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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Mentee: a person who is guided and supported by a more experienced staff or expert in the field of interest and area of competency building in order to promote continuous academic, professional and personal development for the realisation of their full potentials.

Mentor: a specialist or an expert or an experienced staff who seeks to pass skills, expertise and knowledge to a less experienced staff with a view to fostering the latter's academic, professional and personal development.

Mentoring: a structured, sustained process of enabling an individual to gain more knowledge and skills to assist him/her in advancing academic, professional and personal skills and/or leadership capabilities for more effective service delivery, job performance and career management.

Monitoring and Evaluation: mechanisms put in place to ensure adherence to quality, standards, cost effectiveness and relevance of programmes of mentorship through continuous review of implementation to meet intended purpose and to ensure sustainability.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Bolgatanga Technical University (BTU) aims at improving the knowledge, professionalism, integrity and safety of its staff. This Policy, thus provides clear guidance in institutionalising mentoring in Bolgatanga Technical University. It outlines the mechanism for the roll out and for effective coordination of mentoring across levels and departments. It will therefore infuse as part of the University Strategic direction, best practices in academic and career development, professional conduct and performance management for efficient service delivery in the University.

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

This Policy is designed as part of strategies to develop and improve staff academic and professional engagement and continuous development. It will specifically help to:

a) equip the mentee with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to cope with the demands of work, technological changes, curriculum implementation and social dynamics in the work environment,

b) build the capacity of staff in terms of knowledge, skills and competences to improve staff conduct and performance,

c) prevent the occurrence of indiscipline,

d) provide an full opportunity for staff to access an exciting and fulfilling career,

e) influence staff retention by helping to establish a life-long learning culture that is attractive to top talent.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

This Policy will apply to newly recruited staff and other staff experiencing challenges in their professional conduct and performance. It shall also apply to experienced staff who will mentor the above mentioned staff.

SECTION TWO: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The implementation of this Policy will be guided by the University's core values as stipulated in the Strategic Plan (2022 – 2032) as follows:

Academic Freedom

The University acknowledges the right to freedom of expression in teaching, learning and research in line with the ethical policies of the University without any hindrance.

Excellence

We strive to exceed expectations not only in providing quality teaching, research and community service, but also for continuous improvement in our services university-wide.

Integrity

We conduct ourselves with honesty, professionalism and respect for others, accepting responsibility for the ethical consequences of our ideas and actions.

Innovation

We aim to challenge our assumptions, curious to create and anticipate change and encourage both our internal and external stakeholders to bring their ideas onboard. We are ready to learn from our failures and we iterate, adapt and generate new ideas and solutions.

Discipline

We are committed to cultivating behaviours that are consistent and align with achieving the University's goals and vision by vigorously applying the rules and regulations governing the institution.

Equity

We are committed to ensuring fair treatment, equality of opportunity, fairness in access to information, resources and opportunities that staff and students need to succeed. We seek to eliminate barriers that impede the participation of both internal and external stakeholders.

Sustainability

The University embraces sustainable development by incorporating relevant aspects of climate change, biodiversity, and sustainable practices across the entirety of the University.

In addition, the mentoring process will incorporate:

Professionalism – participating staff will be required to uphold professionalism in their practice. Thus, the mentor and mentee are to conduct themselves professionally as stipulated in the Ethics

Policy of the University and other legal documents.

Confidentiality – the mentor and mentee shall have the responsibility to maintain and respect confidentiality of all parties.

Voluntary Participation - the selection of mentors will be anchored on the principle of volunteerism. The mentor will be encouraged to offer his/her services voluntarily for the good of the teaching profession, personal career growth and the society at large.

Collaboration - the University will coordinate and seek to establish partnerships and collaborations with relevant stakeholders to support the Mentoring Programme.

Protection - the interests of the mentee shall be safeguarded while undertaking the Mentoring Programme.

Life-long Learning - the University will ensure continuous professional development of staff in order to improve and upgrade their knowledge, skills and competences in response to the ever changing socio economic and technological environment and the requirements of work.

2.1 Mentoring Guidelines for the Mentor

For the process of mentoring to be successful, the following specific guidelines shall apply:

i.   the mentor should be experienced and knowledgeable in the area of mentoring,

ii.   the mentor should be suggestive and not coerce the mentee,

iii.   the mentor should give the mentee challenging tasks and lead him/her through the tasks to enable the mentee to unearth and develop his/her potentials.

iv.   the mentor should be honest, transparent, tolerant, committed, and disciplined in the mentoring process,

v.   the mentor should set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound objectives,

vi.   the mentor should be able to overcome any bias,

vii.   the mentor should take necessary steps to address the grievances of the mentee,

viii.   the mentor should always endeavour to offer constructive feedback to the mentee,

ix.   the mentor should be able to build rapport with the mentee to give him/her some self-confidence,

2. 2 Mentoring Guidelines for the Mentee

During the mentoring process, the mentee will be required to:

i.   identify areas of improvement,

ii.   take responsibility for own development,

iii.   be clear about the mentoring goals to be learnt and achieved,

iv.   be proactive about initiating contact with the mentor using the various existing communication methods/channels,

v.   be willing to listen and learn,

vi.   ask for feedback and give feedback when required,

vii.   prepare and maintain punctuality at all times for meetings and work.

2.3 The Role of BTU

In order to ensure high quality of mentoring, BTU shall:

i.   identify and select mentors at school/department levels who should be experienced Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Professors or their equivalents,

ii.   support mentors to develop relevant activities based on the needs of mentees,

iii.   sensitize the relevant stakeholders on the strategic benefits of mentoring to the University,

iv.   supervise the implementation and address any emerging issues of the mentoring process,

v.   encourage and support eligible staff to take up mentoring duties and responsibilities in the University,

vi.   encourage and support mentors to develop relevant expertise by attending seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.,

vii.   create and maintain a database of mentors,

viii.   provide logistics and structures for Monitoring and Evaluating the process,

ix.   collaborate with other institutions to strengthen mentoring programmes,

x.   resolve disciplinary issues between the mentor and the mentee in the event they arise,

SECTION THREE: DISPUTE/CONFLICT OF INTEREST RESOLUTION

For there to be smooth and successful mentoring, disputes/conflict of interest shall be handled as follows:

i.   the mentor and the mentee should always take steps to manage their differences in the mentoring process if disagreements arise,

ii.   in an event where both are unable to reach an understanding, a third party (organisation, oversight committee) shall be involved in resolving the conflict/misunderstanding,

iii.   where mentors/mentees commit acts of misconduct, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Statutes of the University,

iv.   any actual or potential conflict of interest situation shall be disclosed in the course of mentoring by the mentor and the mentee e.g. previous conflict or confrontation should be disclosed and care should be taken in mentoring a relative or a family member,

v.   the mentor and mentee shall operate within defined rules of the University to avoid conflict in the process,

vi.   the mentor and mentee shall be given orientation before the mentoring process in order to avoid potential conflicts,

vii.   both the mentor and mentee must care in order not to exploit the mentoring relationship for personal gains in terms of time and accessibility in order to avoid potential conflicts,

viii.   disclosure of confidential information to third parties must be avoided by both the mentor and the mentee.

SECTION FOUR: IMPLEMENTION OF THE POLICY

Management should establish a committee to ensure the implementation of this Policy. The Quality Assurance and Planning Directorate should regulate the Policy.

This policy should be reviewed as and when need arises based on the recommendations of the Academic Board.

4.1 Ethical Issues in Mentoring

To ensure smooth and perfect mentoring processes, the BTU Ethics Policy and other relevant policies shall guide the mentoring process.

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