

ONLINE LEARNING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ONLINE COURSE STANDARDS

Office of the Provost
Nazarbayev University
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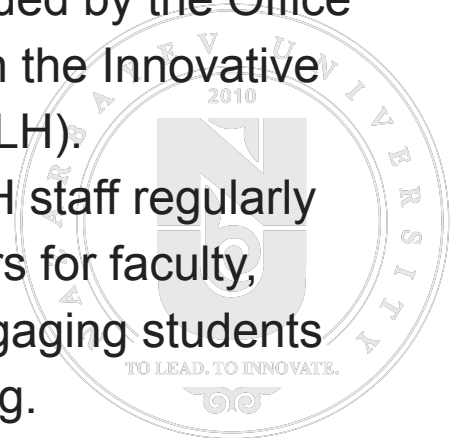
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TO LEAD. TO INNOVATE.

Context

- This document is presented in response to recommendations from the **Fall Semester Task Force: Student Engagement Working Group**.
- These FAQs are provided for guidance, if needed, during the COVID period, they do not supersede approved NU policies.
- These course standards (adapted from the *QM Higher Education Rubric*) reinforce the standards provided by the Office of the Provost in the Innovative Learning Hub (ILH).
- Please note: ILH staff regularly present webinars for faculty, including on engaging students in online learning.



FAQ 1. Does NU provide training for online teaching?

For faculty

- Innovative Learning Hub (ILH) portal has developed and curated online teaching resources and has provided links to training courses from *The Open University* and *LinkedIn Learning*.
- ILH provides training for new Graduate Teaching Assistants.
- ILH presents regular webinars on Zoom, Moodle, Turnitin, Digication, Qualtrics.

For students

- Contact the IT helpdesk with any technical questions such as passwords.
- Review resources in the ILH.



FAQ 2. Where can I find NU resources for online learning?

- For faculty: Innovative Learning Hub Resources include:
 - NU Course Design Guide
 - NU Recommendations for Online Teaching
 - NU Online Assessment Guidelines
 - NU Quality Indicators for Online Courses
 - NU Guide for Engaging Students Online
- For students
 - Refer to your course syllabus and School resources.
 - Always feel free to ask your professor, and your Department Chair and your Vice Dean for Academic Affairs.



FAQ 3. How does the NU attendance policy apply to online learning?

- For faculty
 - Online learning provides opportunities for creative, low-stakes and frequent formative discussions and assessment to ensure student engagement.
 - We expect active student engagement, so we are asking more from both instructors and students.
 - Faculty **might consider** creating several points of engagement each week.
- For students
 - Your professor will challenge you to engage with course material very frequently. He/she will need to see that you are active in all online activities.
 - Your access to Moodle will be automatically checked every week through the IT system and the results sent to your Dean. Be prepared to receive a call from your professor or GTA if you are not active online.
 - If your attendance is affected by your well-being, please contact the NU Psychological Counselling Center. They are

FAQ 4. Medical certificates and requests for extensions during online learning?

- For faculty and students
 - Students will need to provide evidence if they seek medical excuses for extensions.
 - Medical excuses may need to be verified so instructors have some independent confirmation.
 - During the COVID period, documentation may include screen shots, emails and other evidence.

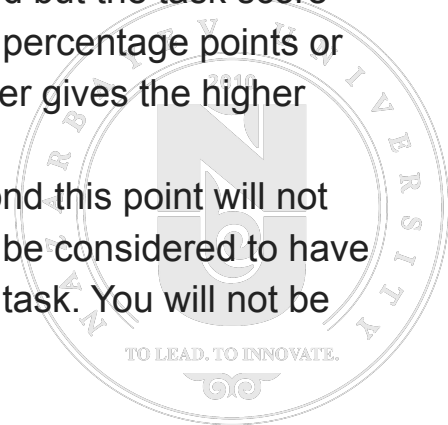


FAQ 5a. Extensions and grace periods for assessments?

- Some NU Schools have chosen to customise this policy adapted from *The Open University*. These extracts are presented for guidance for those Schools which might find them useful, they are not compulsory.
- "SA 3.2.1 Cut-off dates
You must submit your assessment task(s) in accordance with the published cut-off date unless you have been formally granted a discretionary postponement. The deadline for receipt of assessment tasks is noon (Nur-sultan local time) on the cut-off date. NU operates a grace period of 12 hours so work submitted before midnight (UK local time) on the cut-off date will be accepted without penalty. If you fail to submit an assessment task and you will receive a Fail result."

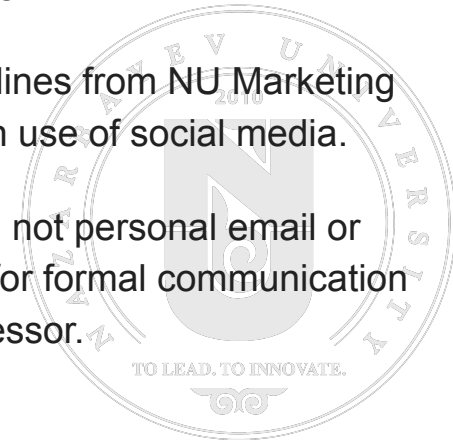
FAQ 5b. Extensions and grace periods for assessments?

- Some NU Schools have chosen to customise this policy adapted from *The Open University*. These extracts are presented for guidance for those Schools which might find them useful, they are not compulsory.
- SA 3.2.2 Late submission
If your submission is received up to 24 hours after the grace period (e.g. after midnight local time) on the cut-off date and before midnight (local time) . on the day following the cut-off date), the assessment will be accepted but the task score will be reduced by up to 10 percentage points or to bare-pass level, whichever gives the higher score.
Submissions received beyond this point will not be marked and you will not be considered to have completed the assessment task. You will not be offered another opportunity.



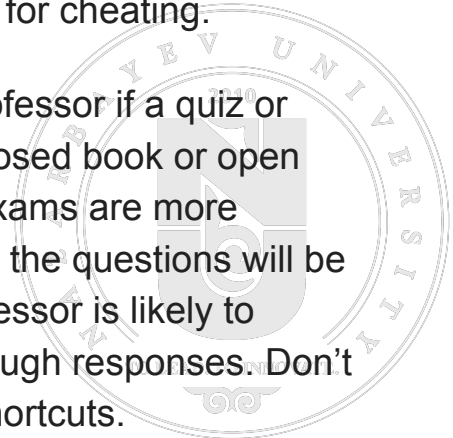
FAQ 6. How should NU students communicate online?

- For faculty
 - NU recommends email as the main form of communication between faculty and students so that there is a formal record.
 - Clarify your requirements in the syllabus (communication channels, frequency, hours).
 - For instance, clearly state if you will use Zoom, Google meets or other platforms.
 - Ideally 24-48 hours response time for emails.
 - Buddy systems can be useful for some students, especially undergraduates.
- For students
 - When in class, be sure to keep your camera on and remain in view so instructors can see you are engaging in the discussions.
 - Refer to guidelines from NU Marketing Department on use of social media.
 - Use NU email, not personal email or social media, for formal communication with your professor.



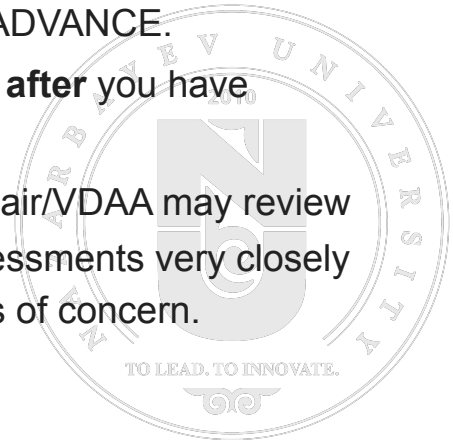
FAQ 7. How does academic integrity work online?

- For faculty
 - Tools include:
 - Student Code of Conduct
 - Turnitin (which can be used by faculty as well as students for formative purposes)
 - Interesting, frequent and engaging assessment tasks, using group work as appropriate.
- For students
 - If you think it is easy to cheat online, think again. The ***NU Student Code of Conduct*** explains the severe penalties, including dismissal, for cheating.
 - Check with your professor if a quiz or essay or exam is closed book or open book. Open book exams are more common online, but the questions will be harder and the professor is likely to demand more thorough responses. Don't cheat. Don't take shortcuts.



FAQ 8. Transfer credits for online courses from other universities?

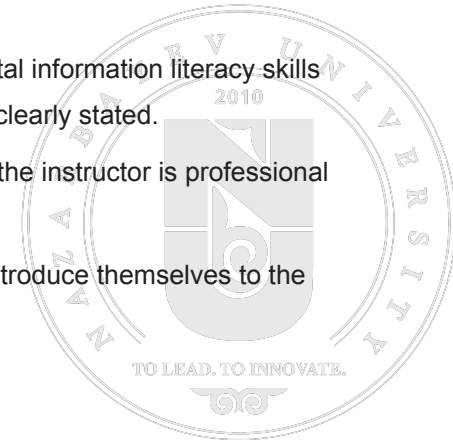
- For faculty
 - **NU Rules on Academic Mobility** define transfer credit policies.
 - Students who were taking online courses at another university during their NU Spring semester cannot transfer credits at all.
 - Students who were taking online courses at another university during their NU Summer term, can transfer their credits if 1) all paper work was submitted in advance 2) they did not register for any NU courses during Summer
- For students
 - Your Department Chair or Vice Dean for Academic Affairs will need to approve any course for credit **IN ADVANCE**.
 - Do not ask for credit **after** you have completed a course.
 - Your Department Chair/VDAA may review your completed assessments very closely and clarify any areas of concern.



Online course standards 1 – Course overview

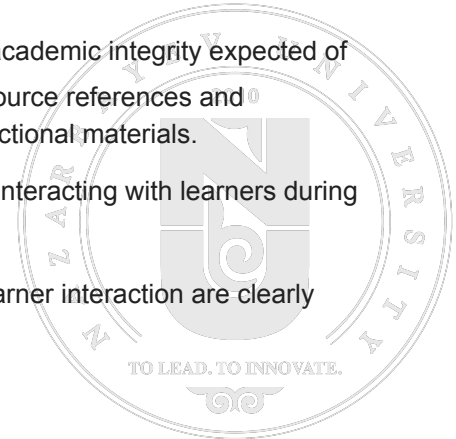
(Extracted from: *Specific Review Standards from the QM Higher Education Rubric, Sixth Edition*)

- 1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.
- 1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.
- 1.3 Communication expectations for online discussions, email, and other forms of interaction are clearly stated.
- 1.4 Course and institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated within the course, or a link to current policies is provided.
- 1.5 Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided.
- 1.6 Computer skills and digital information literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.
- 1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is professional and is available online.
- 1.9 Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class.



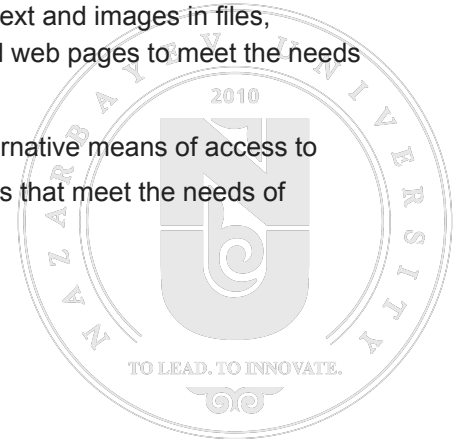
Online course standards 2 – Learning outcomes, assessments and materials

- 2.1 The course learning outcomes provided to students are measurable.
- Assessment
- 3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly at the beginning of the course.
- 3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work, and their connection to the course
- grading policy is clearly explained.
- 3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress with timely feedback
- 4.2 The relationship between the use of instructional materials in the course and completing learning activities is clearly explained.
- 4.3 The course models the academic integrity expected of learners by providing both source references and permissions for use of instructional materials.
- 5.3 The instructor's plan for interacting with learners during the course is clearly stated.
- 5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.



Online course standards 3 – Technology, support and accessibility

- 6.4 The course provides learners with information on protecting their data and privacy.
- 7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.
- 7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.
- 7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's academic support services and resources that can help learners
- succeed in the course.
- 7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's
- 8.1 Course navigation facilitates ease of use
- 8.2 The course design facilitates readability. 8.3 The course provides accessible text and images in files, documents, LMS pages, and web pages to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- 8.4 The course provides alternative means of access to multimedia content in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.



References and Contacts

References:

NU Rules on Faculty Mobility

NU Student Code of Conduct

Online Course Standards, QM Higher Education Rubric:

<https://www.qualitymatters.org/sites/default/files/PDFs/StandardsfromtheQMHigherEducationRubric.pdf>

Code of Practice for Student Assessment for The Open University

<https://help.open.ac.uk/documents/policies/code-of-practice-student-assessment/files/14/student-assessment.pdf>

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