Policy and Procedure

European College of Polytechnics

EUROPEAN
COLLEGE OF
POLYTECHNICS

SKILL FOR PURPOSEFUL LIFE

Contents

European College of Polytechnics

Distance Learning Policy

I. Definitions

(1) The European College of Polytechnics establishes this Distance Learning (DL) Policy to govern the educational offerings leading to an award or part thereof, which are delivered, supported, and/or assessed through methods that may not require students' attendance at scheduled classes or trainings.

(2) Distance learning at ECP offers a versatile educational framework that accommodates various learning dynamics through digital and traditional modalities. This approach is designed to bridge the geographical gap between educators and learners, including advisors and research students, leveraging technology to facilitate both synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (delayed) interactions.

Asynchronous Distance Learning. Asynchronous DL stands out as an educational strategy that permits students to partake in learning activities without the necessity of being physically present in conventional settings such as classrooms. This model promotes autonomy among learners, allowing them to engage with course materials at their own pace. The asynchronous format employs digital tools and resources, including: (a) Online platforms for content delivery and interaction (b) Paper-based materials and digital content distributed through mail (c) Telephonic support for individual guidance. In this setup, educators assign tasks and provide feedback through electronic means, thus eliminating the need for direct physical contact. Within this method enables students to study remotely, making education accessible regardless of the learners' location.

Synchronous Online Learning and Blended Approaches. Conversely, synchronous online learning at ECP facilitates real-time interaction between instructors and students, fostering a dynamic and interactive learning environment. This mode can be seamlessly integrated into blended learning strategies, which combine the benefits of in-person and digital education. Blended learning is characterised by: (a) Periodic direct interactions between educators and students within a physical classroom setting (b) Engagement with digital content and assessments outside the classroom environment. This hybrid approach offers an educational experience that capitalises on the strengths of both

distance learning and traditional, in-person teaching methods. By incorporating elements of online education, blended learning supports a mixed methodology that enriches the learning experience while accommodating diverse learner needs and preferences.

II. Quality Assurance and Development of DL Programmes

General Principle

(3) ECP ensures that students engaged in DL receive an educational experience equivalent to that of their peers on campus, fostering clear expectations and responsibilities among all involved parties.

Approval of the DL Provision

(4) DL courses or programmes at ECP must exhibit the same quality standards as traditional programmes. During the validation process, DL courses or programmes must demonstrate their ability to meet students' needs effectively. Key considerations for programme validation include: management of learning experiences, relevance and reliability of digital platforms, staff training and competencies, student support mechanisms; contingency plans for technological failures.

Student Engagement and Annual Monitoring

(5) DL courses or programmes undergo the same rigorous annual monitoring and evaluation processes as traditional courses or programmes, with specific attention to students' remote learning experiences. Any issues identified must be addressed promptly, with contingency plans in place for technological or access-related challenges.

III. Expectations of ECP, Staff, and Students

Expectations of ECP for DL Courses or Programmes

(6) ECP ensures a reliable and secure delivery system, high-quality study materials, adequate contingency plans, designated contacts for academic feedback, clear communication regarding programme delivery and assessment schedules.

Commitments of ECP's Collaborative Partners

(7) ECP's collaborative partners, such as Learning Management System contractors, are committed to ensuring that staff supporting distance-learning students are adequately skilled and trained, provide remote access to student support services where feasible, and confirm the authenticity of students' assessed work.

Responsibilities of Students

(8) ECP's students are expected to maintain consistent, secure internet access and meet technical requirements, arrange personal IT support, familiarise themselves with basic

computing terms and instructions, engage actively with the learning materials and delivery methods, adhere to the programme's delivery and assessment timelines.

IV. Admission, Enrolment, and Induction

(9) Admission Requirements: Applicants must meet the course's or programme's entry requirements and may need to: ensure access to the necessary technology, agree to supervisory arrangements, demonstrate access to the required academic facilities.

(10) Enrolment: DL course or programme enrolment is facilitated online or via post, tailored to meet distance learners' needs.

(11) Induction: An online induction introduces DL students to essential resources and platforms. ECP provides comprehensive digital resources to orient students to distance learning, ensuring they are well-prepared for their educational journey.

V. Monitoring and Reviewing

(12) This policy, aligned with applicable legislation and the educational goals of the European College of Polytechnics, underscores the organisation's commitment to providing high-quality remote education, ensuring equitable access for all students, and continuously improving and adapting its practices. It is subject to periodic review and may be amended to reflect changes in legislation or best practices. This policy must be read in conjunction with all other relevant policies, terms, and conditions of ECP and its awarding partner organisations.