

INES-Ruhengeri, Institute of Applied Sciences

INES-Ruhengeri Blended Learning Policy

December 2017

Accredited by Ministerial Order N° 005/2010/MINEDUC of 16 June 2010

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INES

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1. Introduction

1.1 Philosophical backbone of INES-Ruhengeri

Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur de Ruhengeri (INES-Ruhengeri) is a private higher learning institution in Rwanda that opened its doors on 17th November 2003 and was accredited by Ministerial Order No 005/2010/Mineduc of 16 June 2010. Three complementary pillars motivated the idea of establishing INES-Ruhengeri: to build signs of hope in a Rwanda that was rising from genocide, to contribute to unity and reconciliation, and to contribute to sustainable development. Quality of service delivery along with Christian ethical values are key determinants of the current performance of INES-Ruhengeri in teaching, research and community engagement. Among the key strategic objectives identified by the Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur de Ruhengeri (INES- Ruhengeri) in its vision towards, Universality in each individual, Knowing, in order to Unite and better serve the Worlod, is the support and development of the Blended Learning function within the INES. In this connection, one of the objectives of the Strategic Plan for September 2012- August 2017 is to: maximize student and staff productivity and service delivery, enhance teaching and learning and improve quality of research through Blended Learning. Clearly, this is a challenge that must be taken on board with vigour and gusto; with a clear vision and plan and with a commitment from all concerned including students, staff and management. Against this background, the ICT Department and eLearning Task Force, on behalf of the INES has taken its mandate of developing a blueprint that will guide in the development, implementation, and effective use of the Blended Learning services at the INES RUHENGERI. Where there is no separate Blended Learning standards document for the INES RUHENGERI, this policy will serve, alongside other related published documents, as the reference document on Blended Learning standards.



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1.2. Motto of INES-Ruhengeri

Scientia et lux/Shifting from paper to people.

1.3. Vision of INES-Ruhengeri

Universality in every individual; Knowledge in order to better serve the world.

1.4. Mission of INES-Ruhengeri

To contribute through the interactive conjunction between civil society, private sector and public sector to the national and regional development, by providing specialized university education enhanced by research, in order to create competitive enterprises and well paid employment.

1.5. Orientation of INES-Ruhengeri as Institute of Applied Sciences

INES focuses on the relevance and quality of education and the employability of graduates through collaboration with stakeholders in the whole spectrum of academic services. It is in this context that INES has decided to orient itself as Institute of Applied Sciences. The decision to orient its programs towards applied sciences was taken by INES after a deep analysis of the situation of the labour market and discovering that there was a serious problem of mismatch between university products (graduates) and labour market needs in the region. The underlying question was whether Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) teach wrong things or whether they teach right things in a wrong way. The answer to that question was found to be that HLIs teach right things but in a wrong way.

The applied sciences approach was indeed identified as the right tool to overcome the mismatch between the academic services and the labour market expectations. Before adopting the approach, INES organized several workshops, seminars and consultations. This exercise involved academic and administrative staff, students, professionals, and representatives of professional institutions.

Being an Institute of Applied Sciences implies that INES' academic system and community engagement activities are characterized by (1) academic programs that are not only tailored to students professional requirements but are also developed based on real community development needs, (2) a more competence-based educational methodology with a focus on integrating theories and practicals done at school with professional



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context generic competences, (3) research activities focusing on applied research in collaboration with the world of work and (4) close ties with business and industry in contributing to regional development.

2. Purpose

The objectives of this policy are: To provide a framework for staff to engage with blended and online programme delivery;

- To ensure compliance with other INES quality assurance policies3, in relation to course delivery methodologies;
- To ensure that INES's learning environment has the appropriate operational supports to allow blended learning programme delivery;
- To ensure that INES's technical infrastructure can support blended learning programme delivery;
- To provide guidance on instructional design for blended programme delivery

3. Benefits of Blended Learning at INES Ruhengeri

The blended learning policy for the INES Ruhengeri is intended to promote the use of ICTs to enhance teaching, learning and student engagement, achieve competitive advantage, increase opportunities for flexible access, and increase productivity and efficiency through optimum use of human, fiscal and physical resources. The blended learning initiative at the INES Ruhengeri will have the following major goals

- Enriches the student experience and learning outcomes
- Strategic and systematic use of technology in a quality face-to-face environment to provide a more diverse and flexible learning experience, offering students flexibility with respect to time, place, pace and devices for learning
- Supporting innovative teaching strategies;
- Building the digital capacity of INES Ruhengeri.
- Meets the expectations of students for utilizing technology and fosters the development of important new skills for work in the global networked environment
- Caters to individual needs, learning styles and schedules



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- Encourages the development of independent learning skills
- Fosters among faculty the development of new skills and knowledge to transform teaching
- Fosters connections between the classroom and the "real world"
- Supports flexibility and convenience of access to course resources and activities for persons with jobs, family or distance barriers
- Helps reduce educational costs for students by reducing travel and accommodation costs
- Helps reduce the costs of delivering instruction and facilitates more efficient use of resources
- Makes optimal use of physical and virtual resources
- Increases competitiveness in building new student markets enabled by innovative program delivery
- Reducing costs through maximizing the use of human and physical resources
- Fostering of collaboration, reflection, problem solving and critical thinking in students

4. Policy Scope and Related Policies

This policy applies to all members of staff and students of the INES-Ruhengeri, related approved institutional policies include:

- •The ICT Policy (Ines, 2014)
- •The Research Policy
- •The INES part time policy

5. Policy principles

This policy is written to support the high-quality on-INES Ruhengeri learning experience enhancement by the use of learning technologies that enable increased student access to learning resources online. Blended learning at INES Ruhengeri is based on the following principles:

 Students are inspired, motivated and engaged to learn, through blended learning approaches that vary according to their appropriateness to the particular learning context.



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- Staff are encouraged and supported to adopt fit-for-purpose and innovative blended learning approaches. These approaches are enabled by academic and professional partnerships and appropriate institutional investment in learning technologies.
- Digital literacy is recognized as an important graduate attribute and a core skill for academic staff.
- Flexible delivery options are offered to reflect the needs of students, the intended learning outcomes and the availability of resources.
- Blended learning will not always include flexible delivery and so will not always
 provide students a choice of where and when they can study.
- Blended learning and flexible delivery are chosen to enhance student engagement
 and learning outcomes and not just to reduce the costs of delivering teaching or to
 reduce teaching loads. In some circumstances, blended learning and flexible
 delivery may require increased investment of resources to ensure sustainable
 delivery of high-quality learning and teaching.
- Technology is considered an opportunity to capture data regarding patterns of student participation (learning analytics) to inform monitoring for at-risk students, to promote just-in- time learner support and to provide information to students.

6. Definitions

The use of two keys terms in this policy are defined as follows, in relation to this policy:

Blended learning: refers to learning design that strategically, systematically and effectively integrates a range of face-to-face, online, mobile, distance, open, social and other technology enhanced learning across physical and virtual environments, as informed and driven by student needs and support for desired learning activities and learning outcomes.

Flexible delivery: refers to how the timing, pace, content, assessment and location (in both virtual and physical environments) of learning can be varied, personalised and chosen by the student to suit their needs, whilst still meeting the desired learning outcomes. The extent of variability will be determined by course and/or subject requirements.

Digital literacy: refers to the ability to locate, evaluate, choose, use and create



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technologies effectively, critically and safely for lifelong learning. Students require digital literacy to locate, engage, interact, create, share and communicate with a range of learning technologies in order to access subject information, participate in learning activities, collaborate with peers and complete assessment tasks. Staff require digital literacy to communicate, support, motivate and inspire learning for students in contemporary learning environments.

Mode of delivery: refers to whether a subject is delivered internally, externally or via limited mode. Blended learning can, and should be, integrated into any subject regardless of mode of delivery

7. Academic Standards

- INES Ruhengeri will ensure that procedures and regulations as specified in academic policies are fit for purpose in a blended learning environment. For example, INES Ruhengeri will ensure that reliable and scalable systems and processes are in place to verify the identity of students and to manage remote assessments, even across time zones.
- INES Ruhengeri will ensure that quality assurance systems to monitor and/or moderate standards are fit-for-purpose in a blended and online learning environment.
- INES Ruhengeri will ensure that the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) system supports blended and online learning programmes and the quality assurance of a flexible learning experience.

8. Definitive Policy Statements

8.1 Institutional Supporting Framework

- i. Vision for Blended Learning: The INES Ruhengeri will be an institution in which Faculties, Departments and individuals are empowered to be bold and innovative in harnessing available and appropriate ICTs to create teaching and learning environments that are pedagogically sound, learning-centered and engaging, offer flexibility in time, place and pace of learning; and facilitate the most efficient and effective use of human, technological and physical resources.
- ii. **Principles of Blended Learning:** The Blended Learning initiative at the INES Ruhengeri will be guided by the following Principles:



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- Effective Blended learning is achieved through a process of systematic course design/redesign that takes account of the best features of the online and face-toface learning environments
- Pedagogy represents the principal consideration in blended course design and development
- Effective blended learning thoughtfully integrates face-to-face and online learning
- Effective blended learning is achieved through a focus on constructive alignment of learning outcomes, assessments, content and learning activities
- Blended approaches are designed to improve the student learning experience, optimize student engagement, and lead to improved learning outcomes
- Blended approaches cater to diversity among students
- Students must be adequately prepared to function in a blended learning environment

Faculty must be adequately trained and supported in the science and art of blended course design, development and delivery

iii. Financing: The INES, through the ICT department will ensure adequate budgetary support for a

sustainable Blended Learning Initiative

iv. Accessibility: The INES libraries will provide adequate facilities and services to support

students

v. Infrastructure: ICT

The INES, through the ICT department will establish and maintain a robust ICT infrastructure capable of efficiently supporting INES -wide blended learning initiative.

- The INES, through the ICT department and eLearning team will ensure the delivery of a 24/7
- technical support service.
- vi. Infrastructure: Library
- The INES through the ICT department and Library service will expand the services of the library to include a copyright advisory and clearance service to support the INES -wide



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blended initiative.

• The INES through its library's services will ensure that there is 24/7 access to electronic

information resources to support teaching and learning.

vii. Infrastructure: Course Development & Delivery Support

•The INES through the ICT department will equip the ICT services to provide quality services in instructional design for blended learning, faculty training for blended course development and delivery, and multimedia materials development. The ICT team and eLearning team shall in turn coordinate Blended Learning Instructional Design in collaboration with stakeholder units, to include subject matter experts, curriculum specialists, instructional

designers, librarians, multimedia specialists and instructional and information technologists.

viii. Oversight & Planning:

- The INES shall establish a Blended Learning Implementation Team to oversee the implementation of the Blended Learning Initiative
- The INES strategic plan will implement initiatives to ensure alignment between the Blended Learning Initiative and the strategic plans of Faculties and Departments as well as
 - ix. support units.

8.2 Academics (Details in Appendix 1)

i. Course Design, Development and

Delivery

- The INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department shall provide specific quality standards for blended courses
- Course design, development and delivery will be in accordance with the INES Ruhengeri' general Principles for Teaching and Learning, and the specific Principles for Blended
- Learning



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- Online teaching, learning and assessment coverage shall be dependent on the nature of the module (Appendix 1) as a process of consultation with the Deans and HoDs under the coordination of the DVCAR office
- The INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department, shall provide, on an ongoing and systematic basis, appropriate trainings in course design and delivery for blended learning for faculty and relevant staff
- Any Instructor scheduled to teach a blended course shall be required to complete a stipulated programme of training prior to the start of the course
- The INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department, shall provide readily accessible information and resources on best practices in blended learning to inform approaches to course design and development
- Blended course design, development and delivery, including the preparation of learning materials shall take account of the needs of students with disabilities
- INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department will take all practicable steps to ensure security
 and reliability of its online learning and support systems in accordance with INES's ICT
 Policy.
- INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department will control access to its online learning resources.
- INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department will get all practicable steps to ensure continuity of service delivery of its online learning and support systems. It will ensure that a contingency plan is available in the event of failure of the designated modes of delivery

8.3. Faculty, Department Students Information Support & Preparation/Recognition

- The INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department, will provide training for faculty
 on an ongoing and systematic basis, in course design, development and delivery
 strategies for blended learning.
- The INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department, will provide readily accessible information and resources for faculty on best practices in blended learning
- All blended courses, must be clearly identified as such in student handbooks, promotional materials, and INES websites.
- Students must be made aware prior to entering the INES Ruhengeri and other special



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requirements of a blended learning environment.

- The INES Ruhengeri, through the ICT department other relevant service areas, shall offer schemes to assist students in the acquisition of hardware and software necessary for study in a blended learning environment.
- The progressive training on the use of blended learning should be provided to students

 The INES Ruhengeri' induction and orientation programmes for new students, including
 programmes and services offered by Faculties, the Library, ICT department, such as
 advising and orientation activities specific for course, information literacy or study skills
 workshops, electronic resources or help desks, shall be designed to assist students in
 becoming familiar with the different teaching methods, new technologies and independent
 learning skills needed for the blended learning environment.
- The INES ICT Department Service shall provide timely and effective technical support for students on a 24/7 basis via email, telephone, FAQ archives and other appropriate channels
- The INES Ruhengeri shall make available to students online tutorials on the use of eLearning tools and strategies for success in a blended learning environment.
- INES also provides support to students on all aspects of face-to-face and online delivery through an ICT Support Helpdesk, a dedicated Support page on the Institutional VLE and through face-to-face support sessions held throughout the academic year.

8.4 Quality Assurance and Evaluation

- The instruments used for student evaluation of teaching shall take account of elements unique to blended learning and with the established standards.
- The Heads of Department, through the Quality Assurance Office shall routinely conduct student, Faculty and staff evaluations of blended courses with the respected to the standards (Appendix 1) and assess the impact on learning outcomes, performance and student experience

8.5. Financial Impact

• The INES Finance office shall conduct periodic financial impact assessments.

8.6. Responsibility

• The Director of ICT with support from Heads of Department and Deans, are responsible for the



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implementation of this Blended Learning policy under supervision of DVC/AR

8.7. Privacy, Intellectual Property, Security and Copyright

- i. INES Faculty, department members have many of the same concerns with the privacy, intellectual property, security and copyright ownership of online educational materials as they do with traditional scholarly works, including:
 - The INES Ruhengeri, Blended Learning course development will require lecturers to borrow artifacts and intellectual material from the Internet all the time to linking to external resources. But they should use them by attributing the original author or the materials they have borrowed.
 - The ability to edit and control the presentation of their work, and to exercise a right of first refusal in the preparation of subsequent versions
 - The ability to change and update materials over time, reflecting new research, evidence, or developments
- The right to take educational materials they create when they leave for another institution, for their own teaching and research purposes
- The right to share their work with peers in their disciplines (e.g., to check their work or to build upon it)
- E-Learning platform should be protected with valid SSL certificate



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9. General Instructions of E-learning courses and Authentication

9.1. Authentication

After registration, every student gets a corporate email with a default password. This email is used for the login into the eLearning platform. After logging in for the 1st time the user gets the option of creating a new and strong password of their choice. This is the setup of each student's corporate account for using e-learning platform.

9.2. Department (Instructors)

Instructor shall prepare course materials to be ready ahead of the offering of such a course. Once the course is on offer, instructor shall be at hand to guide the students at every stage of the course.

9.3. Student

- A student will be required to fulfil all the requirements for admission into eLearning
 Program to gain admission. They will also be required to undertake all scheduled the online lessons.
- Attendance and Participation:
 - Students attendance for eLearning courses requires at least have two assessments (assignment and quiz) to the course Module. To encourage effective attendance, two weeks of missed attendance shall lead to an automatic drop of course, and the instructor will submit an Instructor Initiated Withdrawal to the Department office copied to the DVCAR.
- substitutions and Guest Lecturing

 For substitutions and Guest Lecturing, departmental heads must approve guest lecturing and substitution for course facilitation in advance and inform all the parties accordingly.
- Instructor Interaction with Online Students:
 - The critical role of communication should be appreciated, given that communication is essential to the success of all courses. Faculty may apply methods of interaction such as email, phone, fax, chat, discussion boards, or audio/video conferencing.
- Feedback to students:
 - Feedback for student assignments will be delivered in a timely manner by the instructor. Recent research shows that delay in returning feedback to students makes elearning courses to be less effective; so that the longer the delay the less effective the course becomes. Online learning should provide interaction between the student and Instructor on a regular basis.

They should also respond to all submitted work in a timely manner.



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9.4. Instructor Responsibilities:

The instructor is responsible for the course content, delivery of instruction, evaluation of student progress in online learning courses, and timely communication with students. The instructor will evaluate course content on a continuing basis to ensure currency of materials.

9.5. Department responsibility:

Access: Department should ensure students have access to the following:

- Information that sets out the respective responsibilities of the institution for the delivery of the programme, module, or element of the course.
- Module descriptors, to show the intended learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment methods of the module(s).
- A clearly defined schedule for the delivery of their study materials and for assessment of their work.

9.6. Assessment:

Departments via their various faculties shall be responsible for planning and administering all forms of student assessment. Assessment will conform to the requirements as stipulated in the various eLearning curricular. Other University academic policies shall also apply accordingly.

Schools will ensure that learners have access to the following:

- Relevant information on the ways in which their progress will be judged, and the relative weighting of units, modules or elements of the course.
- Timely summative assessment and to illustrate the awarding institution's expectations for the summative assessment.
- Grades for student progress through the course will be posted a week after the assignment is done.
- University policy regarding examinations shall apply

9.7. Written Assignment Requirements:

- Written work includes formal research papers, business writing, technical writing, and journal entries.
- All written work shall follow the guidelines for academic honesty, copyright, and intellectual property policies.
- All assignements will be given as scheduled. The instructor is not obligated to repeat or remind students of tests and assignment dates. This is because each student is responsible for



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acquiring notes and assignments online. There shall be no makeup tests unless approved by the Instructor.

Continuous Assessment Test and Final Examination:

Procedure for taking CATs and final examinations will be in line with INES examinations rules and regulations. It is strictly recommended that CATs and Exams should be done physically.

10. Indicators of Success

There are several ways in which the Ines Ruhengeri will know that it has succeeded in fulfilling its vision, mission and strategic goals for blended learning. These include the following:

- Blended learning will be integrated in the programmes of all Faculties and Departments by 2018
- The majority of courses will be delivered utilizing at least the minimum stipulated standards for use of the VLE/elearning course management system
- Academic staff will confidently integrate ICTs into curricula in a manner consistent with course and program learning outcomes and in accordance with set standards and protocols
- Student evaluations will consistently rate their blended learning experiences positively and will indicate wide exposure to blended learning.
- Students will report high levels of confidence in using ICTs for life-long learning



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- Course and programme reviews will indicate improved levels of student performance in blended courses
- Stakeholders will comment positively on the technological competence of graduates
- Infrastructure and services will be supporting ease of access to courses and programmes

11. Review of Policy

• The Blended Learning Policy and Minimum Standards for the use of the Virtual Learning Environment shall be subject to be reviewed on the four year basis.

12. Related Documents

All documents related to this policy approved INES Guiding Documents (Ruhengeri,2017) include:

- INES Brochure
- Missed exam-CAT declaration form
- Internal Regulation for INES
- Academic Programs
- HEC Quality Assurance documents
- Academic Regulations (HEC)
- Program's Profile
- Student Handbook 2015-2016
- INES General Academic Regulations
- Annual report 2012-2013
- Code of Academic Promotion
- Lesson planning format
- Guidelines for final dissertation at INES
- INES Code of Conduct

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- INES RUHENGERI POLICY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINE
- Community Service Policy
- ICT Policy
- Research Policy
- INES part time policy



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Approved by the INES Academic Senate on December 2017.

For the Academic Senate

Fr. Dr. Jean Bosco BARIBESHYA

Vice Chancellor and Chairperson of the Academic Senate



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Appendix 1: BLENDED LEARNING MODULE FORMAT

1. General: Module description

i. Module instruction:

Describe how the module will be taught, indicating at which percentage the online teaching will take, the technology that will be used for interaction (Video with zoom, PowerPoint with audio), and software and hardware requirements, course completion guideline), course aims and learning outcomes and indicative content.

- ii. Module guide
- iii. Timetable
- iv. Attendance list

2. Activities: Module materials and assessments

For a Module where practice is	For a l	Module	where pract	ice is	For a Module where practice is grea	ter Module	where
0% (Theoretical course)	under	40%	(Theory	and	than 40% but less than 80% (Theory a	nd practice:	> 80%
	practic	e)			practice)		

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Course design	The module should be 280/1880 0 30 30 the AFOLTAS SAGNA WHI WWW. in the active in the interpretation of the control of the con						
	into units according to the	units according to the learning	according to the learning outcomes	be taught the			
	learning outcomes	outcomes		campus			
Course	• Resources (links, open	• Resources (links, open	• Resources (links, open resources,				
Materials	resources, Lecturer	resources, Lecturer	Lecturer developed hand-outs in pdf,				
	developed hand-outs in	developed hand-outs in	PPT, or word, PPT files with audio,				
	pdf, PPT, or word, PPT	pdf, PPT, or word, PPT	video)				
	files with audio, video)	files with audio, video)					
Technologies	Forum is a must	• Forum is a must	Forum is a must				
for interaction	• Chat is a must	• Chat is a must	• Chat is must				



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	Use zoom video	• Use zoom video	Zoom video conference is
	conference where	conference is compulsory	compulsory
	necessary		
Assessment	For Module of 10 Credits	For Module of 10 Credits	For Module of 10 Credits
	At least:	At least:	At least:
	 2 assignments online 	2 assignments online	2 assignments at the online ,
	■ 1 Quiz online	■ 1 Quiz online	 1 assignment at the at the campus,
	■ 1 Invigilated CAT at the	■ 1 Invigilated CAT at the	■ 1 Quiz online
	campus	campus	■ 1 Invigilated CAT at the campus
	 Final Exam the campus 	 Final Exam the campus 	■ Final Exam the campus
	For Module of 15 Credits	For Module of 15 Credits	For Module of 15 Credits
	At least:	At least:	At least:
	 3 assignments online 	 3 assignments online 	 2 assignments online ,
	■ 1 Quiz online	■ 1 Quiz online	 1 assignment at the at the campus,
	■ 1 Invigilated CAT at the	■ 1 Invigilated CAT at the	■ 1 Quiz online
	campus	campus	■ 1 Invigilated CAT at the campus
	 Final Exam the campus 	 Final Exam the campus 	■ Final Exam the campus
	For Module of 20 Credits	For Module of 20 Credits	For Module of 20 Credits
	At least:	At least:	At least:
	■ 3 assignment,	■ 3 assignment,	2 assignments at the online ,



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	■ 1 In	vigilated CAT at the	•	1 Invigilated CAT at the	•	1 Quiz online	
	cam	pus		campus	•	1 Invigilated CAT at the campus	
	Fina	l Exam the campus	•	Final Exam the campus	•	Final Exam the campus	



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Appendix 2: Online module course evaluation form for Heads of

Faculty:	Department:		
I evel:	Module title:	Module Code:	

II. Module evaluation

Department I: Module details

Criteria	Observations of the Head of Department
Course design (Has the course been designed according to the set standards?)	
Technologies for interaction (Did the Lecturer use technologies to facilitate live interaction with the students?)	
Assessment (Has the assessment been conducted according to the guidelines?)	
Feedback to students (Did students receive formative feedback on the work they have done in the units?)	

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Appendix 3: Online module course evaluation form for Class

Committee I: Instruction: To be filled by each member of class

committee online

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Faculty:	Department:		
Level:	Module title:	Module Code:	

III: Module evaluation

Scoring mode for the level of achievement

5: Excellent 4: Very good 3: Good 2: Fair 1: Poor

Critera	5	4	3	2	1
Instructions to the module are clear					
Module materials were readable and downloadable					
Interaction with Lecturer was effective					



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Assessment was adequate					

General observation:			
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	 	 	• • • • • • • • •



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