



Title: Teaching and Learning Policy

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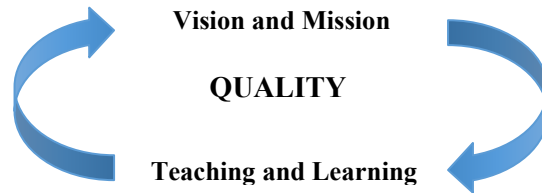
Approval Authority: Board of Trustees

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 and HEC regulations

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide actions of all Gulf University staff members in order to ensure that teaching and learning, as core pillars of academic endeavor, drive the Vision Mission of the University, and is driven by them in order to contribute to quality. This dynamic process is captured in the following diagram:



The policy also guides teaching staff to provide students with learning experience that will allow them to meet the outcomes of the qualifications they are registered in. It aims to ensure that teaching is based on sound educational principles, and it complies with criteria set by relevant regulatory authorities.

2. Scope

The document applies to all programs offered at Gulf University and to all personnel involved in the provision of teaching and learning.

3. Acronyms

BQA	Education and Training Quality Authority
HEC	Higher Education Council
LMS	Learning Management System
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

4. Definitions

Analytical Thinking: Analytical thinking refers to a set of cognitive skills, which involves the breaking down of the whole into a set of components to identify and solve problems. Analytical thinking also allows for the reassembling of those components into a ‘new’ whole to innovate and develop. Analytical thinking involves the use of deductive reasoning.

Deductive Reasoning: Deductive reasoning is the ability to use evidence to reach a conclusion.

Guest Speaker: A guest speaker is an individual from the professional community, invited by the university to deliver a lecture on specific topics relevant to a course.

Instructor: An instructor is an individual appointed by Gulf University to teach on its 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.

The Learning Management System: The Learning Management System (LMS) is a Web-based technology (i.e software application) used by instructors to plan, implement, and assess the learning process. LMS allows instructors to generate and deliver contents, observe students' participation, and assess their performance. Moreover, LMS provides students with a friendly, creative, and learning environment to enhance their knowledge.

Learning Outcome: A learning outcome states what students should be able to do by the time they have completed the course or program for which the outcome is set. Outcomes can include knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The attainment of an outcome is determined through the assessment process.

Learning Resources: Learning resources comprise of all aspects of the learning environments in which students are immersed in, as they engage with programs of study. They, therefore, comprise of equipped classrooms, studios, laboratories, libraries, an online learning platform (LMS, such as Moodle) and learning materials produced by instructors.

Student: A student is an individual who has completed the formal procedures necessary to register in a program offered by Gulf University.

Teaching: Teaching refers to a set of activities planned and designed to ensure that students can achieve the learning outcomes set for courses in a program. Teaching may be face-to-face and take the form of lectures or more informal discussion and tutorial sessions. It can also encompass various online activities that are designed and selected as part of an overall teaching approach. In addition, teaching encompasses formative feedback provided to students on assessment tasks. Teaching is enhanced by *reflection on teaching*, a process involving instructors using feedback from students, from peers, and from the assessment of students' learning to consider how they may re-plan and re-design the overall approach to teaching. Therefore, quality teaching results from reflection on practice to ensure that it allows students to meet program outcomes.

Teaching Strategies: Teaching strategies are the deliberate and planned methods used by an instructor to ensure that students are guided and supported in the attainment of learning outcomes.

Virtual Learning Environment: The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is an education space used as an extension tool of normal classroom sessions to enhance teaching and learning process and practice. Usually, VLE is linked to LMS.

Distance Education: It 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. The program will not exceed 25% of the courses in the study plan to be delivered via distance learning mode.

Hybrid Learning: Hybrid learning is a dynamic educational model that can vary significantly from one course to another. At its core, it combines in-person and virtual learning, allowing some students to attend physical classes while others participate remotely. An essential feature of hybrid learning is that the instructor simultaneously delivers instruction to both in-person and virtual learners, ensuring that no one is left behind. It is a mode of distance education where 30% to 79% of the instruction is conducted online via a university learning management system. The remainder of the instruction is provided in a traditional face-to-face modality. Although the online component is typically asynchronous, it may be synchronous.

Synchronous Distance Learning: This learning mode refers to instructors and students gathering simultaneously. Students must also log in and participate in class activities and discussions at a specific time each week.

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Asynchronous Distance Learning: Asynchronous distance learning means that the instructor and the students in the course all engage with the course content at different times (and from different locations). The instructor provides students with a sequence of sessions, which the students move through as their schedules permit. Each session might use assigned readings or uploaded media, online quizzes, discussion boards, and more. The instructor guides the students, provides feedback, and assesses them as needed.

5. Policy Statement

- 5.1 Gulf University follows an outcome-based education system where learning outcomes are mapped for an entire program and its courses, and where it considers students' needs (including those with special needs).
- 5.2 Gulf University ensures that teaching is directed at the achievement of learning outcomes and it is fit for purpose.
- 5.3 Gulf University commits to learning as a holistic process, which is embedded with work-based practice, involves cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of human functioning.

- 5.4 Gulf University ensures that critical thinking ability is reflected on the outcomes for all courses and programs.
- 5.5 Gulf University ensures project based learning irrespective of the nature of the program. Students are encouraged to build network with industry in doing real projects.
- 5.6 Gulf University commits to alignment of assessment with outcomes as key to an outcomes-based approach to education, resulting in the achievement of validity, reliability, and fairness of assessment.
- 5.7 Gulf University emphasizes active learning approaches which provides opportunity to the students to become responsible for their own learning.
- 5.8 Gulf University ensures that staff development is imperative for quality instructors within an outcomes-based approach to education.
- 5.9 Gulf university commits to academic advising to support learning environment in guiding students towards achievement of learning outcomes.
- 5.10 Gulf University ensures that learning resources are carefully designed and freely available to support the outcomes-based approach.
- 5.11 Gulf University ensures provision of virtual learning environment to students and instructors together with a reliable and efficient learning management system to enhance the teaching and learning process. Midterm and final examinations are conducted electronically on campus via learning management system.
- 5.12 Gulf University commits to student feedback data and the scrutiny of assessment results, which are essential to quality teaching.
- 5.13 Gulf University ensures that courses and programs are regularly reviewed to ensure relevance with constantly changing 21st century world.
- 5.14 Gulf University commits to offer synchronous and asynchronous sessions in distance education format.
- 5.15 Gulf University encourages staff and students to use digital tools and technologies in education thus promoting technology enabled learning.
- 5.16 Faculty teaching philosophy is underpinned by inclusion, multiplicity and equality principles.

6. Policy Details

Teaching Strategies

Instructors need to draw on a diverse array of teaching strategies in order to guide and support students towards the attainment of learning outcomes. These strategies include the following:

Strategy	Description	Purpose	Advantage	Limitations	Requirements	
					Instructor	Student
Lecture	Formal teaching in which the instructor outlines course content.	Provides an overview which can then be probed in more depth.	Allows instructor to work with large groups. Provides 'big picture'. Time efficient.	Students may not be active in teaching session and can lose concentration.	Good planning abilities. Good delivery skills. Good audio-visual presentation.	Willingness to go beyond the lecture to deepen learning.
Discussion	Facilitated interactive session generally involving a small group. May include a specific task (e.g. discussion of piece of reading).	Allows a group to work together to develop joint understandings of a topic or question.	Allows students to engage more deeply with a topic. Builds language skills and self-confidence.	Some students may participate more than others. Generally, requires some study before session. Not all students may do this.	Ability to stimulate discussion. Ability to ensure that contributions are spread throughout the group. Ability to provide sensitive feedback.	Willingness to complete tasks before session (e.g. reading). Willingness to take turns and not dominate conversation. Willingness to listen to peers.
Case Study	Description of a problem, the application of a theory or principle in a real-life setting.	Allows students to see the application of theory and principles in action. Allows for the critique of theory and principles. Develop critical thinking.	Draws on 'real world' applications of theories and principles that can be contextualized to the Bahrain and Gulf region.	Some published case studies may not be entirely relevant to learning outcomes.	Ability to develop own case studies that are relevant to the learning outcomes. Ability to design tasks aimed at promoting engagement with the case study.	Willingness to study independently. Need to have mastered at least to some degree the theory or principle exemplified in the case before study is attempted.
Role Play	Students enact roles in a simulation of a real-life situation.	Allows for the development and demonstration of skills and attributes.	Engages students and allows them to practice for future roles and to receive feedback on practice.	Can be very time consuming. Require careful management by instructor (e.g. to ensure that all students engage with role play)	Ability to script role plays. Ability to facilitate group to ensure all participate and not only those playing roles. Ability to provide	Self-confidence. Willingness to offer constructive rather than negative critique.

						sensitive and constructive feedback.
Small Group Tasks	<p>Assessment task of some sort requiring students to work together on a joint submission.</p> <p>Mainly focused on formative assessment.</p>	<p>Allows students to share understandings and learn from each other.</p> <p>Develops understanding of what it means to work in task-oriented groups.</p>	<p>Develops skills and attributes for the workplace where students are likely to become members of task-focused groups.</p> <p>Allows for more frequent assessment without imposing heavy feedback load as feedback is to groups.</p>	<p>Not all students may contribute equally to the group task.</p>	<p>Ability to design assessment tasks requiring participation by multiple students.</p> <p>Ability to manage conflict particularly with regard to workload sharing.</p>	<p>Willingness to contribute to the common good of the group rather than to individual achievement.</p>
Practical Work	<p>Skills based training, for example, in laboratory, workshop and workplace conditions.</p>	<p>Allows for the development of skills.</p>	<p>Focus on skills.</p> <p>Can also allow for development of critical thinking and deductive reasoning (for example, conclusion to a laboratory report).</p> <p>Can be computer based using simulation software.</p>	<p>Time consuming.</p> <p>Requires specialist equipment.</p>	<p>Ability to design practical session to maximize learning.</p> <p>Ability to structure tasks to contribute to development of critical thinking.</p> <p>Ability to provide constructive feedback as students work on practical task.</p>	<p>Willingness to follow procedures and pay attention to accuracy.</p> <p>Willingness to have engaged with theory and principles before practical session to draw on them as it takes place.</p>

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<p>Guest Speaker</p>	<p>Specialist from the professional world, outside Gulf University.</p>	<p>Provides insights and expertise to students.</p>	<p>Give students a chance to connect with professionals. Students have the opportunity to learn something new.</p>	<p>Can be time consuming. High expectation by students may result in disappointment.</p>	<p>Require careful management by instructor.</p>	<p>Willingness to attend, participate and contribute. Willingness to keep focused.</p>

7. Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- following this policy appropriately.

Instructors and Academic Advisors are responsible for:

- following this policy appropriately.

Assisting, Technical and Administrative Staff are responsible for:

- following this policy appropriately.

Teaching Excellence and Technology Center is responsible for:

- following this policy appropriately.
- providing

Heads of Departments and Program leaders are responsible for:

- ensuring that all faculty members and students are fully informed of this policy.
- implementing this policy appropriately.
- Following up with the teaching and learning activities and required improvements.

Deans are responsible for:

- ensuring that all faculty members and students follow this policy.
- implementing this policy appropriately and following up with the required improvement actions.

Staff Development Office is responsible for:

- following this policy appropriately.

Quality Assurance and Development Center is responsible for:

- ensuring appropriate implementation of this policy.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for:

- ensuring appropriate implementation of this policy.

University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:

- systematic review of the effectiveness of this policy.

8. Related Policies

- Distance Education Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Mapping Programs to National Qualifications Policy
- Program Design, Development and Approval Policy
- Program Review and Development Policy
- Disability Policy

9. Related Procedures

- Teaching and Learning Procedures
- E Learning and Distance Education Procedures
- Assessment Procedures
- Assessment Verification and Moderation Procedures
- Mapping Programs to National Qualifications Procedures
- Program Design, Development and Approval Procedures
- Program Review and Development Procedures

10. Related References and Standards

BQA	National Qualifications Framework Handbook
BQA	Institutional Reviews Handbook
BQA	Programs-within-College Reviews Handbook
HEC	Regulations and Resolutions