

# **ST. AUGUSTINE UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**



## **E - LEARNING POLICY**

**December, 2022**

## **Foreword**

E-learning is considered as an important component of enhancing teaching and learning processes in Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania. In the context of teaching and learning, e-learning encompasses the use of information, computers and technology to enhance communication in distance learning. The use of modern technologies in teaching and learning processes is considered a competitive tool for improving the academic performance of Higher Learning Institutions in developing countries, and Tanzania in particular. According to Lwoga & Komba, (2015), the use of e-learning has resulted in a number of changes in many universities and higher learning institutions in as far as education delivery are concerned. Consequently, the use e-learning has increased access to education to in rural areas as well as distance education not only in Tanzania but also in many parts in Africa. Today, e- learning is increasingly being regarded as an effective way to deliver education in terms of time and costs in higher learning institutions.

SAUT e -learning policy is derived from ICT national policy, SAUT ICT policy and TCU guidelines for Online and Blended Delivery Mode of Courses for University Institutions in Tanzania. The Policy provides a guide the usage of the e learning resources such that students achieve the expected course outcomes. The University is committed to enhancing quality flexible learning which has to be in consistent with its strategic priorities, such as increased use of information and communication technologies in teaching and learning, flexible modes of learning and cost-effectiveness of courses and leads the University towards the realization of its Vision and Mission. I take this opportunity to thank the University participatory organs and in particular the, SAUT Management, ICT department, Senate and Council for thoroughly discussing this document at different stages.

**Amb. Costa Ricky Mahalu**  
**Vice Chancellor**  
**St. Augustine University of Tanzania, Mwanza**

## ABBREVIATIONS

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DICT	Department of Information, Communication and Technology
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDU	Instructional Development Unit
LAN	Local Area Network
LMS	Learning Management System
MOOCs	Massive Open Online Courses
OER	Open Educational Resources
SAUT	St. Augustine University of Tanzania
TCU	Tanzania Commission for Universities

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

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<b>Blended learning:</b>	This is a style of education in which students learn via online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching and distance learning. In other words, it is a mixing of different learning environments. It combines traditional face-to-face classroom (traditional course) methods with more modern computer and web-based mediated activities.
<b>E- Resources:</b>	Electronic Materials in digital format accessible electronically.
<b>Face-to-face learning:</b>	Learning that is conducted in a classroom or practical room where a lecturer interacts directly with students daily as per the allocated timetable.
<b>Online learning:</b>	Learning where a student and an instructor are being connected through the internet instead of being in a physical classroom.
<b>Platform:</b>	Particular technology that is used for delivering lectures and in this case we shall use Google classroom and zoom.
<b>Learning Management system:</b>	This is a software application of the administration, documentation, tracking and reporting of training programs, classrooms and online events, E learning programs and training contents
<b>E-learning courses:</b>	These are programs offered with all work being completed on-line. Learners access primary content and instruction from an e-learning environment using a variety of tools including, but not limited to, e-mail, text and voice chat, discussion boards, web pages, and multimedia technologies. Specific technologies employed will vary by course and instructor.
<b>Online Education:</b>	A form of distance learning providing an opportunity for learners to use a computer network (internet) to distribute educational content via two-way communication among teachers and learners in an educational institution.
<b>Distance Learning:</b>	This is a kind of learning carried out remotely by using electronic communication and is not bound by geographical locations. Distance learning provides a more flexible course schedule for those that have a family and/or are working students.

# CHAPTER ONE

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1.1 Introduction

E- Learning is a technological development that has the potential to change not only the way society retains and accesses knowledge but also to transform and restructure traditional models of higher education, particularly the delivery and interaction in and with course materials and associated resources. Utilizing the online to deliver eLearning initiatives has created expectations both in the business market and in higher education institutions. Indeed, eLearning has enabled universities to expand on their current geographical reach, to capitalize on new prospective students and to establish themselves as global educational providers. St. Augustine University of Tanzania has invested heavily in the information and communication technology (ICT) which support e learning and teaching services, research and management. KIUT recognizes ICT as a prime mover and driver in enhancing current global technological innovations to meet the university vision, mission and goals. The performance and visibility of the university is determined to a great extent on its use of on line platform, physical infrastructure and attractive programs. It is on these bases SAUT has an ICT policy which guide the design, develop, implement and evaluate the effective use of ICT services and resources. The University is committed to enhancing quality flexible learning which has to be in consistent with its strategic priorities, such as increased use of information and communication technologies in teaching and learning, flexible modes of learning and cost-effectiveness of courses.

### 1.2 Objectives of the policy

- 1.2.1 To provide guidance that would ensure that online/blended programs offered at SAUT have required quality that meet the required standards as per Tanzania Commission for Universities guidelines
- 1.2.2 To guide the internal development of the e-learning courses in instructor workloads, and technical support by providing informational resources and support services to students as well as SAUT members.
- 1.2.3 To provide guidance on training and development of academic and technical staff for the purposes of ensuring the university is well stocked with qualified staff to manage online/blended training
- 1.2.4 To guide and provide support the use of the Learning Management System (LMS) and other technologies in both face-to-face and online learning environments.
- 1.2.5 To provide guidance on how to develop online programs, expand, and coordinate the development of quality courses that meet the needs of the labor market

- 1.2.6 To provide guidance on periodic evaluation and comprehensively every facet of the E-learning program and use these results to restructure and improve the program.

### **1.3 Rationale**

The rationale of formulating the e learning policy is three folds, namely,

- 1.3.1 Although SAUT has invested heavily in the ICT infrastructure, the university did not have a well-defined and elaborate guidance on how to govern online and blended courses. The development of the e learning policy is an attempt to fill this gap by ensuring that the academic standards are maintained across all courses offered by university and that the developed courses meet the national, regional and international market requirements.
- 1.3.2 Secondly, and more important is the TCU initiative to develop the guidelines that shall support online teaching and learning for the purposes of improving the quality course delivered through online/blended modes of delivery. The new guidelines necessarily require a university to develop policies which will help to the online/blended modes among others.
- 1.3.3 SAUT doesn't have appropriate guidelines that ensure the recruitment of an adequate number of academically and professionally qualified staff to administer and manage the online/blended programs. This was a shortcoming in as far as improving the quality of human resource to man e learning programs. The policy therefore timely much as it will address the issue of having academically qualified staff to manage these programs

### **1.4 The Scope of the policy**

The policy covers the following broad area

- 1.4.1 Program and Course Delivery Mode
- 1.4.2 Teaching and Facilitation
- 1.4.3 Learning Resources
  - a) Quality and accessibility
  - b) Open Education Resources
  - c) Massive Open Online Courses
- 1.4.4 Human Resources
- 1.4.5 Technology
  - a) Access to technology
  - b) Learning management system
  - c) Video conferencing facilities

- 1.4.6 Course Assessment
- 1.4.7 Support Services
- 1.4.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

## CHAPTER TWO

### POLICY ISSUES, OBJECTIVES AND STATEMENTS

#### **2.1 Introduction**

St. Augustine University of Tanzania plans to enhance the use of ICT infrastructure and services in teaching and learning. The implementation shall follow a set of broad areas as detailed in this section. In this policy the broad areas, policy objectives and statements have been formulated based on the University Rolling Strategic Planning (2021/22 -2024/25, SAUT- ICT policy and TCU guidelines for online and blended delivery modes of courses for universities institutions in Tanzania of April 2021. The description of each identified areas, objectives and the policy statement for each proposed area is listed below.

#### **2.2 Program Design and Course Delivery Mode**

##### ***2.2.1 Situational Analysis***

Curriculum design is a purposeful activity aimed at improving student learning process. Because of that the curriculum must be consciously planned. It involved using explicit process that identifies clearly what will be done by whom and when. For this reason, it a creative exercise. over the last few years SAUT has been using the traditional face to face approach in postgraduate and undergraduate programs. The emergence of new online and blended mode offered through ICT, and the emergence of COVID 19 have opened the door to universities to revisit their curriculum delivery modes by taking into the effectiveness, quality and flexibility which is inbuilt in online delivery mode while fulling the needs of learners at large.

##### ***2.2.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To ensure online on line courses have on line components and associated delivery methods
- b) To a mechanism in place to ensure online/blended program (e.g. internships, specialized laboratory work, seminars, viva voce, supervision etc.) are clearly stated in the curriculum design
- c) To put in place a mechanism of ensuring that existing face to face curriculum are reviewed to ensure they incorporate online and blended modes
- d) To ensure new students joining the university participates in online/blended learning before the commencement of studies.

##### ***2.2.3 Policy Statements***

- a) The university shall have to apply to the Tanzania Commission for Universities to offer online to offer online/blended programs at undergraduate and post graduate level

- b) For blended mode, the university shall indicate the online components and the associated delivery method (i.e. synchronous or asynchronous) and the face-to-face components.
- c) The university shall ensure online/blended program (e.g. internships, specialized laboratory work, seminars, viva voce, supervision etc.) are clearly stated.
- d) The university shall ensure it reviews its existing face to face curriculum into online/blended modes.
- e) The university shall orient students to participate in online/blended learning before the commencement of studies.

## **2.3 Teaching and Facilitation**

### ***2.3.1 Situational Analysis***

Pedagogical help to improve the quality of your teaching and the way students learn, helping them gain a deeper grasp of fundamental material. Students can leverage their preferred learning styles with a teaching process that supports them, and the way they like to learn. However, technology has the ability to enhance relationships between teachers and students. When teachers effectively integrate technology into subject areas, teachers grow into roles of adviser, content expert, and coach. It is within this context that, technology helps make teaching and learning more meaningful.

### ***2.3.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To ensure academic staff have both pedagogical and technical skills to facilitate online teaching and learning
- b) To put in institute a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the teaching process with technology
- c) To ensure the university uses accredited hospitals to offer online/blended teaching and learning that requires clinical rotation.

### ***2.3.3 Policy Statements***

- a) The university shall ensure that the academic staffs have the required pedagogical and technical skills to facilitate online teaching and learning processes with technology.
- b) The university shall put in place mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the teaching process with technology.
- c) SAUT shall indicate the tools and methodologies that will be used to facilitate teaching and learning in online/blended courses.
- d) SAUT shall use accredited hospitals to offer online/blended teaching and learning that requires clinical rotation.

## **2.4 Learning Resources**

### ***2.4.1 Situational Analysis***

Effective usage of proper learning resources helps the students to construct more than superficial knowledge that is building in depth knowledge on a particular subject and also developing their individual learning strategies, values, attitudes and generic skills. Because of that there is a dire need of the university to ensure that, the developed learning resources meet the quality of courses delivered in online or blended mode. The main issues to be considered in learning resources include quality and accessibility, Open Educational Resources (OER), and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) among others.

### ***2.4.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To put in place a course development policy that addresses issues such as copyright, incentives, the peer review process, and any other related issues.
- b) To design learning resources which accommodate the online components for blended or online courses which include multimedia elements such as video, animations, and simulations, and audio.
- c) Put in place mechanisms to ensure that the learning resources are accessible on a variety of devices including mobile phones, tablets etc.
- d) Develop mechanisms to regularly evaluate, monitor, and review the quality of learning resources, OER and MOOCs used in its courses
- e) Put in place policies such as MOOCs and OER policies that provides a clear vision for the integration of MOOCs in online and blended learning courses and a clear vision for the internal use of developed learning resources and those adopted from OER depositories
- f) To ensure arrangements are in place for compliance with any legal, regulatory or statutory obligations required before adopting OER, MOOCs for its courses.

### ***2.4.3 Policy Statements***

- a) The university shall put in place a course development policy that addresses issues such as copyright, incentives, the peer review process, and any other related issues.
- b) The university shall ensure there is a mechanism to design learning resources which accommodate the online components for blended or online courses which include multimedia elements such as video, animations, and simulations, and audio
- c) The university shall put in place mechanisms to ensure that the learning resources are accessible on a variety of devices including mobile phones, tablets etc.

- d) The university shall develop a mechanism to regularly evaluate, monitor, and review the quality of learning resources, OER and MOOCs used in its courses
- e) The university shall ensure there are policies related to MOOCs and OER policies, that provide a clear vision for the integration of MOOCs in online and blended learning courses and a clear vision for the internal use of developed learning resources and those adopted from OER depositories
- f) The university shall ensure arrangements are in place for compliance with any legal, regulatory or statutory obligations required before adopting OER, MOOCs for its courses.

## **2.5 Human Resources**

### ***2.5.1 Situational Analysis***

The integration of ICT in education requires salient ICT capacities. Thus, building ICT capacity is a key cornerstone that must be included in the university operations. Despite high investment in ICT infrastructure and digital skills development at the university, there are still assertions of a slow technology uptake. This means that the value addition of technology is not seemingly perceived by some of university staff and students. The university is required to develop clear strategy to equip its staff and students with digital skills to enable them to effectively utilize the existing technological resources. E-learning is one way that enables employees to obtain and renew the knowledge. By the same token, employees want to be able to have time for learning. Modern methods of training reflect these characteristics whereby a well-trained and motivated help to retain a better qualified workforce. on this regard, the university need appropriate guidelines that ensure the recruitment of an adequate number of academically and professionally qualified staff to administer and manage the programs. The main issue at stake is staffing requirement and regular capacity building.

### ***2.5.2 Policy Objective***

- a) To provide staff members with opportunities to develop and sustain their ICT related knowledge and skills as appropriate to the purposes of their individual jobs.
- b) To ensure the university has academic staff with pedagogical and technical skills able to use online technology
- c) To acquire technical staff with online program management skills among whom include instructional designers, media experts, ICT personnel
- d) To develop a clear policy to promote life-long learning to staff on new technologies about online teaching and learning
- e) To maintain high level of responsiveness and ensure the University meets customer expectations.

### ***2.5.3 Policy Statements***

- a) SAUT shall ensure it has academic staff with pedagogical and technical skills to be able to use selected technologies for online and or blended learning.
- b) SAUT shall have technical staff with online program management skills which must include instructional designers, media experts, ICT personnel etc.
- c) SAUT will develop a clear policy to promote life-long learning to staff on new technologies about online teaching and learning.

## **2.6 ICT Ssupport for online teaching and learning**

### ***2.6.1 Situational Analysis***

ICT has become a major tool that supports teaching and learning in many higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The introduction of online or blended courses imposes new requirements for the University to provide ICT infrastructure designed to facilitate the delivery of such courses. The necessary ICT infrastructure must be sufficiently resourced to enable the accessible and reliable provision of online and blended courses for all students regardless of location. The main issues here are access to technology; a Learning Management system and video conferencing.

### ***2.6.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To promote innovation in the use of ICT to support the teaching and learning process.
- b) To build capacity for instructors and students to fully utilize new technologies to enhance the teaching and learning practices
- c) To ensure there is increased access of reliable technology and related computing devices among the member of academic staff and students
- d) To ensure there is full time online interactions between academic staff and students as well as among students
- e) To acquire facilities which are affordable and accessible facilities (such conference facility) for online delivery as well as research activities (e.g. viva voice, presentations,
- f) To ensure availability of power supply through backup systems such as standby generators, Un-interuptible Power Supply
- g) To ensure that students and academic staff have speedy and reliable Internet connectivity such as via a robust Local Area Network (LAN), wireless hotspots etc
- h) To ensure that academic staff as well as students have access to the computing devices.

### ***2.6.3 Policy Statement***

- a) The university shall ensure there is increased access of reliable technology and related computing devices among the member of academic staff and students
- b) The university shall ensure there is full time online interactions between academic staff and students as well as among students
- c) The university shall acquire facilities which are affordable and accessible facilities (such conference facility) for online delivery as well as research activities (e.g. viva voice, presentations,
- d) The university shall ensure availability of power supply through backup systems such as standby generators, Un-interuptible Power Supply
- e) The university shall ensure that students and academic staff have speedy and reliable Internet connectivity such as via a robust Local Area Network (LAN), and wireless hotspots
- f) The university shall ensure that academic staff as well as students has access to the computing devices.
- g) The university shall implement the Learning Management System and host it in a place where it is accessible 24 hours a day

## **2.7 Course Assessment**

### ***2.7.1 Situational Analysis***

Despite the existence of Standard Guidelines for Student Assessment provided by TCU (2019), courses offered on line will have to be assessed to ensure students to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter is critical to the learning process; it is essential to evaluate whether the educational goals and standards of the lessons are being met. Students must be able to think critically, to analyze, and to make inferences in order to carter for quality online assessment.

### ***2.7.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To ensure there is a defined procedures and platform related with online course work assessment options and a platform used in coursework assessment as well as final examination procedures
- b) To ensure all examination regulations regarding the online programs are developed, and endorsed by the senate
- c) To ensure all online examination processes and procedures (i.e. from registration of students for online examinations up to dissemination of the results) are well known to students well in advance

- d) To have in place authentication software, similarity index and proctoring software for the summative assessment.
- e) To get special approval from the senate and TCU concerning online summative assessment systems
- f) To put in place a well-defined on line examination security system to protect examination leakage is in place e.g. having a reliable examination storage systems including location, duration of storage, capacity and backup mechanisms

### ***2.7.3 Policy Statement***

- a) The university shall ensure there is a defined procedures and platform related with online course work assessment options and a platform used in coursework assessment as well as final examination procedures
- b) The university shall have all examination regulations regarding the online programs are developed, and endorsed by the senate
- c) The university shall ensure all online examination processes and procedures (i.e. from registration of students for online examinations up to dissemination of the results) are well known to students well in advance
- d) The university shall put in place authentication software, similarity index and proctoring software for the summative assessment.
- e) The university shall ensure it secures a special approval from the senate and TCU concerning online summative assessment systems
- f) The university shall put in place a well-defined on line examination security system to protect examination leakage is in place e.g. having a reliable examination storage systems including location, duration of storage, capacity and backup mechanisms

## **2.8 Support Services**

### ***2.8.1 Situational Analysis***

Learner support services are the most vital component of any open and distance learning system. It includes wide range of academic and other related activities. The support services should not only be responsive to the needs of the distance learners but should also be accessible. Monitoring of the support services has to be a continuous and ongoing exercise, which could bring constant improvement through innovations in the support services. To have quality learning students and academic staff need to have adequate and reliable technical support.

### ***2.8.2 Policy Objective***

- a) To put in place technical support help desk, advisory service and academic advisor
- b) To put in place study centres which will provide access to library services and other internet facilities?
- c) To establish the Instructional Development Unit (IDU) for online programs development and delivery.
- d) To ensure there is digital library at SAUT which is easily accessed by members of academic staff as well as students

### ***2.8.3 Policy Statement***

- a) The University shall put in place a Technical Support Help Desk allowing students to call, send emails or chat synchronously with technical personnel.
- b) SAUT shall make sure that advisory services are factored into the overall online program through the office of the Dean of Students.
- c) SAUT shall provide access to students with an online advising platform whereby all students should be assigned with the academic advisor.
- d) SAUT will consider establishing study centre as per TCU the standard guidelines of 2019
- e) The University shall establish the Instructional Development Unit (IDU)
- f) The university shall establish a digital library (which is accessible to academic staff and students) that is subscribed to the latest online databases for various resources.
- g) The university shall ensure that the digital library is accessible to staff and students within the university and beyond
- h) The university shall put in place complain procedures to handle students matters related to online teaching and learning

## **2.9 Monitoring and Evaluation**

### ***2.9.1 Situational Analysis***

At the program level, the purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to track implementation and outputs systematically, and measure the effectiveness of programs. It helps determine exactly when a program is on track and when changes may be needed. To this effect SAUT will be required to monitor and evaluate the use of all systems and practices contributing to their learners' experiences, to ensure that practice, policy and strategy meet the indented benefits.

### ***2.9.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To ensure that quality assurance models for online and blended courses are integrated into established internal quality frameworks.

- b) To put in place mechanisms for monitoring the teaching process of online and blended courses and evaluates them at the end of each semester.
- c) To put in place a mechanism for monitoring student activities in the Learning Management System.
- d) To conduct regular surveys with regards to student's experience on online or blended courses.
- e) To ensure there is monitoring and evaluation mechanism on the usage of the Learning Management System

### ***2.9.3 Policy Statement***

- a) The university shall ensure that Quality assurance models for online and blended courses are integrated into established internal quality frameworks.
- b) The university shall put in place mechanisms for monitoring the teaching process of online and blended courses and evaluate them at the end of each semester.
- c) The university shall put in place a mechanism for monitoring student activities in the Learning Management System.
- d) The university shall conduct regular surveys with regards to student's experience on online or blended courses.
- e) The university shall monitor and evaluate the usage of the Learning Management System.

## **2.10 Ethical issues related with online teaching and learning**

### ***2.10.1 Situation Analysis***

The major ethical concerns for online students include plagiarism and student substitutions. These concerns are likely to affect SAUT students, to this effect the university will have to acquire plagiarism check software to check student's assignments. More sensitization will be needed to help students understand the importance of using plagiarism detection software to check their works. In addition to that, it is important to teach students on ethical matters including smart online practices as well as how they can proper cite the reference materials used in their assignments. Furthermore, attention to integrity issues should also be considered on the side of instructors.

### ***2.10.2 Policy Objectives***

- a) To develop ethical guidelines for university academic community (code of conduct).
- b) To expose students and staff to the existing policies and regulation.
- c) To enable students, obey the rules including honoring property right (copyright issues and patents), giving proper credit for intellectual property, honoring confidentiality, being honest and trustworthy.
- d) To apply technological tools such as artificial intelligent tools, plagiarism checker, webcam to impose measures to unethical behavior.

### ***2.10.3 Policy statements***

- a) University shall develop ethical guidelines/code of conduct in online learning for both instructors and students and institutionalize these guidelines.
- b) University shall design a mandatory course on ethics and integrity for both students and instructors/staff.
- c) University shall integrate software including plagiarism checkers and other software to monitor unethical conducts in an online environment.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The implementation of e-Learning policy shall be institutionalized within the SAUT organization structure. The Department of Information and Communication Technology shall lead the implementation of the policy and responsible for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The primary tasks of this institute shall be to prepare the guide for implementation plan, which will provide to the University a wide oversight of e – learning policy related activities. The Department of Information Communication Technology shall act as a central custodian for all ICT related activities.

#### **3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation**

The implementation of this policy depends on the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluations mechanism that will be set aside. The process entails decisions, implementation of the decisions and monitoring of performance and progress through the Department of Information, Communication and Technology and University statutory. Relevant performances indicators shall be developed and made available to stakeholders to enable them assess the implementation of the policy on a regular basis.

Most of the University decisions are made after thorough deliberations by members of concerned committees. More often decisions are reached through consensus. The Head of the information communication technology shall report to office of DVCAF all e learning matters which shall discuss and provide recommendations to the management or senate as the case will be. The department of ICT will oversee the implementation of this e learning Policy and undertake its regular reviews to accommodate the rapid changes of technology.

#### **3.3 ENFORCEMENT**

- a) The Directorate of Quality Assurance of the University shall audit compliance with this Policy from time to time. The outcome of the audit shall be a rating of the User Department compliance which will be published
- b) The compliance of the policy shall be audited by an internal and external ICT related auditor once a year.
- c) The Institution’s governing bodies shall monitor the implementation of the policy on regular basis and provide quarterly reports.

- d) The e learning policy shall be implemented using the implementation plan and shall be reviewed once every five years or earlier as needs arises.

Approved by the SAUT Council in its 71<sup>st</sup> Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Flavian Kassala', written over a horizontal dashed line.

**Rt. Rev. Flavian Kassala**

Chairman of the SAUT Council

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