



## Policies & Procedures Manual

### Sir Syed University of Engineering & Technology

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#### Policy Statement

It is the policy of SSUET to establish a quality management system that meets the quality standards expected by our stakeholders. To achieve this, SSUET management is committed to continuous improvement in all areas of activities.

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# **Policy & Procedures for Online Education at SSUET**

## **1. Preamble**

In response to COVID-19 pandemic, HEC has instructed the universities to make preparations to minimize the disruption to teaching due to shutdown of educational institutions in Pakistan. Universities are advised to prepare systems that will enable them to offer effective online teaching as a substitute to regular classes. Online education system is to ensure that the quality of education is protected from being compromised. This document describes the policy and procedures to ensure these objectives at Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology in line with the

## **2. Policy**

Online education at SSUET is guided by the policy that online and face-to-face courses should have the same learning outcomes, course descriptions, and expectations. It is ensured that the quality and rigor of an online course is no less than that of its face-to-face equivalent. Moreover, compliance to instructions and accreditation-requirements of all relevant regulatory and accrediting bodies is ensured.

## **3. Governance**

SSUET has constituted an Online Academic Council (OAC) which is responsible for approving policy/procedures for online education at SSUET and verifying readiness of SSUET to offer online education as per guidelines provided by HEC, CEIC and accrediting councils. The OAC at SSUET has the following composition:

- Vice Chancellor (In Chair)
- Registrar (Secretary)
- Expert (One External Member)
- Deans (Member)
- Director QEC (Member)
- All Chairperson (Members)
- Controller of Examination (Member)

In order to regularly monitor, regulate and approve the progress of “online readiness”, Online Accreditation Committee is constituted. The Committee has the following composition:

- Vice Chancellor (In Chair)
- Registrar (Secretary)
- Deans (Member)
- Director QEC (Member)
- Chairperson (SWED) (Member)
- Chairperson (CED) (Member)

- Chairperson (AED) (Member)

As per HEC's guidelines the "online readiness" is measured in terms of a set of targeted requirements for online programs, namely:

- (a) The Online System: which is the readiness of the university, the library, the technology, and the examination,
- (b) The Online Class: which is the readiness of the course, the faculty, the laboratory, and the student.

As a first step the OAC reviews and approves this "Policy & Procedures" document for implementation at SSUET during COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, the steps already taken by SSUET for conducting online education are presented to OAC for approval. Thirdly, the plans and procedures of continuing online education beyond 31<sup>st</sup> May are presented for approval.

#### **4. Online System at SSUET**

Sir Syed University's management has accepted the challenges encountered due to unexpected lock-down situation and has been working on war footings. The following are the major ongoing activities already initiated and implemented:

- a) **Continuity of PG Classes:** SSUET can proudly claim that while ensuring quality education, there was no loss of teaching in our ongoing postgraduate classes. Arrangements were made to convert the ongoing classes to online mode. Necessary training and assistance were provided to the faculty and students. All postgraduate classes are now being conducted using MS Teams platform and other approved platforms, records are being systematically maintained and a monitoring system is in place. The issues faced by the faculty and students were successfully resolved. A working paper indicating all activities for post graduate classes will be presented to OAC for approval.
- b) **IT Steering Committee:** Prior to the pandemic, an IT Steering Committee was already functional at SSUET. Now the same committee also acts as "Technology Development Committee for the University", as required by HEC. The committee looks after IT related requirements for enabling university to work online – both academic as well as administrative activity. The IT Steering Committee, under Prof. Dr. Aqeel Ur Rehman, Dean B&AS, has adopted a line of action to achieve its goal through regular meetings, pragmatic discussions, purchasing the required equipment and above all activation and operation of Learning Management System (LMS) software efficiently and diligently.
- c) **Technical Support Committee:** A Technical Support Committee, headed by the Registrar, is functional at SSUET. This committee is responsible for maintaining the

IT system & infrastructure of SSUET. The committee is also assigned the duty of providing IT related assistance and support to all faculty /students. SSUET is exploring possibilities of providing assistance to faculty/students in improving/solving their connectivity and hardware requirements at home.

- d) **Capacity Building of Faculty for Online Lectures/ Virtual Classes Program:** A two Weeks Program of Training on Capacity Building of Faculty for Online Lectures/ Virtual Classes (Train the Trainers Program) commenced on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020. It is mandatory for all chairpersons to attend all training sessions along with one focal person (to be transformed as master trainer along with chairperson) in each course. All Chairpersons started conducting the same training courses for all faculty members in their respective department w.e.f. 27th April 2020 by following the order of course conducted in first week in train the trainers program. A Monitoring Committee consisting Both Deans, Associate Dean and Director QEC has been constituted to ensure proper compliance.

## **5. Procedures for Offering Online Courses**

- a) Fortunately, the teaching activity of Spring Semester 2020, of all undergraduate programs, except BBA and BSc (Technologies), was completed at the time of closure of the university by the government. The following procedure, is intended to be applicable to undergraduate and postgraduate classes to be conducted in case the lockdown is extended beyond 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.
- The first step is to require all faculty members who are assigned to offer online course to take a capacity building training course. The Chairperson ensures that faculty members who are assigned the courses demonstrate their understanding and capabilities of conducting online course.
  - Once the course is assigned to the faculty member he/she starts preparing and organizing the course. The course is to be organized according to requirements of the accrediting councils, PEC, PCATP, NCEAC, NBEAC etc. In general, the best practice for course organization is to provide all of the following information to the students ahead of time:
    - i. the course introduction,
    - ii. the learning objectives,
    - iii. the evaluation/ grading policy,
    - iv. course prerequisites (if any),
    - v. course requirement or rules (if any),
    - vi. the textbooks or other required readings, the key dates,
    - vi. the time of class meetings,
    - vii. the lesson plan (together with the assigned readings for each lecture),

- viii. the assignments,
  - ix. if possible any PPTs or handouts.
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- b) Based on the nature of the course, availability and connectivity of IT infrastructure at the faculty as well as the students' end, the faculty member identifies the type of online teaching, i.e. synchronous, asynchronous or hybrid.
  - c) It is recommended by HEC that faculty members who wish to offer online instruction to take a training course (online of course) on this subject. Also the faculty members are required to do a dry run of the course to test the system for any unforeseen problems.
  - d) All of the above course-readiness is demonstrated by the faculty member to the respective Chairperson. The departmental Chairperson then submits the information to Online Accreditation Committee for evaluation of online readiness of the courses and their approval.
  - e) The OAC satisfies itself that every faculty member desirous of teaching an online course has passed the required training program and that the course is properly organized.
  - f) After approval of OAC the course is uploaded on LMS and the students are provided access to relevant material by the faculty member.

## **6. Laboratory & FYP**

The conduction of laboratory, FYP and practical-works are conducted according to instructions of respective accrediting councils. Every department, through its BOS/ BOF, submits its recommendations for approval by OAC.

## **7. Students**

Students and their parents are the most important stakeholders in the online process. There are multiple serious issues regarding internet connectivity, availability of devices such as laptops etc. Some of the major issues are being taken up by HEC, accreditation bodies and the government. The issues at SSUET level are handled by Director Students Affairs. A separate SOP is to be issued by DSA in this regards.

## **8. Library**

The library is essential for every academic activity. Arrangements are being made to provide the required facility. A separate document is to be issued by the Librarian providing information about availability of digital library.