

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS UNIVERSITY (IBU)

POLICY CONTROL

Policy Number	1023 (previously 119)
Policy Title	IBU Online Learning Policy
Policy Owner / Responsible Offices	Office of the Dean / Vice President
Approval Authority	Board of Directors
Applies To	All domestic and international students registered in a program at IBU
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Revision Date/s	-
Revision Implementation Date/s	-

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The International Business University (“IBU”) is committed to applying technology enhanced approaches and integrating technology at the institutional, curricular and classroom levels with the overall objective to enhance and support the learning and teaching processes with appropriate and meaningful usage of electronic resources.

The use of online learning as a mode of course and program delivery must be based on both a clearly developed academic rationale and a robust instructional model that meets high institutional standards for learning. In cases where online offerings develop within existing programs, the expectations for online courses and programs should align with existing offerings.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. **Learning Effectiveness.** IBU ensures that appropriate standards are achieved and maintained in the development and design of its online programs, courses and program delivery methods and that it is offering high-quality education consistent with post-secondary institutional academic standards.
2. **Student-Centered Experience.** IBU is committed to providing a positive student-centered online learning experience, with a personalized learning approach, which is reflected in class size, an online student orientation, opportunities for interaction and collaboration with faculty and peers, rigorous coursework that prepares students for a successful career, and responsive technical support by IBU's IT Service Desk.
3. **Access.** Facilitation of online programs and courses enables IBU to reach an extensive network of students internationally.
4. **Faculty Satisfaction (and Engagement).** Appropriate and ongoing faculty development opportunities and support for those teaching online courses and programs is available, for example faculty preparation and orientation; coaching in online instructional practice and student engagement; course design and assessment methods.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a comprehensive institutional framework governing the design, delivery, evaluation, and continuous improvement of online, hybrid, and technology-enhanced learning at International Business University.

This Policy ensures that IBU's online learning modalities meet Ministerial program delivery requirements, uphold standards of academic integrity, and achieve learning outcomes equivalent to those of in-person programs, as verified through IBU's quality assurance processes and assessment of student learning.

The Policy further affirms that delivery modes are intentionally designed to enhance pedagogical effectiveness, foster meaningful academic community among students and faculty, support accessibility and flexibility, and maintain consistency in academic rigor, student engagement, and institutional accountability across all modes of instruction.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The strategic vision for IBU's Online Learning courses or programs is to provide a supportive, high-quality, and affordable educational experience that has a positive impact on students, faculty, and the community. IBU will deliver an online educational experience that is student centered, enhances both student and faculty engagement, meets emerging needs and interest, and is widely accessible to a diverse student population around the world.

The expected and actual learning outcomes of IBU's personalized learning are supported through an intensive faculty-student experience, class-size limits, dedicated student experienced personnel and a carefully tailored curriculum designed to deliver a clear portfolio of skills, learning outcomes and competencies differentiated and advantageous for employers.

4. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all domestic and international students registered in a program at IBU. This policy is available to all past, current and prospective domestic and international students of IBU.

Please also refer to IBU's Online Code of Conduct Policy.

5. DEFINITIONS

Online Learning

Instruction in which teaching, interaction, and assessment occur primarily through digital platforms without the instructor and students being in the same physical location.

Hybrid (Flexible) Learning

A delivery model combining online and in-person instruction, allowing flexibility in student participation while maintaining academic equivalence.

Blended Learning

A delivery model consisting of scheduled in-person instruction supplemented by online activities that do not constitute the majority of academic engagement.

Learning Management System (LMS)

An institutional digital platform used to deliver course content, facilitate interaction, manage assessments, and track student participation.

6. POLICY

6.1 COURSE & PROGRAM MODE OF DELIVERY & INSTRUCTION

Mode of Delivery	Definitions	Instruction and Student Attendance
In-Person	In-person courses or programs are ones in which both the instructor and the students meet in the same physical location at the same time for most or all of the teaching and learning involved in the course components. While some online learning activities, such as dissemination of course materials via a learning management system (i.e., Canvas), may be included as part of the course design, they do not constitute the majority of academic activities.	In-person class meetings at campus or other location.
Blended	Courses or programs composed of in person meetings supplemented by online meetings. In addition, some online learning activities, such as dissemination of course materials via a learning management system (i.e., Canvas), may be included as part of the course design.	In-person class meetings at campus or other location, supplemented by online meetings. Students must physically attend the in-person meetings in order to fulfill the attendance requirements.
Hybrid (Flexible)	Hybrid courses or programs are designed to provide a mix of online and in-person interaction, involving the use of technologies to facilitate multi-modality, flexibility, and student engagement. Students have the flexibility to attend a course in-person or online.	Online instruction may be facilitated via web-based learning platforms including online instruction, lecture captures, videos, discussion forums, collaborative tools, self-directed learning modules etc. International students must physically

		attend in person in order to fulfill attendance requirements.*
Online	Online courses and programs are designed such that all instructional interaction occurs without the student and instructor being in the same physical location.	Online instruction may be facilitated via web-based learning platforms including online instruction, lecture captures, videos, discussion forums, collaborative tools, self-directed learning modules etc.

* For international students starting in September 2023 to be eligible for a post-graduation work permit (PGWP), they must be in Canada for the complete duration of their studies after Sept 1, 2023 and attend at least 50 percent of their program in class and meet all other PGWP requirements.

6.2 STANDARDS FOR ONLINE COURSES AND PROGRAMS

IBU has set out the following standards for which its online courses and programs must adhere to the following:

- a) IBU Faculty is required to possess the relevant expertise and qualifications to offer courses that utilize teaching strategies and technologies for online courses and programs. All IBU Faculty teaching an online course or program are expected to participate in Faculty Preparation and Orientation training with IBU's IT Director prior to commencement of the course or program.
- b) Student identification processes shall be in place to verify that each registered student is the same student who participates in and completes the online course and receives academic credit.
- c) IBU Faculty must apply strict procedures to ensure that credibility and integrity are maintained at the highest level. Faculty must have a plan to monitor student progress and evaluate student learning outcomes through graded activities mediated through technology.
- d) All campus policies and regulations for courses and instruction (registration deadlines, academic integrity, etc.) that apply to conventional courses also apply to online courses and programs. As with in-person courses, online courses and programs must accommodate students with disabilities.
- e) Any synchronous interaction (for example in lectures, discussion sections, office hours, or any other setting) must meet the following minimum set of standards:

- i. Students must be able to both see and hear the instructor and view the instruction materials (for example, physical or electronic whiteboard, computer slides, experimental setups, etc.) with sufficient fidelity that no significant information is lost.
- ii. Students must have appropriate and effective ways of asking questions.
- iii. Student should be able to hear questions asked by other students and the instructor's answers.
- iv. When a class has some students remote and some students in-person, all students must have equal opportunity to participate in classroom discussions, and all students must have equal access to office hours.

IBU utilizes its course delivery methods of in-class, hybrid and online education to support the achievement of its unique value proposition that is “personalized learning”. In the online or hybrid delivery methods, class interaction takes place through the use of technology. It is the responsibility of both the instructor and students to monitor and respond regularly to all course, campus community and other information on the My IBU web-based platform. Instructors will be responsible for setting out clear contact information and office hours for students at the beginning of the course

6.3 ONLINE CURRICULUM

IBU Faculty possessing the appropriate credentials are responsible for the design, development, implementation, and revision of online courses/programs. IBU's Dean / Vice-President (or designate) must approve all online courses/ programs prior to implementation. IBU requires all online courses and programs to provide the same academic quality consistent with its in-person courses and programs. Accordingly, course syllabuses, program learning outcomes and course evaluations for online courses reflect standards and practices including Ministerial program requirements consistent with IBU's in-person courses and programs.

Faculty are responsible for the integrity of all content used in online course materials, including accuracy, currency and compliance with laws regarding copyright.

6.3.1 ASSESSMENT, REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMS

Regardless of delivery mode all IBU courses and programs follow the same academic process with respect to program assessment, review and approval.

6.3.2 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Regardless of delivery mode, all IBU's programs are subject to a robust cyclical internal review process to ensure appropriate standards are achieved and maintained in the University's educational programs and that it is offering a high-quality education consistent with post-secondary institutional standards.

6.3.3 ACADEMIC REVIEW

All IBU's existing programs are also required to undergo a five-year University academic review, the intent of this review is to ensure that student and peer feedback concerning course content and delivery is thoroughly included in any organizational review discussion and in efforts to ensure continuous improvements at IBU.

6.3.4 STUDENT FEEDBACK

At the core of IBU's program quality review process are student feedback questionnaires that are completed at the end of each course. These questionnaires will be distributed by IBU staff through IBU's online portal or other means deemed appropriate. The feedback provided in the questionnaires will be used to:

- a) Promote teaching excellence;
- a) evaluate teaching effectiveness
- b) monitor the relevance of taught curriculum; and
- c) indicate, insofar as possible, areas for continuous improvement in courses within a program lead to competency development in all relevant skills.

IBU's Dean/Vice President (or designate) will be responsible for overseeing the design, distribution, and interpretation of feedback forms.

For more information on IBU's Quality Assurance process, IBU's Academic Review process and Student Feedback process please refer to IBU's Quality Assurance Policy.

6.4 FACULTY

Faculty engaged in delivering online courses and programs must meet the same qualification and Ministerial requirements as those teaching in-person courses. IBU's programs and courses regardless of delivery mode are taught by a combination of industry professionals who demonstrate significant industry experience in their field as well as faculty members who have a terminal degree in the relevant field. Industry professional faculty will also be required to have relevant pedagogical experience, such as regular facilitation of workshops, institutional courses, instruction at another post-secondary

institution, a certificate or degree in adult education, or another means of demonstrating the capacity to teach the course effectively.

Prior to teaching an online or hybrid course, faculty members are required to demonstrate the requisite skills and knowledge needed to effectively deliver the curriculum.

Faculty should maintain accurate student attendance records for each class meeting whether an attendance is fulfilled by online or in-person mode

6.5 TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technical support services for faculty, staff, and students are provided through IBU's IT Help Desk. The Dean/ Vice-President (or delegate) with support from IBU's IT Director will oversee the administration of the learning management system; maintain the users, courses, and enrollments in the system; provide technical assistance and training; and provides instructional design support for the development of quality, accessible online, hybrid, and technology-enhanced courses. The IT Service Desk provides user account and log-in support for the learning management system. Online training tutorials and resources for the learning management system are available on IBU's web-based platform for faculty/staff and students.

For more information on technology management and expectations of conduct and behavior when using electronic resources at IBU please refer to IBU's Student Virtual Learning and Information Technology Management Policy and IBU's Online Code of Conduct Policy.

For information on data privacy and security please refer to IBU's Information and Cyber Security Policy.

6.6 LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Students enrolled in IBU's online courses and programs have access to IBU's online library facilities. The digital resources and services of IBU's online library enable its students to reach the information from off campus. IBU provides electronic access to EBSCO Products called Business Source Elite and eBooks Business Subscription that provides our students and faculty with access to thousands of eBooks dedicated to the study of business. In

addition, IBU's subscription to EBSCO products provides other research databases covering a variety of subjects for students and researchers. IBU will maintain other necessary online library facilities to support its online courses and programs as well as to allow access to more academic and professional databases for research activities

6.7 ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SERVICES

Students enrolled in IBU's online courses and programs have access to the same services as in-person students, including, but not limited to academic support (e.g., academic counselling, tutoring, accessibility services), administrative support (e.g., registrar), student support services (e.g., career counseling, personal counselling, international student services) and technical support services from IBU's IT Service Desk.

6.8 ADMISSION

Students seeking admission to online courses and programs must satisfy the same requirements for admission to the University, to the program, and to academic credit courses, as are required of in-person courses and programs. Students are apprised throughout the recruitment and application process of the instructional delivery systems and technologies used in their online courses or programs. Admitted students are informed of the technical competence required to complete the online course or program.

6.9 QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

For purpose of ensuring continued academic program quality and to effectively meet its mandate, IBU has adopted a quality assurance policy that encapsulates:

- 1) Governance, Policies and Procedures – allowing programs to be developed in a timely fashion, in response to market need that meet provincial quality standards.
- 2) IBU will establish Periodic Academic Program Review schedules including annual reviews of all programs and in-depth external academic reviews every 5 years in order to determine that programs are meeting the University's objectives.
- 3) Each program shall be reviewed at least once every 7 years.

- 4) In addition, every 6 years, IBU will evaluate its' existing Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures.
- 5) Student Assessment – based on clearly articulated learning outcomes and meeting appropriate degree standards.
- 6) The quality assurance review process shall work in concert with Academic Council's ongoing curriculum and program review.
- 7) Regular and systematic evaluations of faculty and staff performance assessments will be aligned with periodic quality assurance review process.

6.9.1 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

IBU will retain an external review panel to report on the quality of its online courses and programs every five years. The external review panel would report to the Academic Council on matters related to academic activities, and to IBU's Board on matters related to administrative activities.

6.9.2 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

IBU will conduct an internal quality assessment of its' online courses and programs also referred to as its' academic review process every five years. It will be conducted by a review team that will include the Dean, faculty members, student representatives, and representatives of other groups as deemed appropriate by IBU's Academic Council.

During the academic review, the following elements of the program will be assessed:

- (a) The overall strengths and weaknesses of the current courses and work integrated learning opportunities.
- (b) Faculty workloads.
- (c) Adequacy of connections with industries and business in Toronto for work placements.
- (d) Discussion of learning outcomes for students and means by which those outcomes are evaluated.
- (e) Consideration of the links between courses and the degree standards.
- (f) Relations between courses, programs, work-placements, and work integrated learning.
- (g) Evaluation of the nature and value of the student assignments during their integrative semesters.
- (h) Suggestions for improving the delivery of programs, at both course and program levels.

Broadly, the review will also include:

1. A systematic evaluation of current faculty and assessment of their teaching evaluations by peers and from student feedback;
2. An assessment of student outcomes (graduation and employment rates); and consideration of relevant physical resource

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility and authority for adherence and review of this policy resides with the Dean/Vice President (or designate), with that responsibility is shared with IBU's Academic Council, Board of Governors, department chairs and faculty, as appropriate.

8. REVIEW

This policy was last reviewed on January 2, 2026 (1st review) Further on this policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure continued relevance, regulatory compliance, and alignment with institutional academic practices and applicable requirements as referenced within the policy. The standard review cycle for this policy is every three (3) years, or earlier if required due to regulatory change or institutional need.

9. COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

Compliance with this Policy is overseen through IBU's academic governance and quality assurance mechanisms.

10. EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

External and internal quality assurance processes apply equally to online, hybrid, and in-person programs as outlined in IBU's Quality Assurance Policy.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- IBU Online Code of Conduct Policy
- IBU Quality Assurance Policy
- IBU Student Virtual Learning and Information Technology Management Policy
- IBU Information and Cyber Security Policy