SCEI
Southern Cross
Education Institute

PP519
Online programs and course delivery policy and procedure

PURPOSE

This policy focuses specifically on the best practices and strategies for online/distance learning and course delivery. Within this context, SCEI further endorses the following high quality standards/guidelines for course design, instruction, associated support services, assessment, use and distribution of course materials, the rights and responsibilities of parties and all related matters associated with online/distance learning.

This policy is additionally designed to assist SCEI in the fulfilment of its training and assessment strategy in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations promulgated by the regulatory body.

SCEI does not have a Fully Delivered Online Course, rather its online is a Hybrid Course Delivery (HCD) or Blended Course Delivery (BCD) where all practical tasks and assessments, such as role play, projects, skills lab, etc. are delivered and assessed in its campuses.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Southern Cross Education Institute's online teaching and learning practices.

DEFINITIONS

Flexible learning	An approach to education which offers the student choices in what to learn, how it is learned and assessed, and when and where learning occurs.
Fully Delivered Online Course (FDOC)	FDOC means a course in which 80 to 100% of the instruction is entirely delivered online, with the following two (2) variances: • Students and instructors meet exclusively online and the course is delivered entirely online. • Students and instructors only meet on-campus for orientation and/or evaluation and performance testing
Hybrid Course Delivery (HCD) or Blended Course Delivery (BCD)	Hybrid Course Delivery or HCD refers to a course in which the theoretical part is entirely delivered online. Hybrid courses blend face-to-face interaction such as role play, projects, skills lab with typically web based educational technologies such as online, assignments, discussion boards, and other web-assisted learning tools to form an integrated instructional approach.

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Online learning	Online/distance education is defined as a delivery of educational courses and programs which uses a wide range of educational and telecommunication technologies including satellite and web-based technologies which incorporates learning management systems with synchronous and/or asynchronous modes of communication.
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Teaching and learning	A flexible approach to education and training that supports the adoption of a range of learning, teaching and assessment strategies in a variety of learning environments to cater for differences in learning styles, learning interests, needs and variations in learning opportunities and/or circumstances.

POLICY

1. Notice to students regarding the nature of online/distance learning before entering a program or enrolling in a course.

    1.1 The prospective online/distance student(s) will be given a fact or information sheet regarding the nature of the online/distance learning environment as well as FAQ related to the online learnings. Also, the student(s) will be given an online/distance readiness "checklist" and/or a "questionnaire

2. Online Display of Academic Online/Distance Calendar.

    2.1 SCEI shall provide online/distance information regarding an academic calendar for each term in which courses are offered for an online/distance course or at least units.
    2.2 It shall be the responsibility of IT/Training/Administration Managers to ensure that such information is provided to students prior to admission into the program.

3 SCEI will comply with all requirements that apply, for online/distance course delivery.

4 SCEI's Information and Technology Service will provide adequate technology for its online/distance course offerings through the Department of Information and Technology as well as other facilities that are required and accessible to both trainers and assessors and students.

    4.1 The IT department is equipped with technology (i.e., software. equipment and facilities) appropriate for instructor and student interaction;

    4.2 The IT department provides the appropriate facilities to accommodate curricular commitments and technical assistance is available for students and trainers with their use of the institution's Learn-ing Management System (LMS).

5 SCEI will have a panel of management that overviews the management of online delivery.

    5.1 SCEI online panel members are chaired by the CEO and include Compliance Manager, IT Manager, Training Manager, Administration Manager and Training Coordinators.

    5.2 Assurance of quality and standards for online/distance programs and courses are provided by this panel whose members are trained and qualified by standards in online design, development and teaching.

6 It is the responsibility of the Training Manager by the advice and/or directives of the CEO and SCEI Online Panel to ensure that instructors have the indicated requisite skills necessary to deliver online/distance education courses.

7 The Compliance Manager is closely working with the IT Manager and will overview the development and delivery of online/distance education courses and programs, web delivery and compressed video delivery by successfully completing performance-based training sessions offered each semester.

    7.1 The training sessions are a combination of online, face to face skills labs and web-based instruction.

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8   Evaluating Satisfaction with the Content and Delivery of the Course Experience.

    8.1   Evaluating the course content and delivery effectiveness in improving Online Student Learning Out-comes (OSLO) involves getting honest and direct feedback from students on what worked well for them and what needs improvement.

    8.2   Such feedback is always tempered by the judgment of the teaching professional, this feedback when constructively considered can be invaluable in re-thinking course components.

9   Intellectual Property Rights and Ownership of Materials.

    9.1   The SCEI Online/Distance Programs and Course Delivery policy will be consistently applied and interpreted in accordance with the Intellectual Property Policy set forth and adopted by the SCEI Policy and all policies and provisions regarding ownership of intellectual property as established and/or accepted by the SCEI.

PROCEDURE

1. The overall design of the online delivery will be made clear to the students

2. Learning objectives will be measurable and clearly stated

    2.1.   Learning objectives will clearly describe what students are expected to know or should be able to do by the end of the course

3. Assessment strategies will be designed to evaluate student progress by reference to stated learning objectives;

    3.1.   to measure the effectiveness of student learning;

    3.2.   and will be an integral part of the learning process.

4. Instructional Materials will be sufficiently comprehensive to achieve stated course objectives:

    4.1.   Learner Interaction and Engagement Forms of interaction incorporated in the course will be designed to motivate students and to promote learning.

    4.2.   Course Technology (Course navigation and technology) will support student engagement and ensure access.

    4.3.   The course will facilitate student access to institutional support services essential to student success.

    4.4.   The course will demonstrate a commitment to accessibility for all students.

5. Online/distance courses will be included for online courses taught on campus using the Learning Management System (LMS) such as Moodle, Zoom etc.

6. In normal circumstances (except in cases such as the COVID -19 pandemic) It is recommended that no course be allowed to be delivered more than one third of the total volume of learning, as part of his/her regular (traditional classroom (face to face)) teaching load as prescribed by the SCEI Training and Assessment Strategy.

7. In line with its endeavours to support for participation in Online/Distance Delivery, SCEI will provide support for all programs involved in online/distance education in the following ways:

    7.1.   If needed, priority consideration will be given to new technology purchases and updates at the departmental level.

    7.2.   Priority technical support will be provided in the design and maintenance of delivery systems, as provided by the Office of Information Technology.

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7.3.   Ongoing leadership support will be provided through professional development, a strong support staff (in the technology department) dedicated to online/distance learning concerns, and development of user-friendly templates for designing course materials that optimize the full range of SCEI resources.

7.4.   As needed, other forms of support will be provided by the department all necessary support will be given upon request

7.5.   The coordination of schedules, protocols and troubleshooting (as needed) by the students and trainers will also be provided.

8.   Creating a Sense of Community for the Online/Distance Student.

8.1.   SCEI will create a sense of community for students who are learning through an online/distance environment to make them feel a part of the overall campus community.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- PP40 Work Based Training and Assessment Policy and Procedure
- PP77 Assessment Policy and Procedure
- PP82 Course Development Policy and Procedure
- PP28 Teaching and Learning Strategies Policy
- PP42 Plagiarism Policy V2.0
- PP97 Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Stu-dents 2018, Standard 11

RESPONSIBILITIES

- It is the responsibility of the Training Manager and IT department aided by the advice and/or of the panel of management that overviews the management of online delivery, to ensure that trainers and assessors have the indicated requisite skills necessary to deliver online/distance education courses.

- SCEI course coordinators must realize that the decision to use online/distance learning will be made on a course-by-course basis, with consideration given to the content of the course, the needs of the learners, and the flexibility of the delivery mechanism. The designing and implementing online/distance education for trainers and assessors, as content experts, is the responsibility of the compliance department.

- Administrative Support Towards Completion of the Online/Distance Program.

  o   The admin department will be responsible for providing information and assistance to students interested in completing a third of the units of their qualification online.

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- It is apparent that the very nature of online/distance learning creates challenges for the online student.

  - SCEI recognizes some, if not all of these challenges, and therefore provides appropriate services to address those challenges, many of which may be found at the SCEI's website and the Moodle instruction.

- In addition, students will be provided with a guide and additional materials to assist them with various pertinent information.

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