Title: Distance Education Policy

Code: GU-PL05TL

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Approval Authority: Board of Trustees

Document Owner: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Review: The policy is subject to a periodic review every 4 years or in a shorter cycle as per amendments of University policies

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles within which Gulf University provides quality education and administrative services in distance mode.

2. Scope

This document applies to all types of distance teaching, learning and assessment activities in all academic programs as well as administrative functions complying with the requirements of regulatory bodies.

3. Acronyms

BQA	Education and Training Quality Authority
CILOS	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
HOD	Head of Department
HEC	Higher Education Council
GU	Gulf University
PILOS	Program Intended Learning Outcomes
IT	Information Technology

4. Definitions

Distance Education: Distance education is a form of education in which the main elements include physical separation of teachers and students during instruction and the use of various technologies to facilitate student-teacher and student-student communication.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes: Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attributes envisioned to be achievable by students who have been enrolled in a course. CILOs, therefore, contribute to PILOs.

Instructor: An instructor is an individual appointed by Gulf University to deliver assigned courses.

Learning: Learning is understood to encompass the knowledge and skills that result from engagement with the teaching activities planned and designed for a program of study. Learning is cumulative and can manifest itself in many forms and assessment needs to take account of this. New learning builds on and expands existing learning.

Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes state what a student should be able to do by the time they have completed the course or program for which the outcomes are set. Outcomes can include knowledge, skills and attitudes. The attainment of an outcome is determined through the assessment process.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the copying of ideas and content from another source without appropriate referencing. This can include the copying of work from another student. Where plagiarism has been detected in any assessment, the Plagiarism Policy and Procedures must be implemented.

Program Intended Learning Outcomes: Program Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) describe the knowledge, skills and attributes envisioned to be achievable by students who have followed a program of study. Demonstration of achievement of PILOs is a necessary requirement for the award of a qualification associated with a program.

Student: A student is any individual who is formally registered in a program offered by Gulf University.

5. Policy Statement

5.1 GU believes in no detriment approach to ensure that student learning outcomes for each course and the program are not compromised in distance education and all the actions are implemented in flexible and adaptable manner to serve the interest of the students.

5.2 GU commits to providing best learning experience in distance education mode via digital platform for its academic and administrative operations without compromising with quality.

5.3 GU is committed to offer academic programs in virtual learning environment which are comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional/face to face education.

5.4 Academic staff is committed to design teaching, learning and assessment methods suitable for theoretical and practical courses with emphasis on project-based learning.

5.5 GU strictly follows the requirements and expectations of regulatory bodies, professional and academic accreditation bodies around the world towards the achievement of Intended Learning Outcomes on courses and programs levels.

5.6 GU ensures technical viability of conducting distance learning and assessment for students and instructors and managing all administrative or support functions in digital platform for all the stakeholders. Gulf University is committed to provision and support for emerging technology.

5.7 GU commits to equip instructors with required skill in delivering online lecture and conducting online assessment with adequate support and training from IT department.

5.8 GU ensures validity, reliability, accuracy, consistency, security, fairness of assessment in distance education.

5.9 GU ensures academic integrity, confidentiality and data protection once assessments are submitted online along with plagiarism detection of student work.

5.10 GU is committed to conduct examination (midterm and final) through Learning Management System with appropriate online proctoring.

5.11 GU ensures availability of learning resources via online databases for courses and research across the academic program

5.12 GU is committed to implement online admission and registration in academic programs along with opportunities for online payment of admission fees, registration fees, exam fees etc.

5.13 Gulf University commits to provide all support services to the students in distance education/online learning which the on-campus student receive regularly.

5.14 GU commits to measure effectiveness of distance education for continuous quality enhancement.

5.15 GU shows its endeavor to collect feedback from internal and external stakeholders to identify gap areas while operating in distance mode.

5.16 GU is committed to organize curricular and cocurricular activities for the students in digital platform along with providing opportunities for career development.

5.17 GU ensures to be connected virtually with external stakeholders via scientific research and community engagement activities.

5.18 GU commits to organize online staff professional development activities and encourages staff to participate in webinar, online conference, workshop, and forum.

5.19 GU is committed to support students with special needs to get similar learning experience in distance education as in face to face learning.

6. Responsibilities

Students and Applicants with disability are responsible for:

- following this document appropriately.

Unit of Admission and Registration is responsible for:

- ensuring that all students and applicants are fully informed of this policy.
- appropriate implementation of this policy.

Heads of Departments are responsible for:

- ensuring that all faculty members are fully informed of this policy.
- appropriate implementation of this policy.

Deans are responsible for:

- ensuring that all faculty members are fully informed of this policy.
- appropriate implementation of this document.

Academic Advisors and Instructors are responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Examination Committee is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Unit of Student Services is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Unit of Staff Professional Development is responsible for:
- appropriate implementation of this document.

HR Department is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Quality Assurance and Development Center is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Chief Operating Officer is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for:

- appropriate implementation of this document.

University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:

- systematic review of the effectiveness of this policy.

7. Related Policies

- All University Policies (academic and administrative)

8. Related Procedures

- All University Procedures (academic and administrative)

9.   Related References and Standards

BQA	Institutional Reviews Handbook
BQA	National Qualifications Framework Handbook
BQA	Programs-within-College Reviews Handbook
HEC	Institutional Accreditation Standards Handbook