



Assam
down town
UNIVERSITY



Life Long Learning Policy

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Assam down town University
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Approved by		 Prof (Dr) Pranveer Singh Pro Vice-Chancellor Assam down town University 

Lifelong Learning Policy

Introduction:

A Lifelong Learning Policy in the University formally recognizes that education is a continuous, self-motivated pursuit that extends far beyond initial degree programs. It shifts the institutional model from a one-time educational provider to a dynamic, career-long partner for its graduates and the wider professional community.

This policy is driven by the rapid pace of technological change and evolving industry demands, making the periodic upskilling, reskilling, and professional development of adult learners an absolute necessity.

The policy essentially formalizes the university's commitment to creating a flexible and accessible ecosystem where individuals can continuously update their knowledge and skills throughout their entire professional journey.

Objective:

The objectives of a Lifelong Learning Policy in a private university center on enhancing institutional relevance, supporting career development, and ensuring financial sustainability through a flexible and continuous educational offering.

- ❖ To extend the university's academic offerings beyond traditional full-time degrees to include part-time, online, and blended formats, making education accessible to working adults and diverse learner demographics.
- ❖ To provide pathways for alumni upskilling and reskilling to maintain their professional competitiveness and deepen their connection to the institution, treating them as career-long learners, not just graduates.
- ❖ To establish a reliable and self-sustaining source of non-tuition revenue through fees for executive education, certificate courses, and corporate training contracts, reducing reliance on traditional enrollment cycles.
- ❖ To contribute to the broader social goal of creating an engaged, educated citizenry by promoting the personal enrichment and self-improvement aspect of continuous learning.

Role & Responsibilities:

A university's role and responsibilities toward a Lifelong Learning Policy are multifaceted, positioning the institution as a hub for continuous learning that extends far beyond traditional undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Strategy and Vision, Program Design and Delivery, Access and Inclusion, and Recognition and Partnerships.

- ❖ Define Lifelong Learning Policy as a high priority within the university's mission statement, strategic plan, and institutional policies. Foster a university-wide culture that values continuous self-directed learning for students, staff, and the wider community.
- ❖ Conduct ongoing analysis of economic, technological, and societal trends (e.g., green skills, digital transformation, demographic shifts) to anticipate and respond to evolving learning and skill needs.
- ❖ The university must offer flexible, responsive, and innovative learning pathways. Move away from purely time-bound degrees by developing modular, stackable, and short-form learning options (e.g., micro-credentials, professional certificates, short courses) that can be completed around work and personal commitments.
- ❖ Employ blended, hybrid, and fully online models to ensure learning is accessible anytime and anywhere, accommodating the diverse schedules of adult learners.
- ❖ Embed generic lifelong learning skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem-solving, digital literacy, self-directed learning) into all curricula, including undergraduate programs.
- ❖ Provide continuous training for academic staff on adult learning principles, flexible The university is responsible for widening participation to non-traditional and adult learners. Actively reach out to diverse and vulnerable groups (e.g., older adults, unemployed, underrepresented communities) who may not traditionally access higher education.
- ❖ Provide specialized information, guidance, and counseling services tailored to adult learners, helping them navigate learning opportunities and career planning.
- ❖ Address digital divides and financial barriers to ensure Lifelong Learning programs are affordable and accessible to all demographic groups.
- ❖ The university must act as an engaged community partner and an evaluator of learning. Develop robust, coherent mechanisms and policies to formally assess and recognize learning outcomes acquired through work experience, non-formal training, or other life contexts, allowing for credit transfer toward a formal qualification.

- ❖ Establish strong collaborations with employers, professional associations, and local communities to co-design curricula for maximum relevance.
- ❖ Bring the university's resources and services to outside groups and engage in and promote interdisciplinary research on adult learning, effective teaching methodologies, and the impact of Lifelong Learning Policy.

Application & Management:

The application and management of a Lifelong Learning Policy by a university requires a shift in operational structures and administrative processes to effectively support non-traditional learners and flexible offerings. This involves dedicated governance, streamlined student services, and robust quality assurance.

- ❖ Effective management begins with structural changes to champion the Lifelong Learning agenda.
- ❖ Dedicated Lifelong Learning Office/Unit need to establish as central, cross-departmental administrative unit responsible for coordinating, managing, and promoting all Lifelong Learning activities, including short courses, micro-credentials, and professional development programs. This unit acts as the single point of contact for external partners and adult learners.
- ❖ A dedicated and sustainable budget is allocated for Lifelong Learning initiatives, covering the development of new programs, marketing, technology infrastructure, and specialized staff training.
- ❖ Regularly review and update university policies (e.g., admissions, fees, academic regulations, faculty workload) to remove barriers for Lifelong Learning participants and align with the principles of flexibility and accessibility.
- ❖ Managing flexible learning requires new operational standards for academic delivery. Develop an administrative system capable of handling short-cycle, modular enrollments and scheduling, which differs significantly from traditional full-semester course management.
- ❖ The University should arrange technology infrastructure by investing in robust, user-friendly learning management systems (LMS) that support asynchronous learning, blended delivery, and easy access to course materials for part-time, off-campus learners.

- ❖ Adjustment of faculty workload recognition to appropriately credit the time and effort involved in designing, teaching, and updating Lifelong Learning courses, which often require specialized content and teaching methods.
- ❖ Implement an accelerated and streamlined application process that minimizes bureaucracy, focusing on practical experience and prior qualifications rather than solely relying on traditional entry scores.
- ❖ Design and administer a transparent, fair, and efficient system for assessing and granting academic credit for skills and knowledge gained outside formal education. This requires trained assessors and clear documentation standards.
- ❖ Offer specialized support services for Lifelong Learning students, including evening/weekend advising, career counseling focused on re-skilling / up-skilling, and dedicated technical support.
- ❖ Implement flexible payment plans, per-module fee options, or government subsidy management to ease the financial burden associated with continuous learning.
- ❖ Effective management includes monitoring and ensuring the quality and relevance of Lifelong Learning offerings. Need to establish mechanisms for continuous feedback from industry partners and employers to ensure Lifelong Learning curriculum remains current, relevant, and meets the demands of the labor market.
- ❖ Develop specific quality assurance metrics for Lifelong Learning programs (e.g., completion rates for micro-credentials, learner satisfaction, employment/promotion rates after completion) separate from traditional degree program metrics.