



UNIVERSITY
OF ESWATINI

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME TUTORIAL LETTER
BACHELOR OF ARTS - HUMANITIES

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Dear Student

Welcome to the Institute of Distance Education (IDE), a Unit of the University of Eswatini. As a university, we would like to congratulate you for taking this bold decision in your life to enhance your life skills by studying to acquire a degree. The objective of this Tutorial Guide is to acquaint you with the concept of Open and Distance and E-learning (ODEL) delivery mode. We focus on how ODeL is implemented by the Institute of Distance Education, and also give you a brief explanation of the activities that we do here in the Institute of Distance Education to ensure that you are settled well to focus on your studies.

It is essential that you understand what Distance Education is all about so that: (1) you know what to expect, and (2) you are aware of your role as a student in Distance Education.

You are therefore encouraged to read this Tutorial Letter carefully so that you understand all the processes of studying through IDE here at the University of Eswatini.

1 The Open and Distance e-Learning Delivery Mode

The Distance Education (DE) system involves teaching and learning at a distance with a package of multimedia instructional materials. It is learner-oriented and enables you as the learner to learn independently away from campus at a distance at his/her own pace and place.

Open Distance and eLearning (ODEL) is a flexible and convenient method of teaching-learning system using multi-media resources, such as self-instructional course materials; limited face-to-face classes and online teaching-learning system. The combined use of face-to-face and online learning is often defined as “blended learning”. The ODeL structure provides students with great flexibility and control over time, so that they can study at their own pace, place and convenience during the weekends or whenever they find convenient time during the week. It also provides flexible educational opportunities in terms of access and multiple modes of knowledge acquisition, anytime from anywhere provided the internet connectivity is available. Learning materials and instruction can actually be obtained either in print or online at any time soon after they enrol into the programme.

Through distance education mode, learning opportunities are brought to learners at home or in a work place, irrespective of whether they remain in one location or become mobile during their study. Further, the hallmark of distance education is the quality of course materials prepared by subject

specialists. As such the quality of teaching-learning in distance education is the same as the quality of teaching-learning in full-time provided the students actively interact with peers, lecturers and study materials to excel in their studies.

You may find more information in the student handbook available here: <http://www.ide.uneswa.ac.sz/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IDE-Student-Handbook-1.pdf>

1.1 What does this mean for you?

What this means generally is that you will access the courses synchronously and asynchronously using the blended delivery mode: online sessions and face-to-face study sessions.

There will be a **timetable** for attending face-to-face study sessions on campus, on weekends from time to time. This attendance is always guided by the Institute's Almanac which is uploaded on the IDE website (check it on the UNESWA Website) and is also available at the Print shop during registration at the beginning of every semester.

Please note that learning through the Institute of Distance Education is tied to the time frames of semesters followed by all programmes offered in the University of Eswatini. The Humanities Programme has eight (8) semesters, and in each semester you have to take a specified number of courses which you have to pass at a minimum of 50%. Each academic year has two (2) semesters and each semester, you progress from one semester to the next. The courses that you will register for in this programme are the same courses as those taken by the student who are studying on full-time basis. These are taught and/or moderated by the same lecturers so there is nothing different between what you study in IDE and what is offered in full-time. Hence, it is important to emphasise that the content of your degree programme is in no way inferior to one offered to those studying on the full time basis. It is just as challenging and enriching.

1.2 How do we deliver teaching in IDE?

This section describes to you what we do in IDE to ensure that you get all the content you need.

1.2.1 IDE Module

A module is your main source of learning material in this programme. You learn through interaction with the instructional material in the module. However, you will have other forms of learning used in distance education to support the module such as the face-to-face tutorials and the Moodle. Face-to-face sessions will help you to go through the module smoothly. They will mainly focus on: (1) giving you topic overviews, (2) guidance on how to enhance your understanding of the study materials, (3) help you solve academic problems you might encounter along the way, and also (4) may assist you on ways to approach assignments and examinations.

Upon registration, you should visit the IDE Print Shop to collect your course modules. In instances where Course Modules are still under development, you will receive Draft Modules or other relevant learning materials. The Course Module is your main point of contact for learning as a distance learner. Read your modules carefully, and do all the activities in the modules.

1.2.3 Online Learning

Online learning in this university is delivered through the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS) which is the only official learning platform for online learning. You are enrolled on the Moodle LMS for all your registered courses immediately you are registered. You will access Moodle on (<https://learn.uneswa.ac.sz>). In case you have challenges accessing Moodle, the Technologist will assist you or you can write to (ictc@uneswa.sz). Always use your **Student ID number** and your **Name** when communicating with any official for you to be assisted faster.

Please note that you will be taught how to navigate through the Moodle LMS in your Computer Foundations Course and some information is also available on Moodle – always read such a Guide.

During the Course of the Semester, you need to visit the Moodle LMS site to access course content, and participate in online learning activities and assessments. I suggest that you design a timetable for study during the week since you will be attending face-to-face classes on weekends.

1.2.3 Weekend Face to Face Study Sessions

We organise weekend face-to-face contact classes to supplement online learning. Where possible endeavour to attend the classes. Prepare for the classes and participate in the learning activities. In case you have challenges, inform your lecturer and seek assistance from the Students' Support Services in IDE. Some assessments are given on site.

2 Registration

2.1 Correct registration

For each semester, you will be required to register for at least two (2) courses. Whereas it is possible to register for all the courses per semester (and graduate faster), you are advised to consider your personal circumstances. This includes issues such as your work commitment and whether or not you are also carrying courses from a previous semester. Your registration may also be limited by your *current academic status* from the previous semester. For instance, if you are currently on probation the regulations require that you register for fewer courses. **I strongly advise you not to register for more courses than you can possible handle.**

As articulated in the IDE student handbook: <http://www.ide.uneswa.ac.sz/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IDE-Student-Handbook-1.pdf>), follow the procedures below for correct registration. As a new student, you will:

- First approach the IDE Academic Office for verification of your certificates. Bring all your original academic certificates and admission letter for verification;
- After verification of your certificates, go to the Bursary Desk to present your Proof of payment for your Tuition Fees, and follow the directives you will be given;
- Proceed for Online Registration of your programme courses. You will be assisted with registration by the IDE Coordinators, Senior Assistant Registrar (IDE); Technologist (IDE) and the relevant Faculty Heads of Department.

As a prospective student, it is your duty to check that all these steps are followed, and all the information included in your registration forms is correct and relevant. Do not forget to take your copy of the registration form for safe-keeping.

2.2 Dropping and Adding Courses

After registration, the University may allow you to add or drop courses. Normally, this will only be allowed within the **first two weeks** of registration.

In case you register for an incorrect code, you need to apply to drop the course or take another code. The Technologist will send you a FORM to fill or just pick one from the Print Shop and drop submit to the Technologist and the Coordinator.

2.3 Exemptions

According to the University regulations, exemption may be granted for courses taken and passed at UNESWA or any other recognised institution. The procedure is that you must write an application letter to the academic office and attach your certificate and transcript from the other institution(s). Normally, the exemption will be granted if it certifies the following conditions:

1. You must be registered before you apply for exemption;
2. You must have obtained the qualification within 10 consecutive semesters. In other words the qualification must not be older than five (5) years. For the 2021-2022 academic year, your qualification should have been completed in 2017 or later.
3. The course content must be equivalent to the course(s) you want to be exempted from. In this regard, you may be required to submit course the outline(s) from the other institution

All exemptions are processed and granted by the department offering the course. After submitting your application you must remain in class until you get a response from the academic offers.

Based on previous applications and approved exemptions, you are advised as follows.

1. Exemptions are typically granted only for level 1: courses. Most departments are very reluctant to grant exemption for higher level courses.
2. If you qualify, the ACS department will normally grant you exemption from ACS111 but not ACS112.
3. Normally you will not be granted exemption from MAT111 and MAT112.
4. Information Technology and Computer Science Diploma holders are more likely to be exempted from CSC104, CSC111, CSC112, CSC113 and CSC121.

Once again, remember that you must first register for the course before you apply for exemption.

Refer to the University Calendar for more details. Here is the URL:

<http://www.uneswa.ac.sz/administration-registrar-corporateaffairs-publications/university-calendar-almanac/>

2.4 Credit Transfer

In cases where you started a previous programme at UNESWA, but did not finish it, credit for already passed modules may be transferred to BSc. Computer Science Education programme on condition that it was obtained within 10 consecutive semesters. Refer to the University Calendar for more details: <http://www.uneswa.ac.sz/administration-registrar-corporateaffairs-publications/university-calendar-almanac/>

2.5 Payment of Fees

In terms of the University Act and Statutes, you only become a student of the University once you have paid your tuition fee for the semester and are properly registered with the University. Therefore, you are encouraged to pay all stipulated fees as per the guidelines provided by the student finance office. Ordinarily, all marks earned while you are not properly registered will be declared null and void by the University Senate.

3 Assessment

Some assessments will be given during the face to face sessions and others will be given online. You have to do all assessments given by your lecturers. Start working from day 1 of your lesson – do not procrastinate.

Regarding all assignments which you will be required to submit online, you are advised to check it you have correctly submitted/uploaded your correct assignment on the directed platform. Previously, course instructors have faced the following challenges:

- i) Blank online assignment submissions
- ii) Submission of cover sheets only.
- iii) Submitted assignments not opening for marking, you are advised to submit these assignments as will instructed by your course instructor,
- iv) Corrupted assignments not opening for marking.
- v) Assignments submitted to the wrong course e.g. ALL103 being submitted on ENG103.

3.1 Working in Groups

Distance education requires collegiality – do not suffer alone – connect to your colleagues and communicate with your lecturers as well through Moodle. Please read the guidelines for group discussions, exercise politeness when seeking clarification from your lecturers. But please note that copying assignments from others is not acceptable, and it has negative consequences. We are all there for you OK! You made the best decision to enrol with IDE Eswatini.

3.2 Continuous Assessment (CA) and Examination

3.2.1 Assignments

Each course may have assignments specified in the course outline. The number of assignments is at the discretion of the course instructor. So you are encouraged to do all work assigned to you on time.

3.2.2 Tests

Normally, each course will have a minimum of two (2) tests as determined by the course instructor and specified in the course outline.

3.2.3 Examination

Normally, each course will have a final examination. All examinations are coordinated by the academic office and written at the end of each semester. In this regard, a time-table will be circulated a few weeks before the start of the examination period.

3.2.4 Final Mark Calculation

Your final mark for each course is a weighted average of the CA and Examination mark. The weighting is derived from the special regulation of the department offering the course. Typically all courses have a weighting of 40:60. That is the CA marks contributes 40% to the final marks and the Examination contributes 60%. However ACS courses are weighted 60:40 for CA and Exam. In addition, some courses may be assessed based on CA only. Refer to the University Calendar for more details: <http://www.uneswa.ac.sz/administration-registrar-corporateaffairs-publications/university-calendar-almanac/>

3.2.5 Missed Tests and Assignments

You are encouraged to do all your work and submit on time as required by your course instructor. Usually no make-up tests or assignment shall be given unless there is a valid reason such as ill-health. In case you miss a Test, you need to report to the Coordinator Support Services in IDE who would assess if your request is genuine and give you a support letter to use when requesting a make-up test.

3.2.6 Make-up Tests

Makeup tests shall only be given at the end of the semester on a date stipulated in the time-table.

3.2.7 Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

All work submitted for assessment must be your own and not copied from your friends or any other sources. The University Calendar stipulates the penalties for any person involved in academic dishonesty and plagiarism. You are therefore encouraged to read the relevant section in the calendar on the following issues:

- (i) **Misconduct in tests and examinations** – strict punitive/disciplinary measures are taken against those of you who are involved in misconduct during tests and examinations.
- (ii) **Plagiarism** – this refers to the copying of all or part of another person's work, material, publication, report, data, computer files and listings, assignment, results of an experiment, project and/or academic work without due acknowledgement of the source of that information. If you copy someone else's work without indicating your source then you are guilty of plagiarism and you will be given a zero.

4. The Humanities Programme

The Humanities Programme has five (5) departments, namely:

1. Academic Communication Skills

2. African Languages and Literature
3. English Language and Literature
4. History
5. Theology and Religious Studies

4.1 Choice of Subjects and Specialisation

1. General Courses (compulsory in year 1)

- **Two (2) courses** which you will take from Academic Communication Skills,
- **1 course** on HIV/AIDS from the Department of General Nursing in the Faculty of Health Sciences
- **1 course** on Computer Foundations from the Department of Computer Science.

2. Choosing Subject Specialization

- You need to decide which subjects you need to register for.
- In year 1, you have to register for **3 subjects** out of the 4, and each subject has two courses. You have to pass all these courses including the general courses listed above.
- In Year 2, you then select **two subjects** as your specialization.
- From year 2 to year 4, you will register for **3 courses** in each subject.
- In year 4, you will register for a **research project** in one of your subject specializations.
- Failed courses can be registered for the next time they are offered, and one can advise that you do not take many courses in cases you have to repeat some courses.

5. The University Calendar & Student Handbook

This document is available on the University Website. Go to the Section of the Institute of Distance Education, Humanities programme – you will find a **list of all the courses** to register for in each level. The Technologist will also upload such Lists for you on the IDE section of the UNESWA website each semester. So please make sure you are careful to select the correct course codes when you are registering.

The first section of the Calendar contains a range of university regulations. Please take time to read these because they guide all activities in this university. Not knowing a regulation is not an excuse. I personally invite you to read the regulations about continuous assessment, examinations and malpractice.

We also have a Students' Handbook that would help you navigate through the different aspects of being a student here at the University of Eswatini.

Access these resources for more information

Resource	Uniform Resource Locator (URL)
University Calendar	http://www.uneswa.ac.sz/administration-registrar-corporateaffairs-publications/university-calendar-almanac/
IDE Student Handbook	http://www.ide.uneswa.ac.sz/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IDE-Student-Handbook-1.pdf

6. Heads of Departments, Course Instructors and Class Representatives

6.1 Heads of Departments

You will meet the five (5) Heads of Departments online during the orientation. Please pay attention to their explanation on what to expect in their departments, and the future prospects you may have by registering for any of the 4 Subjects: African Languages and Literature, English Language and Literature, History and Theology and Religious Studies.

You will meet all your course lecturers and tutors online and during the face to face study sessions.

6.2 Class Representatives, IDE Board and Senate Students' Rep.

The Class always has to select **one** of you to be a contact person between you and the course lecturer, coordinator and even student services. Please note the Class Rep. is not there to address individual problems – he or she assists in the dissemination of information to you and from you as a class. For personal support, please use the Office of Students' Support Services. I humbly request that you do not overburden the class representatives with personal problems concerning your work – submission of tests, and failure to write tests, etc. On these please contact the lecturers directly or seek assistance from Students' Support Services Office. When communicating in the class Whatsapp Groups – please be polite all the time and use such a group platform for the furtherance of your support of class or learning activities.

The Students' Support Services Office will from time to time call you to elect three representatives from the IDE Students Body. In such an election, you will elect two Board Members: one for level 1 (years 1 & 2) and Level 2 (years 3 & 4) and 1 Senate Rep. Please note that this representation may come from any programme. Any of you is eligible to be nominated and voted for as long as that candidate is an IDE Student. Through your Class Reps., you can communicate your wishes and

challenges which you need the university to address, and these would be brought to the attention of the Board and the Senate by the Board Reps. And Senate Rep.

7. Conclusion

You are advised to focus on your work from the first day of the semester. Check the course outlines for all the courses you have registered for. The course outlines may even indicate dates for tests and assignments – while some may have the assignments which you need to start working on from Day 1. Check the Moodle page to view lessons that are uploaded. Endeavour to do all activities given by the Course Lecturer or Tutor whether on Moodle or Face to Face.

Do not forget that the purpose you applied for was to get education and a qualification. Other social activities should not become paramount to your studies.

**Pay attention to your academic work; it is only for a few years; then you can spread your wings
– Good Luck!**

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