Online Learning Policy

Owner	Director of Digital Academic Strategy		
Version	1.3		
Changes	Terminology updated, modes of learning simplified, staff and student expectations strengthened around online learning and assessment, accessibility highlighted.		
Approval date	March 2026	**Approved by**	Academic Council
Implementation date	March 2026	**Date of next review**	November 2028
Related internal policy	Access and Participation Plan (APP) AI Policy Observation of Teaching Policy Academic and Study Skills Support Policy Inclusion policy and procedure UK Student Engagement and Attendance Policy International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy		
Related external policies and regulations	BNU Flexible And Distributed Learning Policy UGM Not available SMU Not available		

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Introduction

1. This policy sets out the principles and expectations for learning, teaching and assessment when programmes, or parts of programmes, are delivered online. It informs the planning of teaching, learning and assessment and guides academic staff and students in what is considered by the sector as good practice in developing, delivering and assessing learning while maintaining academic standards.

2. The policy outlines the minimum requirements expected by the College and its awarding bodies when staff are delivering teaching and learning online. The requirements of this policy are in addition to the normal expectations on academic staff described in other policies and procedures.

Different Modes of Learning

3. The College delivers programmes in two modes:

    - **In-person learning,** wherein teaching is delivered face-to-face in a physical space, such as a lecture hall or laboratory, and students study independently between teaching sessions (including by using online learning resources).
    - **Distance learning** denotes teaching delivered online or virtually using technology designed to deliver programmes in this way.

4. In addition some programmes are run as blended where some teaching is delivered in-person and some at distance (online), depending on the teaching material and the subject matter.

5. Note that the college does not deliver "hybrid" learning, i.e. where some students are online and others are in-person in the same class at the same time, or fully "on demand" where all studies are carried out asynchronously.

6. This policy focuses on distance learning.

Learning principles and expectations

7. All students should receive a clear and realistic explanation of the expectations on them for studying online, and of the nature and extent of autonomous, collaborative and supported aspects of learning.

8. All students will have access to Regent Digital, Digital Library resources and a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which provide learning materials and resources including materials to prepare for their lesson as well as to consolidate their learning following the session.

9. All students will be advised about how they can best approach their learning, by setting guidance around the expected conduct and participation in online environments with embedded support through Academic Skills Support, TiC (Thinking into Character) and appropriate guidance for online study.

10. All students will be provided with appropriate support through their Programme Leader, Personal Academic Tutor and/or Student Success Officer (SSO) as appropriate.

11. Students should work through their programme at the same pace through timetabled activities with the ability to go back through content in their own time.

12. Students should have the ability to engage in collaborative working in real time, such as through online meetings and discussion functions.

13. Students will participate in group sessions, tutorials and independent study to ensure sufficient learning takes place for their programmes.

14. All students will have further enrichment of their study through SCOPE and Thinking into Character (TiC) sessions provided through Regent Digital and the Virtual Learning Environment as well as skills development provided through Career Connect.

15. Students will have opportunities to provide feedback on their experience of the programme through the College's normal feedback channels.

16. Programmes delivered online will be monitored according to the relevant awarding body's requirements and the College's normal programme monitoring procedures.

Teaching principles and expectations

17. Teaching will be delivered in 'real time' through use of video conferencing, webinars, drop-in sessions, live chat and instant messaging using College approved and provided platforms.

18. Staff and students are required to join online classes from a quiet, safe and appropriate environment and have their cameras on during the online sessions. This ensures engagement and effective learning. Non-adherence to this will be handled in accordance with the appropriate Attendance and Engagement policy.

19. Schools will ensure all students have the appropriate contact time with their tutors in digital synchronous forms, to ensure sufficient learning takes place.

20. Schools will ensure that appropriate time is provided for the different elements of online study and that the timetable, programme and module handbooks clearly explain how teaching is delivered and learning is assessed.

21. Academic staff should use a range of digital learning tools and activities to support students to achieve their learning outcomes, provide appropriate stretch and challenge and foster student engagement. Tools used should be provided by the College. Where a member of staff uses a third-party tool, the staff member should ensure that no staff or student data is collected by the tool.

22. All tutors who deliver online programmes will be provided with appropriate training, support and development for online teaching.

23. Teaching observations will be carried out within online lessons as part of the wider observation process.

Assessment Principles and Expectations

24. Schools will ensure all students are assessed in a fair, reliable, valid and secure way.

25. Students will be given opportunity to take part in formative assessments with timely and appropriate feedback to help them prepare for summative assessments. This formative feedback must not take the form of giving feedback on drafts of the summative assessment.

The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

26. The College will ensure that the online delivery system has been tested and that a robust contingency plan exists in the event of failure of any technical systems.

Accessibility and Inclusion

27. The College will ensure that digital tools and content are accessible to students with a wide range of disabilities and learning needs.

28. Academic staff will ensure that their teaching and materials creation make use of all accessibility tools and resources as appropriate.

29. The College will provide training to academic staff to support accessibility.