Section 8 - Student Supports			
Subject:		Procedures associated with supporting students to engage with Blended Learning	
Date Approved by Board of Directors:			**July 2019**
Policy Version	1/2019	Date due for Revision	February 2024
Parent Policy		Policy on supporting students to engage with Blended Learning	

INTRODUCTION

ICHAS recognizes that the use of technological interfaces can be a source of anxiety for some learners. The college provides robust supports for students at pre-enrolment, enrolment and on an ongoing basis throughout their programmes. Orientation and training in technologies to enhance learning take place online and involve the actual technologies and tools students will use thereby allowing students to learn by doing.

RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE/ PERSON	RESPONSIBILITY
Educational Technology Manager	Delivering training. Providing accurate information for the ICHAS website and promotional materials. Ongoing support.
IS Manager	Delivering training. Providing accurate information for the ICHAS website and promotional materials.
Vice President (Academic Affairs)	Oversees the process.

PROCEDURES

The procedures to support student readiness for blended learning is presented here to outline the steps taken to ensure that students can engage with blended learning successfully. The procedures state the actions necessary to give students the opportunity to evaluate their own digital skills, develop the necessary digital skills to engage with blended learning approaches at ICHAS through the use of the Learning Management System, attending virtual classrooms, electronic submission of assignments and checking academic originality using digital tools.

Procedures Before Application

- Comprehensive information on the form and manner of blended learning used in ICHAS programmes is available from the ICHAS website
- Comprehensive information on the minimum technical requirements necessary to use blended learning technologies are also outlined on the ICHAS website.
- Potential students can avail of online information sessions and the same technology is used at this stage.

Procedures for Induction/Orientation to Support Student Readiness for Blended Learning & Virtual Classes

The Induction introduces key concepts and technologies to the learners and they also receive an introduction to Blended Learning which is a short course delivered over several weeks that ensures students have the opportunity to develop digital skills slowly and with robust support.

Induction Day:

At induction day, the information systems team demonstrate the key educational technologies that students will use, including;

- The process for logging in to the Learning Management System is outlined. Students are encouraged to bring their own personal device to Induction Day so that they can activate their account immediately.
- The Password reset process is outlined next, demonstrating how students will always be able to access their account.
- The structure and navigation of the Learning Management System is outlined next. Students are shown how to access their student email and download Office 365 software.
- Students are then shown how to access their modules. The module template is explained – all modules have a consistent appearance and outline to ensure easy navigation.
- Students will be shown where to access important information, including:
  - Module Descriptor and Learning Outcomes
  - Assessment Information & Upload links
  - Virtual Classroom & Class Recording Links
  - Communication tools such as instant messaging and discussion forums.
  - How to launch and access their virtual classroom. An overview is provided of the virtual classroom itself, outlining its use and capabilities in a brief simulated session.
- The educational technology overview session concludes with an outline of the "Introduction to Blended Learning" course. Students are encouraged to attend and shown how to access it.

Introduction to Blended Learning

As part of the formal introduction to the BSLE environment students are provided with access to "Introduction to Blended Learning" which is a 6-week orientation programme intended to enable students to learn about their educational technologies at a comfortable pace. The course exists as an optional, unassessed module available from

the Learning Management System. It is delivered entirely online on the LMS to promote meta-learning about the LMS itself through active use of same. Each weekly session covers a separate topic and digital skills that students need to acquire to engage with their programme.

Ongoing Supports to Develop Student Digital Literacy and Skills

ICHAS recognises that the need for digital skills development does not cease following the Induction and Orientation process.

- The educational technologist is available for students to discuss their learning needs.
- All virtual classrooms are actively supported by the information systems support team.
- The support team provides ad-hoc support as needed to all students to resolve once-off technical issues as they arise and they make recommendations of resources for the enhancement of digital skills
- The LMS contains resources and advice on the enhancement of digital skills.
- Reminders are posted regularly in the Student Dashboard page of the LMS to point students towards resources that can support them in:
    - Using online libraries
    - Electronic submission of assignments
    - Understanding similarity reports and replacing assignments with a high similarity score
    - Using virtual classrooms effectively

GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION OF PROCEDURE

The following Chart outlines procedures that relate to Supporting Students and their engagement with Technology used to support Learning at Early Stages following Enrolment – the Introduction to Blended Learning Course**:**
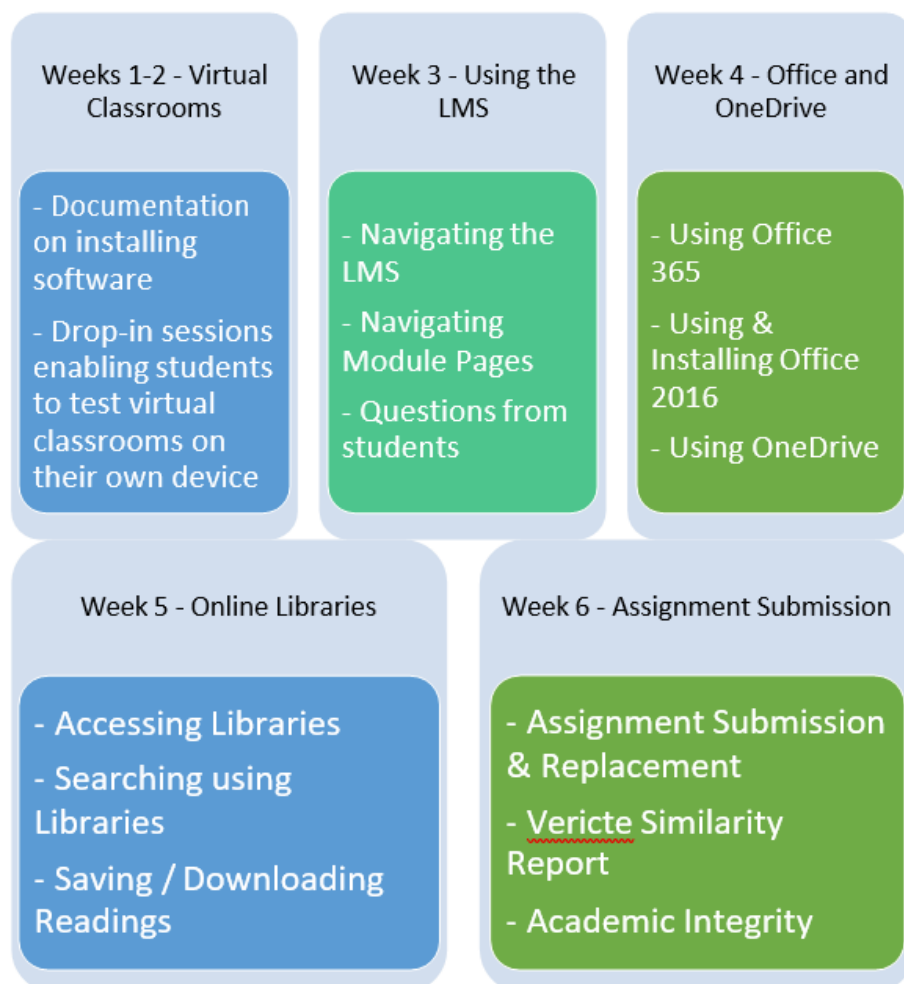
Weeks 1-2 - Virtual Classrooms

- Documentation on installing software

- Drop-in sessions enabling students to test virtual classrooms on their own device

Week 3 - Using the LMS

- Navigating the LMS

- Navigating Module Pages

- Questions from students

Week 4 - Office and OneDrive

- Using Office 365

- Using & Installing Office 2016

- Using OneDrive

Week 5 - Online Libraries

- Accessing Libraries

- Searching using Libraries

- Saving / Downloading Readings

Week 6 - Assignment Submission

- Assignment Submission & Replacement

- Vericte Similarity Report

- Academic Integrity

Figure 1 - the Introduction to Blended Learning Course:

Linked Policies and Procedures

Linked Policies	Policy on supporting students to engage with Blended Learning Policy on Teaching and Learning Policy on Assessment of Learners Policy on General Student Supports
Linked Procedures	Procedures associated with Assessment of Learners