



OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY OF RAJARATA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

On the recommendation of the Senate, the Council of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, as the governing authority of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, by resolution adopts the following policy.

Dated :

Last amended :

Signature :

Position : Vice Chancellor, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

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1. Preamble

Rajarata University of Sri Lanka is committed to provide opportunities for the citizens belonging to diverse need contexts in order to give access to formal education through open and distance mode. This policy covers education provision leading to an award or part an award which is delivered through open and distance learning mode. This policy is intended to help manage open and distance learning programmes of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka with the equal quality and standards as its conventional programmes. Further, this policy aims to commit RUSL to an ongoing, responsive interaction with current and emerging national and international imperatives and development with relevance to quality ODL provision. The requirements of this policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant University regulations, policies and guidelines.

2. Name of the policy

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Policy of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.

3. Definition of Open and Distance Learning

According to RUSL, Open and Distance Learning refers “to providing learning opportunities in an environment where there is a separation of teacher in time and/or place and learning is achieved through the use of variety of media, including print and electronic which requires specialized division of labour in the production and delivery of courses. Throughout the learning period, two-way communication is maintained allowing learners and tutors to interact with one another in occasional face-to-face meetings. Finally, the learning process and outcome are certified by means of evaluation by a specified institution or agency”.

4. Governance and Curriculum

The Center for Distance and Continuing Education (CDCE) of RUSL is the dedicated body for supporting ODL programmes of the University to provide provisions for student selection, enrolment, registration, facilities for teaching, leaning and assessments. The Center is headed by a director appointed by the University Council. The Centre shall be governed by a Management Committee (MC) under the chairmanship of the Vice Chancellor with representatives from the University, Council, Faculties, Centers, Units, general administration and finance. The Faculties, Centers and Units shall link with the CDCE through Boards of Study. However, the Faculties should have ultimate ownership of and authority to continue or sojourn ODL programmers on the Faculty board, senate and council recommendation.

The University Senate is responsible for approval of ODL programmes offered by the Faculties and Units of the University. Each and every ODL program shall have a Board of Studies in which all academic related matters of the relevant programme are discussed and recommended. This shall be a sub-committee of the Faculty Board. The Faculties assume primary responsibility for, through its committees, exercise oversight of ODL programmes. The Faculty ensures the rigor of ODL programmes and acts to maintain the quality of instruction. The Faculties with their committees ensure that programmes constitute coherent entities that are compatible with the university vision, faculty mission and Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF). The faculty, through ongoing assessment and evaluation, regularly updates courses and programmes, revise curricula in a five year cycle.

5. Admission, Enrolment and Registration

Admission criteria for ODL programmes shall be decided by the relevant Board of Study of a Department/Faculty/Unit in conformity with the guidelines framed by the UGC and adopted with the approval of the Senate and Council of the University.

To qualify for consideration for admission to an ODL program, applicant shall meet the normal entry qualification requirements of the programme which in line with SLQF. Applicant shall submit an application in the specimen format for the programme. CDCE shall ensure that all offer letters (decision of selection to a program) include or be accompanied by supplementary information confirming requirements regarding attendance, and any other arrangements pertaining to the programme. Applicants should ensure that they have fully understood the terms and conditions prior to accepting an offer or registration.

A comprehensive handbook which includes University by-laws, minimum entry qualifications, course contents and delivery and assessment methods shall be made available at the time of registration.

A formal induction programme may be conducted by the CDCE with the assistance of academic coordinator/s of the programme for all ODL programmes.

6. Teaching and Learning Methods

The teaching and learning method of an ODL programme shall be determined by the nature of the programme, the profile of the students, students' access to resources. The teaching and learning methods shall include face to face interaction including online modes of skype, google practical sessions, independent study of learning materials, completion of various activities, formative assessment tasks, tutorials, practical work and opportunities to interact with others.

7. Learning materials

Learning material shall be systematically designed and developed by the Faculty appointed committee/s and CDCE shall ensure that learning material shall be

accessible to target students. Learning materials could be providing manually and/or through Learning Management System (LMS). The University makes effective use of educational and social technologies in learning programmes in appropriate and innovative ways that improve the quality of teaching and learning.

8. Programme delivery and student support

Programmes shall use advanced teaching and learning models, well designed courseware, effective administration and timeout student support using a wide range of delivery channels.

9. Assessment method and procedure

Assessment method and procedures shall be designed by the faculty/ unit or department considering nature of the program and course units aligned to SLQF requirements and approved by the university senate on the recommendation of Board of Studies and Faculty Boards.

10. Regional infrastructure

The regional infrastructure shall be provided as per the requirements of the programme. These infrastructure shall provide an expanding range of services to students such as access to facilities for independent and grouped based study, discussion, library faculties, computer facilities tutors and literacy development. These facilities shall be arranged and monitored regularly by the CDCE.

11. Cost and tuition fees

Tuition fees/course fees are set annually by the relevant Faculty/Unit under the approval of University Council.

12. Quality assurance and enhancement

ODL programmes are expected to be of equal quality to any other programmes leading to a University award and, as part of the validation process.

13. Funding and budgeting

All the ODL programmes of the university shall be fee-levying and operate without adding any burden to the University. The budgets for ODL programmes which are on non-profit basis shall be approved by the Council on the recommendation of the Board of Studies and Faculty Boards.

14. Role and responsibilities of the students:

The student is responsible for making their own arrangement for minimum necessary infrastructure support to resolve failures related to facilities when student engages in learning process outside the university premises. Students may be required to be present in person in the University as required by the ODL programme.

NOTES

Date adopted : [This is the date on which the policy is formally approved]

Date commenced : [This is the date on which the policy will commence, suggest at least two weeks from date of adoption/approval]

Administrator : Director / The Center for Distance and Continuing Education/
Deans of the Faculties

Review date : [This date must be no more than 5 years from the date of commencement]

Related documents : Manual on Sri Lanka Qualification Framework

By-laws of External Degrees / Degree Programmes (Internal)