

# **Accessible and Inclusive eLearning Policy**

## **Template**

### **for ODeL and Digital Centres**

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## Executive Summary


This Accessibility eLearning Policy outlines [Institution Name]’s commitment to ensuring that all eLearning content, platforms, and resources are accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities. The policy complies with applicable laws, including the Constitution of Kenya (2010), the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003), the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), the Education Act (2013) while adhering to Kenya Standard KS 2952-1-2:2022 framework.

By implementing this policy, [Institution Name] aims to foster an inclusive learning environment where every learner, regardless of ability, has equal access to high-quality educational opportunities.



## Policy Statement

[Institution Name] is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive eLearning environment that ensures all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or learning needs, can engage with and benefit from our online courses and resources. This policy outlines our approach to making eLearning accessible, inclusive, and equitable for all learners, including those with disabilities, learners from diverse cultural backgrounds, and those with varying levels of technological access.



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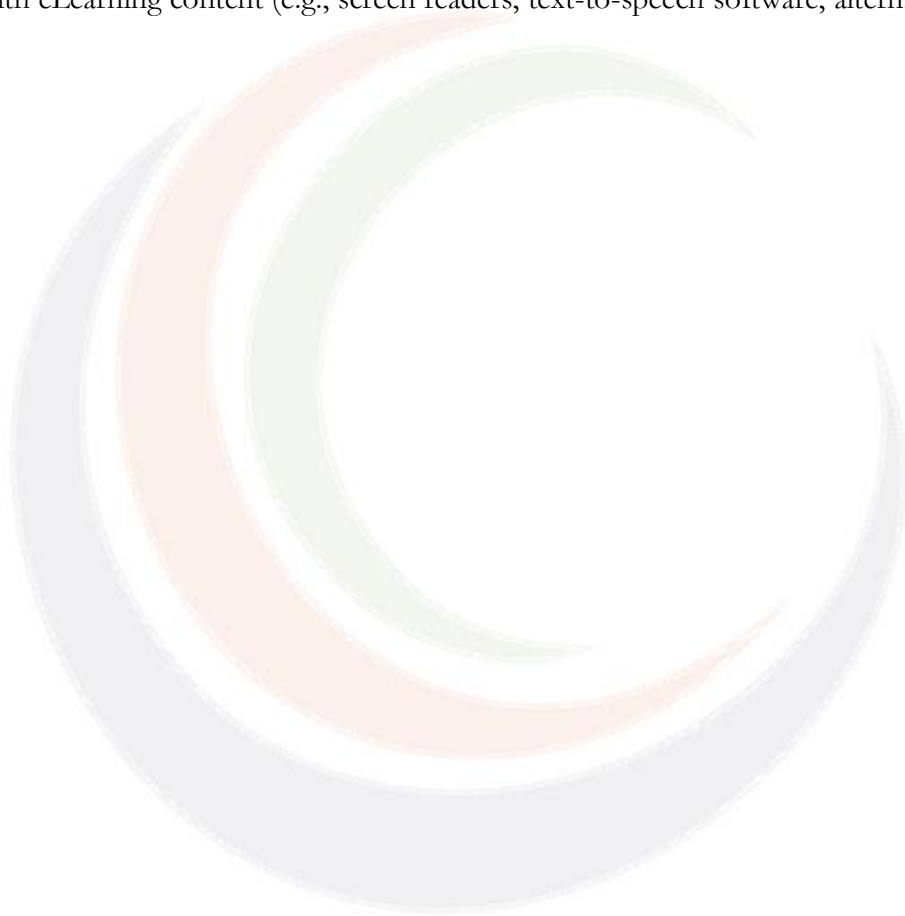
## Glossary Of Terms

**eLearning:** Learning that occurs through electronic media, typically via the internet, where students interact with digital materials, instructors, and fellow learners.

**Accessibility:** The design of digital content, platforms, and learning experiences so that they can be accessed by all students, including those with disabilities or specific learning needs.

**Inclusion:** Ensuring that eLearning is welcoming, supportive, and provides equitable opportunities for all students, regardless of their background, ability, or learning style.

**Assistive Technology:** Tools and resources used to help students with disabilities access and engage with eLearning content (e.g., screen readers, text-to-speech software, alternative input devices).



## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that eLearning content and platforms are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.
- Foster an inclusive online learning environment where students from all backgrounds can participate fully and achieve their learning goals.
- Provide guidelines for designing and delivering eLearning courses that are equitable, flexible, and responsive to the diverse needs of all learners.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All eLearning courses, modules, and programs delivered by [Institution Name], regardless of the platform or delivery method.
- All students, instructors, and staff who are involved in the development, delivery, and support of eLearning.
- All digital content, including videos, training modules, assignments, assessments, and other digital learning materials.

## Accessibility Laws, Standards and Frameworks

**To ensure accessibility, [Institution Name] will adhere at a minimum to the following standards and frameworks:**

**The Constitution of Kenya (2010):**

- The Constitution includes provisions for the rights of persons with disabilities under **Article 54**, which guarantees them the right to access services, education, and employment. This ensures that public services, including eLearning, should be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

### The Persons with Disabilities Act (2003):

- This law outlines the rights of persons with disabilities, promoting equality, inclusion, and accessibility. It also mandates the creation of environments that are accessible to people with disabilities in various sectors, including education and technology.

### The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD)

- This government body oversees the implementation of policies and guidelines related to disability inclusion. It provides guidance on ensuring accessibility in public spaces, services, and digital content.

### Kenya Standard KS 2952-1-2:2022

- The Kenya Standard on Accessibility for ICT Products and Services; ensure eLearning services are accessible to people with disabilities and older people, by setting clear guidelines for inclusivity across all digital platforms.

### The Education Act (2013)

- The policy applies to all eLearning courses, training modules, and related digital materials, ensuring that they are designed and delivered in a way that supports a diverse range of learning needs. It includes guidelines for creating accessible content, offering accommodations for learners with disabilities, and providing regular accessibility testing and evaluations.

## Introduction

The [Institution Name] is committed to ensuring all students can fully and equitably participate in eLearning while enjoying the benefits, facilities, and services it provides. This commitment is both a legal obligation under the Commission for University Education (CUE) Guidelines and a reflection of our aim to foster a welcoming community where students feel proud of their membership.

Our eLearning environments are diverse, encompassing virtual classrooms (synchronous sessions), asynchronous learning modules, online discussion forums, digital textbooks and resources, multimedia content (videos, podcasts, etc.), interactive simulations, collaborative tools (group projects, peer feedback), learning management systems (LMS) like Moodle, student research and assessments, and student support tools (virtual office hours, online tutoring). This comprehensive policy aims to ensure accessibility and inclusion across all these contexts of teaching, learning, and assessment.

The policy aligns with key legislative frameworks, including:

- The Kenyan Constitution (2010), particularly Article 43.1.f on the right to education and Article 54.1.b on access to educational institutions for persons with disabilities
- The Persons with Disabilities Act (2003)
- The Education Act (2013)
- Kenya Standard KS 2952-1-2:2022
- The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD)
- These frameworks emphasize universal design and the upgrade of digital infrastructure to enhance accessibility and foster belonging.

To fulfil these commitments, the institution has three core responsibilities as outlined below:

## Core Responsibilities

1. To recognize and anticipate barriers that may prevent equitable participation in teaching, learning, and assessment for each student.
2. To acknowledge that many barriers can be addressed through purposeful changes in design and implementation.



3. To identify and proactively address situations where barriers may be temporarily or partially insurmountable, ensuring continued opportunities for student participation.

## Accessibility and Inclusivity Principles

This policy is grounded in the following principles:

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Courses will be designed with flexibility to accommodate a wide variety of learning styles and abilities, ensuring multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression.
- **Equity and Fairness:** All students will have equal opportunities to succeed in eLearning courses, regardless of their background or abilities.
- **Technological Accessibility:** All eLearning platforms and materials will be compatible with assistive technologies, accessible to students with disabilities, and responsive to varying levels of technological access.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Course content and activities will be culturally inclusive and free from bias, ensuring that all students feel represented and valued.

## Accessibility of eLearning Content

- **Multimodal Content:** All course materials (e.g., lectures, readings, videos, and documents) will be provided in multiple formats, including text, audio, and video, to accommodate students with different learning preferences and disabilities.
- **Captioning and Transcripts:** All video and multimedia content must include closed captions and/or transcripts to ensure accessibility for students with hearing impairments.
- **Alt Text for Images:** All images, graphs, and charts used in eLearning materials will include descriptive alt text to ensure they are accessible to students using screen readers.
- **Screen Reader Compatibility:** All course content and eLearning platforms must be compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies commonly used by students with visual impairments.

- **Accessible Documents:** Course materials (e.g., PDFs, Word documents, slides) must be created in an accessible format that is compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies.

## Technology Requirements and Support

- **Device and Browser Compatibility:** All eLearning platforms and tools will be compatible with a variety of devices (e.g., desktop computers, tablets, smartphones) and browsers. Students should not be required to use specific devices or software to access course materials.
- **Low-Bandwidth Solutions:** Alternative formats, such as downloadable content or low-bandwidth versions of videos, will be provided for students with limited Internet access.
- **Technical Support:** [Institution Name] will provide accessible technical support for all students, particularly those needing assistance with assistive technologies, online platforms, or other accessibility-related issues.
- **Assistive Technology Support:** Students will have access to training and support for using assistive technologies to navigate eLearning platforms and course materials.

## Course Design and Delivery

- **Inclusive Course Design:** All eLearning courses will be designed with accessibility and inclusivity in mind, following best practices in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This includes providing content in diverse formats, offering flexible assessment options, and fostering an interactive, collaborative learning environment.
- **Flexible Assessment Methods:** Assessment methods will be designed to be flexible and equitable, offering students multiple ways to demonstrate their learning (e.g., written assignments, audio/video submissions, and oral presentations). Adjustments to assessment formats or deadlines may be made for students with documented disabilities or other learning needs.
- **Engagement and Participation:** All students should be able to participate fully in online discussions, group work, and interactive activities, with accommodations provided as needed for students who require additional support.

## Training and Professional Development

- **Instructor Training:** All instructors and content developers will undergo training on creating accessible and inclusive eLearning content, including training on the use of assistive technologies and how to foster an inclusive online classroom environment.
- **Ongoing Professional Development:** Instructors will have access to ongoing professional development opportunities to keep up to date with the latest best practices in online teaching, accessibility, and inclusivity.
- **Ongoing Awareness:** [Institution Name] will continually promote awareness of accessibility best practices as well as encourage feedback from all learners.

## Student Support Services

- **Disability Services:** [Institution Name] will provide online disability support services for students who require accommodations, including extended time for assessments, alternative formats for materials, and use of assistive technologies.
- **Mental Health and Well-being:** Online counselling services and mental health resources will be made available to students to ensure their well-being in the online learning environment.
- **Academic Support:** Online tutoring, writing assistance, and peer support services will be offered to all students, with accommodations available for those who need additional support.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Regular Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness in promoting accessibility and inclusion within the eLearning environment. Feedback from students, faculty, and staff will be incorporated into policy revisions.
- **Student Feedback:** Students will be encouraged to provide feedback on the accessibility and inclusivity of their eLearning experience through surveys, focus groups, or one-on-one meetings with staff.

- **Continuous Improvement:** [Institution Name] will continuously improve its eLearning offerings by adopting new technologies and strategies that enhance accessibility and inclusion, based on ongoing evaluations and feedback.

## Responsibilities

- **Institution Leadership:** Ensure the allocation of resources to support accessibility and inclusivity in eLearning and oversee the implementation of this policy.
- **Faculty and Instructors:** Design and deliver accessible and inclusive online courses and provide accommodations to students as needed.
- **Students:** Students are encouraged to communicate their needs regarding accessibility and to seek out available support services when necessary.

## Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in corrective actions, including the redesign of non-compliant courses, removal of inaccessible content, or additional support for students and instructors.

## Policy Review and Approval

### Approved by:

[University Authority]

### Date:

[Date of Approval]

### Next Review Date:

[Review Date]

This policy will be reviewed annually by the [eLearning Committee/Office of Accessibility] and will be revised as needed to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of all students.

**The End**

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