MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORATE OF E-LEARNING

E-LEARNING POLICY
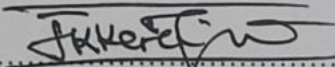
Policy No.	MMU/DEL/AA/001/2020
Version	01
Principal Responsibility	Director, E-Learning
Effective Date	5th August, 2020

Policy Approval

This policy shall be known as the E-Learning Policy of Maasai Mara University (herein after referred to as "the Policy") and shall take effect on the date of approval by the University Council.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Statute 17 (2d) of Maasai Mara University section 35(1) (a) (iii) of the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 and section 19 of the Charter for Maasai Mara University 2013, Maasai Mara University Council affirms that this Policy has been made in accordance with all relevant legislations.

Dated the ......5ᵗʰ......... day of ....August.,.....2020

Signed: ....

Dr. Kennedy Ole Kerei, PhD

Chairman of Council, Maasai Mara University

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PREFACE

The Maasai Mara University (MMARAU) has promulgated its educational priorities through past and current strategic plans and policy statements where e-Learning (EL) and the related areas of flexible learning have all been well articulated. EL is seen as one area that can give the University a competitive advantage if carefully planned and executed.

This Policy serves as the guideline for all EL services and activities in the University. It outlines the objectives, guiding principles, policy areas and implementation. This policy shall be read and applied in conjunction with various other policies and documents such as the Admission Policy, Examination Policy, E-Learning Examinations Regulations and Procedures Policy, Research and Extension Policy, Intellectual Property Policy, ICT Policy, The University Master Plan, Infrastructure and Maintenance Policy, University QMS Manual and Procedures, Plagiarism Policy, Fees Payment Policy, Training and Development Policy and Policy on Establishment of Learning Centres. The Directorate of e-Learning (DEL) will be responsible for implementing this policy and in case of any contradictions in the application of this policy the prevailing University Statutes shall apply.

FOREWORD

The E-Learning Policy operationalizes the vision, mission and philosophy of EL mode of delivery at the University. Its purpose is to ensure that the teaching and learning outcomes using this mode of study meets the expectations of all interested parties and complies with the standards and guidelines of the Commission for University Education (CUE) as set out in its standards and guidelines of 2016 under Schedule IV. E-Learning aims to enhance experiential learning by utilizing modern instructional materials and methods, including increased use of ICT; expanding access to University education and training, by developing capacity for increased enrolment through non-conventional approaches in teaching and learning; and exposing staff and students to ICT-driven teaching and learning experiences required in a competitive higher education environment. The principles and guidelines contained in this policy have been standardized with best practices in other world-class universities to ensure that the vision of the University is achieved.

PROF. KITCHE MAGAK
AG. VICE-CHANCELLOR

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAT   Continuous Assessment Test
CUE   Commission for University Education
DEL   Directorate of eLearning
HOD   Head of Department
ICT   Information and Communication Technology
ISO   International Organization Standards
M&E   Monitoring and Evaluation
EL   E-Learning
PC   Performance Contracting
QA   Quality Assurance
QC   Quality Control
QMS   Quality Management System
MMARAU   Maasai Mara University

DEFINITION OF TERMS

i.   *Academic Unit* - colleges, faculties, schools, institutes, centres, and departments that offer academic programmes.

ii. *Asynchronous Learning* - learning where the learner is not online at the same time as an instructor or other learners.

iii. *Blended Learning* - the integration of e-learning tools with conventional learning methods, and is commonly understood as combining instructor-led training and e-learning, or combining face-to-face training and e-learning.

iv. *DeL* - Directorate of eLearning.

v.   *Channel* – the *means* through which learning content is delivered.

vi. *e-Content* - the short form of e-Learning content.

vii. *e-Learning* - means interactive instruction which is enhanced, supported, mediated, delivered or assessed by information technology (ICT) means.

viii. *e-Learning Content* – the learning resources specifically developed as part of approved University courses but delivered using the e-learning mode of teaching and learning.

ix. *ICT* - computer and electronic systems used for the acquisition, creation, processing, storage, retrieval and transmission of digital information.

x.   *International Students* – students who are not Kenyan citizens.

xi. *Learning* - a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, practices and attitudes which lead to change of observable behavior or performance in terms of outcomes.

xii. *Media* - the various means through which learning content is delivered such as television, radio, internet and intranet.

xiii. *m-Learning* - learning with mobile or portable technologies including but not limited to handheld computers, MP3 /MP4 players, iPods, notebooks and mobile phones to facilitate, support, enhance and extend the reach of teaching and learning.

xiv. *Occasional Learner* - a person who registers for a single one-off course without enrolling for a degree program.

xv.   *Online Learning* - e-learning that makes use of Internet technologies and teachers and learners can be located anywhere as long as they have access to a computer and a connection to the Internet. Online learning can happen on campus or at a distance from the campus. It can be synchronous or asynchronous.

xvi.   *Open* - flexibility in terms of delivery modes, time, place, admission, examinations and target groups.

xvii.   *Synchronous Learning* - learning where the learner is online at the same time as the instructor or other learners.

xviii.   *eL Campus* - a college of the University whose mandate is to facilitate the development and delivery of programs through eLearning methods.

xix.   *University* - Maasai Mara University.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In May 2019, the University created the Directorate of E-Learning (DEL) which is established under University Statutes. The objective was to expand the use of ICT for both on-campus and off-campus students. The overall purpose of using EL is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning for both staff and students in tandem with best practices; improve access to and flexibility of learning opportunities for students; and increase enrolment by targeting new groups of potential students who are outside the normal catchment of the University such as working adults and cross-border students. In a competitive higher education market, EL is desirable in meeting the expectations of such students and other stakeholders.

2.0   BACKGROUND

It has been the desire of the university to digitize its operations right from admission of students, fees payment, library, finance, examinations and processing of results. This led to the creation of the ICT Department, acquisition of hardware and software for digital operations and the recruitment of technical staff to support the delivery of services on the digital platforms. The ERP has gone a long way in improving services to staff and students. The Directorate of E-Learning was established in 2019 to champion the delivery of lectures through the online platforms. One of the primary mandates of the Directorate is to develop policies and instruments that will govern its operations and to mainstream the university as a digital champion. This Policy thus provides the guidelines for the operations of E-Learning in Maasai Mara University.

3.0   RATIONALE

This policy explains the need for EL. The provision of quality EL programs and its management must be anchored on a policy that clearly outlines the guidelines for the design of an appropriate management and operational structure, administrative processes, courseware development and production, programme delivery and learner support, research and evaluation and lifelong learning.

4.0   PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the use of E-Learning mode of delivery for both on-campus and off-campus students is enhanced through efficient and effective management of all the key functions of DEL.

5.0 VISION
To be a World Class University Committed to Academic Excellence for Development

6.0 MISSION

To provide quality University education through innovative teaching, research and consultancy services for development.

7.0 MOTTO

To provide quality University education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge.

8.0 CORE VALUES

8.1 **Freedom of thought and expression.** We shall promote and defend freedom of thought and expression in all our academic enquiry and activities.

8.2 **Excellence.** Our actions and interactions shall be guided by high standards and sustained endurance for excellence.

8.3 **Care.** We foster a leadership culture that cares, is people-focused, that connects to and is responsive to the needs of internal and external customers, and promotes stewardship over University resources on behalf of beneficiaries.

8.4 **Good governance.** We shall be guided by the national values and principles of governance specified under articles 10 and 232 of the Constitution. These include Integrity; Transparency; Accountability; Inclusiveness; high standards of professional ethics; Efficient, Effective and economic use of resources; and responsive, prompt, effective, impartial and equitable provision of services.

8.5 **Innovativeness and creativity.** Innovation and creativity shall be our distinctive character in delivering value to our customers.

8.6 **Partnership and teamwork.** We foster a culture of work characterized by teamwork and partnership with both internal and external stakeholders.

9.0 MANDATE

The mandate of DEL is to support, guide, and facilitate the use of e-learning, blended learning, mobile learning, offer short lifelong courses and conduct research in EL guided by this policy.

10.0 PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

DEL in pursuance of its mandate undertakes to observe and practice the following principles and guidelines: -

10.1 Use of technology to support student learning and experience: We shall be flexible, effective, innovative and at the forefront in the use of diverse technology to support and enhance student learning and experience.

10.2 Flexible instructional design: We shall endeavour to design and develop learning content based on established good educational practices; and research, monitoring & evaluation shall bear out the use of technology.

10.3 Orientation and skills development: We will be committed to proactively sensitize and build capacity of the learners, faculty and support staff to increase the uptake and utilization of EL in the University.

10.4 Stakeholder engagement: We will strive to actively engage all stakeholders in service delivery. This will create networks that will promote all stakeholders' interests.

10.5 Commitment to excellence: In line with the University's vision, DEL will strive to distinguish itself from other players in the sector by embodying the spirit of excellence in the course of undertaking its operations. This is critical in supporting the University in its march to be a world-class University Committed to Academic Excellence for Development

10.6 National cohesion and inclusiveness: DEL believes in national unity and cherishes respect for diversity in all its forms.

10.7 Sustainable development: DEL shall endeavor to meet its mandate sustainably by putting in place mechanisms to ensure it will always have the resources to continue dispensing its mandate by providing EL services into the foreseeable future.

11.0 PHILOSOPHY

MMARAU is guided by the need to connect and inspire the Kenyan community to provide leadership, stewardship and to give hope and faith to the Kenyan society so that it can excel in whatever it chooses to do with passion, moral responsibility and a strong sense of patriotism.

12.0 E-LEARNING POLICY OBJECTIVES

The E-L Policy seeks to achieve three objectives:

i. Expand access to university education and training by developing capacity for increased enrolment through non-conventional approaches in teaching and learning.

ii. Enhance the quality of teaching and learning by utilizing modern instructional materials and method through use of ICT.

iii. Expose staff and students to ICT- driven teaching and learning experiences required in a competitive higher education environment.

iv. Develop sustainable capacity in EL faculty for continuous professional development.

13.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy aims to mainstream EL into academic programs of the University so as to increase access to flexible and quality technology-supported learning as outlined in its strategic plan 2019/20-2024/25 which recognizes the importance of EL in increasing flexible and quality education to prospective students in Kenya and beyond.

14.0 SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all academic units that offer or wish to offer their programs through e-Learning mode of delivery. It covers but not limited to the following:

i. EL target clientele;
ii. Financing of EL and sustainability;
iii. Staffing of DEL;
iv. Capacity building;
v. Promotion of EL services;
vi. EL discipline;
vii. Curriculum development and assessment;
viii. Examination;
ix. Courseware development, production and transmission;
x. Delivery channels and media;
xi. Learner support services;
xii. Technological support;
xiii. Partnership and Collaboration;
xiv. Monitoring and evaluation;
xv. Research and innovation;
xvi. Quality assurance.

15.0 EL TARGET CLIENTELE

i. The DEL will collaborate with relevant Faculties, Institutes and Schools to admit all those who would qualify for university education into any of the University programs guided by the University admission policy;
ii. People wishing to enhance their life skills or work skills will be trained on relevant short lifelong learning courses including registering for courses as an occasional learner.

16.0   FINANCING OF EL PROGRAMMES AND SUSTAINABILITY

    i.   The University shall allocate adequate finances to the DEL to carry out its mandate;

    ii.   The DEL and collaborating academic units shall develop a fee structure for EL programs based on the University Fee Payment Policy;

    iii.   The fee charged for international students will be as per the existing University Fee Policy;

    iv.   DEL shall on its own or in partnership with academic units, write grant winning proposals to support EL research and activities;

    v.   The University shall ensure continuous investment in capital development in DEL infrastructure that supports growth, development and decentralization of DEL activities and programs.

17.0   STAFFING FOR DEL FUNCTIONS

The University shall ensure that there is a staffing structure that efficiently manages and delivers EL programs and learner support services.

    i.   The University shall engage sufficient and competent academic and administrative staff to ensure that DEL adopts a model that guarantees optimal utilization of resources and provide continuous, consistent and quality service to the students and other stakeholders;

    ii.   The relevant roles of the staff shall be redefined from time to time to ensure high quality EL inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes;

    iii.   There shall be three categories of staff in DEL namely: academic, administrative & technical support staff;

    iv.   The DEL shall have an operational structure consisting of the DEL Board, Directors Office, Courseware Development and Production; Programme Delivery and Learner Support;

    v.   Each Academic Unit shall have a DEL Programs Coordinator nominated by the respective Unit and appointed by the Vice Chancellor at the level of a HOD;

    vi.   Each Academic Unit shall have an EL working team recommended by the Dean/Director and appointed by a DVC in charge of Academics Affairs.

18.0   CAPACITY BUILDING

    i.   The DEL staff shall keep in touch with technological and pedagogical developments in EL through research and participation in academic fora;

    ii.   Subject matter experts, administrators, stakeholders and faculty members shall be trained in skills required for the design; development and production of courseware materials, selection and use of technological media, and tutoring and assessment of EL learners;

19.0 PROMOTION OF EL SERVICES

The DEL shall champion the awareness, sensitization, and adoption of EL services within and outside the University as per its mandate.

20.0 E-LEARNING DISCIPLINE

The DEL working with other relevant academic units shall create a Centre of Excellence for capacity building at all levels of certification to nurture the discipline of EL in the country and beyond.

21.0 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT

i.   Curricula shall be domiciled in schools/faculties/institutes/centres offering academic programs;

ii. Each curriculum shall have provision for eLearning mode of delivery in addition to the traditional mode of teaching and learning;

iii. The curriculum development and implementation process shall be in line with the University QMS and the Commission for University Education standards and guidelines;

iv. DEL shall support the students throughout their study by putting in place evaluation strategies to gather student feedback and take corrective action.

22.0 EXAMINATION

E-Learning students shall be examined as per the E-Learning Examinations Regulations, the University Policy on Examinations and QMS procedures.

23.0 COURSEWARE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND TRANSMISSION

i.   The DEL, working with academic units shall be responsible for courseware development, production and transmission processes;

ii. Study materials shall be developed in conformance with the standard and procedure set by the University and the requirements of CUE;

iii. All programs in the University shall be eligible for complete or partial conversion as appropriate into EL mode of delivery;

iv. The University shall require that each Academic Unit prioritizes at least one programme every year for conversion into EL mode of delivery;

v.   The University shall require that any academic member of staff assigned a course to teach in the regular program develops an EL study unit for that course;

vi. All materials developed for use on any EL delivered program shall be approved by the DEL Management Board;

vii. The University shall permit modular study and multiple exit avenues on EL programs.

24.0 COMPENSATION AND REMUNERATION

Senate, guided by the ICT Policy, The Copyright and Intellectual Properties Rights Policy shall determine commensurate remuneration for:

i) Course Development

ii) Course Facilitation

iii) Technical Support

25.0 DELIVERY CHANNELS AND MEDIA

i. E-Learning programs shall be delivered through a suitable channel or a combination of distance learning, E-Learning and blended learning;

ii. The primary channel of delivery will be the University Learning Management System through the internet and intranet.

26.0 LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES

i. The DEL and collaborating academic units shall provide administrative support, tutorial support, guidance and counseling support, and library & ICT support to the learners

ii. The learner support services will be provided primarily through the internet and intranet and at University Campuses and Learning Centers.

27.0 TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

i. ICT and related infrastructure consisting of computers, servers and internet linkages shall be provided at the learning centers;

ii. Minimum specifications for electronic learning devices such as mobile phones and tablets shall be provided to the learners;

iii. A robust Learning Management System (LMS) shall be put in place.

28.0 PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

The DEL shall seek to collaborate with other eLearning institutions globally to make opportunities available for all who wish to enroll for EL programs. Such academic collaborations shall be in the following areas:

i. Faculty and student support strategies in EL;

ii. Development of courseware and the use of multimedia;

iii. The integration of technology to support teaching, learning and assessment at a distance;
iv. Staff training and capacity building for University employees;
v. Joint development of instructional materials for formal and non-formal courses;
vi. Sharing experience on common policy issues;
vii. Sourcing of tutors for face-to-face or e-tutoring.

29.0   MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The DEL Management Board shall develop M&E mechanisms in line with the University Quality Management System (QMS).

30.0   RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The University is committed to quality experiential teaching by using EL mode of delivery. Through research, the DEL, together with University academic units, shall continually review the teaching and learning processes through research to improve services. This will entail:

i. Describing and analyzing current trends in eLearning;
ii. Addressing challenges and obstacles to EL effectiveness in delivery;
iii. Investigating potential contributions of EL to socio-economic development;
iv. Evaluating EL programs and building models that work in the EL context;
v. Formulating EL theoretical explanations for EL scholarship and practice;
vi. Identifying strategies to improve student throughput;
vii. Evaluating the impact of EL practices.

31.0   QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance efforts will be made to ensure that quality assurance standards are in place to promote delivery of quality EL programs and related learner support services as per the University Quality Assurance Policy and as directed by the Directorate of Quality Assurance.

32.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF COLLABORATING SCHOOLS AND FACULTIES

Collaborating academic units shall host the curriculum and provide faculty support to learners.
These will include the following:
i. Develop and review curriculum;
ii. Request for advertisement of programs;

iii. Set the required admission targets in consultation with DEL;
iv. Seek admission of applicants;
v. Create and maintain a database for E-Learning students;
vi. Develop learning materials;
vii. Assign tutors to provide academic tutorial, counseling and administrative support;
viii. Provide orientation to new and continuing students;
ix. Assess learners;
x. Present qualified students for graduation.

33.0   RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEL

The DEL shall promote E-Learning mode of program delivery in collaborating academic units. These will include the following:

i)   Facilitate advertisement and promotion of programs using EL modes of delivery;
ii)   Train tutors on eLearning pedagogy, andragogy and instructional design for material development;
iii)   Facilitate and supervise material development process and ensure conformity with quality standards;
iv)   Induct tutors on conversion and uploading of developed courseware and other resources on learning platforms;
v)   Manage the learning platforms including their access to students;
vi)   Orientate students on EL pedagogy and andragogy;
vii)   Induct students and tutors on the use of learning platforms;
viii)   Induct Faculty administrators on provision of Faculty Support to DEL students;
ix)   Create and maintain a database for all E-L students;
x)   Track the progress of E-L students and advise Faculty to take appropriate action as per common regulations;
xi)   Provide learner support services on the learning platforms.

34. REFERENCES

The E-Learning Policy shall operate within existing relevant legal, regulatory and policy framework and guidelines that include:
1. Maasai Mara University Strategic Plan 2019/20-2023/24
2. Maasai Mara University Statutes
3. The DEL Strategic Plan 2019/20-2023/24
4. Constitution of Kenya 2010
5. University Act 2012

6. University amendment Act 2016
7. Commission for University Education, Standards and Guidelines 2014
8. Maasai Mara University Charter 2013
9. Complementary Policies of the University
10. Quality Assurance Policy

35.0 COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

This policy will be publicized on the intranet and during sensitization of stakeholders

36.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The DEL shall, in collaboration with Boards of partner academic units on behalf of Senate, be responsible for enforcement of this Policy.

37.0 COMPLEMENTARY POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

This Policy shall be read and applied in conjunction with the following policies and other legal university documents.
1. Admission Policy
2. Examination policy
3. Research and Extension Policy
4. Intellectual Property Policy
5. Infrastructure and Maintenance Policy
6. University QMS and Procedures
7. Plagiarism Policy
8. Fees Payment Policy
9. Training and Development Policy
10. Policy Establishment of Campuses and Schools

In a case where this Policy is in conflict with any University Statute, the Statute shall supersede the Policy.

38.0 REVIEW
The E-Learning Policy shall be reviewed every five Years or whenever necessary to ensure continued relevance, currency and effectiveness.

39.0   RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL

Organ _____ **Signature** _____ **Date** _____

1. DEL Board
2. University Management Board
3. Senate
4. Council

DIRECTORATE OF E-LEARNING MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

DEL MANAGEMENT BOARD
(Director, 2 Deans, 1 Senate Rep, 1 School Rep)

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DIRECTOR
(Holder must be least Senior Lecturer or above)

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR
(Requisite ICT Knowledge/Lecturer or Equivalent)

ACADEMIC STAFF	ADMIN STAFF	TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF
(E-L Program Coordinators)	Admin Assistant	Systems Admin
School E-L Team	Secretary	Course Facilitators
	Clerical Staff	
	Office Support Staff	