GOER Accreditation Standards Handbook

Guiding Principles for Global Online Education

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Teaching and Learning

This chapter outlines the standards for teaching and learning within GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Curriculum Design and Delivery

The curriculum should be designed to meet the diverse needs of all learners and should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current research and best practices in online education. Delivery methods should be engaging, interactive, and accessible to all students, regardless of their location or learning style.

Standard 2: Assessment and Feedback

Assessment methods should be varied and designed to measure student learning outcomes effectively. Feedback should be timely, specific, and constructive, and should be used to inform instruction and improve student performance.

Standard 3: Use of Technology
Technology should be used effectively to enhance teaching and learning. Instructors should be

proficient in the use of online learning platforms and tools, and should be able to use technology to create engaging and interactive learning experiences. The platform should be accessible and well maintained.

Standard 4: Academic Integrity

The institution must have clear policies and procedures in place to promote academic integrity and prevent plagiarism. Students should be educated about academic honesty and the consequences of academic misconduct.

Standard 5: Continuous Improvement

The institution should have a system in place for continuous improvement of teaching and learning. This system should include regular data collection and analysis, as well as ongoing professional development for instructors.

Student Welfare

This chapter details the standards relating to the welfare of students enrolled with GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Support Services

The institution should provide access to a range of support services, including academic advising, counseling, and technical support. These services should be easily accessible to all students, regardless of their location.

Standard 2: Health and Safety

The institution should ensure the health and safety of its students. This includes providing information about online safety and security, as well as access to resources for dealing with stress and mental health issues. Even though the setting is online, wellbeing is important to promote a healthy and safe learning environment for all students.

Standard 3: Inclusion and Diversity

The institution should promote a culture of inclusion and diversity. All students should be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

Standard 4: Grievance Procedures

The institution should have clear and fair grievance procedures in place for students who have complaints or concerns. These procedures should be easily accessible to all students.

Standard 5: Student Voice

The institution should provide opportunities for students to provide feedback and input on their educational experience. This feedback should be used to inform decision-making and improve the

quality of the institution.

Safeguarding

This chapter focuses on the standards for safeguarding students in GOER-accredited online educational institutions. Given the unique challenges of the online environment, it's crucial to have robust measures in place to protect students.

Standard 1: Policies and Procedures

The institution must have comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures in place, which are regularly reviewed and updated. These policies should cover online safety, cyberbullying, and appropriate staff-student interactions.

Standard 2: Training and Awareness

All staff, including instructors, administrators, and support staff, must receive regular training on safeguarding issues. They should be aware of the signs of abuse or neglect and how to report concerns appropriately.

Standard 3: Reporting Mechanisms

The institution must have clear and accessible reporting mechanisms for students and staff to report safeguarding concerns. These mechanisms should be widely publicized and easy to use.

Standard 4: Background Checks

The institution must conduct thorough background checks on all staff members who have contact with students. This includes verifying credentials and checking for any history of misconduct.

Standard 5: Online Monitoring

The institution should implement appropriate online monitoring measures to identify and address potential safeguarding risks. This could include monitoring chat rooms and forums for inappropriate content.

Leadership

This chapter details the standards for effective leadership within GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Vision and Mission

The institution should have a clear vision and mission that guides its strategic direction. This vision and mission should be communicated effectively to all stakeholders.

Standard 2: Strategic Planning

The institution should engage in strategic planning to set goals and objectives, and to allocate resources effectively. This planning process should involve input from a variety of stakeholders.

Standard 3: Decision-Making

Decision-making processes should be transparent and inclusive. Leaders should be accountable for their decisions and should be willing to listen to feedback from others.

Standard 4: Communication

Leaders should communicate effectively with all stakeholders, including students, staff, and the wider community. They should be responsive to inquiries and concerns.

Standard 5: Innovation

Leaders should foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. They should be willing to experiment with new approaches and to learn from their mistakes.

Governance

This chapter outlines the standards for effective governance within GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Structure and Composition

The institution should have a clearly defined governance structure, with well-defined roles and responsibilities for board members, administrators, and faculty. The composition of the governing board should reflect the diversity of the institution's stakeholders.

Standard 2: Policies and Procedures

The institution should have written policies and procedures that govern its operations. These policies should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Standard 3: Financial Management
The institution should have sound financial management practices in place. This includes budgeting, accounting, and auditing procedures. Financial records should be transparent and accessible to stakeholders.

Standard 4: Legal Compliance

The institution should comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including those related to education, employment, and data privacy.

Standard 5: Ethical Conduct

The institution should adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct. This includes avoiding conflicts of interest, protecting confidential information, and treating all stakeholders with respect.

Communication with School Community

This chapter focuses on standards for effective communication between GOER-accredited online educational institutions and their school community (students, parents/guardians, staff, and alumni).

Standard 1: Communication Channels

The institution must establish multiple communication channels to reach all members of the school community. These channels may include email, website, social media, online forums, and virtual meetings.

Standard 2: Transparency and Timeliness

The institution must communicate openly and transparently with the school community, providing timely information about important events, policies, and procedures.

Standard 3: Responsiveness

The institution must be responsive to inquiries and concerns from members of the school community, providing prompt and helpful answers.

Standard 4: Language Accessibility

The institution must ensure that communication is accessible to all members of the school community, including those who speak different languages or have disabilities.

Standard 5: Feedback Mechanisms

The institution must establish feedback mechanisms to solicit input from members of the school community. This feedback should be used to improve communication and decision-making.

Ethos

This chapter outlines the standards relating to the development and maintenance of a positive and supportive ethos within GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Values and Beliefs

The institution should have a clearly articulated set of values and beliefs that guide its operations and shape its culture. These values should be communicated effectively to all stakeholders.

Standard 2: Community Building

The institution should promote a sense of community among its students, staff, and alumni. This can be achieved through online events, social media groups, and other activities.

Standard 3: Respect and Tolerance

The institution should foster a culture of respect and tolerance, where all members of the community feel valued and supported. Discrimination and harassment should not be tolerated.

Standard 4: Social Responsibility

The institution should encourage its students and staff to engage in social responsibility activities. This can include volunteering, fundraising, and advocacy.

Standard 5: Positive Role Models

The institution should promote positive role models for its students and staff. These role models should embody the values and beliefs of the institution.

Extra-Curricular Activities

This chapter details the standards relating to the provision of extra-curricular activities within GOER accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Variety and Choice

The institution should offer a variety of extra-curricular activities to meet the diverse interests of its students. These activities may include clubs, societies, sports, and cultural events.

Standard 2: Accessibility
Extra-curricular activities should be accessible to all students, regardless of their location or financial situation. The institution should provide financial assistance to students who need it.

Standard 3: Student Involvement

Students should be involved in the planning and organization of extra-curricular activities. This gives them a sense of ownership and encourages them to participate.

Standard 4: Supervision and Safety

Extra-curricular activities should be supervised by qualified adults. The institution should ensure the safety of all students participating in these activities.

Standard 5: Learning Outcomes

Extra-curricular activities should be designed to promote student learning outcomes. These outcomes may include teamwork, leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Staff Support

This chapter outlines the standards for providing adequate support to staff members in GOER accredited online educational institutions. This support is crucial for effective teaching, student welfare, and overall institutional success.

Standard 1: Professional Development

The institution must provide ongoing professional development opportunities for all staff members, including training on online teaching methods, technology, student support, and safeguarding.

Standard 2: Mentoring and Collaboration

The institution should foster a culture of mentoring and collaboration among staff members. This can be achieved through formal mentoring programs, peer observation, and online forums.

Standard 3: Workload Management

The institution must ensure that staff members have a manageable workload. This includes providing adequate time for lesson planning, grading, student interaction, and professional development.

Standard 4: Supportive Processes for Effective Teaching and Learning

The institution must have supportive processes in place to help staff with effective teaching and learning. Some examples of these processes are:

- **Regular training on the use of technology and online learning tools:** Staff should have opportunities to learn about new technologies and tools that can be used to enhance teaching and learning.
- **Access to resources and support for developing online courses:** Staff should have access to resources and support for designing and developing high-quality online courses. **Opportunities to collaborate with other staff members:** Staff should have opportunities to collaborate with other staff members to share ideas and best practices.
- **Regular feedback on teaching performance:** Staff should receive regular feedback on their teaching performance from students and administrators.

Standard 5: Dismissal Processes

The institution must have clear and fair dismissal processes in place. These processes should be followed in all cases of staff dismissal, and staff members should be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations against them. These processes should comply with all applicable employment laws and regulations. Thorough documentation should be kept. These processes must:

- **Be Fair and Transparent:** Clearly defined procedures, communicated to all staff.
- **Follow Legal Guidelines:** Adherence to all relevant employment laws.
- **Provide Due Process:** Opportunity for staff to respond to allegations.
- **Be Documented Thoroughly:** Maintain detailed records of all steps taken.

Standard 6: Well-being and Mental Health

The institution should promote the well-being and mental health of its staff members. This can be achieved through providing access to counseling services, offering stress management workshops, and creating a supportive work environment.

The Use of AI

This chapter outlines the standards for the ethical and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

As AI is increasingly integrated into education platforms and processes, it is essential to ensure that its use is transparent, fair, and safe for learners and staff.

Standard 1: AI Governance Policy

The institution must have a clearly defined AI Governance Policy covering:

- Approved AI tools and systems
- Purpose of AI use in teaching, learning, and administration
- Data privacy and protection relating to AI use
- Human oversight of AI outputs
- Process for AI system review and approval
- Reporting obligations for unintended AI harms or bias

Standard 2: Transparency & Consent

Learners, parents/guardians, and staff must be clearly informed:

- When AI is used to support learning or assessments
- When AI is used in decision-making (e.g. grading, admissions, attendance monitoring)
- How data is used in AI systems

Informed consent must be obtained where required by law or best practice.

Standard 3: Ethical Use of AI

- AI must not replace core teacher judgement or human interaction.
- AI should not be used to manipulate learners or influence behaviour in ways that undermine autonomy.
- AI outputs must be regularly checked for:
  - Bias
  - Inaccuracy
  - Discriminatory outcomes
- High-risk AI applications (e.g. those that impact grading or progression) must be subject to enhanced human oversight.

Standard 4: AI Training for Staff

All staff using AI tools must receive training on:

- Ethical and legal considerations
- Risks of bias and misinformation
- How to interpret AI outputs responsibly

Staff should know how to guide learners in critical AI literacy — helping them understand the strengths and limitations of AI tools.

Standard 5: AI Monitoring & Reporting

The institution must maintain records of:

- AI tools in use
- AI system updates or changes
- Any AI-related incidents (bias, harm, legal concerns)

AI use must be regularly reviewed as part of the institution's Continuous Improvement cycle. Learners and staff must have a clear, accessible mechanism for reporting concerns about AI use.

Future Vision

This chapter describes the standards related to strategic planning and a forward-looking vision for GOER-accredited online educational institutions.

Standard 1: Innovation and Adaptability

The institution must demonstrate a commitment to innovation and adaptability in response to changing trends and technologies in online education. This includes exploring new pedagogical approaches, assessment methods, and learning technologies.

Standard 2: Sustainability

The institution must have a plan for long-term financial and operational sustainability. This plan should address issues such as enrollment growth, resource allocation, and infrastructure development.

Standard 3: Global Reach and Impact
The institution should strive to expand its global reach and impact by offering programs to students around the world. This includes addressing issues such as cultural sensitivity, language accessibility, and international accreditation.

Standard 4: Research and Development

The institution should invest in research and development to improve the quality and effectiveness of

online education. This includes conducting research on student learning outcomes, instructional design, and technology integration.

Standard 5: Community Engagement

The institution should actively engage with the wider community, including other educational institutions, industry partners, and government agencies. This can be achieved through collaborative projects, partnerships, and advocacy efforts.

Summary

This handbook provides a comprehensive overview of the standards for GOER (Global Online Education Regulator) accreditation. It covers a wide range of areas, including teaching and learning, student welfare, safeguarding, leadership, governance, communication, ethos, extra-curricular activities, staff support, and future vision. These standards are designed to ensure that GOER accredited online educational institutions provide a high-quality education and a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. By adhering to these standards, institutions can demonstrate their commitment to excellence and their dedication to the success of their students and staff.