

ORDER 16/2022 DISTANCE LEARNING

Technology-mediated teaching and learning in Portugal has experienced a marked expansion within the framework of the response of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to the pandemic crisis. In this circumstance, the HEIs have accumulated significant experience in the development of programmes in this modality and the promotion of non-face-to-face training initiatives, revealing a great capacity to adapt to very challenging circumstances. The response capacity revealed was based, in some cases, on the training of human and technological resources resulting from the launch of initiatives that could temporarily ensure contact with students throughout the period disturbed by the pandemic crisis.

This evolution developed in parallel with the Distance Learning modality, which has been recently legally framed, by Decree-Law no. 133/2019, 3 September.

Given this new context and the high number of proposals for study programmes submitted to A3ES which integrate curricular units or modules with non-face-to-face teaching characteristics and widespread use of technological means of virtual communication, it is important to define the criteria that should preside over the assessment of these degree-awarding study programmes. The definition of these criteria is made within a framework of effective use of the institutions' accumulated experience and forecasts a mixed structure for the curricular development of study programmes.

The following criteria are therefore established for assessing study programme proposals with non-face-to-face teaching components, not covered by Decree-Law no. 133/2019:

- Teaching-learning methodologies for non-presential components in a hybrid context or of a mixed nature must be differentiated. When associated with asynchronous learning, the methodologies should be constructed and adopted according to the specificity of this modality, including research methodologies, document analysis and information processing, case analysis and discussion, and preparation of projects, reviews or reports, with strong support from teachers to encourage students to develop their paths of reflection and creation;

- The teaching staff associated with the curricular units or modules offered in the non-face-to-face teaching modality must present evidence in the following areas while valuing dynamics of progress patent in the teachers' background:
 - ◇ Training actions on topics related to online teaching and learning methodologies and the use of digital mediation technologies, which include not only theoretical training but also practical experience in organizing, promoting and managing curricular units/training modules in non-face-to-face teaching;
 - ◇ Experience in teaching curricular units/training modules based on active learning methodologies;
 - ◇ Portfolio for publications and/or recent scientific or pedagogical activities (last 5 years) on topics directly related to the methodologies or digital mediation supporting non-face-to-face teaching, although this aspect can be mitigated by a curriculum vitae in progress in this area;
- The position of study programme coordinator must comply with the requirements set out in articles 6, 16 and 29 of Decree-Law No. 74/2006, March 24, as amended by Decree-Law No. 65/2018, August 16. Therefore, the coordinator must hold a doctorate degree in the fundamental area of training of the study programme (or hold the title of specialist, when applicable) and may be assisted by an expert in the area of non-face-to-face teaching;
- Technical, administrative and management staff. In this area, attention should be paid to specialized technical staff, bringing together technical and pedagogical skills to support students and to collaborate with teachers in the design of curriculum plans and study programme materials;
- Material and technological means must include verification of the existence of adequate material and technological resources to carry out the proposed teaching-learning activities, especially and when applicable, experimental, laboratory or performative activities in the distance modality;

Lisbon, 21 September 2022

The President of the A3ES Management Board,
João Guerreiro.