

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG



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OF
JOHANNESBURG

**POLICY ON
LEARNING RESOURCES**

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

UJ Documents (policies, regulations, guidelines, contracts)	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UJ Vision, Mission and Value Statement • Policy on assessment • Guiding Principles: Programme Design • Language Policy • Policy on Work-integrated Learning and Service Learning • Policy on Teaching and Learning • Policy on Quality Management • Academic Programme Policy • Skills Development Policy • UJ Code of Academic and Research Ethics: March 2005 • UJ Guidelines on Programme Review • UJ Academic Regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (Act 58 of 1995) • Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) • CHE: HEQC Improving teaching and learning resource • CHE: HEQC Criteria for programme accreditation: November 2004 • Copyright Act (Act 98 of 1978) • DALRO Guidelines • CHE Criteria for Institutional Audits: November 2004
Stakeholders affected by this document (units and divisions who should be familiar with it)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Administration: Registrar • Executive Deans and Vice-Deans • Heads: Academic Departments • Lecturers (part time and full time) • Academic development and support units • SRC • Unit for Quality Promotion

CONTENTS

1.	FOREWORD	1
2.	PURPOSES OF THE POLICY	1
3.	SCOPE	1
4.	DEFINITIONS	2
5.	PRINCIPLES	3
6.	MANDATORY LEARNING RESOURCES	4
7.	LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIALS	5
8.	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES	6
9.	QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES	6
10.	PLAGIARISM AND COPYRIGHT	6
11.	LANGUAGE	6
12.	POLICY REVIEW	7

LEARNING RESOURCES

1. FOREWORD

The University of Johannesburg provides a wide range of academic programmes, from formative and professional to vocation-focused programmes that address national and regional imperatives, support transformation of the higher education system and advance freedom, democracy, equality and human dignity.

The University's strong commitment to global excellence in teaching and learning is implicit in its vision and mission statements: "An international university of choice, anchored in Africa, dynamically shaping the future" and: "Inspiring the community to transform and serve humanity through innovation and the collaborative pursuit of knowledge". Central to this sustained excellence is the quality of the programmes offered, programmes that pursue academic excellence, have international recognition as well as national legitimacy, credibility and well understood academic, professional and career-orientated outcomes. This programme quality is underpinned by the UJ Teaching and Learning philosophy, 'learning to be', as spelled out in the UJ Teaching and Learning Policy.

To support the envisaged quality of learning, it is crucial that students have ready access to a wide variety of learning resources, both virtual and in paper form, which may include textbooks, e-books, research publications, multimedia, databases and other electronic resources, as well as the learning guides that provide essential information for each module. This Policy informs the proper provision of such learning resources and is applicable in all programmes across all campuses and Faculties.

2. PURPOSES OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1 Establish guidelines for the development, use and distribution of learning resources that support learning as taking place both in and outside of scheduled classes;
- 2.2 Ensure coherence within the holistic learning experience of our students through the proper alignment of learning resources with the purpose, outcomes, learning strategy and assessment criteria of the academic programme/modules concerned, in accordance with the Academic Programme Policy.
- 2.3 Create awareness of the responsible use of the array of available learning resources, including online resources now readily available.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 The Learning Resources Policy applies to all learning resources developed and implemented in the University in respect of principles, processes and practices.
- 3.2 This policy similarly applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate whole and

Continuing Education Programmes.

4. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Table 1: Definitions

Term	Definition
Qualification	The formal recognition and certification of learning achievement awarded by an accredited institution.
Academic programme	A purposeful and structured set of learning experiences (i.e. the teaching, learning and assessment activities) that lead to a qualification (degree, diploma or certificate).
Assessment criteria	A description of the standard, derived directly from the learning outcomes that students must achieve. Criteria are the clear and transparent expression of requirements against which performance is assessed.
Copyright	The right of intellectual property, which allows the author or owner of a literary or musical work to obtain, for a limited time, the exclusive right to produce, distribute, perform, display, or license the work. The owner also receives the exclusive right to produce or license the production of derivatives of his/her work.
Epistemological access	"... access to the knowledge that universities distribute" (Morrow, 2007), as opposed to merely physical access to the university. Epistemological access presupposes teaching that makes academic practices and underlying knowledge systems and values explicit, as well as the linguistic discourse used to represent those values
Learning outcome	The contextually demonstrated end-product/result of the learning process.
Learning resources	All resources, including learning guides, that contribute to student learning and to students achieving the learning outcomes of the specific module. Learning resources may be in hard or soft format, they may be prescribed or recommended by the lecturer, or students may find and use them independently. The source and authorship of all learning resources must always be fully acknowledged.

Learning unit	A smaller component of a module consisting of learning activities linked to a single outcome or set of related outcomes. A combination of related learning units forms a module.
Module	A predetermined unit of teaching and learning (building block) within a programme with an institutionally determined credit value and duration.
Plagiarism	Passing off ideas, however expressed, including in the form of phrases, words, images, artefacts, sounds, or other intellectual or artistic outputs, as one's own when they are not one's own; <i>or</i> such passing off, as an original contribution, of ideas that are one's own but have been expressed on a previous occasion for assessment by any academic institution or in any published form, without acknowledgement of the previous expression.
University	University of Johannesburg

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 Teaching staff are encouraged to use a wide variety of learning resources, in order to accommodate different approaches to learning and to promote active student engagement with materials.
- 5.2 All learning resources are required to be reliable and relevant, and to be updated regularly.
- 5.3 In line with the University's ICT strategy, teaching staff are encouraged to draw on open access materials and to prescribe e-books, if available or procure if required, always subject to considerations of quality. The use of open access materials must be used in a responsible manner.
- 5.4 All learning resources are to be available to all students, to ensure ubiquitous access to learning.
- 5.5 Teaching staff are responsible for the quality of learning resources used in specific modules and programmes.
- 5.6 The development and/or selection of learning resources is based on current research into successful teaching and learning practices.
- 5.7 Evaluation of the quality of learning resources takes place regularly, and is also included in programme and module reviews.
- 5.8 A selection of professional development opportunities are available to enable academic employees to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills regarding the development, use and distribution of learning resources.
- 5.9 The Policy distinguishes between learning guides, which are compulsory; flexible learning support materials, which are recommended and which can assist the epistemological access of entrants to higher education; and additional learning

resources.

5.10 Learning resources developed by UJ staff in the course of their employment remain the intellectual property of the University.

5.11 Adherence to UJ Online Policy Framework

The University of Johannesburg is committed to providing quality programmes regardless of the delivery format. As such, the UJ Online Policy Framework focuses specifically on the best practices and strategies for online/distance learning and course delivery. All other teaching and learning policies within the University are adhered to, irrespective of the mode of delivery. Within this context, UJ is committed to the quality standards/guidelines for programme design, instruction, associated support services, evaluation and assessment, use and distribution of course materials, the rights and responsibilities of parties and all related matters associated with online/distance learning.

6. MANDATORY LEARNING RESOURCES

6.1 The Learning Guide

6.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the learning guide is to facilitate quality teaching, learning and assessment. It contains an organisational component, which presents necessary information as to delivery and completion of the module, and a section on the facilitation of learning, which guides students in self-directed learning. A learning guide is made available for every module. In support of the University's ICT strategy, the learning guide should be made available in soft copy.

6.1.2 Structure of the learning guide

The structure of the learning guide may vary, but should include the following:

- (i) Cover page, and date
- (ii) Introduction
- (iii) Organisational component (see 6.2.3 (a))
- (iv) Facilitation of learning (see 6.2.3 (b))
- (v) Clarification of key concepts to assist students in achieving the learning outcomes.

6.1.3 Learning guides are updated annually and are made available to registered students on commencement of lectures.

6.1.4 Components of the Learning Guide

The learning guide comprises two parts:

(a) Organisational

The learning guide includes at least the following organisational components:

- (i) Details of lecturers/facilitators involved in the specific module and their availability;
- (ii) Work schedule and contact times, with combination of lectures, laboratory work, tutorials, seminars etc. (as applicable);
- (iii) Attendance requirements and academic regulations related to compulsory attendance of lectures/tutorials for admission to the final summative assessment opportunity (examination);
- (iv) Useful information regarding the library and student support services;
- (v) Assessments: mark allocation, examination entrance requirements, mark weightings (if applicable), final assessment requirements; regulations pertaining to supplementary and aegrotat tests and examinations;
- (vi) Information regarding the rights and responsibilities of students in an environment that is conducive to learning. This may take the form of identified links to the Student Charter and Student Grievance Procedures on the intranet.

(b) Facilitation of Learning

The following aspects are included and their coherence/alignment demonstrated in order to facilitate learning:\

- (i) Programme overview with relevant positioning of the particular module;
- (ii) Module outcomes;
- (iii) Learning outcomes for each unit in the module;
- (iv) Assessment criteria, assessment opportunities and feedback mechanisms;
- (v) Teaching and learning strategies used in the module or unit;
- (vi) Clarification of any additional key concepts.

6.2 Faculty calendars, rules and regulations

Faculty calendars, rules and regulations contain an overview of the qualification as a whole, and explain the role of each individual module in jointly achieving the purpose of the qualification. They also contain information on assessment, promotion requirements for progression to the following year of study, and information on the F7 rules and procedure.

Where appropriate, this information may be made available to students as a Programme Guide. Programme guides support student motivation by ensuring that students understand the structure of the programme and the contribution of each module to the programme outcomes.

7. LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIALS

The development of learning support materials to further support student learning and specifically the epistemological access of first-year students, is recommended.

Support materials will be likely to relate to individual units within a module and may cover a wide range of topics such as: the nature of the specific learning resources relating to this unit; knowledge presupposed for the unit; recommended or suggested approaches to self-study; possible methods of assessment; approaches to different types of questions; scaffolding for assignments and essay-writing etc.

8. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

Recent developments in ICTs combined with universal access to the web make available a multitude of online resources that can be used to promote student learning. Teaching staff are encouraged to draw on these resources in ways that support the creativity and active learning of their students and the development of higher order social and cognitive skills.

9. QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES

- 9.1 The management of the quality of learning resources, the planning, development and design thereof, is in accordance with the Higher Education Quality Committee's (HEQC) programme criteria, requirements and procedures and is reflected in faculty procedures for the development of learning resources.
- 9.2 The quality of learning resources is the responsibility of individual lecturers, heads of departments and executive deans of faculties, as well as faculty quality committees.
- 9.3 The review and monitoring of learning resources are an integral part of the programme review process.
- 9.4 Evaluation of the design, development, utilisation and relevance of learning resources also takes place on an annual basis.

10. PLAGIARISM AND COPYRIGHT

- 10.1 Staff should be alert to the need to scrupulously avoid plagiarism, when preparing learning resources. The use of appropriate referencing (which is mandatory) will serve as a model for students who also need to acquire the referencing conventions appropriate to the discipline being studied.
- 10.2 Copyright issues should be handled in accordance with DALRO principles and procedures.
- 10.3 Any plagiarism in learning resources will be dealt with as a disciplinary offence.

11. LANGUAGE

The language/s used in learning resources reflect the stipulations contained in the University's Language Policy as approved by Senate and Council.

12. POLICY REVIEW

Regular review of the policy is carried out in line with the approved University Policy on Policy Development. This will take place in consultation with the relevant quality assurance structures at faculty and institutional level and under the auspices of the official custodian of this policy, namely the Registrar.

Approved by Senate: Amendments approved by
Senate: