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Standards and Regulations of Online Learning, Open Universities and other Institutions of Tertiary Education in the Republic of South Sudan

Presented by

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***Workshop: Drafting a Regulatory Framework for Online Higher
Education Programmes***

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AUW Ahfad
University
for Women
جامعة الأحفاد للنساء



National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)

The Committee for Standards and Regulations of Online and Open Learning in Tertiary Institutions in the Republic of South Sudan.

Composition

Dr. Lado Wani Kenyi –Chairperson

Mr. Manyok Chol David –Secretary

Prof. Gyavera Taban Wani -Member

Assist.Prof. Yak Ater –Member

Mr. Lukudu David -Member

- ✓ Accessible quality, relevant, inclusive education, training and research for prosperous, productive and innovative nation.



- ✓ To ensure that Higher Education Institutions meet the knowledge, competencies, skills, quality, innovation and creativity required to nurture South Sudanese values, promote peaceful coexistence among ethnicities and enable sustainable development.



Objectives

- ✓ Accessible ,quality, relevant and inclusive education.
- ✓ Distant and Online learning using technology
- ✓ Solicit funding to develop and manage higher education institutions;
- ✓ Breaking barriers to education



Purpose



To promote the vision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, to transform the higher education system, continuously formulating transformative policies and strategic plans that best suit the needs of institutions of higher learning in accordance with [South Sudan's Transformative Agenda 2015-2025](#) emanated from the [National Vision 2040](#).



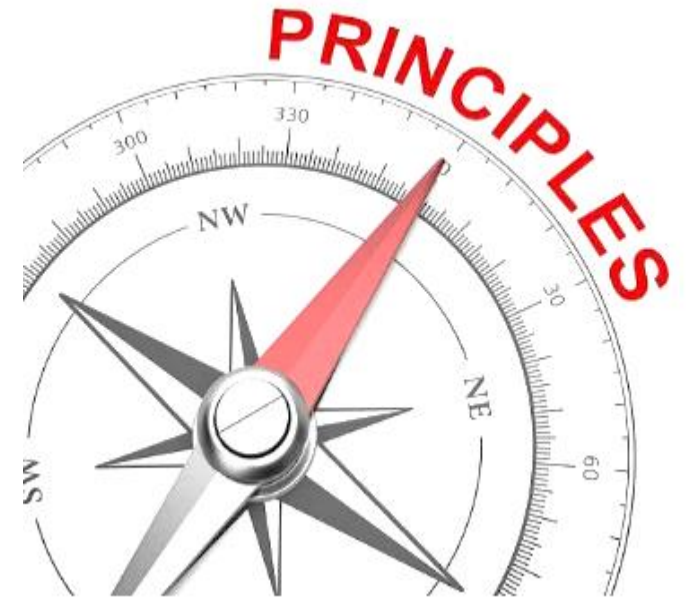
Rationale

- ✓ The need for inclusive access to education for all South Sudanese
- ✓ Increasing cost for traditional education system
- ✓ The learning method is under-utilized in South Sudan.
- ✓ The concept has not deeply taken root in the country.
- ✓ the increasing need for technology-driven learning.



Guiding principles

- ✓ Quality education
- ✓ Equal access to education for all South Sudanese
- ✓ Technology-oriented learning

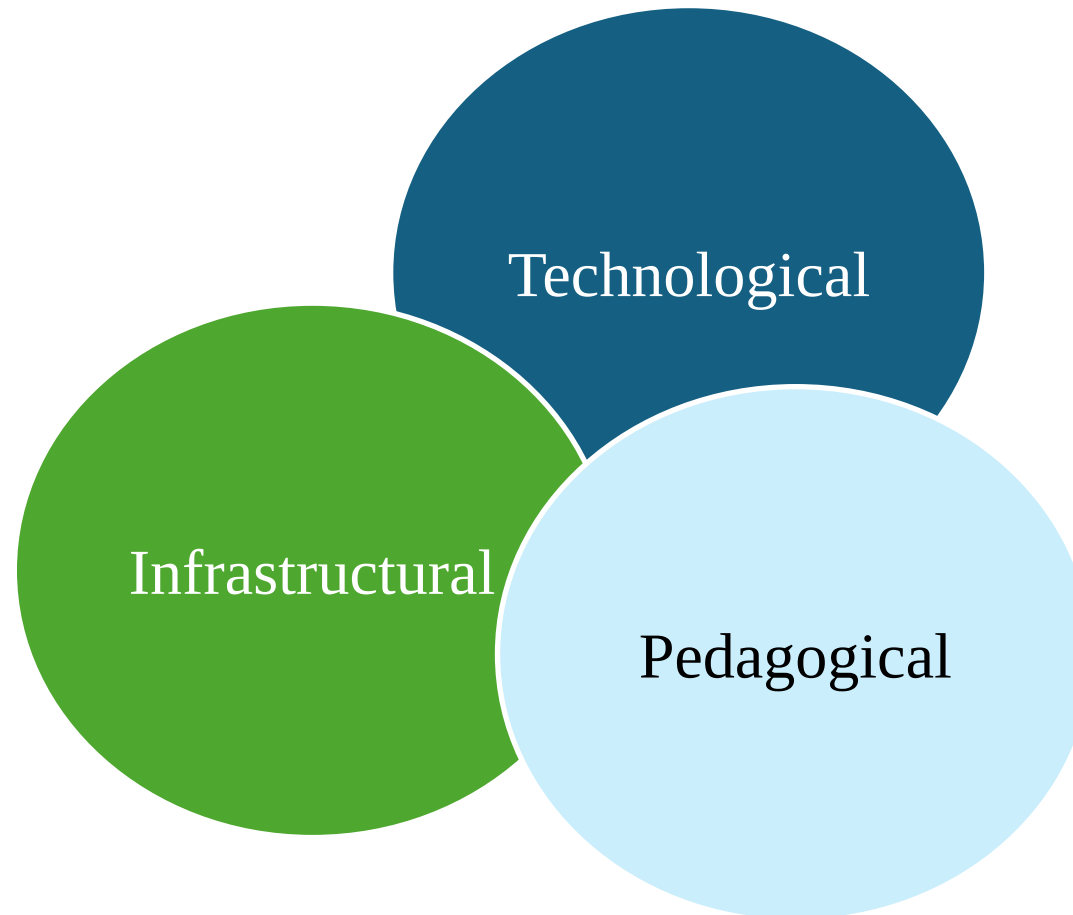


Core values

- ✓ Quality education, equal access to technology-oriented education
- ✓ Strive for academic research, community services and excellence;
- ✓ Promote good corporate culture;
- ✓ Enhance professionalism and integrity in service delivery;
- ✓ Improve clients' and stakeholders' relations;
- ✓ Teamwork and respect for partnerships;
- ✓ Endeavour for creativity and innovation;
- ✓ Build and integrated a peaceful society; promote merit-based access to higher education.



✓ **Standards** used for online and Open Learning modes of education.



Background and Context

- ✓ Online and Open Learning enable learners to learn anywhere, when, how and what they want/need, (Cunningham, 1987) it is a philosophy of **education of 'choice', 'flexibility' and 'access'** (Holdberg, 1989).
- ✓ This mode of learning is not new in South Sudan. It was tried during the Covid-19 pandemic (University of Juba) /home-based learning.
- ✓ South Sudan has limited internet connectivity especially in the rural areas and this is a challenge to online learning, *but there is a hope!*

- ✓ **The World Bank Project : Eastern Africa Regional Digital Integration Project (EARDIP).**
- ✓ Operating under **Project code P176181** with a **\$60 million**
- ✓ will increase internet access across South Sudan and
- ✓ this will support access to online education

- ✓ **Faculty development:** staff training: pedagogical skills , technological skills, online platforms, using interactive learning tools, and online assessment techniques;
- ✓ **Infrastructure development:** Investment and expansion of internet connectivity to the rural areas, to ensure equitable access to Online learning platforms
- ✓ **Content Development:** Creation of high-quality, culturally relevant online educational content in both English and local languages
- ✓ **Open Educational Resources (OERs):** Promotion of the development and utilization of OERs to provide free and accessible educational materials for learners e.g. [Junub Open Space](#), [#ASKnet](#)

- ✓ **Collaboration:** Partnership with other universities in South Sudan and abroad to develop and deliver online programmes and professional courses;
- ✓ **Leverage International Expertise:** Work with international organizations and Non-governmental Organizations to access expertise and resources in regard to Online and distance education
- ✓ **Accountability and Compliance:** All the institutions that are offering online and Open Learning modes of education shall adhere to the learning standards defined by the NCHE Committee for the Standards and Regulations of Online Learning and Open Learning in the Republic of South Sudan

- ✓ **Ministry:** Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology shall receive reports from;
- ✓ **NCHE Committee for the Standards and Regulations of Online and Open Learning** : which will evaluate institutions offering online programmes and submit the report to the Ministry for further actions.
- ✓ **Online and Open Learning Institutions:** to adhere to online and open education standards and provide the committee with accurate information of their programmes

- ✓ **Accreditation:** The NCHE Committee for the Standards and Regulations of Online and Open Learning, shall evaluate and accredit online and open learning programmes to institutions based on success criteria
- ✓ **Regulator:** The NCHE Committee for the Standards and Regulations of Online and Open Learning, shall be the sole regulator of online programmes.
- ✓ **Digital Divide:** In the event of unavailable internet services, a blend approach shall be adopted until the restoration of internet access.
- ✓ **Data privacy :** Personal data should not be disclosed without permission
- ✓ **Intellectual property and Rights:** Institutions should avoid plagiarism, respect copyrights of the learning materials
- ✓ **Artificial Intelligence:** AI to be used for social goods and for learning only

Policy Implementation

- ✓ The Committee shall assess infrastructure, teaching methods , learning materials, online platforms before accreditation of online programmes
- ✓ Admission requirements shall be based on the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology general admission and private criteria
- ✓ Institutions offering online and open learning must provide online application provision to applicants
- ✓ Institutions must have provisions for self-evaluations for students, digital libraries, and optionally partner with Digital Africa Library or others.
- ✓ New online programs shall be approved by NCHE/MOHEST

NCHE Committee for the Standards and Regulations of Online and Open Learning shall regularly assess the effectiveness of the online learning programs, looking at :

- ✓ Quality
- ✓ Relevance
- ✓ Learning materials
- ✓ Learning platforms
- ✓ Curricula
- ✓ Performance (Staff competency)

- ✓ **NCHE Committee for the Standards and Regulations of Online and Open-Learning** shall establish a **Centre for Internal Quality Assurance**: to ensure that the online programmes being offered are of acceptable quality and standards

Regulatory frameworks

Comparative analysis of the regulations in different countries (East Africa Community)

Online Regulatory Framework In Kenya



- ✓ In Kenya , online learning is governed by **ICT in Education and Training Policy** and **institution-specific Open, Distance, and e-Learning (ODEL) policies**. In addition, **national acts** also contributed to its governance.
- ✓ These frameworks mandate standards for digital infrastructure, data privacy, and e-content development to support digital literacy across all learning levels.

Online Regulatory Framework In Kenya



ICT in Education Policy 2021:

- ✓ Developed by the Ministry of Education
- ✓ It sets standards for digital curriculum delivery, remote learning continuation, capacity building for educators, and infrastructure across basic and higher education
- ✓ **Key components:** legal and policy context, policy provision in education, governance, resources and partnership, institutional framework, monitoring and evaluation and implementation guidelines.

Online Regulatory Framework In Kenya

National ICT Policy Guidelines 2020:

- ✓ Overseen by the **Communications Authority of Kenya**, this framework ensures local system development, data sovereignty (storing Kenyan citizen data locally), and secure network infrastructure.



Online Regulatory Framework In Kenya

Technical Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA)



- ✓ Has developed open distance and Learning (ODEL) requirements and guidelines for online learning.
- ✓ **Key components;** Governance, curriculum, infrastructure, staffing, technologies, intellectual property and copyrights, students, learning materials, platforms, monitoring and evaluation.

Online Regulatory Framework In Kenya



- ✓ The **Commission for University Education (CUE)** and the **Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)** regulate the accreditation of online degrees and the digitization of educational contents.
- ✓ **Data Protection Act, 2019** : The e-learning platforms must strictly safeguard the privacy of students' and educators' digital information.

Online Regulatory Framework In Uganda



- ✓ The main regulator for online learning is the Ministry of Education and Sport.
- ✓ It has developed “**digital education standards and guidelines for the education and sports sector**”
- ✓ **Key components:** management and governance, infrastructure and systems, pedagogy , content development, training and development,

Online Regulatory Framework In Uganda



- ✓ In addition, NCHE has developed “**minimum standards for open distance and e- learning programmes**” (ODEL)
- ✓ **Key components:** need assessment, accreditation requirements, governance and management, financial resources, human resource, infrastructures and facilities, course design and materials, delivery and learners support.
- ✓ Some public institutions e.g. Makerere University has “**open and distance learning policy**”.

Online Regulatory Framework In Rwanda



- ✓ In Rwanda, online learning is regulated by the Ministry of Education (MINDUC) and supervised by National Education Council (NEC).
- ✓ The framework is called “[standards and guidelines for open and distance learning](#)”.
- ✓ **Key components:** provider , governance and administration, regional centers, collaboration, mode of delivery, material, curriculum, staff and support, student support, admission requirements, examinations requirements, evaluation and assessment, evaluation,

Online learning Regulatory Framework In Rwanda

- ✓ The **National Education Council** (NEC) has also drafted “guidelines and assessment tools for the virtual learning and the use of artificial intelligence in higher institution of learning”
- ✓ **Key components:** Effective use of AI, infrastructure and digital ecosystem, Curricula development, staff capacity building and student AI literacy



Online learning Regulatory Framework In Tanzania

Online learning is governed by three bodies

- ✓ The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)
- ✓ National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET)
- ✓ Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- ✓ Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority



Online learning Regulatory Framework In Tanzania

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)

- ✓ This commission has developed “**guidelines for online and blended delivery modes of courses for university institutions**”.
- ✓ **Key components:** delivery mode, teaching and facilitation, learning resources, human resource, technology, assessment methods, staff/student support, monitoring and evaluation



Online learning Regulatory Framework In Tanzania

National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET)



- ✓ It has developed “[guidelines for accreditation of online programmes offered by TVET institutions](#)”.
- ✓ This document define minimum standards and guidelines for online TVET, to maintain digital quality, mechanisms and program accreditation
- ✓ **Key components:** Programmes accreditation, institutional arrangement, quality assurance, accreditation procures, reviews

Online learning Regulatory Framework In Burundi

- ✓ Burundi does not have an online learning regulatory framework, however, it relies on the **digital governance policies** from the **Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research**.
- ✓ This ministry govern the digital data after validating data governance strategy in November 2025
- ✓ This strategy is support online learning



Online learning Regulatory Framework In DRC

- ✓ Like Burundi, The [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) has no formal regulatory framework for online learning.
- ✓ It relies on “**DRC Digital Code**” a document that define license rules for digital platforms
- ✓ The country has also adopted digital education policy (March 2026) for certain digital services



Online learning Regulatory Framework In Somalia

- ✓ The **Federal Republic of Somalia** regulates online learning through its **Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE)**
- ✓ The Ministry approves alternative learning platforms
- ✓ **Somalia National Qualification Framework** defines several modalities for online learning
- ✓ Due to limited internet access, online learning is still untapped technique.



Useful links

Kenya

<https://www.education.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-01/ICT%20IN%20EDUCATION%20AND%20TRAINING%20POLICY%202021.pdf>

<https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/CA/Statutes%20and%20Regulations/National-ICT-Policy-Guidelines-2020.pdf>

Uganda

<https://www.education.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Standards-for-Digital-Learning-Draft1.pdf>

Rwanda

https://www.hec.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/hec/publications/guidelines/standards_and_guidelines_for_open_and_distance_learning.pdf

Useful links

https://www.hec.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/HEC/Publications/Guidelines/GUIDELINES_ASSESSMENT_TOOLS_FOR_VL_and_AI_in_HLIs.pdf

Tanzania

https://tcu.go.tz/sites/default/files/file_uploads/2024-01/No.%2001%28d%29GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ONLINE%20AND%20BLENDED%20DELIVERY%20MODES%20OF%20COURSES%20FOR%20UNIVERSITY%20INSTITUTIONS%20IN%20TANZANIA.pdf

<https://www.nactvet.go.tz/storage/public/files/GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ACCREDITATION%20OF%20ONLINE%20PROGRAMMES%20OFFERED%20BY%20TVET%20INSTITUTIONS.pdf>

Burundi

[Burundi Validates National Data Governance Strategy | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa](#)

Useful links

Democratic Republic of Congo

<https://bankable.africa/en/digital/1803-2593-dr-congo-defines-licensing-rules-for-digital-platforms-and-services>