questions or possible questions at the end of the unit for providing feedback to the learners on their performance while they are learning a course in an ODL mode.

- ***Self-learning:*** Self learning materials are based on the principles of self learning where learners learn the materials without taking much help from the other external sources. Therefore, they should provide the study guide, directions, hints, references, illustrations, activities, check your progress, exercises, model questions or possible questions to the learners in each unit of a SLM. In fact, the SLMs must be comprehensive enough so that the learners learn of their own. Therefore, the SLMs must be interactive in nature.

  For developing and preparing SLMs, the above mentioned principles must be followed to make the SLMs independent learning materials.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Explain some imporatnt features of SLMs.

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3.4 DESIGN AND STRUCTURE OF SLMs

The preparation of the SLMs is mainly based on three stages or principles: first stage is the preparation or planning of the course (thinking about the course), second is developing the Course (writing the contents) and the final stage is producing the course content in the form of SLMs which need editing, reviewing, and then the making of the layout, and finally printing.

The Course contents in SLMs are designed for smooth running of the programmes of an open and distance learning institution. The SLMs

are designed in different terms such as Programme, Course, Block, Unit, Section, Sub-section etc., which are mentioned below in some detail:

Programme: A programme means the curriculum or combination of courses in a particular field of study. For examples, Undergraduate Programmes, Master's Programme (i.e. M.A.) in Education, Diploma Programme in Mass Communication, Post-graduate Diploma Programme in Distance Education, etc.

Course: The Programme is divided into courses. In the conventional system, courses means the subjects such as post graduate Physics, undergraduate Chemistry, primary level Mathematics and so on. But, in open and distance learning, the term course is used to describe teaching and other components of the study. In the ODL mode, the course consists of a number of booklets or Self Learning Materials, Development and Revision of SLMs as printed materials, audio-video material, online materials and computer based materials. Besides, in the ODL system, the course also consists of counselling and contact sessions, assignments, library work, laboratory work, project work, etc.

Block: A course is divided into blocks. In SLMs, the standard size of a block contains around 60-80 printed pages. Each block must have a thematic perception. The printed SLMs are sent to the learners and an attempt is made to provide a feeling of attachment and contact with the learners, although the learners are off campus for their learning. Besides, the learners may feel a greater sense of achievement if he or she completes a block in each time. Again, from pedagogical point of view, a block is better or more motivational for completing the course than a single big book.

Unit: In SLMs, a block consists of some units. There is a structured writing style of a unit where a particular content of the course is precisely written for the learners sothat the learners get the required information and knowledge on a particular topic of their given curriculum of the course. Thus, a unit, is a self-contained portion of a block, covering one or more interwoven learning concepts. Each unit is broken into sections and

subsections for the clarity of the presentation of concepts, information, illustrations, etc.

For writing a unit, there is a definite structure which may be developed by the ODL institutions. Each ODL institution can design specific structure of wrtiing a unit of their own. In a block of the SLMs, there is a cover page which may be designed by the Course-Coordinator in consultation with the dean (academic) or any higher academic body for the course. Besides, in each block, each unit should have a clear title that tells the learners what the unit is all about. For instance, to draw out the clear and explicit picture of a unit, the title of the unit should be comprehensive enough. In a unit, the structure with itemized sections and subsections should be given in order of the occurrence of the content in the material. The structure draws the learner's attention to the subject matter.

Apart from these first layout or format of a unit, there are some other important points such as the objectives of the units. They should be defined clearly in behavioural terms. Again for making the unit more comprehensible and easy to grasp on the part of the learners, the units can be divided into sections and sub-sections. In a unit, if some difficult terms are included, they should be indicated distinctly by bold typeface, and explain the meaning of the indicated terms as Glossary in the blank side of the pages of the units. For giving more clarity of the content to the learners or to assess how much a learner is able to graps the content of the unit, there may be inclidced some questions as 'Check Your Progress' in a few sections and sub-sections. These have been designed to self-check of the learners' progress of study. It will be better if a learner is able to solve the problems himself or herself immediately after going through the sections of a unit, and then match the answers with "Answers to Check Your Progress" given at the end of each unit. For developing the capacitiy of critical thinking as well as writing skills of the learners, in eacch unit, some activities are to be given by the unit writers so that the learners may not feel isolated from their learning contexts. Besdies, providing actitivities, illustration, excercises in a unit, additional information under the heading of 'Let Us Know' is also given for making the unit more interactive in nature. In the last section of each unit,

under the heading 'Let Us Sum Up', an attempt is also made to summarise the whole unit for the purposes of recapitulation on the topic in detail. In the latter part of a unit, a few links such as 'Further Reading' are also provided as they can guide a learner to read more if he or she is interested to know the topic in detail. And, finally at the end of a unit, possible or probable questions under the heading of 'Model Questions' are also provided, as through such questions, a learner can prepare himself or herself for the term end examination.

Thus, it has been found that all the units, blocks and courses of a programme are interrelated. Again, there must be some kind of uniformity following which the size of the unit or the limits of the words of a unit has to be standardised. Again, each ODL institution should have some policy with regards to the uniform pattern of payment to the course writers. Besides, they should also have a programme guide for each programme, where the entire map of how to study, what to study, when to study are made availbale to the learners. Apart from these, the ODL insstitutions should carefully follow the maintenance guidelines of the SLMs which are prepared for running the programmes in an ODL institution. The updating of the curriculum as well as the contents, revision of the SLMs, updating the data, minor changes in the content or units in a SLM which are based on the feedback received from various sources (like learners, counsellors, academicians, reviewers etc) should be done on regular basis for maintaining the quality of the SLMs which are prepared solely for the learners. Apart from the printed materials, the multi-media self-learning materials, assignments and manuals, tele-conferencing and interactive radio counselling, laboratory and hands-on experiences and the entire range of learners' support programme delivery mechanism should be relooked, re-designed and updated for making teaching-learning more effective and efficient.

Credit: Besides the preparation of the SLMs in various forms, the size or the weightage of the unit is credit based. There shall be description of credit value of each module or unit in the course. Credit is a standardised transparent system which is necessary for smooth running of the

educational process in a definite time period. It is used for determining the study hours.

- In a standardised scale, per credit indicates 30-32 hours.
- For a 4 credit course in a programme, a total of 120 hours are allotted for study. Out of 120 hours, 12 hours are fixed for counseling classes i.e. 10% from the total study hours.
- For a 6 credit course in a programme, the total study hours should be 180 hours, from which 18 hours is allotted for counselling classes in the study centres, which is 10% from the total study hours.



LET US KNOW

The New Education Policy of UGC on Distance Education 2017, clearly suggested the credits for the SLMs in a very clear manner. The UGC Regulation has accepted the suggestions which were provided by the Madhava Menon Committee with regards to the credits, how many units, an SLM should contain, how many should be the counselling hours, how many assignments should be given to the learners in ODL system etc. The following table shows the guidelines of the UGC towards the credit system that should prevail in the ODL system.

Table 1: Norms for offering programmes through Distance mode based on credit system

No.of Assignments	Practical Sessions	No.of Counseling Sessions Theory (10% of the total study hours)	Size of SLMs Range (in terms of units, to be divided into blocks)	Study input	Credit Value of the Course
1	60 hours	6 hours	6-8 units	60 hours	2 credits
2	120 hours	12 hours	14-16 units	120 hours	4 credits
3	180 hours	18 hours	20-24 units	180 hours	6 credits
4	240 hours	24 hours	30-34 units	240 hours	8 credits

Table 2: Norms for delivery of courses through distance mode

Duration of the Programme	Credits	Level of the Programme
3 Years	96-100	Bachelor's Degree (General)
2 Years	64-72	Master's Degree (General)

Table 3: Norms of Credit Structure for Self Learning Material Development Non-Print Form

No.of Assignments	Practical Sessions	No.of Counseling Sessions Theory (10% of the total study hours)	Size of SLMs Range (in terms of units, to be divided into blocks)	Study input	Credit Value of the Course
1	60 hours	6 hours	6-8 units	60 hours	2 credits
2	120 hours	12 hours	14-16 units	120 hours	4 credits
3	180 hours	18 hours	20-24 units	180 hours	6 credits
4	240 hours	24 hours	30-34 units	240 hours	8 credits

* Syn : Synchronous
**Asyn : Asynchronous
f2f : face-to-face

Thus, while preparing the SLMs, the ODL inssititutions must follow the above mentioned criteria in terms of size of the SLMs, credit values, assignment, study and conseling inputs etc. as suggested by the New Regulation of UGC on Distance Education in 2017.



ACTIVITY 3.1

Please read the section (section 3.4 of this unit) carefully on the structure of preparing a unit and then design a unit structure in your own interest topic.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: What is meant by a Programme, Course and Block of an SLM?

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Q 7: Define credit

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3.5 LET US SUM UP

- Self learning materials are those materials where the contents are designed in such a way that without taking much help from the teacher, a learner can easily grasp and understand their learning contents.
- Self learning materials are in different forms such as print material, audio-video material, online material and Computer-based material.
- Self Learning Materials and Text Books are prepared for running a course for a definite peroid of time, but there are some basic differences between them.

- Self explanatroy, self-contained, self-motivating, self-evaluating, self learning are the basic features of a SLM that makes the learning material effective and interactive.
- The SLMs are designed in different ways such as Programme, Course, Block, Unit, Section, Sub-section etc.
- The SLMs are designed for running a programme. A programe means the curriculum or combination of courses in a particular field of study.
- In the ODL mode, the course consists of a number of booklets of Self Learning Materials Development, and Revision of SLMs as printed materials, audio-video material, online material and computer based material. Besides, in ODL system, the course also consists of counselling and contact sessions, assignments, library work, laboratory work, project work, etc.
- A course is divided into blocks. In SLMs, the standard size of a block contains around 60-80 printed pages. Each block must have a thematic perception.
- In SLMs, a block consists of some units. A unit is a self-contained portion of a block covering one or more interwoven learning concepts. Each unit is broken into sections and subsections for the clarity of the presentation of concepts, information, illustrations, etc.
- Besides the prepareation of the SLMs in various forms, the size or the weightage of the unit is credit based. There shall be description of credit value of each module or unit in the course.
- Credit is a standardised transparent system which is necessary for smooth running of the educational process in a definite time period. It is used for determining the study hours.



3.6 FURTHER READING

1) Self Learning Materials, STRIDE, IGNOU

3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q N. 1: The SLMs are those materials where the contents are designed in such a way that without taking much help from the external sources, a learner can easily grasp and understand their learning contents. The SLMs are designed in such a way that it should guide the learners to achieve his or her educational objectives. The activities and functions of a teacher seem to be inbuilt in the study material itself as if the teacher is teaching in the classroom and a student is listening his or her class. Thus, an SLM should include all the materials which are prepared to stimulate independent study or learning a way that can ameliorate the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor domain of the learners.

Ans to Q N. 2: In the ODL system, the SLMs are found in both print and non-print forms such as:

- Books
- Workbooks
- Worksheets
- Audio-Video materials
- Online materials
- Computer based training (CBT) packages (Computer based materials)
- Multimedia etc

Ans to Q N. 3: Although the SLMs are found in varied forms such as print materials, audio-visual materials, online materials and computer based materials, the nature of the SLMs must be interactive and up-to-date. Generally, an SLM should be designed by considering the points suggested by the Distance Education Council (Now it is known as Distane Education Breau), which are as follows:

- In SLMs, there should be some clearly stated objectives
- It should be user-friendly
- Easy language must be used while writing the SLMs

- There should be short, manageable chunks of learning
- Plenty of helpful examples are to be used
- Reference to the learners' experiences
- Use of illustrations where they are better than words
- Headings to help learners to find their way around
- Links to other media where appropriate
- Obvious awareness of the needs of the different learners
- Exercises and activities that get the learners to use the material
- Space for learners to write down their own ideas
- Feedback to help learners to check their own progress
- Suggestions about getting help from other people
- Glossary and summary should also be included.

Ans to Q N. 4: Although text books and SLMs are designed for smooth running of a programme in an educational institution, there are some basic differences between the SLMs and the text book, which are as follows:

- In text books, it is assumed that they will develop interest among the learners, whereas in case of SLMs, they should arouse the interest of the trageted group of learners.
- The text books are written for serving the purpose of teachers' use, on the otherhand, the SLMs are prepared primarily for learners' used.
- In the text books, there is no indication of study time, but in SLMs estimated study time is given.
- In the text books, aims and objectives are rarely stated, whereas SLMs always contain clearly stated aims and objectives.
- The text books are written with a traget of covering a wide range of market, whereas the SLMs are written or desined for a particular group of learners.

Ans to Q N. 5: Self Learning Materials are the instruments for learning. The SLMs must followed the following features:

- **Self -Explanatory**: The SLMs should be designed in such a way that learners can understand them without external support.The

content of the SLMs should be self-explanatory and conceptually clear.

- ***Self-Contained:*** The SLMs must be self-sufficient in nature, learners may not require other additional sources for getting an idea on a particulalr subject.
- ***Self-Directed:*** The study materials should aim at providing necessary guidance, hints and suggestions to the learners at each stage of learning.
- **Self-Motivating:** The study material is like a live teacher and should encouage the learners, should arouse the curiosity among the learners to learn. The entire credit for creating motivation among the learners to learn goes to the course writers for making the SLMs meaningful and fruitful. The sense of reinforcement should be strengtened at every stage of learning and retention.
- ***Self-Evaluating:*** The SLM must contain the entire features of writing that helps the learners to self assess themselves without taking any external support. Self evaluation in the form of self check questions such as check your progress, activities, excercises provides the feedback to the learners about their progress in learning. Apart from the activities like check your progress, excercises in the text of SLMs of each unit, the unit must contain questions like model questions or possible questions for providing feeback to the learners on their performance, while they are learning a course in a ODL mode.
- ***Self-learning:*** Self learning materials are based on the principles of self learning where learners learn the materials without taking much help from the other external sources.

Ans to Q N. 6: The SLMs are designed for running a programme. A programme means the curriculum or combination of courses in a particular field of study. For examples, Undergraduate programme, Master Programme (e.g.M.A.)in Education, Diploma programme in Mass Communication, Post-graduate Diploma programme in Distance Education, etc.

Course: The programe is divided into courses. In the conventional system, the courses refer to the subjects such as post graduate physics, undergraduate chemistry, primary level maths and so on. But, in open and distance learning, the term course is used to describe teaching and other components of the study. In the ODL mode, the course consists of a number of booklets in the form of printed materials, audio-video materials, online materials and computer based materials. Besides, in the ODL system, the course also consists of counselling and contact sessions, assignments, library works, laboratory works, project works and so on.

Block: A course is divided into blocks. In SLMs, the standard size of a block contains around 60-80 printed pages. Each block must have a thematic perception.

Ans to Q N. 7: The size or the weightage of the SLM is based on credit system. Credit is a standardised transparent system which is necessary for smooth running of the educational process in a definite time period. It is used for determining the study hours.

- In a standardised scale, per credit indicates 30-32 hours.
- For a 4 credit course in a programme, a total of 120 hours are allotted for study. Out of 120 hours, 12 hours are fixed for counseling classes i.e. 10% from the total study hours.
- For a 6 credit course in a programme, the total study hours should be 180 hours, from which 18 hours is allotted for counseling classes in the study centres, which is 10% from the total study hours.



3.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions (Answer each question in about 50 words)

Q 1: Why is meant by SLM?

Q 2: What is the need of SLM for running a programme in an ODL institution?

Q 3: What is meant by a Programme in the ODL system?

Q 4: Explain the concept of a Block of the SLM.

Q 5: Define the necessity of a Unit of the SLM.

Q 6: What is meant by credit?

B. Short Questions (Answer each question in around 150 words).

Q 1: Explain some nature of SLMs.

Q 2: How would you like to differentiate SLMs from text books?

Q 3: Point out some basic features of a SLM.

Q 4: Explain the credit system in the ODL mode of learning.

C. Long Questions. (Answer each question in around 300-500 words)

Q 1: What are the different types of SLMs? Explain the nature of different types of SLMs.

Q 2: Discuss the necessity and features of the SLMs.

Q 3: 'There is specific structure and design for developing a unit of the SLMs.' Discuss the design and structure of a unit of the SLMs.

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