

BOLGATANGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY



RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is a fundamental duty of every University to nurture and grow knowledge. Bolgatanga Technical University (BTU) recognizes this fundamental duty, and thus puts together this document - Research and Publication Policy - to encourage and support the creation, transmission and growth of knowledge and scholarship in the University. The pursuit for knowledge and scholarship, which is fundamental to BTU, requires among others:

- i. The creation of knowledge through research
- ii. The transmission and preservation of knowledge through teaching and publication
- iii. The application of knowledge through consultancy and public service

To this end, the creation, transmission, preservation and application of knowledge through research must be done with integrity and guided by ethics of knowledge creation and sharing devoid of academic dishonesty by all members of the University community. Hence, the preparation of this policy.

The University was established in 1999 and has since carried out many research and publication activities. However, these activities were performed without an approved, documented and well formulated Research and Publication policy as a guide.

Many of such researches required huge finance, facilities and human resource support. However, internal funds and funds from the government were minimal or non-existent. Funding research have continued to be extremely difficult as government has continued to withdraw its subversion. The human resource and facilities are also either inadequate or not available. Therefore, many research activities of the University have been highly donor driven or have simply been shelved.

Therefore, there is the need for the University to put in place a policy that will guide and search for funds, facilities/equipment as well as human resources for research and publication activities.

This need has become overwhelming following the conversion of the Institution to a Technical University in 2020, and is in line with its Ten-Year Strategic Plan. Hence, this policy is mainly designed to formulate guidelines to govern many of the key activities of the University particularly in research and publication.

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

In line with the Technical Universities amended Act 2020 (Act 1016), and the mission and vision of the University, this policy aims to among others:

- i. Regulate the creation, transmission, preservation as well as application of knowledge and research to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of both the individual staff and the University;
- ii. Facilitate equity and fairness in the award of research grants and sharing of research benefits to staff;
- iii. Prioritize and promote the University's research and publication needs as an integral activity through increased planning, funding, monitoring and standardization of operational procedures;
- iv. Foster research culture and ethics, including the protection of research subjects, environment, and materials;
- v. Establish a mechanism of reviewing research agenda in order to be in line with National and International Research practice.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

The policy includes all research and publication activities of the University. Research includes the creation, re-organization, and application of knowledge. It also includes cultural innovation or aesthetic refinement or work in the form of artistic works, performances or designs that lead to new or substantially improved insights that impact specific needs of the University community, government, industry and commerce. Publication means the transmission of instructional materials, research finding, presentation of research papers at conferences and seminars through the use of electronic systems, books, journals etc. All research and publication activities carried out by the University and/or its members whether solo or collaborative are within the jurisdiction of this policy.

2.0 THE POLICY GUIDELINES

Below are the guidelines in the conduct of research and publication by the University or its members.

2.1 General Guidelines on Research and Publication

- i. All research and publications should align with the researcher's discipline or work.
- ii. Research should be done alongside other obligations of staff including teaching and administrative responsibilities.
- iii. Where is there funding for research, the University shall call for research proposals from members.
- iv. Staff and students including persons working with BTU (who are not members of BTU) will have rights to initiate research that are reasonably consistent with the University's vision, mission, and niche area and publish same.

In doing so, staff are to individually or in groups:

- a) broadly disseminate research results including through their teaching or administrative practices and, where appropriate, protect the results of their research;
- b) contribute to the research environment and culture of BTU through activities such as mentoring, supervising, engaging in new research initiatives and strengthening research infrastructure;
- c) participate in proposal development when called for to secure financial support for research activities from external sources (including for example, government funding, industry partnerships and contracts, philanthropic gifts, research translation and commercialization opportunities); and
- d) Ethical clearance should be obtained from the appropriate authority for the use of human and non-human subjects in any research activity.
- e) The researcher(s) shall ensure that confidential information is safeguarded.

2.2 Resources in Support of Research and Publication

2.2.1 University Research and Publication Fund

There shall be a University Research and Publication Fund (URPF) for the purpose of funding research and publication in the University to maximize research and publication outcomes that the University expects to result from staff and student research.

The University Budget Committee shall allocate grants to this fund.

A portion of the URPF should be used to support researchers and staff at Lecturer/Senior Lecturer level or analogous ranks who are desirous of research and who have not previously (in the past three years) received research funding support from the University.

A portion of the URPF should be allocated for strategic support of external funding bids and partnerships.

All applications for research and/or publication funding are to be submitted to the University Research and Publication Committee (URPC) through the Research, Innovation and Development Directorate (RIDD).

2.2.2 Research, Innovation and Development Directorate

The RIDD shall coordinate, compile and forward applications to the URPC for consideration.

Non-BTU research, (research contracted by an external party) may be administered and/or coordinated by the Research, Innovation and Development Directorate.

Allocation of research and publication grant to staff shall be based on availability of Research and Publication Funds.

2.2.3 University Research and Publication Committee

- i. The URPC shall determine the benefits or the ratios of benefit among staff and the University in terms of research and publication proceeds.
- ii. Staff may however do private research work but must report such activities to their Head of Department/Dean of School. Staff doing private research work may manage their funds through the Research and Publication Fund (RPF).
- iii. Staff are eligible to apply for leave (e.g. Research and Study Leave/Overseas Conference Leave) in support of their research and publication. Such applications shall be sent to the University Research and Publication Committee through the Head of Department of the staff seeking research and publication leave.

2.3 Other Resources

- i. The use of all other resources, human, animal and equipment including space for BTU funded research must be permitted or consented by appropriate authority.

- ii. The use of these resources including tape recorders, cameras, etc must be ethical and safe.
- iii. In the case of human beings or animals as subjects, they must not be coerced into participation.
- iv. The privacy of human beings used as subjects must be maintained and handled with extreme care.

2.4 Assessment of Research/Publication Funds Applications

Staff, students and persons working with the University desirous of research funding support, shall send applications for research and/or publication funding to the Research, Innovation and Development Directorate for consideration by the University Research and Publication Committee. Applications to the URPC will be assessed as follows:

- i. Priority will be given to applied and/or developmental research that seeks to solve a problem (practical) which addresses current local, national or international issues. Collaborative research will be more desired in this regard.
- ii. The finance, material and human resources should be used within the means of the University. In other words, research expenses should be reasonable and permissible under government and the University's rules and regulations.
- iii. Expected outcomes including benefits of the research to the University, and whether the research or project lends itself to interventions that can bring about improvement in quality of life and learning conditions.
- iv. The intended research has a proposal or plan for the training and inclusion of young or not too skilled researchers within the University.
- v. The intended research meets ethical considerations/issues.
- vi. The integrity and the feasibility of the research fall within reasonable time frame of not more than two years as maximum, except in donor or government funded research that may come with its life span.
- vii. All the University funded research proposals are to have leaders to coordinate and ensure that the research is carried out as proposed and that it achieves its objectives.

The researcher or leader, in the case of collaborative research, takes responsibility for the management of the research within the funding limitations and accounts by way of progress reports to the URPC through the RIDD.

2.5 Research and Publication Management

Policy and advice on research matters shall be coordinated by the University Research and Publication Committee (URPC). It shall advise and inform the Academic Board on research strategies to be pursued, developed; and review progress in research and publication of the University.

The Research, Innovation and Development Directorate shall provide research support services to staff. This support includes but not limited to:

- i. Assist the URPC with the coordination of research and publication activities,
- ii. Monitor and identify external research funding sources for the University,
- iii. Secure external research funding from the public and private sectors on behalf of the University,
- iv. Monitor, implement and report on research grants
- v. Provide professional development opportunities for staff to enhance their research performance.
- vi. Ensure that newly appointed staff are familiar with research and publication practice of the University including research training and funding opportunities and the importance of publishing in suitable venues, both within and out of the University.

2.6 Research and Publication Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- i. The Research, Innovation and Development Directorate has responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation (annually) of funded Research and Publication including individual staff research performance.
- ii. The RIDD shall advise the University Governing Council (UGC) and URPC on the University's performance through the Academic Board, its alignment with available external research funding sources, opportunities for development and the impact and intensity of its research.

- iii. Staff will be required to annually complete the staff Research and Publication appraisal through which their Head of Department/School/Directorate will evaluate their Research performance.

In doing so, staff are required to supply full and accurate details of their research work to their Head of Department/School/Directorate. This shall be done at least annually. The information will be forwarded to the Research, Innovation and Development Directorate for its database and to appraise itself for appropriate decision making.

3.0 ETHICS, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES

3.1 Research/Publication Ethics and Obligations

- The work of the University is guided by ethics and values. Some of these ethics and values are controlled by external regulatory bodies while others are enshrined by law including the Status of the University. All researchers are to be minded of research ethics in order to maintain the integrity research carries. It is therefore an obligation for all researchers within the University's jurisdiction to closely observe all ethics pertaining to research including rules and regulations of the University for the maintenance of intellectual honesty, confidentiality, acceptability of research results, so as to avoid sanctions.

In the light of these, the University funded research shall be conducted after the URPC has approved the research to start.

Again, in the execution of the approved research, the University enjoins all researchers to:

- i. maintain the highest ethical and safety standards particularly when human and animal subjects are involved;
- ii. strive for fairness, excellence and to make judicious use of available resources;
- iii. endeavour to conduct research with scientific integrity and excellence;
- iv. communicate findings with honesty and comprehensiveness;
- v. be guided by the codes of conduct of specific professions or disciplines which they identify with;

- vi. use not student ideas and patent as their own ideas;
- vii. acknowledge any financial or resource support by the University in reports, publications or visual presentations;
- viii. regard not research and the pursuit of knowledge as the supreme goal at the expense of other academic, personal, social and cultural values.

Staff and students are thus required to carry out their research in compliance with all the University's rules and regulations, and under all ethical and contractual obligations. All staff, students, and visitors of the University are to also familiarize themselves and comply with the University Safety rules on work.

Hence, all researchers must at all times accept ethical, social and scientific responsibility for the research they conduct or manage.

3.2 Intellectual Property

Applied and development researches often manifest themselves in inventions or designs or technological progress. Such progress comes with great economic advancement and improvement of the quality of life. Normally, the use or exploitation of such technological progress is limited to the creator or the researcher through appropriate protection to ensure that all accruable rights are properly protected.

In order to qualify for patent protection, an invention must be:

- i. of a technical character,
- ii. novel and inventive, and
- iii. able to find application in trade, industry, medicine or agriculture.

A functional design must be:

- a. novel, not commonplace, and
- b. intended for industrial multiplication.

Prospective inventors or designers should guard against disclosure of the appropriate creation prior to submitting an application for its protection. Staff, students and persons working with the University are thus advised to make the desired enquiries before any action is taken.

Nonetheless, this policy will at all times recognize and apply the national laws on intellectual property and protection, and ensure a fair distribution of financial benefit which may accrue for the rights obtained under the appropriate creation.

Any financial benefits which may arise from the commercialization of inventions or designs in which the University has an interest, will be distributed as follows (after all costs incurred by the University have been deducted): Inventor 80% University 10% Department/Unit 10%

The ownership of intellectual property for the University funded research rests with the University. This shall apply when all funding is from within the University, other public sources, or where donor funding is not tied to any specific research project(s). On the other hand, where research is partly or wholly financed from an external source, and there is a desire for shared ownership of intellectual property, a formula for ownership will be worked out upfront and be part of the approval process.

The formula should include the following: Intellectual property rights are required to be known at first before the research is conducted so that the right of the researcher's intellectual contribution is safe-guarded and protected. This will ensure that the findings of the research will not bring any conflict of interest between the funding agencies and the researchers. The intellectual property rights may differ in terms of intellectual contribution made by researchers, experience of the researcher(s), the personnel involved, the financial contributors as well as the time devoted by each member on the project.

3.3 Miscellaneous Research and Publication Activities

To ensure optimal research and publication results, the University shall ensure that the entire process of conducting research is well guided with formulated guidelines at each stage, starting from proposal writing, proposal approval, monitoring of the research activity and finally research report writing and/or publication.

3.3.1 Guidelines on Writing Research Proposals and Research Reports

The University guidelines on Writing Research Proposals and Research Reports as contained in the Project Work/Thesis/Dissertation Policy shall apply. The University will also ensure that the University research agenda is available and published.

3.3.2 Guidelines on Approving Research

The URPC in conjunction with RIDD shall ensure that an evaluation form is prepared to cover indicators such as standard format for proposal writing, the University and national research agenda and ethical consideration to guide the approval process for research proposals.

3.3.3 Guidelines on Monitoring Research/Publication Projects

The URPC and/or the RIDD shall monitor research activities and ensure there is data and registration of all research activities. The RIDD shall create fora for the dissemination of research results.

3.3.4 Student Research and Publication

(a) The University Research and Publication Committee and the Directorate for Research, Innovation and Development are responsible for ensuring that the management of student research complies with the relevant University Statutes, policies and procedures.

(b) Departments are responsible for ensuring that appropriate budgetary provision for the support of student research is made.

3.3.5 Publication

Publication in this context mean transmission or making public of research and its findings to the University community. The University thus expects all funded research work including student research to be reasonably made public and available at the University Library and/or University Thesis Repository. However, research work or outputs may be withheld by the University where “good reason” exists as permitted by law and regulations of the University.

The University will create opportunities or fora including online and encourage staff to attend and present papers or articles at academic or professional conferences or seminars within and outside the University.

It will also encourage its staff to publish books, updates, articles and papers locally and internationally for intellectual consumption and for the promotion of the University’s mission and vision. However, research results that may be politically sensitive or extremely confidential, may be kept until it is safe to publish it. The University will further establish mechanisms for

quality assurance and intellectual property protection of papers and books that are to be published within the University community.

4.0 SANCTIONS

Sanctions in this policy are to be consolidated by sanctions in the Statutes of the University including any other sanction regulated by Intellectual and Copyright Property laws of Ghana.

Accordingly, the following sanctions are applicable to staff, students and persons working with the University:

- i. Dismissal.
- ii. Termination of appointment.
- iii. Suspension for stated period without pay.
- iv. Reduction in rank or grade.
- v. Interdiction.
- vi. Denial or deferment of promotion
- vii. Recovery of money or property which is the subject of misconduct
- viii. Stoppage of increment.
- ix. Forfeiture of pay for stated period.
- x. Withholding an increment.
- xi. Reprimand.
- xii. Warning.

Also, the Rules of Discipline as provided in **Schedule D** of the Statutes apply.

These sanctions shall apply after a Disciplinary procedure has been conducted in accordance with the Statutes of the University.