

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Centre for Online Education

1. Title

- (1) These regulations shall be called the “Mahatma Gandhi University Regulations for Online Academic Programmes, 2021”.
- (2) These regulations lay down the standards for the conduct of programmes for the grant of degrees at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the Online mode by the Centre for Online Education and shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other regulations, Notifications, Guidelines or Instructions issued by the University and the University Grants Commission.
- (3) The functioning of Centre for Online Education is primarily based on the UGC ODL and Online regulations 2020 and its amendments. For each programme of Centre for Online Education, the corresponding regulations for regular programmes of the University shall be followed generally unless otherwise stated in this regulation.

2. Scope and Application

- (1) The regulations provided herein shall apply to all academic programmes offered by the Centre for Online Education(COE), Mahatma Gandhi University .
- (2) The Syllabus/Scheme/ Regulations applicable in the regular stream of the University shall be applicable to the Online Programmes offered by the COE, unless stated otherwise.
- (3) Medium of instruction shall be English except for the language programmes and for the programmes otherwise stated therein.

3. Definitions

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires,

- (1) “Academic Calendar” means the document detailing the calendar of academic and non-academic activities during the programme duration, which should enable a learner to plan the period of study at the COE.
- (2) “Academic Core Committee” and “(ACC)” mean the committee consisting of experts (academia/ industry) representing various disciplines in which Online Programmes are offered by the COE constituted to assess and monitor the academic matters related to the programmes. The role of ACC is to recommend modifications, changes and innovative academic proposals for the Centre for Online Education.

- (3) “Academic Council” means the Academic Council of Mahatma Gandhi University, the body empowered to take decisions regarding all academic matters in the University, including decisions permitting the COE to offer Online Programmes in compliance to these regulations.
- (4) “Academic session” means the duration of twelve months either from January to December of a calendar year or from July to June of the next calendar year, as the case may be.
- (5) “Act” means the Mahatma Gandhi University Act, 1985 (12 of 1985).
- (6) “Assessment mechanism” means the precise assessment mechanism for the identified learning outcomes at each level for both continuous formative and summative assessments defined and implemented by the University.
- (7) “Assistant Director” means the Assistant Director, COE
- (8) “Centre for Internal Quality Assurance” and “(CIQA)” means a Centre established by the University as prescribed by the UGC for ensuring the quality of programmes being offered in Online mode.
- (9) “Centre for Online Education” and “COE” means the Centre for Online Education, Mahatma Gandhi University.
- (10) “Commission” means the University Grants Commission established under the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 (3 of 1956).
- (11) “Complaint Handling Mechanism” means the online complaint submission, tracking and resolution of complaints regarding programmes offered by the COE accessible to the learners enrolled for the programs offered by the COE.
- (12) “Course Coordinator” the Course Coordinator shall coordinate the development, delivery and assessments of the learners in the Course;
- (13) “Credit” means the Unit award gained by a learner with study efforts of minimum number of hours required to acquire the prescribed level of learning in respect of that Unit
(Explanation - For the purpose of this clause, a study effort for one credit means time required by a learner to understand the contents equivalent to 15 hours of teaching or 30 hours including self-learning time required to acquire the prescribed level of learning in respect of that Unit).
- (14) “Degree” means a degree specified under sub-section (3) of section 22 of the UGC Act.
- (15) “Deputy Director” means the Deputy Director, COE
- (16) “Director” means the Director, COE
- (17) “e-Learning Material” means and includes contents in the form of structured course material, as a part of one or more courses in the Online Programme, in digital format delivered through Learning Management System, which is *inter alia* self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed at the learner, and amenable to self-

- evaluation, and enables the learner to acquire the prescribed level of learning in a course of study, but does not include text-books or guide-books; as defined in these regulations.
- (18) “Examination Centre” means a place where examinations are conducted, *inter alia*, for assessment of the learners pursuing programmes under Online mode and is having the requisite infrastructure relevant to respective mode of education including adequate manpower for smooth conduct of examinations.
- (19) “Grievance Redress Mechanism” means the mechanism implemented by the University to cater to the grievances of online learners enrolled for programs offered by the COE.
- (20) “Hand Book” the document contains the evaluation strategy, components of evaluation and pass/fail criteria shall be detailed on specific programmes.
- (21) “Higher Education” means such education imparted by conventional mode or through open and distance learning mode or through online mode conducting regular classes or through Open and Distance Learning mode or through Online mode, beyond twelve years of schooling leading to the award of a degree at undergraduate or postgraduate level or Certificate or Diploma or Postgraduate Diploma.
- (22) “Learners’ Authentication Requirement” means Aadhaar number or other government recognized identifier, as applicable for Indian Nationals and Passport in the case of International learners.
- (23) “Learning Management System” means a system to keep track of delivery of e-Learning Programmes, learner’s engagement, assessment, results, reporting and other related details in one centralized location.
- (24) “Online Mode” means a mode of providing flexible learning opportunities by overcoming separation of teacher and learner using internet, e-Learning Materials and full-fledged programme delivery through the internet using technology assisted mechanism and resources.
- (25) “Proctored Examination” means the examination conducted under the supervision of approved person or technology enabled proctoring which ensures the identity of the test taker and the integrity of the test taking environment, either in pen-paper mode or in computer-based testing mode or in full-fledged Online mode; as permissible in Online mode under these regulations.
- (26) “Prospectus” includes any publication, whether in print or e-form, issued for providing fair and transparent information, relating to the COE’s programmes, to the general public (including to those seeking admission to the University) by the university or any authority or person authorized by the University to do so.
- (27) “Self-Learning e-Module for Online mode” means a modular unit of course material in e-learning form which is *inter alia* self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed at the learner, and amenable to self-evaluation, and enables the learner to

acquire the prescribed level of learning in a course of study and includes contents in the form of a combination of the following e-Learning content, namely,

- a) e-Text Materials
- b) Video Lectures
- c) Audio-Visual interactive material
- d) Virtual Classroom sessions
- e) Audio Podcasts
- f) Virtual Simulation, and
- g) Self-Assessment Quizzes or Tests

(28) "Statutes" means the Mahatma Gandhi Statutes, 1997 including the amendments thereto.

(29) "UGC Act" means the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 (3 of 1956)

(30) "University" means the Mahatma Gandhi University as defined in the Act and Statutes.

4. Equivalence of qualification acquired through Conventional and Online modes.

Degrees awarded after successful completion of study shall be treated as equivalent to the corresponding awards of the Degrees at undergraduate and postgraduate levels offered through conventional mode of the University.

5. Programmes offered by the COE

The University shall publish the details of programmes offered by the COE through its website and shall update the list as and when required.

6. Duration of the Programme

(1) The duration of UG programmes shall be 6 semesters spread over three years and that of PG programmes shall be 4 semesters spread over two years.

7. Eligibility for the award of Degree

(1) A student who has registered for a UG programme shall successfully complete the programme within a period of Six years from the date of admission to the programme to be eligible for the award of the degree.

(2) A student who has registered for a PG programme shall successfully complete the programme within a period of Four years from the date of admission to the programme to be eligible for the award of the degree.

(3) A learner not eligible for the degree as per clauses 7(1) or 7(2) above may join the programme as a fresh admission. All formalities regarding admission shall be completed afresh, including allotment of a new PRN.

8. Eligibility for Admission

(1) Eligibility criteria for admission to the full-fledged online programmes shall be the same followed for admission to the corresponding programmes offered in the conventional mode by the University.

(2) The applicants are not required to submit their Transfer Certificate and/or Migration Certificate for admission to the programmes offered by the COE. However, candidates shall be required to submit Eligibility/Equivalency Certificate for

- regularization of admission to the programme as per the norms followed for admission through the conventional mode.
- (3) For the admission of international students, a standard operating procedure developed by the University shall be followed.
 - (4) The University shall be the final authority in decisions on applications for admission to the programmes.

9. Intake of Admission to programmes

- (1) The intake to each of the programmes shall be as per the guidelines/orders issued by the UGC and the details shall be included in the prospectus for admission issued by the COE.

10. Reservation of Seats

- (1) For programmes with seat limit, reservation of seats to students shall be as per the existing rules and regulations of the University and the Government of Kerala

11. Fees

- (1) The fee for undergoing the programmes including admission fee shall be decided by the University before the commencement of each academic year for students admitted during the academic year.
- (2) The fee waiver and/or scholarship schemes for Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Persons with Disabilities and other categories of learners and students from deprived sections of society as well as Scholarships for foreign students will be in accordance with the instructions or orders issued by Central Government/State Government/University.
- (3) The University shall also prescribe the refund policy to be followed for students admitted during the academic year.
- (4) The prospectus for admission to the programmes shall include the fee structure and policies of payment and refund approved by the Syndicate for students admitted for the academic year.
- (5) All payment to the COE shall be accepted online only.
- (6) Requests for refund of fees shall be submitted to the Director, COE. Approved refunds as per the provisions for refund published in the prospectus shall be made online to the applicant.

12. Registration

- (1) Students admitted to the programmes shall be registered for undergoing the course and availing the various online-offline facilities offered by the COE. All students shall be provided with a unique and permanent register number (PRN) which shall be in conformation to the PRN implemented by the University for students registered for programmes in the conventional mode.
- (2) learner authentication - integrated with Aadhaar or other government recognised identity for Indian learners and Passport for foreign learners.
- (3) Details of National and International students admitted to each programme shall be made available in the portal.

- (4) The learner shall have a minimum participation of 75 per cent in all the activities of Online programmes prior to end semester examination in order to register for the examination. The student shall be eligible for appearing for the examination after completing 75 percent of attendance in respective semesters within the stipulated total duration of the programme as per clause 7.

13. Notional Registration

There shall be no provision for notional registration for examinations.

14. Readmission

Students shall be eligible for the award of degree only as per clause 7 of these regulations. Therefore, there shall be no provision for readmission to any semester of study.

15. Mobility across modes of study

- (1) Students shall not be permitted to change their mode of study from online to conventional.
- (2) However, in order to facilitate the students of Mahatma Gandhi University who discontinue regular studies due to gaining of employment, relocating from the place of study, or for health reasons etc may be permitted to apply for changing mode of study from conventional mode to online mode provided the syllabus and curriculum in both modes are one and the same. Such applications, received by COE shall be submitted to the academic branch for concurrence and administrative sanction for continuation of studies in online mode.

16. Academic Calendar

The COE shall publish the Academic Calendar at the beginning of each academic year.

17. Scheme and Syllabus for a programme of study

- (1) Programmes offered by the COE shall have the total credits and minimum duration same as that of the corresponding programmes in conventional mode.
- (2) The curriculum, teaching-learning scheme, end semester examination and the pass or fail criteria shall be the same as that of the corresponding conventional programmes offered by the University.

18. Online Learning

- (1) The Online Learning will have the four-quadrant approach, as per UGC (Credit Framework for online learning courses through SWAYAM) Regulations, 2016
- (2) At least 60 per cent. of e-Learning Material will be developed by the in-house faculty of the COE and remaining will be sourced from available e-resources such as Open Educational Resources (OER), SWAYAM or other source, duly approved by the statutory authorities of the University.
- (3) The Online programme delivery will be through MGU-ALEMS (Automated Learning and Evaluation Management System).
- (4) The COE will also make available printed notes to students registering for the same at the start of the Semester, on demand. Students who opt to receive printed study material should pay the cost of the printed material including postage/courier charges.
- (5) All student activities including participation in Online or virtual classes, discussions, group activities, submission of assignments, tests etc. shall be monitored continuously by the Learning Management System (LMS).

19. Learner Support Services

- (1) The COE shall provide learner support services including academic counselling and library services. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities shall be established to support blended learning.
- (2) Learner support services shall be provided through campus-wide portal and the e-learning platform and shall ensure a seamless learner-centered environment.
- (3) The learner support services shall also include
 - a) Pre-admission counselling for prospective learners to enable them to make an informed decision on joining a particular programme of study.
 - b) Support for admission related matters
 - c) Provide details on study materials available and monitor prompt delivery of learning materials (both online, e-resources and offline or print resources)
 - d) Provision for Single Window Service delivery for learners.
 - e) Online guidance facilities
 - f) An online discussion forum for learners.

20. Examination and Evaluation

- (1) The University shall conduct examinations either using technology enabled online tests with security arrangements ensuring transparency and credibility of the examinations or through Proctored Examinations and in conformity with any other norms for such examinations as may be laid down by the Commission.
- (2) The attendance of examinees shall be authenticated through biometric system as per Aadhaar details or other Government identifiers for Indian learners and Passports for International learners.
- (3) The evaluation for a course shall include two types of assessments: -
 - a) continuous or formative assessment for a maximum of 30 per cent and
 - b) summative assessment for a minimum of 70 percent in the form of end semester examination.
- (4) The end semester examination or term end examination shall be held in a subject on completion of at least 75 per cent of the programme of study stipulated for the semester or year.
- (5) A student shall have minimum participation of 75 percentage in all the activities of Online programme prior to end semester examination or term end examination for appearing for the end-semester or term-end examination of the semester.
- (6) Marks or grades obtained in continuous assessment and end semester examinations or term end examinations shall be shown separately in the grade card.
- (7) Components of Evaluation and other criteria
 - a) The evaluation strategy, components of evaluation and pass/fail criteria shall be detailed in the hand-book on specific programmes.
 - b) The curriculum, teaching-learning scheme, end semester examination and the pass or fail criteria shall be the same as that of the corresponding conventional programmes offered by the University

21. Publication of Results

- (1) The results of the Examinations shall be published by the Controller of Examinations on behalf of the university.

- (2) Mark lists/Grade Cards shall be made available to the students immediately after publication of the Results.
- (3) The credentials shall also be pushed onto the DigiLocker ID of the student after publication of the results.

22. Revaluation/ Scrutiny

The provision for revaluation/ scrutiny of answer scripts shall not be available for students enrolled for full fledged online UG/PG programmes.

23. Certification

- (1) Each award of Degree at Undergraduate and Postgraduate level for Online mode shall be assigned a unique identification number (PRN) and shall have photograph and Aadhaar number or other government recognized identifier or Passport number, as applicable, along with other relevant details as provided with the conventional degree certificate. Each degree awarded shall also be uploaded to the National Academic Depository.
- (2) University shall mention the following on the backside of each of the degrees/ certificates and mark sheets issued to the learners (for each semester certificate and at the end of the programme):
 - a) Mode of delivery.
 - b) Date of admission.
 - c) Date of completion.
 - d) Name and address of examination centre/centres.

24. Academic Core Committee

- (1) There shall be an Academic Core Committee constituted by the Vice -Chancellor to manage and monitor the activities (Academic and Non-Academic) of COE.
- (2) The following shall be the constitution of the committee
 - a) Director, COE (Convenor)
 - b) Subject Experts (academia/industry) representing various disciplines in which Online Programmes are offered.
- (3) The Vice Chancellor is entrusted to nominate the members of the Committee.

25. Grievance Redressal

The University shall adopt and operationalize the University Grants Commission (Grievance Redressal) Regulations, 2012 and institute a system of Grievance Redressal.

26. Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA)

- (1) The University shall establish a Centre for Internal Quality Assurance as per the University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020. (*see Annexure I*)

Annexure I

CENTRE FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. To ensure that the quality of programmes of study offered through Online mode are maintained at par with standards as defined for the conventional mode of teaching, in conformity with the provisions as stipulated under section 22 of UGC Act, 1956 and UGC notification on specification of degrees, 2014 as notified by the Commission and to take adequate measures for training and capacity building of its teaching and administrative staff and counsellors/ coordinators/ mentors at regular intervals, the university shall establish a Centre for Internal Quality Assurance.
2. It shall be headed by a full-time Director, being a senior academician not below the rank of an Associate Professor, preferably from the field of online education, who shall be supported by adequate number of academic and other staff.
3. Centre for Internal Quality Assurance Committee shall have the following composition, namely:-
 - i. Vice Chancellor of the University (Chairperson)
 - ii. Three senior teachers from the University Teaching Departments as members
 - iii. Head of three Departments or School of Studies offering recognized programmes in Online mode as members
 - iv. Two external experts of Online education as members
 - v. Officials from the Administration and Finance departments of the Higher Educational Institution – Members;
 - vi. Director, COE (Convenor)
 - vii. Director, Centre for Internal Quality Assurance will be the Member Secretary.
4. The members at clauses (ii) to v) shall be nominated by the Vice- Chancellor of the University.
5. The membership of such nominated members shall be for a period of two years. The members of the Centre for Internal Quality Assurance shall meet at least once in a semester. The quorum for the meeting shall be two-third of the total number of members with mandatory presence of one external expert. The agenda, minutes and Action Taken Reports are to be documented with official signatures and maintained electronically in a retrievable format.

