Rushmore Business School

Online Teaching and Learning Policy

Mrs Kajal Purlackee-Boodhoo
6-2-2022

Contents

1. Introduction

Rushmore Business School (RBS) is now capitalizing on the innovative technology and the evolution of the online education market and is also advancing its online pedagogical methods and student-centric programme structures.

2. Online Programme Development

Online programmes are developed collaboratively by a team, including representation from the faculty, academic department, and administration with the aim of adhering to and expanding on best practices and guidelines for online education set forth in the Quality Policy.

As with all academic programmes, the final authority for approval of online programmes rests with the RBS Academic Committee, headed by the Academic Director.

3. Course Structure and Contents

Essential elements for an effective course structure and contents:

3.1 Fully developed and complete:

Course site is finished and populated with all assignments and course materials well before the first day of lecture. Upcoming assignments may be 'hidden' in the student's view, on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE,) **RBS Moodle**, but all other lecture materials and information are uploaded well before the semester begins.

3.2 Welcoming and visually appealing:

An induction session and a course orientation are provided to all students (in-person, PDF with screenshots, screencast, or video) at the start of their course. RBS Moodle training, tour of the building and meeting with both Administrative and Course team are encompassed during induction and orientation.

3.3 Intuitive, user-friendly navigation:

RBS Moodle is easy to navigate and consistent across the academic programme. It includes a banner and follows the organization of the programme, including handbooks, lecture notes, videos, journals, and any announcement from the Management. All course materials are easy to find. However, the Course Coordinator/ Programme Manager is the point of contact if any issue arises, and IT support is available too for any technical issues.

3.4 Clear Road map in syllabus:

Effective, visually appealing syllabus provides roadmap to course. Due dates and times are clear. Home page is visually rich.

3.5 Aligned learning and programme objectives:

Programmes objectives are stated in syllabus and handbooks which can be found on RBS Moodle. Expected learning outcomes are clearly defined and align with programmes' objectives.

3.6 Formative and summative feedback:

Formative and summative feedback will be provided. Surveys are used to collect early feedback. Appropriate assessments of various kinds are included, such as, coursework, projects, presentation, exams, amongst others, which map to expected learning outcomes.

3.7 Engaging activities:

A variety of learning activities/assignments are used to appeal to different learning styles. All learning activities support expected learning outcomes/objectives. External experts for Guest Lectures are invited to offer their perspectives and share their experience as industries experts, where appropriate.

3.8 Transparent grading:

Rushmore Business School's Assessment Framework defines the grading process including any resits and penalties. RBS Moodle enables the Course Coordinators/Programme Managers to keep track of students' grades throughout the semester. Rubrics and other mechanisms for detailing expectations on assignments are offered in the syllabus and/or through Moodle.

4. Teaching

To support Rushmore Business School's commitment to the development of more online courses and graduate programmes, the Management with the Academic Team consider the following qualities needed to be an effective online lecturer.

An effective online lecturer is:

4.1 Student-centric:

Lecturer makes every student feel welcome; creates an orientation (via video, PDF with screenshots, or in person). Lecturer is proactive with help, both academic and technological (Moodle issues). Lecturer points students to campus resources as needed, is concerned with student retention, and wants to know what he/she can do to improve retention in a class of different learning styles and needs.

4.2 Accessible, responsive, and involved:

An effective online lecturer is accessible to students, provides multiple ways of communicating with students, and responds quickly (within 24 hours) to emails and questions. The lecturer provides substantive and frequent feedback on all assignments or other assessments with students; is active in online learning activities; and provides a high level of instructor presence. RBS has a system in place called 'surgery hours' which are provide to all our students, whereby lecturers are requested to allocate a window to assist to students every week.

4.3 Organized:

An effective online lecturer is highly organized and provides a clear schedule of assignments and due dates in the module specification and on the VLE. The Course Coordinator/Programme Manager ensures that RBS Moodle is well organized and complete; materials are easy to find; and the VLE adheres to programme standards and templates.

4.4 Promotes active learning:

Assignments show creativity and a desire to cater to different learning styles. Assignments use scaffolding to become increasingly more difficult. All assignments or any other form of assessments come with clear, easy to understand instructions and guidelines.

4.5 Transparent grader:

Lecturer communicates how students' work will be graded (through use of rubrics or other instruments, such as marking scheme).

4.6 Open to new technologies:

Lecturer does not have to be a technologist but should be willing to experiment and learn new things technologically and should be comfortable learning and trying new things. All use of technology should be instructionally relevant.

4.7 A team player:

Lecturer uses the team development approach to make sure curriculum is appropriate to programme goals. S/He seeks continuous improvement and modifies course as needed, according to student and team feedback with the collaboration of the Academic Team.

5. Lecturer Development

Lecturers who teach online courses at RBS demonstrates relevant subject matter competencies as determined by their academic department and receive appropriate training prior to delivering their first online or blended course, as part of their course development process. The course material is substantially refreshed and updated as and when required.

RBS has a recording studio for make a recording of lectures and same is uploaded on the VLE for reference purpose.

6. Assessment

To support effective learning, students are encouraged to work more independently, expand their knowledge, and learn to use tools and strategies that they otherwise might not have. Apart from the conventional assessments, some assessment modes used to enhance online teaching and learning are below:

- Discussion forums or text-based chats – incorporated on VLE platform
- Quizzes and Games
- Video chatting and conferencing.
- Live video chats
- Discussion forums or text-based chats
- Time constraints exams
- Time constraints assignments

7. Evaluation

Routine evaluation of programmes is central to the assurance and enhancement of quality in learning and teaching at Rushmore Business School. Course evaluation enables Rushmore to gather the views of students on each of the programme of study, to identify strengths and weaknesses, overlaps and deficiencies.

7.1 Mid Module Evaluation (MME)

The evaluation exercises are carried out twice per semester, the first one is the Mid Module Evaluation (MME) which is carried out on the 4th- 5th week of the semester, all feedback received are treated with high confidentiality and are thus disseminated to the Academic Director, who in turn discusses any burning issues with the relevant Course Coordinators/Programme Manager and lecturers so as corrective actions are taken where necessary.

7.2 End of Semester (EoS)

Moreover, an End of Semester Evaluation (EoS) is also carried out on the 8th – 9th week of the semester to ensure that all feedback provided to us during the MME, have been actioned and the EoS feedback further helps us to have an overview of the semester as a whole and the student's experience. Thus, Rushmore Business School is also committed to ensure that all the quality assurance procedures of its academic partners are respected and applied besides its own.

7.3 Staff/Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), the Student Voice

Feedback from students is considered as an important ingredient in ensuring high quality levels of teaching and learning. Thus, a platform is put in place also called the 'Student Voice'. Students can elect democratically two representatives for each course to participate in the Staff/Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) which is held every semester. The purposes of the SSLC are to ensure that the views of students are given proper weight in the processes of course and module review, and to ensure that the concerns of students about their courses of study are represented to the academic staff throughout the academic year. This is the time where not only academic suggestions are voiced out but any other concern, be it extra-curricular activities, physical resources, assistance of our team members or any others, so as, to ensure students have a comparable and enriching experience as our Partners' students. This meeting is conducted on a Semestrial basis by the Director, the Academic Director, and the Head of

Quality Assurance, together with all the democratically elected Class Representatives and Vice-Class Representatives.