



Curriculum Development and Review Policy

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Revision history:

Approved by: Academic Senate

1. Introduction

The Maldives National University's (MNU) strategic vision is to '*perform and be acknowledged as the outstanding academic institution of the nation and one of the finest in the region.*' In pursuing the aforementioned vision, courses offered by the University shall be designed, wherever possible, with a strong focus on promoting a student-centred teaching and learning environment. All courses should promote the development of MNU graduate attributes that will contribute to the social and economic advancement of the Maldives and beyond.

2. Purpose

The overarching purpose of the **Curriculum Development and Review Policy** is to set out the key principles for the design, approval and review of courses to ensure a high-quality educational experience at the University.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the development and review of all MNQF level courses at the University.

4. Definitions

Annual review: The process of continuous assessment of the course, conducted annually to ensure course materials are properly updated and delivered using appropriate pedagogical approaches. The results of these reviews should be reported to the Faculty Curriculum Committee and Committee on Courses.

Assessment: Evidence of actual learning outcomes and capabilities achieved by the student. Assessment methods can be both formative and summative and are designed to ensure progress in all learning outcomes that can be demonstrated and verified.

Constructive alignment: An approach to learning design where the intended learning outcomes are clearly identified, and the alignment between the said intended learning outcomes, assessments and the learning and teaching activities are ensured (Biggs, 2014).

Course leader: An academic staff member assigned with the responsibility to directly design and oversee the development and implementation of the curriculum along with monitoring its instruction and assessment practices.

Curriculum: A formal plan for the learning experiences of students in pursuit of an academic qualification. It includes:

- goals/outcomes and objectives for student learning (*skills, knowledge and attitudes*);
- content and sequence (*the subject matter in which learning experiences are embedded and the order in which concepts are presented*);
- instructional methods and activities including the instructional resources along with plan for adjustments to teaching and learning processes, based on experience and evaluation (*materials and settings*); and
- evaluation (*the formal and informal methods that students' learning from these experiences are assessed*).

In this document, the word curriculum is used interchangeably with course.

Curriculum alignment: The degree to which the components of a curriculum, such as the learning outcomes, teaching and learning experiences and assessments work in harmony to achieve the desired goals of the curriculum. A stronger curriculum alignment between the formal curriculum and the enacted curriculum provides students with appropriate and sufficient opportunities to achieve learning objectives increasing the educational accountability of the curriculum.

Curriculum design: The identification of the overall structure and framework of the curriculum, including course learning outcomes, the organisation of the core content, and the overall approach to implementing the curriculum. The curriculum design is heavily influenced by the philosophical approach to the curriculum, that is often informed by the nature of the discipline and the learner.

Curriculum development: the planning, implementation and the evaluation processes of the curriculum as informed by the design of the curriculum.

Digital environment: An integration of digital tools and technologies to promote teaching and learning communication and collaboration

Faculty: Institutes, centres, schools or other academic units within the University with a major responsibility for teaching students.

Inclusive learning and teaching: Inclusive teaching and learning encompass the mechanisms established to ensure an equitable and accessible learning environment across the university, where all students have the opportunity to a learning experience that respects diversity, enables participation, removes barriers and anticipates and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences.

Learning outcomes: The learning outcomes are the areas of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attributes students are expected to achieve as a result of engagement with the content of a subject course/program leading to a qualification.

Learning technology: Technologies used to support teaching and learning.

Periodic review: Formal assessment conducted in a determined frequency (as per the procedures mandated by both MNU's Course Review Manual and MQA's Programme Accreditation Guideline), often involving major change that significantly affects the course learning outcomes, structure, organisation or delivery of a course or the basis for its accreditation.

Reviews: The formal systematic and consistent evaluation of courses with the intention of monitoring, providing feedback and analysis.

Student-centred learning: Student-centred learning is an *educational philosophy* or approach to learning that places students' needs and interests at the forefront of the operations and decision-making. The focus is to make students co-creators of their own education and to engage them in decisions about what, when, and how they learn.

Subject coordinator: An academic staff member assigned with the responsibility for the coordination of a subject.

Subject outline: A description of the subject that students, institutions and others can consult to determine the pre-requisites, subject content, learning outcomes, assessment and resources.

University: The Maldives National University (MNU).

5. Principles

Course design, development and review will be guided by the following key principles.

- 5.1 It is **responsive** to the discipline / field, to the students' learning needs, and to the social context, taking into account our position as a public university in the Maldives. Such approaches to curriculum development and review should be relevant, up-to-date, and address the national development needs.
- 5.2 It is **inclusive** whereby the curricula are sensitive to the different backgrounds and outlooks of those engaged in the teaching and learning processes.
- 5.3 The process ensures a **student-centred approach to the teaching and learning** in the implementation of the curriculum that is aligned with the University's policies.
- 5.4 It considers the effective use of **learning technologies and the digital environment** to assist students to achieve the learning outcomes.
- 5.5 It adopts the **constructive alignment** framework to design the learning and teaching activities that optimise the chances of students achieving the course learning

outcomes, and to design assessment tasks that enable clear judgments on how well those outcomes have been attained.

- 5.6 It will ensure that the students can **progressively attain the learning outcomes**, which include cognitive, general and professional practices and skills of a discipline/field. These should be in line with the MNU Graduate Attributes as well as MQA requirements and MNQF level descriptors.
- 5.7 It will **collaborate and consult with key stakeholders**. Stakeholders should include current and past students, academics, and professional bodies and, where appropriate, employers in both the private and public sectors.
- 5.8 The **curriculum reviewing processes** should be part of a curriculum plan in order to accommodate new ideas and knowledge in disciplines/fields assuring the quality of the courses offered at the University. Such changes should also be informed by the legitimate learning needs of particular cohorts of students and consider the affordances of digital technologies for enhancing learning and teaching.
- 5.9 It will be in **compliance** with local, international, and other Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB).

6. Curriculum Design and Development Standards

All curriculum design and development should abide by the following standards:

- 6.1. The courses are developed and revised in alignment with the University's strategic, academic and operational plans subject to the availability of resources.
- 6.2. The courses comply with the requirements of the Maldives National Qualifications Framework (MNQF).
- 6.3. All the courses be approved by the obligatory MNU bodies, MQA and the relevant PSRBs before its implementation.
- 6.4. Each Faculty adheres to the standards set forth by the Course Design and Development Manual approved by the Academic Senate.
- 6.5. The courses adhere to the course nomenclature and classification guidelines set by the Academic Senate.
- 6.6. All courses are designed using *constructive alignment* as a teaching principle. All courses have clearly defined learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities, assessment plans (summative and formative), and the related rubrics or guides used for scoring as per the course specification template.
- 6.7. The development of courses is led by an appointed *Course Leader* who engages stakeholders in the content, design and the teaching and learning strategies.
- 6.8. All courses incorporate opportunities for flexible learning, experiential learning, self-regulated learning, inquiry-based learning and critical thinking related to the field.
- 6.9. Learning activities are designed to support the development of the MNU Graduate Attributes.

- 6.10. In defining the level of the qualification and the intended learning outcomes, all courses shall meet the requirements of institutional and national academic standards, and where appropriate the expectations of the international quality assurance agencies as well as the requirements of PSRBs and employers.
- 6.11. Assessment of learning outcomes in courses conform to the University's *Assessment Policy*.
- 6.12. The process of the University course development adheres to the relevant copyright laws.

7. Monitoring and Review Standards

The monitoring and review of curriculum should abide by the following standards:

- 7.1. Practice systematic and regular review of curriculum, teaching and learning.
- 7.2. Undergo an annual review and periodic reviews per the Curriculum Review Manual approved by the Academic Senate.
- 7.3. Records relating to the structure and design of the courses, including approved variations, and reviews must be maintained and communicated with the relevant university bodies.

8. Quality Assurance of Curriculum Development and Review

The quality of MNU's courses is assured through the:

- 8.1 academic course approval process;
- 8.2 periodic academic quality assurance process;
- 8.3 comprehensive cyclical review of courses; and
- 8.4 regular student feedback and student evaluation.

9. Roles and responsibilities

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Deans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate and appoint a Course Leader for the course development process ensuring course documentations are developed as per the University and MQA guidelines • Initiate and appoint a staff for the course review processes ensuring course review documentations are prepared and course documentations are revised as per the University and MQA guidelines. • Offer leadership and facilitate Faculty committee level deliberations on the course development processes as well as the review processes. • Validate all course documentations that are sent for approval/accreditation and for publishing, ensuring they are up-to-date and as per the University's standards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and ensure the quality assurance in the design, development and review of the curriculum across the Faculty, and maintain records of up-to-date course documentations.
Heads of Departments (HoD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and guide course leaders, subject coordinators/developers and other relevant department staff in relation to course design, development, implementation and review. Supervise, monitor and support the design and the development of courses ensuring all due processes are followed and records are maintained. Supervise, monitor and support the review of courses ensuring all due processes are followed and records are maintained.
Course leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the course development process and prepare course documents for approval. Present the course documentations at the relevant committees at various stages of its development.
Course reviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the course review process and prepare course documents for approval. Present the course documentations at the relevant committees at various stages of course review.
Subject coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and facilitate the course review processes by coordinating the collection of relevant data to review the teaching content, learning and assessment of the subject. Provide to the HoD, the subject review information and revise the subject outlines as per the University procedures and maintaining records accordingly.
Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information, advice and consultation on the need to develop the course and their relevance to the University's strategic plans, as per the committee ToRs. Provide advice and consultation on the curriculum reviews, as per the committee ToRs.
Faculty Curriculum Committee (FCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and support faculty in the design, development and review of courses and subjects ensuring all due process is followed. At the Faculty endorse and approve course approval documents as per the committee ToR, University standards and in compliance with the Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRB).

Policy and Quality Control Unit (PQCU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and oversee the quality assurance activities related to course design, development and review. • Gather data on course implementation processes and provide feedback to the Faculties advising areas of improvement. • Support the Faculties in the monitoring of the curriculum design, delivery and review during each cycle of the course ensuring high standards, transparency and quality of the process is maintained.
Faculty Quality Management Committee (FQMC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate new courses and monitor any changes to academic courses as per committee ToR • Monitor reviews of courses and manage outcomes of the review as per committee ToR
Committee on Courses (CoC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support, advise and approve course related and subject related proposals ensuring adherence to the University course development process and ensure compliance with relevant PSRBs, as per committee ToR. • Support, advise and approve course related and subject related review documentations and ensure compliance with relevant PSRBs, as per committee ToR.
Academic Senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve course proposal and significant amendments to existing courses ensuring their relevance and viability at the University and in compliance with the PSRBs. • Develop, amend and endorse guidelines for course development and review • Endorse the course implementation following MQA approval

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies (*For example, Assessment Policy, Graduate Attributes Policy and Teaching and Learning Policy*).

Adapted from the University of Vanderbilt, the Queensland University, University of Wollongong (UWO) and Rhodes University, *Course Development Policies and UOW Standards and Quality Framework for Learning and Teaching*.

<https://www.psu.edu.sa/en/TL0001-curriculum-review-and-development-policy>

https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/chertl/document/Curriculum_Policy_2016.pdf