# ANA G. MÉNDEZ UNIVERSITY
# STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION
# STUDENT AUTHENTICATION POLICY

## Introduction/Purpose

This policy establishes the mechanisms to comply with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008 (Public Law 110-315) that requires the verification of student identity in distance or correspondence education. This law requires institutions accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education *demonstrate that the student who enrolls in a distance course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit.*

This policy aims to promote and disseminate students' ethical and legal responsibilities as participants in a virtual academic community. In addition, it establishes the scope and mechanisms for the authentication of the students enrolled in the Ana G. Méndez University (AGMU) online modality.

## Scope

This policy applies to students enrolled in online academic programs and courses leading to degrees or credits, remote courses and participants in short courses, workshops, and certifications of the Continuing Education unit of Ana G. Méndez University.

## Definitions

1. **Asynchronous** - Communication or course activities are established in a time-deferred manner when it does not coincide simultaneously. Examples of asynchronous communication tools include discussion forums, individual tasks or assignments, and email.
2. **Authentication** - The process that a user (student) must follow to access the resources of a computer system or network. This process involves identification (telling the system who they are) and authentication (proving that the user is who they say they are). Authentication alone does not verify user access rights; these are confirmed in the authorization process.
3. **Synchronous** - Allows real-time and simultaneous communication, for which participants must be connected at the same time. Examples of synchronic communication tools can be chat, videoconferencing, instant messaging, and live webinars, among others.

## Procedure

The policies of AGMU regarding academic honesty and the acceptable use of information resources and technology include penalties for using another person's name and password, for cheating, lying, or tricking when answering an exam or course work.

All credit-bearing courses and programs offered through distance learning or correspondence methods must verify that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit. One or more of the following verification mechanisms must be used.

VERIFICATION MECHANISMS

AGMU has established the following mechanisms to verify and demonstrate the identity of the student enrolled in the institution's courses, programs, or online certifications:

1) Platforms Access and Secure Password - Each student has a unique user ID (username) created by the institution's Student Information Systems/Enterprise Resource Planner (SIS/ERP). The student sets the password, guided by the security parameters of the AGMU. In addition, the IT Security Unit has created digital mechanisms and procedures for users to protect their accounts with authentication with two-step verification.
2) Supervised exams - AGMU has digital tools that monitor the exams offered remotely through two (2) services:
   a. Monitor the environment in which the student is taking an exam and verify identity by requesting photo identification; using a regular webcam, you can identify movements, interruptions, or any suspicious situation during the active time of the exam.
   b. Screen locks and some computer functions, once the exam is activated, to prevent the user from surfing the Internet or accessing other areas of the computer.

   Another option is taking the exam in an institutional laboratory, identified by the faculty member offering the course. In this environment, the student identifies itself with the lab technician (Proctor), who will assign one of the computers available to the student and will provide any technical support that the student may need.

3) Teaching-learning practices - The faculty is the main agent in the use of these mechanisms. Through the synchronous and asynchronous interactions of the course and the possible recording of the same, the faculty establishes academic relationships with its students to facilitate knowledge and motivate participation in the teaching and learning process. This allows them to identify a profile of each student, not only of their physique but also of how they think, analyze, apply knowledge, and behave.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All students shall maintain the security of usernames, passwords, and any other access credentials that they are assigned. Access credentials must not be shared or given to anyone other than the user to whom they were assigned, for any reason. Users shall be responsible for any and all uses of their account. Users shall be responsible for changing passwords periodically to maintain security. Students must provide complete and true information about themselves in any identity verification process, in accordance with AGMU policies

COMPLIANCE

Violating the rules outlined in this Policy shall be considered a breach of academic integrity/honesty and may be subject to disciplinary action.