ODL
HANDBOOK

AIMST LIFELONG LEARNING

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ODL Handbook

1.0
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Director's Note

Dear Students,

As the Director, I extend a warm welcome to our Open & Distance Learning (ODL) platform. This digital gateway is your key to a world of knowledge and opportunity. We are committed to providing you with a dynamic and enriching learning experience that will not only shape your present but also have a profound impact on your future.

The skills and knowledge you acquire here will equip you to excel in an ever-evolving job market and make a positive difference in your chosen field. The world is changing rapidly, and the ability to adapt, learn, and grow is more crucial than ever. By embracing this educational journey, you are not only investing in your personal growth but also in your future success.

Our dedicated faculty and staff are here to support you every step of the way. They bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to ensure that you receive the best education possible.

So, I encourage you to explore, engage, and excel. Your educational adventure begins here, but the impact it will have on your future is immeasurable. Take full advantage of the opportunities presented to you, and I have no doubt that your time here will shape a bright and promising path ahead.

Sincerely,
ASST. PROF. DR. MOHAMED ASEM,
Director,
AIMST Lifelong Learning.

1.2 Mission and Vision

Mission

"Our mission is to provide flexible, inclusive, and learner-centered education through advanced open and distance learning methodologies. We are committed to fostering academic excellence, supporting lifelong learning, and leveraging technology to enhance educational opportunities and outcomes for a diverse range of students."

Vision

"To be a leading institution in delivering innovative, accessible, and high-quality education through open and distance learning, empowering diverse learners globally to achieve their academic and professional aspirations."
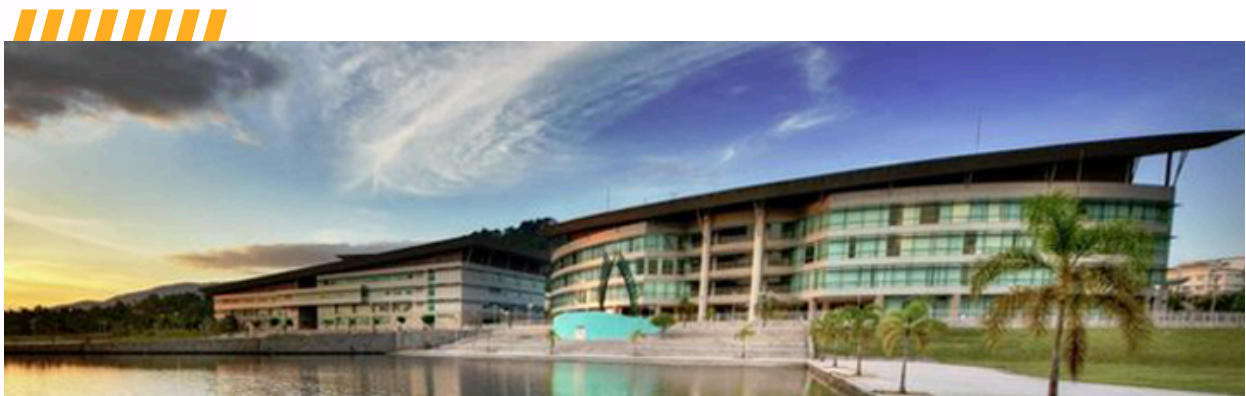
1.3 Overview of AIMST University

Established in 2001, AIMST University in Kedah, Malaysia, is a premier institution recognized for academic excellence and holistic development. Accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, it offers diverse undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Engineering, Business, Computer Science, and more, blending theory with practical skills for global job market readiness.

AIMST is a hub for research and innovation, featuring state-of-the-art facilities and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration in fields like biomedical sciences, renewable energy, and technology. Beyond academics, the university promotes extracurricular engagement, nurturing well-rounded graduates who excel as leaders and contributors to society.

Committed to inclusivity and global relevance, AIMST continues to advance as a center of educational excellence, empowering students to make meaningful contributions worldwide.

1.4 Importance of Open Distance Learning

In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, education is no longer confined to traditional classrooms. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) has emerged as a transformative approach to education, breaking down barriers of time, space, and accessibility. By leveraging digital platforms and innovative teaching methodologies, ODL provides learners with the flexibility and opportunity to pursue quality education, regardless of their location or personal commitments.

One of the most significant advantages of ODL is flexibility. It empowers learners to balance their studies with work, family, and other responsibilities. Students can access course materials, participate in discussions, and complete assignments at their own pace, making it an ideal solution for working professionals, parents, and individuals seeking lifelong learning opportunities.

ODL also promotes inclusive education by reaching learners who may face challenges accessing traditional educational institutions. This includes individuals from remote areas, those with physical disabilities, and people unable to relocate due to personal or financial constraints. By eliminating geographical and logistical barriers, ODL ensures that education is truly accessible to all.

Another key benefit of ODL is its role in fostering independent learning and self-discipline. Unlike conventional classroom settings, ODL places the responsibility of learning on the students, encouraging them to take initiative, manage their time effectively, and develop critical thinking skills. These attributes are essential for personal and professional growth in an ever-evolving world.

Moreover, ODL enables learners to stay ahead in a rapidly changing job market. With the flexibility to upskill and reskill while continuing to work, students can acquire new qualifications or enhance their knowledge to remain competitive in their careers. Many ODL programs are tailored to meet industry demands, providing learners with practical skills and knowledge that are directly applicable in the workplace.

From a global perspective, ODL plays a crucial role in promoting sustainability and lifelong learning. By reducing the need for physical infrastructure, travel, and printed materials, ODL contributes to environmental conservation. Additionally, its focus on continuous education ensures that individuals can adapt to emerging trends and technologies throughout their lives.

Finally, ODL fosters a global learning community, connecting students and educators from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. This cross-cultural exchange enriches the learning experience, broadens perspectives, and prepares students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

In conclusion, Open and Distance Learning is more than just an alternative to traditional education—it is a vital tool for empowering individuals, bridging gaps in education, and building a more inclusive, adaptable, and skilled global society. At AIMST University, we are proud to champion ODL as a cornerstone of our mission to provide accessible and quality education for all.

2.0
ODL Structure and Methodology

2.1 Definition of Open Distance Learning

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is an innovative educational approach that combines flexibility, accessibility, and technology to deliver quality education beyond the constraints of traditional classroom settings. It emphasizes learner-centered methodologies, allowing students to study at their own pace, place, and time while utilizing digital platforms and resources to access course materials, interact with educators, and engage in collaborative learning.

ODL removes barriers to education by accommodating diverse needs, including those of working professionals, individuals in remote locations, and learners with varying personal commitments. By leveraging technology, ODL ensures that education is inclusive, adaptable, and aligned with the demands of a rapidly evolving global landscape.

2.2 Educational Philosophy (Flexibility, Self-Paced Learning)

The cornerstone of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) lies in its progressive educational philosophy, which prioritizes flexibility and self-paced learning. These principles are designed to cater to the diverse needs of learners, enabling them to achieve their academic and professional goals without the constraints of traditional education systems.

Flexibility is one of the defining features of ODL. It allows students to tailor their learning schedules around their personal and professional commitments. Whether they are working professionals, stay-at-home parents, or individuals in remote locations, learners can access course materials, participate in virtual discussions, and complete assignments at times that suit their unique circumstances. This adaptability ensures that education becomes an attainable goal for everyone, regardless of their lifestyle or responsibilities.

Self-paced learning, another pillar of ODL, empowers students to progress through their courses at a speed that aligns with their individual learning styles and capabilities. Unlike conventional classrooms, where all students follow a standardized timeline, ODL provides the freedom to revisit complex topics, spend additional time on areas of interest, or move quickly through familiar material. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter and builds confidence in learners as they take charge of their educational journey.

By embracing these principles, ODL promotes the development of independent learning skills, such as time management, self-motivation, and critical thinking. These attributes not only contribute to academic success but also prepare students for the demands of a rapidly evolving global workforce.

AIMST University's ODL programs are built on this educational philosophy, ensuring that learners receive a personalized, enriching, and transformative learning experience. With flexibility and self-paced learning at its core, our ODL platform is dedicated to creating opportunities that empower individuals to excel in their academic and professional pursuits, while maintaining a healthy balance in their lives.

2.3 Innovative Teaching Techniques

In the realm of Open and Distance Learning (ODL), innovation in teaching techniques is pivotal to delivering an engaging, interactive, and effective educational experience. AIMST University integrates cutting-edge methodologies to ensure that learners receive the highest quality education, tailored to their unique needs and learning styles.

2.3.1 Blended Learning Approaches

Combining the best of traditional and digital education, blended learning incorporates online resources, live virtual sessions, and self-paced activities. This method bridges the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application, creating a dynamic learning environment that encourages both collaboration and independent study.

2.3.2 Interactive Multimedia Content

To enhance learner engagement, AIMST ODL incorporates multimedia-rich content, including videos, animations, infographics, and interactive simulations. These elements transform complex concepts into easily understandable formats, catering to visual and auditory learners while making learning more enjoyable.

2.3.3 Gamification of Learning

Gamification involves applying game-like elements to the educational process, such as quizzes, leaderboards, and badges. These techniques motivate learners by making the process more interactive and rewarding, fostering a sense of achievement and encouraging consistent participation.

2.3.4 Collaborative Learning Tools

Leveraging digital tools like discussion forums, group projects, and shared online workspaces, collaborative learning fosters teamwork and peer interaction. These platforms enable students to exchange ideas, share insights, and learn from each other, creating a sense of community within the ODL framework.

2.3.5 Adaptive Learning Systems

Adaptive learning technology personalizes the educational experience by analyzing learner progress and providing customized feedback and resources. This data-driven approach ensures that students focus on areas where they need improvement, optimizing their learning outcomes.

2.3.6 Live Virtual Classrooms and Webinars

Real-time interaction with instructors and peers through virtual classrooms and webinars brings a human touch to online learning. These sessions allow for immediate feedback, in-depth discussions, and collaborative problem-solving, enhancing the overall learning experience.

2.3.7 Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

PBL encourages learners to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills by tackling real-world scenarios. This technique bridges the gap between theory and practice, preparing students to address challenges in their chosen fields confidently.

2.3.8 Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI-driven tools, such as chatbots, virtual tutors, and intelligent grading systems, streamline administrative tasks and provide round-the-clock support to learners. These technologies enhance the learning experience by offering instant feedback and personalized assistance.

2.3.9 Flipped Classroom Model

The flipped classroom reverses the traditional learning structure by having students review lecture materials at home and engage in practical, discussion-based activities during virtual sessions. This approach encourages active participation and deeper understanding of the subject matter.

2.3.10 Mobile Learning (M-Learning)

Recognizing the growing reliance on mobile devices, AIMST ODL incorporates mobile-friendly platforms and applications. This ensures that learners can access content, participate in discussions, and complete assignments on the go, further enhancing flexibility.

2.4 Role of Technology in ODL

Technology serves as the backbone of Open and Distance Learning (ODL), transforming how education is delivered, accessed, and experienced. By leveraging advanced tools and platforms, ODL has become more inclusive, engaging, and efficient, enabling learners to thrive in a digital-first world. At AIMST University, we embrace cutting-edge technologies to ensure our ODL programs remain dynamic and future-ready.

2.4.1 Learning Management Systems (LMS) – Moodle

At the heart of ODL lies the Learning Management System (LMS), a centralized platform that facilitates the seamless delivery of educational content and resources. Moodle, a leading open-source LMS used by AIMST, enables:

Centralized Access	Students can access lectures, assignments, assessments, and additional resources in one place.
Interactive Learning	Features like discussion forums, quizzes, and real-time feedback encourage active participation.
Personalized Learning Paths	Moodle tracks individual progress, offering insights to both learners and educators to enhance outcomes.

2.4.2 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI has revolutionized the ODL landscape by offering personalized, adaptive, and efficient learning experiences. Its applications in ODL include:

Personalized Learning
AI algorithms analyze student data to customize learning paths, ensuring each learner receives resources tailored to their needs.

Virtual Tutors and Chatbots
AI-driven chatbots provide round-the-clock support, answering queries and guiding students through their coursework.

Automated Assessments
AI simplifies grading by automating evaluations, ensuring consistency and saving time for educators.

Predictive Analytics
AI tools predict student performance, enabling early intervention to address challenges.

2.4.3 Multimedia and Interactive Content

Technology enables the integration of rich multimedia elements into ODL, enhancing engagement and comprehension:

Video Lectures and Tutorials
High-quality video content, often enhanced with animations and subtitles, makes complex topics accessible.

Interactive Simulations	Virtual labs and simulations provide hands-on experience, particularly for fields like medicine, engineering, and sciences.
Gamification	Incorporating game-like elements, such as badges and leaderboards, motivates learners and encourages consistent participation.

2.4.4 Cloud-Based Learning

Cloud technology ensures that ODL resources are accessible anytime, anywhere:

Scalability	Cloud platforms accommodate increasing numbers of learners without compromising performance.
Seamless Collaboration	Students and instructors can collaborate in real-time through shared documents and workspaces.
Data Security	Cloud systems provide robust backups and security measures to protect sensitive information.

2.4.5 Mobile Learning (M-Learning)

Mobile technology extends the reach of ODL, allowing learners to study on the go. Features include:

Responsive Platforms	Virtual labs and simulations provide hands-on experience, particularly for fields like medicine, engineering, and sciences.
Push Notifications	Reminders about deadlines and announcements keep students on track.
Offline Access	Downloadable content ensures uninterrupted learning, even without internet connectivity.

2.4.6 Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR)

Emerging technologies like VR and AR are redefining experiential learning:

Immersive Experiences	VR creates virtual environments where students can explore concepts hands-on, such as virtual dissections or architectural designs.
Augmented Learning	AR overlays interactive content on real-world environments, making abstract ideas tangible and relatable.

2.4.7 Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

Technology bridges time zones and schedules, offering both real-time and self-paced options:

Live Virtual Classrooms	Platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams facilitate interactive sessions where learners can engage directly with instructors and peers.
Recorded Sessions	Asynchronous access ensures students can revisit lectures at their convenience, enhancing retention.

2.4.8 Big Data and Analytics

Data-driven insights play a critical role in enhancing the ODL experience:

Learning Analytics	Educators can monitor engagement, progress, and performance, allowing for data-informed decision-making.
Customized Feedback	Analytics tools provide specific feedback to students, helping them identify areas for improvement.

2.4.9 Open Educational Resources (OER)

Technology enables access to free, high-quality resources such as e-books, journals, and research papers, reducing costs for learners while broadening their access to knowledge.

3.0
Academic
Programs Offered

3.1 List of Available Courses and Specializations

AIMST University's Open and Distance Learning (ODL) platform offers a variety of flexible and accessible programs tailored to meet the needs of modern learners. These courses span multiple disciplines, providing opportunities for personal and professional growth.

 To explore the complete list of ODL courses and specializations, visit: **AIMST ODL Courses**

3.2 Course Registration Process

For more details and to register, visit: **Register Here**

3.3 Duration and Structure of Programs

To refer the course outline, visit: **AIMST ODL Courses**.

4.0
Admission
Requirements

4.1 Admission of Regular Students to University Programmes

4.1.1 Admission to any University course shall be according to the resolution of the Senate and shall be subject to the following:
(a) payment of specified fees;
(b) registration as a student for a programme by signing and submitting the Students" Registration Form during admission to the University; and
(c) registration at the beginning of every academic term / semester for the full duration of the course.

4.1.2 Notwithstanding paragraph (b) of the above sub-section, an applicant who is offered as a candidate for a degree shall be permitted for limited registration as a University student subject to the following conditions: -

(a) payment of specified fees;
(b) registration as a student for a programme by signing and submitting the Students" Registration Form during admission to the University; and
(c) registration at the beginning of every academic term / semester for the full duration of the course.

4.1.3 Personal Data Protection (PDPA) - All personal information obtained from you and other sources in connection with your studies at University will be held securely and will be used by the University solely for academic purposes as explained during enrolment.

4.2 Admission of an 'Audit' Student

4.2.1 The Dean of a Faculty or the Director of a School is empowered to accept an audit student who shall be subjected to the following conditions:

a) the period shall be limited to one calendar year for a research course and one academic year for a study course.

 b) the total number of courses that shall be taken by an audit student may not exceed two thirds of the total courses that is set for a regular student in one academic year.

4.2.2 An audit student shall not be permitted to sit for any examination of the University except with the prior approval in writing from the Registrar. Approval shall only be given if he/she is a student of a university or other institution and if the student has applied to transfer the credit to the university or institution he is enrolled. Application to sit for such examination shall be done by writing to the Registrar within three months after the registration as an audit student. Application should be accompanied with a supporting letter by an authorized officer from the student"s University or institution.

4.2.3 Notwithstanding the provision of subsection (4.2.2) of this section, Senate in special cases shall allow an audit student to sit for any examination of the University for any purpose other than for transferring credit to the student"s home University or institution.

4.2.4 Approval to sit for any examination of the University under subsection (4.2) and (4.3) of this section shall be subjected to the following conditions: -

(a) a student has followed the course that leads to the examination by satisfying the Dean of the Faculty or the Director of the School; and

(b) the results of any examination shall not be given to the student but shall be sent directly to the student"s University or the institution.

4.3 Simultaneous Registration of Courses

4.3.1 A student who is registered for a course that leads to the conferment of a university degree, diploma or certificate, shall not be allowed to register simultaneously for another course that leads to a degree, diploma or certificate of this University or other university.

4.3.2 The Registrar shall allow a student to register for another course that leads to a degree, diploma or certificate if it is not similar to the degree course registered simultaneously in this University.

4.2.3 Notwithstanding the provision of subsection (4.2.2) of this section, Senate in special cases shall allow an audit student to sit for any examination of the University for any purpose other than for transferring credit to the student"s home University or institution.

5.0
Learning Environment

5.1 Learning Management System Overview

A Learning Management System (LMS) is a vital tool in Open and Distance Learning (ODL), serving as the foundation for organizing, delivering, and managing educational content. AIMST University employs Moodle, one of the most robust and versatile open-source LMS platforms, to provide an engaging and effective learning experience for its students.

5.1.1 What is Moodle?

Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is a globally recognized LMS designed to support a wide range of teaching and learning needs. Its open-source nature allows customization and scalability, making it an ideal solution for institutions like AIMST University that aim to deliver high-quality, student-centered education.

5.1.2 Key Features of Moodle:

Centralized Platform for Learning	Moodle provides a one-stop platform for students to access course materials, participate in discussions, complete assignments, and track their progress. Educators can upload resources, create quizzes, monitor student activity, and provide feedback in a streamlined manner.

User-Friendly Interface	Moodle's intuitive design ensures ease of use for both students and instructors. Its responsive layout makes it accessible across various devices, including desktops, tablets, and smartphones.
Personalized Learning Experiences	Moodle allows instructors to tailor content and activities to individual learners' needs. Features like adaptive quizzes, conditional access, and individualized feedback promote a personalized learning experience.
Collaborative Learning Environment	Discussion forums, wikis, and group activities within Moodle foster collaboration among learners. These tools encourage knowledge sharing and create a sense of community within the digital learning space.
Assessment and Feedback Tools	Moodle supports diverse assessment methods, including quizzes, assignments, peer reviews, and surveys. Instructors can provide detailed feedback to help students improve, and automated grading systems save time while ensuring consistency.
Analytics and Reporting	Moodle offers robust analytics tools that allow educators to monitor student performance, engagement, and participation. These insights help identify learners who may need additional support, enabling timely interventions.

Integration and Compatibility	Moodle integrates seamlessly with other tools and platforms, such as video conferencing software (e.g., Zoom), external repositories, and third-party plugins. It supports multimedia content, making it easy to incorporate videos, simulations, and interactive materials into courses.
Scalability and Customization	Moodle can accommodate the needs of small classes or large-scale university programs.Its open-source nature allows AIMST University to customize the platform to align with its educational objectives and branding.
Moodle at AIMST University	At AIMST University, Moodle serves as the backbone of its ODL framework, ensuring that students and faculty have access to a state-of-the-art educational platform. The system supports the university's commitment to flexibility, inclusivity, and quality education by: a) Providing 24/7 access to learning materials and activities. b) Enabling interactive and collaborative learning experiences. c) Facilitating continuous evaluation and feedback to enhance student outcomes.

5.2 Resources Available for Students (e.g., Libraries, Online Materials)

AIMST University is committed to providing students with a comprehensive array of resources designed to support their academic pursuits, especially within the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) framework. These resources ensure that students can access the tools and information necessary for a successful and enriching educational experience. Below is a detailed overview of the resources available to ODL students at AIMST University.

5.2.1 Student Portal serves as a centralized hub where students can manage their academic journey with ease. Through the portal, students can access vital information such as enrollment details, course registration, academic schedules, and examination results. The portal also acts as a communication bridge, providing timely updates on university announcements, upcoming events, and critical deadlines. This all-in-one platform ensures that students remain informed and organized, allowing them to focus on their studies without unnecessary administrative hurdles.

5.2.2 AIMST's Learning Management System (LMS), powered by Moodle, is the cornerstone of the ODL experience. Moodle enables a structured and dynamic virtual learning environment where students can access course materials, including lecture notes, video lectures, and supplementary reading resources. The LMS also facilitates assessments through quizzes and assignments while providing tools for interactive discussions between students and instructors. With features like progress tracking, personalized feedback, and adaptive learning paths, the LMS ensures that every student has the support needed to achieve their academic goals.

5.2.3 E-Library is another crucial resource for AIMST students, offering access to a vast digital repository of academic content. This includes thousands of e-books, peer-reviewed journals, research articles, and case studies that cover a wide range of disciplines. The E-Library is accessible 24/7, allowing students to tailor their study schedules according to their personal and professional commitments. By providing these resources, the E-Library fosters independent learning and ensures that students stay abreast of the latest developments in their fields of interest.

5.2.4 Course Essentials & Interaction Hub is available to enhance student engagement and collaboration. This platform includes detailed guidelines for each course, along with tools for group discussions and collaborative projects. Students can actively participate in forums, seek clarifications from instructors, and share insights with peers. The hub promotes a sense of community, ensuring that students feel connected to their courses and each other, even in a virtual learning environment.

5.2.5 Recognizing the importance of student well-being, AIMST provides **Counseling Services** as part of its comprehensive support system. Professional counselors are available to assist students in navigating academic challenges and personal concerns. These services are confidential and tailored to help students maintain a healthy balance between their studies and personal lives.

5.2.6 The university also offers access to **Microsoft 365**, equipping students with productivity tools like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Teams. These tools are integral for completing assignments, collaborating on projects, and communicating effectively within and beyond the academic environment.

5.2.7 In addition to these resources, AIMST conducts Online Classes through **ZOOM** , enabling real-time interaction between students and faculty. These classes replicate the traditional classroom experience while offering the flexibility of distance learning. Recorded sessions are often made available for future reference, ensuring that students can revisit lectures and enhance their understanding of the subject matter.

By offering this extensive range of resources, AIMST University ensures that its ODL students receive a holistic and well-rounded educational experience. These tools not only support academic success but also prepare students to excel in a technologically driven and competitive global environment.

5.3 Technology Requirements for Online Learning

5.3.1 Windows

Minimum Hardware Requirements	Recommended Hardware Requirements
Processor: Dual-core processor (e.g., Intel Core i3 or AMD equivalent).	**Processor:** Quad-core processor (e.g., Intel Core i5 or AMD Ryzen 5).
RAM: 4 GB or higher.	**RAM:** 8 GB or higher.
Storage: 128 GB HDD or SSD with at least 20 GB free space.	**Storage:** 256 GB SSD with 50 GB free space.
Display: 1366 x 768 resolution.	**Display:** Full HD resolution (1920 x 1080).
Network: Stable internet connection with a minimum speed of 5 Mbps.	**Network:** High-speed internet connection with a minimum speed of 10 Mbps.
Peripherals: Built-in or external webcam, microphone, and speakers/headphones.	**Peripherals:** HD webcam, noise-cancelling microphone, and high-quality headphones.

Minimum Software Requirements

Operating System: Windows 10 (64-bit).

Web Browser: Latest versions of Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, or Microsoft Edge.

Office Applications: Microsoft Office 365 or compatible alternatives (e.g., LibreOffice).

LMS Access: Compatibility with Moodle (requires JavaScript-enabled browser).

Media Players: VLC Media Player or Windows Media Player.

Antivirus Software: Basic protection such as Windows Defender or third-party antivirus.

Recommended Software Requirements

Operating System: Windows 11 (64-bit).

Web Browser: Latest versions of Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge (with extensions for productivity).

Office Applications: Microsoft Office 365 (fully updated).

LMS Access: Seamless integration with Moodle using modern browsers.

Media Players: VLC Media Player or other high-quality alternatives.

Antivirus Software: Advanced protection such as Bitdefender, Norton, or McAfee.

Additional Tools: Adobe Acrobat Reader, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and cloud storage apps like OneDrive or Google Drive.

5.3.2 Mac OS

Minimum Hardware Requirements

Processor: Dual-core Intel processor or Apple M1 chip.
RAM: 4 GB or higher.
Storage: 128 GB SSD with at least 20 GB free space.
Display: 1280 x 800 resolution.
Network: Stable internet connection with a minimum speed of 5 Mbps.
Peripherals: Built-in FaceTime HD camera or external webcam, microphone, and speakers/headphones.

Recommended Hardware Requirements

Processor: Quad-core Intel processor or Apple M1/M2 chip.
RAM: 8 GB or higher.
Storage: 256 GB SSD with 50 GB free space.
Display: Retina display with at least 2560 x 1600 resolution.
Network: High-speed internet connection with a minimum speed of 10 Mbps.
Peripherals: HD FaceTime camera or external webcam, noise-cancelling microphone, and high-quality headphones.

Minimum Software Requirements

Operating System: macOS 11 (Big Sur) or newer.
Web Browser: Latest versions of Safari, Google Chrome, or Mozilla Firefox.
Office Applications: Microsoft Office 365 for Mac or Apple iWork (Pages, Numbers, Keynote).
LMS Access: Compatibility with Moodle (requires JavaScript-enabled browser).
Media Players: VLC Media Player or QuickTime.
Antivirus Software: Basic protection such as macOS built-in security or third-party antivirus.

Recommended Software Requirements

Operating System: macOS 13 (Ventura) or newer.
Web Browser: Latest version of Safari or Google Chrome.
Office Applications: Microsoft Office 365 for Mac or fully updated Apple iWork suite.
LMS Access: Optimized compatibility with Moodle via Safari or Chrome.
Media Players: VLC Media Player or QuickTime (latest version).
Antivirus Software: Advanced protection such as Norton 360 for Mac or Intego.
Additional Tools: Adobe Acrobat Reader, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and cloud storage apps like iCloud, OneDrive, or Google Drive.

5.4 Support Services Available (Academic Assistance, Counseling)

AIMST University is dedicated to providing comprehensive support services to its students, ensuring both academic success and personal well-being. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students, the university offers tailored services to meet their specific needs.

5.4.1 Academic Assistance

ODL students at AIMST University have access to a robust academic support system designed to facilitate effective learning. The university employs a Learning Management System (LMS) that serves as a centralized platform for course materials, assignments, and interactive forums. This system enables students to engage with instructors and peers, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Additionally, the E-Library provides a vast collection of digital resources, including e-books and academic journals, supporting students in their research and studies. For personalized academic guidance, students can reach out to their course instructors through the LMS or via email, ensuring timely assistance with course-related queries.

5.4.2 Counseling Services

Understanding the importance of mental health and emotional well-being, AIMST University offers professional counseling services to all students. The Counseling & Advisory Service Unit (C.A.S.U.) provides free and confidential support, helping students navigate personal challenges, manage stress, and enhance their overall university experience. During unprecedented times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, C.A.S.U. extended its services to include phone and online counseling, ensuring continuous support. Students can schedule appointments with qualified counselors who are trained to assist with a variety of issues, including academic pressures, personal concerns, and career guidance.

By integrating these support services, AIMST University demonstrates its commitment to the holistic development of its students, ensuring they have the necessary resources to succeed academically and maintain personal well-being throughout their educational journey.

6.0
Student Responsibilities and Expectations

6.1 Code of Conduct

As a student of AIMST University's Open and Distance Learning (ODL) program, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and responsibility. The following Code of Conduct outlines the responsibilities and expectations for all ODL students to foster a positive and productive learning environment.

6.1.1 Academic Integrity

Honesty in Academic Work	Complete all assignments, assessments, and projects independently unless collaboration is explicitly permitted. Avoid plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty.
Proper Citation	Give credit to original authors and sources when using external references in assignments or projects.
Authenticity	Use your own credentials for logging into the Learning Management System (LMS) and submitting coursework. Misrepresentation of identity is strictly prohibited.

6.1.2 Respect and Professionalism

Respectful Communication	Maintain a respectful tone in all interactions with instructors, peers, and staff, whether in discussion forums, emails, or live sessions. Refrain from using offensive or discriminatory language.
Diversity and Inclusion	Foster a supportive and inclusive environment by respecting the cultural, religious, and personal differences of others.
Constructive Feedback	Provide constructive and respectful feedback when participating in peer reviews or group discussions.

6.1.3 Participation and Engagement

Attendance	Attend all scheduled live sessions, tutorials, or virtual meetings, and actively participate in discussions. If attendance is not possible, review recorded sessions promptly.
Timely Submissions	Complete and submit assignments, quizzes, and projects by the specified deadlines. Proactively communicate with instructors if unforeseen circumstances arise.
Engagement	Regularly log in to the LMS, stay updated with announcements, and engage with course materials and activities.

6.1.4 Digital Etiquette

Professional Conduct Online	Dress appropriately for video sessions and ensure a conducive learning environment when attending online classes.
Appropriate Use of Technology	Use the provided digital tools (e.g., Moodle, email, Microsoft Teams) solely for educational purposes. Do not misuse or exploit these platforms.
Privacy	Respect the privacy of others by not sharing or distributing course materials, recordings, or personal information without explicit consent.

6.1.5 Responsibility for Learning

Self-Discipline	Manage your time effectively to meet the demands of an ODL program. Take responsibility for staying on track with course requirements.
Independent Learning	Cultivate a proactive approach to learning by seeking additional resources, clarifying doubts, and applying knowledge practically.
Feedback Acceptance	Be open to receiving constructive feedback from instructors and peers to improve academic performance.

6.1.6 Compliance with University Policies

Adherence to Rules	Follow all AIMST University policies, including those related to academic integrity, ethical behavior, and technology use.
Reporting Issues	Promptly report any violations of the Code of Conduct or technical issues encountered during the course to the appropriate university authority.
Commitment to Growth	Strive to embody the values and principles of AIMST University, contributing positively to the ODL community.

6.2 Academic Integrity Policies (Plagiarism, Cheating)

At AIMST University, academic integrity is a cornerstone of our educational philosophy. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of honesty and responsibility in all academic activities. Students enrolled in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) program are expected to adhere to the following policies concerning plagiarism, cheating, and ethical conduct.

6.2.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work, ideas, or intellectual property without proper acknowledgment. It undermines academic integrity and is strictly prohibited.

Examples of Plagiarism

a) Copying and pasting text from online sources, books, or articles without citation.
b) Submitting another person's work or ideas as your own, including assignments, reports, or essays.
c) Paraphrasing or summarizing content from a source without proper attribution.
Reusing your previous work for a different assignment without instructor approval (self-plagiarism).

How to Avoid Plagiarism

a) Always cite your sources using the required citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, or Harvard).

b) Use quotation marks for direct quotes and provide accurate references.

c) Paraphrase correctly by rewording ideas and not simply rearranging sentences.

d) Use plagiarism detection tools to verify the originality of your work before submission.

Consequences of Plagiarism

a) First Offense: Warning, requirement to redo the assignment, and a reduced grade.

b) Second Offense: A failing grade for the assignment or course, and possible probation.

c) Third Offense: Suspension or expulsion from the program.

6.2.2 Cheating

Cheating involves any dishonest behavior intended to gain an unfair advantage in assessments, exams, or coursework. It is strictly forbidden and considered a serious violation of academic policies.

Examples of Cheating

a) Using unauthorized materials or devices during an exam or quiz.

b) Sharing or receiving answers during assessments.

c) Collaborating on individual assignments without permission.

d) Submitting work completed by someone else, including hiring third parties to complete assignments.

e) Tampering with academic records or grades.

Preventing Cheating

a) Prepare thoroughly for exams and assignments to reduce the temptation to cheat.

b) Follow all instructions provided for assessments and seek clarification when needed.

c) Avoid sharing your work with others, even for "reference" purposes.
d) Use only approved tools and resources during assessments.

Consequences of Cheating

a) First Offense: Automatic failure of the assessment and a formal warning.
b) Second Offense: Failing the course and placement on academic probation.
c) Third Offense: Permanent dismissal from the program.

6.2.3 Ethical Conduct in Academic Work

ODL students are expected to conduct themselves ethically in all academic pursuits. This includes respect for peers, instructors, and the learning process.

Responsibilities

a) Submit original work that reflects your understanding and effort.
b) Participate honestly in group projects and collaborative activities.
c) Respect deadlines and avoid seeking unfair extensions through dishonest means.
d) Use university resources responsibly, including the Learning Management System (LMS).

Support for Ethical Practices

a) AIMST University offers workshops on academic writing and research to help students understand proper citation and referencing.
b) The university provides access to plagiarism detection software through the LMS to ensure originality.
c) Counseling and support services are available for students facing academic pressures.

6.2.4 Reporting Violations

Students and faculty are encouraged to report any suspected violations of academic integrity to the appropriate department or authority. Reports will be handled confidentially and investigated thoroughly.

6.3 Participation Requirements for Courses

Participation in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) courses at AIMST University is essential for ensuring academic success and fostering a collaborative learning environment. The following requirements outline the expectations for student engagement, attendance, and contributions to the ODL program.

6.3.1 Active Engagement in Learning

Participation in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) courses at AIMST University is essential for ensuring academic success and fostering a collaborative learning environment. The following requirements outline the expectations for student engagement, attendance, and contributions to the ODL program.

6.3.2 Attendance in Scheduled Sessions

While ODL programs offer flexibility, there are specific sessions and activities where attendance is mandatory. Students must attend all scheduled live webinars, virtual lectures, and tutorials, as these sessions often provide valuable insights and real-time interaction with instructors. If a student is unable to attend, prior notification must be provided to the instructor, and recorded sessions should be reviewed promptly. Attendance in workshops and tutorials is also critical, as these interactive sessions offer hands-on learning and opportunities for direct guidance from educators.

6.3.3 Communication and Interaction

Effective communication is a cornerstone of a successful ODL experience. Students must regularly check emails and LMS notifications and respond promptly to queries from instructors and peers, ideally within two working days. Asking questions and seeking clarification on course content or assignments is highly encouraged, as it demonstrates active engagement and a willingness to learn. Collaboration during group activities and team projects is also essential, fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility among ODL students.

6.3.4 Technology Proficiency and Preparedness

Students must ensure they meet the technical requirements necessary for participating in ODL courses effectively. This includes having access to recommended hardware and software, such as a reliable computer, a stable internet connection, and any specialized tools or platforms required for the course. Additionally, students are expected to possess basic technical skills, including navigating the LMS, using video conferencing tools like Zoom or Microsoft Teams, and working with office software such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Being technologically prepared minimizes disruptions and ensures seamless participation in online learning activities.

6.3.5 Adherence to Course Policies

Compliance with course-specific guidelines and institutional policies is crucial for maintaining a positive and productive learning environment. Students must uphold academic integrity by completing all assessments and assignments honestly and refraining from plagiarism or other dishonest practices. Meeting deadlines is equally important, as late submissions may result in penalties unless prior approval has been obtained. Moreover, students are expected to exhibit respectful behavior in all interactions, adhering to AIMST University's Code of Conduct to foster a respectful and inclusive academic community.

6.3.6 Time Management and Self-Discipline

ODL courses require students to take responsibility for managing their time effectively and maintaining self-discipline. Students are encouraged to create a study schedule that allows sufficient time for reviewing course materials, completing assignments, and preparing for assessments. On average, students should dedicate 6-10 hours per week per course to keep up with academic demands. While some courses may offer self-paced modules, it is essential to progress consistently to meet course milestones and deadlines.

6.3.7 Evaluation Participation

Active participation in course assessments and feedback activities is essential for both academic success and continuous improvement of the ODL program. Students must complete all graded activities, including quizzes, exams, and projects, as these contribute significantly to their learning outcomes. Additionally, students are encouraged to provide constructive feedback through course evaluations and surveys, as this feedback plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of AIMST University's ODL offerings.

By meeting these participation requirements, students in AIMST University's ODL program can ensure a fulfilling and productive educational experience while maximizing their potential for academic and professional success.

6.4 Importance of Self-Directed Learning

Self-directed learning (SDL) is a cornerstone of success in Open and Distance Learning (ODL). It empowers students to take ownership of their education, fostering independence, critical thinking, and adaptability. The importance of self-directed learning can be understood through several key aspects.

6.4.1 Fosters Independence and Responsibility

Self-directed learning encourages students to take responsibility for their own educational journey. Unlike traditional classroom settings where instructors guide every step, SDL requires learners to plan, organize, and execute their study schedules. This independence not only builds a strong sense of accountability but also prepares students for the challenges of the professional world, where self-motivation and responsibility are highly valued traits.

6.4.2 Encourages Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

In self-directed learning, students are often required to seek out information, evaluate its credibility, and apply it to solve problems or complete assignments. This process nurtures critical thinking skills, as learners must analyze and synthesize information from various sources. Additionally, the ability to address challenges independently enhances problem-solving capabilities, a skill essential for personal and professional growth.

6.4.3 Promotes Flexibility and Adaptability

One of the greatest advantages of self-directed learning is the flexibility it provides. Students can learn at their own pace, revisit challenging concepts, and adjust their study schedules to accommodate personal and professional commitments. This adaptability is particularly important in ODL programs, where students often balance education with work or family responsibilities. It also prepares learners to navigate the dynamic nature of modern workplaces, where adaptability is a key attribute.

6.4.4 Enhances Lifelong Learning Skills

Self-directed learning fosters habits and skills that extend beyond formal education, promoting lifelong learning. By taking initiative in their education, students learn how to identify their learning needs, set goals, and acquire new knowledge and skills independently. These habits are crucial in a rapidly evolving world where continuous learning is necessary to stay relevant in the workforce.

6.4.5 Encourages Intrinsic Motivation

In SDL, students learn because they want to, not because they are compelled to by external factors. This intrinsic motivation drives deeper engagement with the material and a greater sense of satisfaction when goals are achieved. Students become more invested in their learning, which often leads to higher levels of academic success and personal fulfillment.

6.4.6 Develops Research and Resource Management Skills

Self-directed learners frequently engage in research to gather information from diverse sources, such as academic journals, online databases, and multimedia resources. This practice not only enhances research skills but also teaches students how to effectively manage and utilize available resources. Such skills are invaluable in both academic and professional contexts, where the ability to find and apply information is often a critical determinant of success.

6.4.7 Builds Confidence and Resilience

Taking charge of one's learning can significantly boost self-confidence. As students overcome challenges and achieve milestones independently, they develop a strong sense of accomplishment. Additionally, self-directed learning fosters resilience by teaching students how to navigate setbacks, seek help when necessary, and persevere through difficulties. These attributes contribute to personal growth and the ability to face future challenges with confidence.

6.4.8 Prepares for Real-World Challenges

Self-directed learning mirrors real-world scenarios where individuals must identify problems, acquire knowledge, and implement solutions independently. By engaging in SDL, students develop skills such as time management, goal-setting, and self-assessment, which are crucial in professional and personal contexts. This readiness to tackle real-world challenges gives self-directed learners a competitive edge in their careers.

7.0
Assessment and Examination

7.1 Types of Assessments and Examinations

7.1.1 Online Proctored Exams
Conducted through a secure platform with tools like the Safe Exam Browser and live or AI-enabled proctoring to ensure academic integrity.

7.1.2 Take-Home Assessments
These assignments are distributed online through the Learning Management System (LMS) and must be submitted within a specific timeframe.

7.2 Roles and Responsibilities

7.2.1 Examination Division
a) Develops and publishes the examination schedule.
b) Ensures compliance with examination guidelines and provides administrative support.
c) Oversees technical readiness for online assessments.

7.2.2 ODL Department
a) Communicates exam schedules and requirements to students.
b) Coordinates with faculty for exam preparation and delivery.

7.2.3 Faculty/Examiners
a) Prepares exam questions and grading rubrics aligned with course outcomes.
b) Ensures the quality and fairness of assessments.

7.2.4 Students
a) Adhere to examination guidelines and submit assessments on time.
b) Ensure the availability of the necessary tools (devices, internet connection).

7.2.5 Invigilators/Proctors
a) Monitor the exam process to ensure compliance.
b) Report any technical issues or misconduct during exams.

7.3 Pre-Examination Procedures

7.3.1 Exam Scheduling
a)The ODL department submits the academic calendar to the Examination Division.
b) The examination schedule is published at least four weeks before the exams.

7.3.2 Question Paper Preparation
a) Faculty submit question papers three weeks before the exam date.
b) Papers undergo internal moderation to ensure quality and compliance.

7.3.3 Technical Readiness
a)Online platforms are checked for functionality.
b) Mock tests are conducted to familiarize students with the system.

7.3.4 Student Notification
a) Examination details, including dates, times, and platforms, are communicated via email and LMS.

7.4 Examination Day Procedures

7.4.1 Online Proctored Exams
a) Students must log in 30 minutes before the exam start time.
b) Identity verification is conducted using student IDs and facial recognition.
c) Proctors monitor the exam in real time.

7.4.2 Take-Home Assessments
a) Questions are distributed via the LMS at the scheduled time.
b) Submissions must be made within the deadline to avoid penalties.

7.4.3 Technical Issues
a) A dedicated helpdesk is available to address technical difficulties during exams.

7.5 Post-Examination Procedures

7.5.1 Submission and Collection
a) Online submissions are automatically collected via the LMS.

7.5.2 Grading and Feedback
a) Faculty complete grading within two weeks of the examination.
b) Results are published on the LMS.

7.5.3 Result Review
a) Students may request a review of results within five working days of publication.

7.6 Academic Integrity and Misconduct

7.7.1 Prohibited Actions

a) Plagiarism, use of unauthorized resources, tampering with proctoring systems, and unauthorized communication during exams.

7.7.2 Penalties

a) Violations are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with university policies.

7.7 Contingency Measures

7.7.1 Prohibited Actions

a) Plagiarism, use of unauthorized resources, tampering with proctoring systems, and unauthorized communication during exams.

7.7.2 Penalties

a) Violations are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with university policies.

7.8 Continuous Improvement

AIMST University's ODL programme is committed to ensuring that assessments and examinations are conducted with the highest standards of fairness and integrity. Students and staff are expected to follow these guidelines to maintain academic excellence and uphold the university's reputation.

8.0
Support and
Resources

8.1 Student Support Services Overview

At AIMST University, we are committed to providing comprehensive support to all students, ensuring they have the resources, guidance, and assistance necessary to succeed in their academic journey. Our Student Support Services are designed to cater to the diverse needs of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students, ensuring that they have the tools and services to overcome any challenges they may encounter while pursuing their education. These services aim to support both academic and personal growth, helping students achieve their full potential in a flexible, online learning environment.

8.1.1 Academic Support

AIMST University offers robust academic support to ensure that students have the resources they need to succeed in their coursework. Our Academic Support Services include access to faculty members for personalized assistance, dedicated tutoring for challenging subjects, and the availability of online resources such as recorded lectures, course materials, and discussion forums. Students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors, participate in live sessions, and engage in discussion groups to clarify doubts and enhance their understanding of course content. Additionally, workshops on academic writing, research methods, and study strategies are available to help students develop the skills necessary to excel in their assignments and assessments.

8.1.2 Counseling and Wellbeing Support

Understanding that the demands of online learning can sometimes be overwhelming, AIMST University provides comprehensive counseling and wellbeing support to help students manage stress, mental health, and personal challenges. Our professional counselors are available to offer confidential one-on-one support to students dealing with academic or personal issues. Counseling services are designed to help students cope with the pressures of studying remotely, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and enhance their emotional well-being. Whether dealing with exam anxiety, time management issues, or general life challenges, students can access resources to improve their mental and emotional health.

8.1.3 Technical Support

To ensure that students can effectively engage with online learning, AIMST University offers technical support to assist with any issues related to accessing the Learning Management System (LMS), Moodle, or other online learning platforms. Our Technical Support team is available to guide students through troubleshooting steps, assist with login issues, and provide solutions to any hardware or software problems that may arise. Additionally, the university offers tutorials on how to navigate the LMS, participate in online exams, and use tools such as video conferencing software, ensuring students can fully engage with the ODL program without technical hindrances.

8.1.4 Library and Online Resources

AIMST University offers a wealth of digital resources to support students in their studies. The university library provides access to a wide range of e-books, academic journals, research papers, and other digital materials that students can use to supplement their learning. Students can access these resources through the university's online library portal, which is available 24/7, allowing for flexible study schedules. In addition to traditional academic resources, the university also provides access to various online learning platforms, multimedia content, and other materials that support both theoretical and practical learning.

8.1.5 Career Services

In addition to academic and emotional support, AIMST University offers comprehensive career services to help students prepare for life after graduation. Our Career Services team assists with career planning, resume writing, job search strategies, interview preparation, and internship opportunities. We also provide access to job boards, career fairs, and networking events to connect students with potential employers and professionals in their field of study. Career counseling services help students make informed decisions about their career paths and offer guidance on pursuing further education or entering the workforce directly after completing their studies.

8.1.6 Peer Support and Mentoring

AIMST University recognizes the value of peer support and mentorship in the learning process. Through our mentoring program, experienced students provide guidance and support to new or struggling learners. This peer-to-peer assistance helps students navigate the challenges of online learning, share resources, and offer advice based on their own experiences. Mentors play a crucial role in enhancing the sense of community among ODL students, helping them stay motivated and connected throughout their educational journey.

8.1.7 Administrative Support

Our administrative team is always ready to assist students with the logistical aspects of their education. From helping with registration and course enrollment to addressing any financial or student record queries, the administrative support team ensures that students can focus on their learning without being burdened by administrative issues. Students can easily access support for exam registration, deadlines, and other procedural matters. The university is committed to providing timely and efficient assistance to ensure that students' educational experiences are as seamless as possible.

AIMST University's Student Support Services are designed to provide ODL students with all the resources, tools, and assistance they need to succeed academically, professionally, and personally. From academic help to emotional support and career guidance, these services are dedicated to ensuring students feel confident, connected, and empowered throughout their educational journey. Our commitment to providing accessible and holistic support is integral to the success of every student in the AIMST ODL program.

8.2 Access to Online Resources and Tools

AIMST University provides a wealth of online resources and tools to support students in their academic journey, particularly for those enrolled in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programs. These resources are designed to offer flexibility and comprehensive support to students, ensuring that they have the materials and technology they need to succeed in their coursework, assignments, and research. Through the university's various online platforms, students can access a wide range of digital content, including e-books, academic journals, research papers, multimedia materials, and other educational tools.

8.2.1 Resource Hub

The Resource Hub on the AIMST ODL website serves as a central portal for all students to access essential learning resources. The Hub is regularly updated with a wide array of materials that students can use to enhance their learning experience. It offers links to course-specific content, reference materials, study guides, and video tutorials, all of which can be accessed 24/7. The Resource Hub ensures that students can find all the information they need in one convenient location, making it easier to navigate the wide array of digital resources available.

8.2.2 AIMST eLibrary

AIMST University's eLibrary is another essential tool for ODL students. Through the eLibrary, students gain access to a vast collection of academic resources, including e-books, peer-reviewed journals, articles, and databases. These resources span a wide range of academic disciplines, ensuring that students have access to up-to-date research and reference materials for their studies. The eLibrary is accessible online, allowing students to access academic materials at their convenience, whether at home, in the library, or on the go. Students can use the eLibrary to research topics for assignments, explore new areas of knowledge, and deepen their understanding of course content.

8.2.3 Multimedia Resources

In addition to text-based resources, AIMST University offers a variety of multimedia tools to enhance the learning experience for ODL students. Video lectures, instructional videos, podcasts, and interactive learning modules are available for students to engage with course material in a dynamic way. These multimedia resources provide different formats for students to absorb information, catering to various learning styles and preferences. Whether students need visual explanations of complex concepts or audio content for learning on the go, these resources make it easier for them to engage with the material in a manner that suits them.

8.2.4 Online Learning Platforms and Tools

AIMST University uses various digital tools and platforms to support the learning experience of ODL students. The university's Learning Management System (LMS), Moodle, is the primary platform for accessing course content, submitting assignments, and engaging in discussions with peers and instructors. In addition to Moodle, students may also have access to other specialized online tools such as online collaboration platforms, virtual classrooms for live lectures, and digital simulation tools for practical learning. These platforms are essential for the success of ODL students, as they facilitate communication, feedback, and interactive learning experiences, even when studying remotely.

8.2.5 Additional External Resources

To further support students' learning, AIMST University also provides access to external online resources and databases. These resources include specialized research databases, educational websites, and industry-specific platforms that students can use to supplement their learning. Whether students are conducting research for assignments, exploring professional development opportunities, or seeking industry-specific knowledge, these resources expand the range of information available to them beyond the university's own collections.

8.2.6 Accessing Resources

To access these online resources, students are provided with login credentials that allow them to access the eLibrary, Resource Hub, and other tools. For ODL students, these resources are available around the clock, enabling them to study at their own pace and convenience. Students are encouraged to utilize these resources regularly to support their learning, enrich their understanding of course topics, and engage with the academic community at AIMST University.

AIMST University's commitment to providing robust online resources and tools is crucial to the success of its ODL students. These resources not only support academic achievement but also encourage students to explore, learn, and grow in a flexible, accessible, and innovative learning environment.

8.3 Academic Counseling and Mentoring

AIMST University, we understand that the journey of higher education can present various academic and personal challenges, particularly for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students. To ensure that all students receive the guidance and support they need to succeed, AIMST offers comprehensive Academic Counseling and Mentoring services. These services are designed to provide students with personalized advice, motivation, and support tailored to their individual academic needs and goals.

8.3.1 Academic Counseling

Academic counseling at AIMST University is an essential service aimed at helping students navigate their academic journey and achieve their educational objectives. The university provides professional academic counselors who are available to assist students with academic planning, course selection, and addressing any challenges that may arise during their studies. Students can seek advice on course content, exam preparation strategies, time management, and balancing academic and personal responsibilities. Counseling services are particularly beneficial for students who may be struggling with the demands of ODL or facing difficulties in understanding specific course materials. Counselors are also available to provide guidance on overcoming study-related stress and anxiety, helping students develop effective coping mechanisms. The ultimate goal of academic counseling is to empower students to take charge of their learning, make informed choices, and stay on track toward academic success.

8.3.2 Mentoring Services

Mentoring is an integral part of AIMST University's student support system, offering personalized guidance from experienced faculty members or senior students. Mentors serve as role models, providing advice, encouragement, and insights that help mentees excel academically and professionally. They assist students in navigating both the academic and social aspects of university life, offering tips on study strategies, time management, and balancing coursework with other commitments.

The mentoring program at AIMST is particularly beneficial for ODL students, as it offers a more personalized approach to learning. Through regular communication, either virtually or face-to-face, mentors offer ongoing support and feedback, helping students stay motivated and engaged. Mentors also help students set long-term goals, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and offer valuable perspectives on the challenges of remote learning. These relationships help create a sense of community, making ODL students feel supported and connected to the academic environment.

8.3.3 Benefits of Academic Counseling and Mentoring

Academic counseling and mentoring offer several key benefits for students, especially those in the ODL program. These include:

Personalized Guidance: Both academic counselors and mentors provide tailored support, focusing on individual student needs, strengths, and challenges.

Increased Motivation: Mentors offer ongoing encouragement, helping students stay motivated and engaged in their coursework.

Improved Academic Performance: By receiving advice on study strategies, exam preparation, and time management, students are more likely to perform well academically.

Emotional Support: Counselors and mentors offer emotional support, helping students cope with academic stress, mental health issues, and other challenges.

Career Development: Mentors provide career guidance, helping students align their academic choices with their long-term professional goals.

8.3.4 Accessing Counseling and Mentoring Services

Students can access academic counseling and mentoring services through various channels. Counseling appointments can be scheduled with university advisors, either through the university's online portal or by direct contact. Mentoring relationships are typically initiated through academic departments or specific programs, with mentors assigned based on students' fields of study or areas of interest. Additionally, AIMST University offers online platforms where students can connect with mentors and counselors in a convenient and accessible manner, ensuring that support is available regardless of location.

Academic Counseling and Mentoring are vital components of AIMST University's student support services, particularly for ODL students who may need extra guidance in managing the unique challenges of online learning. These services are designed to help students achieve their academic goals, improve their performance, and develop the skills necessary for personal and professional success. Through personalized support, encouragement, and expert advice, AIMST University is committed to ensuring that all students have the tools they need to thrive in their academic pursuits.

8.4 Information on Libraries and Research Facilities

AIMST University is committed to providing its students with access to extensive resources to support their learning, research, and academic endeavors. The university's libraries and research facilities are integral components of the academic experience, particularly for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students. These facilities offer a wide range of digital and physical resources that enable students to conduct research, deepen their understanding of course materials, and engage in independent learning. AIMST's libraries and research services are designed to foster academic excellence, critical thinking, and scholarly inquiry.

8.4.1 AIMST eLibrary

The AIMST University eLibrary is a central hub for accessing a comprehensive collection of academic resources, available to all students, including those enrolled in the ODL programs. The eLibrary is equipped with a vast array of e-books, scholarly journals, research articles, and databases across multiple disciplines, ensuring that students have access to the latest academic resources for their studies and research. Students can access the eLibrary from anywhere with an internet connection, providing them with flexibility and convenience in sourcing materials for assignments, projects, and research papers.

The eLibrary also provides access to online tools that allow students to search for specific resources, access multimedia content, and explore various academic fields. Furthermore, the library offers instructional materials on how to effectively use these resources for research, making it easier for students to navigate the vast collection and find relevant information.

8.4.2 Physical Library Facilities

In addition to the eLibrary, AIMST University maintains physical library facilities on campus that are available to students, including those who may visit campus for occasional face-to-face learning or workshops. These libraries house physical books, journals, and academic publications that complement the digital resources available online. The physical libraries also offer spaces for quiet study, group discussions, and access to computers for students who prefer to work in a traditional academic environment.

Students can access the physical library's collection of reference materials, textbooks, and specialized academic publications that may not be available digitally. While most of the resources are accessible online, the physical library provides a valuable setting for in-person research, collaboration, and access to additional academic tools.

8.4.3 Research Facilities

AIMST University supports students in their research endeavors through state-of-the-art research facilities, which provide the infrastructure, tools, and support necessary for high-quality academic and scientific research. The university's research labs and centers cater to various fields of study, including health sciences, engineering, technology, and social sciences.

These research facilities offer specialized equipment and resources for hands-on research and experiments, and students can access faculty expertise to guide their projects. In addition to laboratory-based research, the university supports a variety of research initiatives that can be conducted remotely, including data analysis, literature reviews, and online surveys. These opportunities for collaborative and independent research allow students to contribute to academic knowledge in their field of study.

8.4.4 Library Support Services

To further support students, AIMST's libraries offer a range of services designed to help students make the most of the available resources. These services include research assistance, information literacy workshops, and personalized help with locating materials. Library staff are available to guide students in searching databases, citing sources, and conducting efficient literature reviews. Students can also receive training in academic writing and referencing, ensuring that they understand the research process from start to finish.

For ODL students, library services are available online, allowing them to receive support remotely via email, online chat, or through instructional videos and resources. This ensures that even students who study primarily through online platforms have full access to research assistance and support, regardless of their location.

AIMST University's libraries and research facilities are essential components of the academic experience, providing students with the tools and resources needed to excel in their studies and research. The combination of a comprehensive eLibrary, physical library services, and cutting-edge research facilities ensures that students have access to a vast range of academic materials. Whether students are conducting independent research, completing assignments, or engaging in collaborative academic projects, AIMST University's library and research services are designed to support their academic and professional growth.

9.0
Policy and procedures for modifying a course

9.1 Withdrawal from Programme/ Course

9.1.1 Withdrawal from degree studies is interpreted as student not continuing his/ her studies in the programme.

9.1.2 Withdrawal from the University for a semester is interpreted as withdrawal from all registered courses for that semester. Normally a student is allowed to withdraw from a semester after he/ she has completed at least one semester of studies previously.

9.1.3 Withdrawal from any or all courses in the period between the last day of scheduled classes and sitting for the final examination of the course is not permitted unless a student is confronted by a genuine emergency.

9.1.4 A student must write in to the Dean and obtain prior approval from the Dean before leaving his/ her studies in the concerned semester. The Withdrawal Form is available at the Dean's Office.

9.1.5 A student who without formal approval does not attend classes for a course will be given grade F for the course.

9.2 DEFERMENT OF STUDIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

9.2.1 Senate, on the recommendation of a Faculty, may grant leave of absence or deferment of studies to University students based on the following conditions:

a) for medical reasons, including maternity leave

b) for other reasons, if in the opinion of Senate, that deserve special consideration.

c) such period of leave as given shall not exceed one year at a particular period of time.

d) the total period given shall not exceed two years.

e) Notwithstanding the provisions in the Act that governs the candidate"s basic degree programme about the maximum period to complete his study programme, one year"s leave that is given shall not be considered as part of the maximum period but any such leave period shall normally be counted if it exceeds one year. .Exceptional circumstances may allow this period to be extended by Senate

f) Where such leave is given for medical reason, candidate must be confirmed as healthy before being permitted to continue his/her studies.

9.2.2 Notwithstanding subsection 9.2.1, Senate can grant leave of absence to students to follow other courses in this University or other universities, subject to the following conditions:

 a) such course is a requirement for the first degree programme of this University and is recommended by the Faculty :
 b) such leave that is granted shall not exceed one calendar year: and
 c) such leave that is granted shall not be counted as part of the maximum period fixed for the programme determined for candidature.

10.0
Conclusion

10.1 Encouragement for Continuous Learning and Development

As you embark on your educational journey at AIMST University, it is important to remember that learning does not end with completing a course or program. The pursuit of knowledge and personal growth is a lifelong process. In today's rapidly evolving world, continuous learning and development are essential to remain competitive and adaptive to change, both in your personal and professional life.

At AIMST University, we encourage you to take full advantage of the resources, support systems, and opportunities available to you. Whether you are advancing your academic knowledge through further studies, exploring new skills, or engaging in professional development activities, the key to success is staying curious, motivated, and committed to self-improvement. The university's Open and Distance Learning (ODL) platform offers the flexibility to learn at your own pace, making it easier for you to integrate continuous learning into your life, regardless of your personal and professional commitments.

Your time at AIMST is just the beginning. Embrace opportunities to explore new subjects, engage with emerging technologies, and expand your skillset. Remember that learning is not confined to textbooks or classrooms; it extends to real-world experiences, networking, and self-directed inquiry. The world is filled with vast knowledge, and the more you seek to understand, the more empowered you will be to make meaningful contributions in your field and society.

Stay curious, be proactive, and never stop learning. The knowledge and skills you acquire today will not only help you succeed in your studies but also pave the way for continued growth and success throughout your career and beyond. With dedication and a commitment to lifelong learning, you will undoubtedly unlock new opportunities and make a lasting impact in your chosen field.

10.2 Contact Information for Further Assistance

At AIMST University, we are dedicated to providing comprehensive support to ensure your success in the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) program. If you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to us through the following contact channels:

1) ODL Support Services
For inquiries related to your ODL courses, technical support, and general assistance, please contact the ODL support team:
Email: odl_support@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000
Website: www.aimst.edu.my/odl
Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (UTC+8)

2) Library Services
For access to academic resources, research support, and library-related inquiries, please contact the AIMST University Library:
Email: library@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 220)
Website: www.aimst.edu.my/library
Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM (UTC+8)

3)Technical Support

For assistance with technical issues related to the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS) or other online tools, please contact the IT support team:

Email: it_support@aimst.edu.my

Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 221)

Website: www.aimst.edu.my/it-support

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (UTC+8)

4) Academic Counseling and Mentoring

For academic advice, mentoring services, and personalized guidance regarding your academic journey, please contact the Academic Counseling Office:

Email: counseling@aimst.edu.my

Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 222)

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (UTC+8)

5) General Inquiries

For general inquiries or any other assistance, feel free to contact the AIMST University administration:

Email: info@aimst.edu.my

Phone: +60 4-429 8000

Website: www.aimst.edu.my

11.0
Appendices

11.1 Glossary of Terms

Academic Integrity: Adherence to ethical principles in academic work, ensuring honesty and originality in assignments, projects, and assessments.

Adaptive Learning: A technology-driven educational approach that personalizes learning based on individual progress and needs.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Advanced computer systems that perform tasks requiring human intelligence, such as providing personalized feedback or automated grading in ODL.

Assessment: The process of evaluating a student's understanding and mastery of course content through quizzes, assignments, projects, or exams.

Blended Learning: An instructional method combining online digital media with traditional classroom methods.

Code of Conduct: A set of rules outlining acceptable behaviors and responsibilities for students in the ODL program.

Collaborative Learning: An educational approach where students work together through group projects, discussions, or shared activities to achieve learning goals.

Distance Learning: A method of learning where students and instructors are physically separated, relying on digital communication and online resources.

E-Library: An electronic library providing digital resources like e-books, journals, and research papers for student access.

Educational Philosophy: The underlying principles guiding ODL, such as flexibility and self-paced learning, to accommodate diverse learners.

Gamification: Incorporating game-like elements (e.g., points, leaderboards, badges) into educational activities to enhance engagement.

Learning Management System (LMS): A software platform like Moodle used for delivering, tracking, and managing educational courses and content.

Lifelong Learning: Continuous learning throughout an individual's life to enhance knowledge and skills for personal and professional development.

Mobile Learning (M-Learning): Educational content and activities accessed via mobile devices, offering flexibility to learners.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL): A flexible learning approach that uses digital technologies to provide education without the constraints of location or time.

Open Educational Resources (OER): Free and accessible educational materials such as e-books, journals, and online courses.

Plagiarism: The unethical act of using someone else's work or ideas without proper acknowledgment.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL): A learning method where students develop solutions to real-world problems, fostering critical thinking and practical application.

Self-Directed Learning (SDL): An approach where students take initiative in planning, executing, and assessing their own learning.

Synchronous Learning: Real-time, interactive learning sessions where students and instructors communicate simultaneously, typically via virtual classrooms.

Technology Requirements: The hardware and software specifications needed for effective participation in ODL, such as a reliable internet connection and compatible devices.

Virtual Classrooms: Online platforms that replicate traditional classroom environments, enabling live interactions between students and instructors.

Virtual Reality (VR): Immersive technology used in education to simulate real-world environments for experiential learning.

Webinars: Online seminars or presentations conducted in real-time to provide instructional content or discussions.

11.2 Useful Contacts and Links

Administrative Contacts
General Inquiries
Email: info@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000
Website: www.aimst.edu.my

Admissions Office
Email: admissions@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 201)
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Academic Support Contacts
ODL Support Team
For assistance with ODL courses, materials, and general guidance:
Email: odl_support@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 210)
Website: ODL Website

Library Services
For access to resources, borrowing, and research support:
Email: library@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 220)
Library Portal: AIMST eLibrary

Academic Counseling and Mentoring
For academic advice and mentorship:
Email: counseling@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 222)

Technical Support
Moodle LMS Support
For issues related to the Moodle platform:
Email: lms_support@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 221)
Moodle Login: AIMST Moodle LMS

IT Support Team
For assistance with online tools, technical issues, or device compatibility:
Email: it_support@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 221)
Website: IT Support Services

Student Services
Student Affairs Office
For non-academic student services, including welfare and activities:
Email: studentaffairs@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 230)

Counseling Services
For personal support and mental health resources:
Email: counseling_services@aimst.edu.my
Phone: +60 4-429 8000 (Ext. 231)

Additional Useful Links

ODL Resource Hub
Access to course materials, e-books, and other online resources:
URL: ODL Resource Hub

AIMST eLibrary
A digital repository of academic journals, articles, and research tools:
URL: AIMST eLibrary

Student Portal
Check grades, schedules, and academic information:
URL: Student Portal

Career Services
For career counseling and internship support:
URL: Career Services

FAQs and Help Center
Find answers to common queries and troubleshooting tips:
URL: ODL FAQs

11.3 References to Additional Resources

1) AIMST University. (2025). Open Distance Learning Handbook. AIMST University.

2) Moodle. (n.d.). Moodle Learning Management System. Retrieved from https://moodle.org

3) 1.Microsoft. (n.d.). Microsoft 365 for Education. Retrieved from Microsoft. (n.d.). Microsoft 365 for Education. Retrieved from https://www.microsoft.com/education

4) AIMST University Library. (n.d.). E-Library Resources. Retrieved from https://www.aimst.edu.my/library

5) Open Educational Resources (OER). (n.d.). Free Educational Materials. Retrieved from ScienceDirect. (n.d.). Research Database. Retrieved from https://www.sciencedirect.com

6) 1.JSTOR. (n.d.). Digital Library for Academic Journals. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org

7) Zoom. (n.d.). Video Conferencing for Education. Retrieved from https://zoom.us

8) AIMST University IT Support. (2025). Technical Assistance for ODL. AIMST University.

9) AIMST University Counseling & Advisory Service Unit (C.A.S.U.). (2025). Student Wellbeing Support. AIMST University.

Contact Information

AIMST Lifelong Learning

📞 04-429 8000 (Ext:8185)

✉ odl@aimst.edu.my

🌐 https://aimst.edu.my/odl/index.html

Student Recruitment Division

📞 04-429 8000 (Ext:8108)

✉ 04-429 8000 (Ext:8108)

🌐 https://aimst.edu.my/