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THE MALDIVES NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Academic and Pastoral Support Policy

1. Introduction

The Maldives National University (MNU) is committed to providing students with effective academic and pastoral support to facilitate their academic journey paying attention to their well-being.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that students have access to a support mechanism that builds on best practices, meets the needs of students, and is of quality and consistency. The mechanism, consisting of faculty-level support and central-level support, is designed to provide consistent quality provisions, while also helping students to monitor their progress and performance more systematically and directing students' mindset to longer-term aspirations.

2. Definition of Terms

Academic support:	refers to support and help that is provided by the University to ensure the academic success of the students.
Course(s):	Refers to all short-term and long-term academic programmes delivered through all modalities.
Faculty:	Institutes, centres, schools or other academic units with major responsibility for teaching students.
Pastoral Support	refers to support and help that is provided by the University to ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of the students.
Student:	A person who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled
University:	The Maldives National University (MNU)

3. Statement of Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to:

1. Provide an inclusive system of Academic and Pastoral Support to all students in the MNU community.
2. Ensure students needing assistance are identified and the relevant support provided.
3. Support students by guiding them and facilitating two-way communication.
4. Respect the individuality of all students while building a sense of belonging and security.
5. Provide support that facilitates students to make their own decisions and accept responsibility for their actions.
6. Facilitate a teaching and learning environment of care and compassion.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students of MNU.

5. Policy Implementation

The Academic and Pastoral Support Policy will be overseen by the Vice-Chancellor, while the implementation of this policy is a shared responsibility of all Staff, Student Support Services and the student.

6. Key Principles Underpinning the Policy

The following are the key principles:

1. The MNU provides in partnership with students, **a safe, secure, supportive and happy environment** to all its students where students can thrive both mentally and physically.
2. The MNU **encourages the development** of considerate, and confident, independent and resilient adults to empower all students at MNU.
3. The MNU **accepts and celebrates the individuality** of all students
4. The MNU **upholds the confidentiality** of student affairs and they are supported with dignity and respect.
5. The MNU **ensures there is an early-support mechanism** for students requiring additional support and guidance.

7. The Support System

7.1 The Faculty-level

1. There must be a readily accessible, student-facing office as the primary point of contact for students seeking advice and information. This office ensures that students' enquiries or requests are dealt promptly, courteously and, where necessary, students are directed to the appropriate member of staff or source of information.

2. Batch Coordinator (BC) is the focal point of academic and pastoral support for all students. This is a member of the teaching staff who provides a readily accessible, primary point of contact for academic guidance and pastoral support, to help students reflect on their academic progress and get the most out of their studies.
3. Heads of Departments will ensure that the Academic and Pastoral Support system is operating effectively and consistently.
4. The Student Wings of each Faculty will advise on the wider network of student support services at the University to help students have the best possible experience during their studies.
5. *Meeting requirement* :Batch coordinator are expected to hold meetings with students individually and in groups providing necessary guidance, advice and support. It is recommended to
 - *meet the whole batch twice a term*
 - *meet individual students at least once a term*
 - *offer weekly scheduled consultation time*
6. *Monitoring and Review*
Faculties must have in place an effective mechanism for the monitoring and review of Academic and Pastoral Support

7.2 The Central Level - The Student Support Service (SSS)

1. There must be a readily accessible, student-facing student support office that is accessible to all students. This office must ensure that students' enquiries or requests are dealt with promptly and courteously and, where necessary, students are directed to the appropriate member of staff or source of information.
2. The SSS, headed by the Dean of Students, offers a wide range of student support, in academic and pastoral care to all students at MNU. These services and complement those provided by the Faculties and Campuses. Students can seek support in person, via email or by phone.

8. Limits of Pastoral Support Responsibilities

While BCs and other academic and administrative staff have a responsibility for supporting students, they are not expected to provide specialist pastoral care and should not attempt to do so. Consequently, in cases where a student appears to be experiencing severe distress (e.g., serious physical or mental health problems), should be guided to seek appropriate professional help.

Confidentiality

student information must be dealt with confidentiality by all staff

Relevant guidelines and policies

- Student Code of Conduct and Appeals Process
- Student Voice Policy
- Students with Disability Policy
- Student Panel
- Student Feedback Panel

9. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff and Students

Role	Responsibility
Course/ Batch Coordinator (BC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow the guideline on roles and responsibilities of Batch coordinator• In addition:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ liaise with Student Support Services;○ regularly meet with students as specified in this policy;○ respond promptly to a request for contact or support from a student and to provide an alternative point of contact when unavailable;○ Maintain appropriate forms of records;○ provide references for students;
Student Union Wings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide and assist students to follow this policy.• to ensure the BC and/or Student Support Services is made aware of any student who may be in need of support;
Head of Department (HOD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• advise BCs and SU Wings when they are seeking advice on student-support issues;• deal promptly and effectively with concerns raised by BCs;• seek regular interactions with student representatives;• engage in strategic discussions about student support structures and processes at Faculty or University fora and networks, as necessary;• assist the Head of Faculties/Schools/Centres and Campuses in interpreting student feedback
Dean/ Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• guide, HOD's BCs and SU Wings when they are seeking advice on student-support issues;• attend promptly and effectively to concerns raised by BCs and students;• seek regular interactions with student representatives;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage all staff and students in strategic discussions about student support structures and processes at Faculty or University fora and networks, as necessary;
Student Support Services (SSS) and the Dean of Students (DoS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> help and guide the students from the faculties needing additional academic and pastoral support advise and guide international students on immigration issues, academic and pastoral support
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> familiarise with the Academic and Pastoral Support provided at MNU and proactively seek assistance when required.

10. Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically to ensure adequacy and relevance to all University services. The Policy shall be reviewed every five years or more frequently if the need arises.

Academic Senate Approval Date:	5th March 2023
Policy Effective Date:	5th March 2023
Revision History:	First Version: xxxxx