

Learning Management System Policy

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Approved by ABG on	10 June 2021	Scheduled review date	June 2024

1. Purpose

Student, staff, and doctoral candidates' learning and development is enhanced by the quality of the learning management system that supports their study and work. The purpose of this policy is to clearly identify and document the elements of NIODA's Learning Management System and, where required, identify relevant protocols.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all staff, students and doctoral candidates at NIODA.

3. Policy Statement

NIODA is committed to the provision of a learning management system that is accurate, accessible and of high quality. The learning management system at NIODA is both physical and digital. Key features include:

- physical book library with an online catalogue and postage service
- eJournal library including Informit, JStore, Oxford reference, Gale and Sage platforms and selected specialist journals
- institution, course and subject information
- electronic specialist readings
- invitation-only online discussion forums
- live interactive video conferencing platform for classes, seminars, workshops, symposium and conferences
- online application and enrolment forms.

4. Teaching and Learning Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

The ICT environment at NIODA includes a public profile at www.nioda.org.au, and Google Education suite (G-suite) applications which includes NIODA's Internal Platform.

4.1. NIODA Public profile website: www.nioda.org.au

Hosted on a local Australia services provider, the site has 200MB bandwidth per month and 20GB storage capacity. A maintenance program is in place to monitor intrusions and spam issues, and to restrict access to the administration of the website. The program includes monthly virus scans and weekly backups and the ability to restore the website within hours (dependent on 3rd party issues, such as spam listings). There is no personal information or NIODA files held on this site, nor links to data housed on the G-suite hosting.

The public profile provides:

- a broad range of information about NIODA's history, governance, academic programs, research, consultancy and coaching services
- publicly available policies
- class, symposium, conference, seminar and event timetables and information
- application and enrolment forms
- global updates in this field
- links to the G-suite and Internal Platform

4.2. NIODA Google Education suite

Google Education suite (G-suite) houses all NIODA email under its operative domains nioda.org.au and legacy email nioda.com.au through gmail. All students, staff, board and committee members have independent NIODA accounts with G-suite and the option to log into G-suite to access relevant closed Internal Platform "intranet" site directories and internally shared Google Drive (folders).

G-suite will easily manage the projections to 2025 of numbers of students, doctoral candidates and staff, along with all library needs, as the Google Educational Hosting Agreement is, within reasonable usage, unlimited. Similarly, the number of email accounts and users under G-suite is unlimited.

G-suite provides:

- secure, closed online discussion forums
- a platform for live interactive video conferencing
- information resources including library and ejournals
- and application processes and relevant forms and online submission.

Ordinarily, students use their own computers and mobile devices to access the NIODA digital platforms. Wireless internet access is available at the Melbourne and Sydney sites.

The digital platforms are accessible 24 hours a day, with the following capacity:

- private and secure user member email access
- device agnostic – mobile, tablet and desktop compatible across all websites and G-suite applications
- cloud hosting of 'unlimited' users and files, without reconfiguration.

The security compliance and ability to respond to threats by Google engineers is reputedly of high standing and a significant improvement for NIODA's security from our previous housing of data on an Australian server. A server that did not have the security resources or control of data centres comparable with Google. Email and data transmission between users and G-suite services is encrypted. See Google for Education Security:

https://edu.google.com/intl/en_au/trust/#how-does-google-keep-data-secure*

5. Protocols for effective synchronous and asynchronous communications

Individuals across the organisations use myriad devices including laptops, PCs, Apple products, and mobile devices. Staff, student and candidate synchronous and asynchronous interactions occur in the following ways:

Synchronous:

Video conferencing facilities, such as Zoom, are used for:

- live interactive online classes
- one-to-one supervision in which candidates and supervisors discuss items such as timelines, milestones, and any potential issues around the research methods, settings, analysis and writing
- group and peer supervision
- technology training sessions

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- seminars, workshops, symposium, conferences, consulting, coaching and research
- staff meetings and retreats.

Online collaboration platforms, such as Google Docs and Miro, are used for a variety of purpose, including the below:

- Google Docs is used widely for the collaborative development of documents and for others, be they editors, supervisors or proof readers, to leave comments and make suggestions.
- Miro, an online whiteboard, is used by groups, small and large, and individuals to brainstorm, to map or diagram workflows, idea development or research ideas and connections. Miro can be used to support interactive classes, meetings and workshops. Miro can be used synchronously and asynchronously by multiple users.
- Messaging services such as WhatsApp and Signal are widely used both to support staff, students and candidates, communicate. They are used both for logistics purposes and for group conversation and functioning. Such services also support individuals and groups on those occasions when there are technology breakdowns.

Asynchronous:

- access to the Google suite of applications, including Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, Classroom, Meet, Calendar and Gmail, all of which are currently used across NIODA for collaborative working
- NIODA online library
- NIODA book library
- NIODA Zotero referencing and research software
- timely and critical feedback on drafts of a candidate's written work by email and in Google Docs/Drive, including their assignments, dissertations and thesis is conducted in word/google doc format and returned to candidates utilising track changes to allow for comments and input.

Information regarding the various platforms and systems NIODA utilises is available to prospective students and doctoral candidates on the relevant course information pages of the NIODA website and within course information guides.

Students, candidates and staff, have access to one-on-one tutorials regarding the use of NIODA's online platforms, including the library and online journal facilities, Google drive, Zotero referencing and citation software and video-conferencing facilities. Should it be required for larger events and collaborative exercises, NIODA will also support the PhD program with extra technical support and access to extra video-conferencing accounts.

IT support is available to all NIODA students via phone, email, and video conferencing facilities to our key technology support staff, the Director of Administration and the Administrative Coordinator.

A description of the computer hardware and software required for effective online communication is described as part of the introductory technology session in the induction process.

Staff, students and candidates, current and prospective, are also made aware of the requirement to establish quiet and private workspaces in their homes, or other locations, as preparation for effectively working in an online environment. Having quiet and private workspaces is particularly important as staff work with consulting, coaching, and research clients, and students and candidates work with research partners and operate in the style of work-integrated learning.

6. Access

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The NIODA digital systems are accessible 24 hours a day. Students, candidates, staff, board and committee members are provided with login details that enable them to first register and then personalise their password to gain access to the student, staff and board portals respectively.

7. Planning, reviewing and improving

Planning, reviewing and improving the ICT environment at NIODA is the responsibility of the Executive Management Committee. This committee meets monthly with the NIODA ICT environment as a standing agenda item. Critical ICT-related incidents are reported by the Director of Administration to this meeting in an ongoing way. Student and staff feedback at the end of each semester informs the development of the ICT environment. Advice from IT experts is sought in evaluation, development and improvement of these systems. The updating of the website with new materials and notices is the task of the Director of Administration. Making decisions about new content is the responsibility of the Executive and Education Committees.

8. Website management

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring all content on the NIODA website is current, accurate and accessible, is delegated to the Director of Administration. When web access problems occur, students, staff, board and committee members email the Director of Administration who will either resolve the issue within two working days or, if necessary, contact NIODA's IT support services.

The NIODA website hosting platform is managed by Mr Ross Hazeldine of Webhand. NIODA has an ongoing Third Party Agreement in place with Webhand.

9. User training

Orientation for students to the student portals and the G-suite applications is provided in the first year orientation session. One-on-one training on how to use the staff and student portals respectively and the G-suite applications is provided by the administration staff via Skype to all staff and for those students who require additional support.

All staff are supported to undertake professional development specifically targeting the enhancement of online delivery. Within twelve months of establishing online delivery as core to NIODA business, NIODA will locate and make available the required professional development for all teaching staff. All staff will be encouraged to undertake professional development in this area.

10. Technology support

Technology support is available. Requests for technology support should be sent to admin@nioda.org.au. Administrative staff respond within two working days of the initial email request.

11. Related Documents

PhD Supervision Policy

Introductory Technology Session Information