



PROTECTION OF ENROLLED STUDENTS POLICY

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PROTECTION OF ENROLLED STUDENTS POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Botswana Open University (BOU) seeks to ensure that its students have an opportunity to complete the programmes that they are enrolled for leading to an award. It is the duty of the University to ensure that students are refunded money due to them if a programme ceases before they complete it. The University therefore undertakes to give guidance and assurance that students are provided with adequate and accurate information about the programme that they wish to pursue and about the protection in place for them in the event that the programme ceases prior to their completion. This Policy should be used in conjunction with the following related BOU student policies as reference: The Student Enrolment Policy, The Student Refund Policy and the Learning Analytics Policy.
- 1.2. The Policy seeks to ensure the University's compliance to regulatory requirements on protection of enrolled students in programmes of six months' duration or longer.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Enrolled Student** – refers to a student who is registered with the University. Application and admission forms must have been accepted and the required fee/part fee paid for the purpose of completing an accredited programme of six months' duration or longer.
- 2.2. **Cessation of programme** - where the University stops the programme from running before students complete it due to accreditation and qualification violations or not meeting required standards, or where a programme ceases due to forced closure of the University following natural or unnatural disasters or other unforeseen circumstances.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to outline how the Botswana Open University shall comply with its obligations with respect to the protection of enrolled students. The Policy spells out BOU's obligation to students against risks related to cessation of a programme before students' completion or unexpected closure of the University and it provides a commitment to refund fees and make transfer arrangements.

4. Scope

This Policy serves as a guide to Botswana Open University students enrolled for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, Sponsors/Funders/Donors, potential students and BOU staff.

5. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 5.1. BOU is committed to make provisions for instances when students shall be affected by the cessation of any of its programmes.
- 5.2. BOU undertakes to make the following information publicly available and accessible on its website and through other published materials before enrolling students or accepting any payment from, or on behalf of, an enrolled student for an education and training programme:
 - 5.2.1. The name of the Awarding Body (or bodies);
 - 5.2.2. The title of the programme and the award to which it leads;
 - 5.2.3. Whether the award is recognised within the National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF);
 - 5.2.4. The level of that recognition within the NCQF;
 - 5.2.5. Whether the award is a Major, Minor or some Special Purpose as identified within the NCQF;
 - 5.2.6. Any relevant procedures for access, transfer and progression.
- 5.3. BOU shall, before offer, put in place mechanisms for transfers within BOU programmes, across all its campuses, and conditions for refunds.
- 5.4. BOU shall conduct risk assessment activities during the programme design stage and programme evaluation stage to minimize chances of programme cessation.
- 5.5. BOU shall notify enrolled students of any change in the programme within 14 days of becoming aware of that change.
- 5.6. If requested, and in so far as is practicable, the University shall assist regulatory bodies in the accommodation of learners affected by the cessation of a programme from another Education and Training Provider where that programme has been discontinued.
- 5.7. The University undertakes to strengthen public confidence by:

- 5.7.1. assuring compliance to the prevailing Refund Policy, which shall be accordingly communicated to students;
- 5.7.2. Making arrangements for the protection of enrolled students known to the designated Awarding Body;
- 5.7.3. Minimizing risk through appropriate control and monitoring activities;
- 5.7.4. Designing and delivering programmes in accordance with contractual agreements with the designated Awarding Body and in compliance with national Quality Assurance requirements and guidelines;
- 5.7.5. Fulfilling corporate governance and financial reporting and regulatory obligations;
- 5.7.6. Analysing environmental threats in the annual University risk register.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

The roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Protection of Enrolled Students Policy are as follows:

- 6.1. Council – Oversight and guidance on management of risks that may hinder continued operations of the University.
- 6.2. **Senate** – Overall guidance on quality and relevance of programmes on offer.
- 6.3. **Schools, Academic Departments and Centres** – Responsible for conducting risk assessment throughout the lifespan of each programme to minimise chances of cessation. Also give oversight guidance on programme access, progression and transfers within programmes.
- 6.4. **The Academic Registry** – Ensures timely communication to students and potential students of any changes to programme provision.
- 6.5. **Department of Finance** – Facilitates and monitors implementation of Student Refunds.

7. REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed every three years or earlier as necessary.