



## ADVISORY NOTE NO. 1/2020

### GUIDELINES ON THE DELIVERY OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES DURING AND POST COVID-19 MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER (MCO)

#### GENERAL GUIDE

1. These guidelines serve as **an advisory** to all Higher Education Providers (HEPs) in planning temporary actions and recovery measures on the current academic systems which are affected by the implementation of the current Movement Control Order (MCO) until 14 April 2020, which may also be extended to a later date. The guidelines below should be **read concurrently with instructions or directives issued** by the respective authorities, including the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education [*Jabatan Pengajian Tinggi* (JPT), MoHE], professional bodies, Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS) and others.
2. All temporary actions and measures taken during this crisis period are placed under the **responsibility and autonomy of the HEPs' Senate/ Academic Boards who are responsible in making the necessary decisions within the appropriate time frame** (current and post-crisis) based on their constitutional provisions, and the suitability of relevant existing resources and infrastructures. The HEPs should consider the importance of the current and future students' welfare throughout this period.
3. MQA understands that any remedial plans by the HEPs can only be executed once the situation improved and will consider this inevitable disruption during the upcoming accreditation exercise. Based on this, **MQA will consider appropriate flexibility to the HEPs involved** and will make necessary coordination with the appointed MQA Panel of Assessors.
4. Therefore, the HEPs are advised to keep updated records of all temporary actions and measures taken during the MCO period (or other similar order thereafter).
5. The Internal Quality Assurance Centres of the HEPs are advised to **coordinate the post-crisis actions once the MCO period is over**. Such actions can be in the form of rescheduling activities, remedial and topping-up programmes, crash courses and other suitable measures, as deemed appropriate and necessary.

These can be implemented in stages based on priorities, especially for students graduating in the near future.

6. The term HEPs mentioned in this set of guidelines refers to the Public Universities, Private Higher Education Institutions, Polytechnics, and Community Colleges. It also includes other Higher Education/ Public Training Institutions, whose programmes are accredited by MQA.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

7. **Modification of the face-to-face teaching and learning activities to fully online activities including practical component**

In general, HEPs can modify the current teaching and learning components that involve face-to-face learning (which includes blended learning) to become fully online, depending on the readiness of the students, academic staff, existing resources and infrastructures at the HEPs.

Other remote learning methods such as learning through assignments and self-learning can be used accordingly. HEPs are required to produce clear guidelines for students on this matter.

Students' exposure to the practical components (partial or the entire course) can be implemented through video and virtual simulation or other suitable methods. Academic staff are responsible to ensure that the practical activities are appropriate and able to meet the stipulated course learning outcomes.

8. **Cancellation or postponement of teaching and learning activities which are not replaced by online/ remote learning methods and will not be replaced even after the HEPs resume operation**

In principle, it depends on the level of syllabus coverage so far for a particular course. Replacements through online learning or assignments/ tasks are recommended during the MCO. Should there be any topics not sufficiently covered within a course, these can be offered through microlearning or other appropriate methods in the subsequent semester.

If the said course happens to be a pre-requisite course for another subsequent course, topping-up or bridging sessions can be embedded into the post-requisite course in the following semester, subject to its suitability.

HEPs may consider not to exercise any replacement should the lectures be discontinued at the end of the syllabus of a course, and the academic staff is satisfied that the minimum requirement for each of the stipulated learning outcomes is achieved.

However, HEPs need to exercise due consideration for key courses offered in the final year or semester of an academic programme which demands the strengthening of knowledge and skills prior to graduation.

## **STUDENT LEARNING TIME (SLT) / CREDIT**

### **9. Effect of modifications and changes to the calculation of SLT or credit as well as student learning and assessment**

Should the modifications and changes made to students learning and assessment (with/ without replacement) fulfilled at least 70% to 80% of the SLT requirement, HEPs can consider this achievement to have satisfied the credit requirement, grading and minimum learning outcomes of the course, subject to the suitability of the field of study.

## **INDUSTRIAL TRAINING**

### **10. Replacement of shortened industrial training period**

HEPs may exempt students who have completed at least 70% to 80% of the period specified for industrial training from completing the remaining period, subject to the suitability of the field of study, as well as consideration by related professional bodies. HEPs are responsible for determining the adequacy of the industrial exposure experienced by the students in fulfilling the required or intended learning outcomes.

### **11. Replacement of industrial training course with other methods of industrial exposure**

HEPs may replace industrial training with other appropriate alternatives that involve both industrial collaboration and supervisory by industry practitioners (for example, industry-based projects). However, this depends on the suitability of the field of study, as well as consideration by related professional bodies.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

### **12. Replacement of final examination with other methods of student assessment such as online examination, assignments, and others**

The on-campus final examination can be replaced with a take-home-examination, open-book-examination, online examination and other forms of suitable assessment methods. HEPs must ensure that the assessment mechanisms used are able to measure the students' individual achievement.

The main principle is to ensure that the methods used are able to measure students' achievement for the stipulated learning outcomes in the current situation while ensuring validity, reliability and fairness during the implementation.

**13. Cessation of final examination without replacement with other forms of student assessment**

In principle, the HEPs may consider cessation of final examination, should the summative component in continuous assessment **(a)** has covered at least 70% of the total student assessment **AND (b)** has fulfilled the stipulated learning outcomes. Courses that do not meet the above percentage may introduce additional assessment methods to fulfil the required percentage. However, this depends on the suitability of the field of study and is subject to consideration by related professional bodies.

Specific attention is required for key courses offered in the final year or semester of the programme which demands the strengthening of knowledge and skills prior to graduation.

**14. Replacement of the grading system to Pass/ Fail**

HEPs are given the autonomy to determine appropriate grading system to measure the achievement of students' competency in a particular course. However, during this crisis period, HEPs may consider using Pass/ Fail indicator, taking into consideration the interest and welfare of the students impacted by the current crisis. HEPs are responsible in ensuring that the grades obtained by the students reflect their achievements of stipulated learning outcomes.

## **READJUSTMENT OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM**

**15. Arrangement of courses involving long and short semesters**

The HEPs should appropriately manage the remainder of the current affected semester and the offering of the subsequent semester. HEPs are however advised against offering overlapping academic semesters.

In order for the students to return to their original study track, HEPs are given the flexibility to offer higher credit hours in a semester for the subsequent semesters, subject to a maximum of 45 study weeks in a year. This is to enable the students to undertake necessary components or syllabus which needs to be covered, repeated or strengthened, as a result of the current crisis.

HEPs are advised to allow students to determine their additional study load and monitor students who are at risk in their study progression, should they be taking the extra load.

Any further inquiries can be directed to MQA through the Enquiry and Complaint Management System at <https://www2.mqa.gov.my/sppav2/>.

**MALAYSIAN QUALIFICATIONS AGENCY (MQA)**  
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