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Arab Open University
Saudi Arabia Branch

Supplementary material for
The academic and administrative staff in the Arab Open University
Customized for Saudi Arabia branch

Preparing Orientation Sessions / Workshops

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Arrangement Platform

A proposal is made herein for convening an “*Orientation Session/Workshop*” at all Branch locations.

- Suggested timeframe: one week ahead of the first semester of every academic year.
- Session duration: one day; 2 hours in morning; 2 hours in afternoon.
- Session speakers: Branch Director; Center Directors; Senior Management/ Senior Staff Tutors.

Suggested Contents of Workshop

It is suggested that specific contents should be targeted for such an Orientation Workshop. In particular, the following suggestions are made.

Morning Session:

This session focuses on roles and responsibilities and management aspects of the Learning Process.

- Overview of the Open Education Platform at the AOU, incorporating a blend of Tutorial Sessions (Tutor-based) and Independent Study (Student-based):
 - Review of the Organizational Structures of the HQ and the Branch
 - Roles and responsibilities of Tutors and Staff Tutors
 - Effective Management of the Tutorial Sessions
 - Office Hours and Tutor Communication to enhance the effectiveness of Student Independent Study
- Available Learning Resources:
 - Printed Material
 - Supporting Course Websites
 - Application Software Packages
 - Video streaming of tutorial presentations
 - Other supporting initiatives; e.g., Supporting Notes posted on the net by Tutors and Staff tutors
- Attending to student grievances and appeals

Afternoon Session:

This session focuses on various aspects and requirements of “Student Assessment”:

- Managing the TMAs; a major role for the Tutors:

- Application of the PT3 form is highly important.
- Generous comments are significant feedback to students on their performance.
- Monitoring role of the Staff Tutor
- Administering the Midterm Assessments (Quizzes):
 - Monitoring role and moderation by the Staff Tutor aims at addressing the issue of “Standardization.”
 - Collaborative effort by the team of course Tutors is highly desirable.
- Managing the Final Exam:
 - Exam Preparation; under Dean’s direction; but involves participation by all Branches.
 - “Group Marking Strategy” toward addressing the issue of “Standardization.”
 - Major leading role for the Staff Tutor
- Role of the Branch Exam Committee
- Collecting Student Work Samples: a common responsibility
- OUVS Accreditation: toward quality assurance in Higher Education
- Local Accreditation: local stamp of approval

Targeted Audience

This workshop is deemed beneficial for faculty members of all ranks. Hence, it is recommended that old and new faculty attend the workshop.

Handouts

The following documents should be available for distribution:

1. Faculty Handbook/Compendium of Academic Regulations
2. Guidelines for Managing Student Assessment
3. Group Marking Strategy
4. General Marking Guidelines
5. Description of Academic Programs

Polling Opinions

Opinions of participants should be solicited via a simple questionnaire that would ask them to:

- List the major 3 benefits gained
- List 3 other issues that need to be covered in future presentations of same workshop

Documentation

Branch, at all locations, should document presentation of the workshop:

- Document topics covered
- Write a brief report (1 page) on feedback gained via the questionnaire
- Append Handouts for future reference
- Append list of attendees



Training Workshop Questionnaire

Polling Opinions from Workshop Participants

Dear Workshop Attendant:

We have, by design, developed this simple questionnaire as a means of feedback on the contents and quality of the workshop concerned. In turn, we thank you for your attendance and your kind participation in completing this questionnaire.

Workshop title: **Date:** .../.../ 2006

Benefits Gained:

Please list the three main benefits gained out of this workshop:

1.
.....
.....
2.
.....
.....
3.
.....
.....

Further Issues of Interest:

Please list three main other issues and items of interest that you would like to see covered in the future, in a similar workshop:

- 1.
.....
.....
- 2.
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.....
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- 3.
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.....
.....

Overall Effectiveness:

Please indicate overall quality of workshop management and presentation using the scale:

1. Outstanding 2. Very Good 3. Good 4. Average 5. Poor

Overall quality of workshop management and presentation