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UNIVERSITY OF PORT
HARCOURT
PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA



RESEARCH MANAGEMENT
POLICY

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1.0 Preamble

The University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT) recognizes research, research-led teaching and community service as primary responsibilities of its academic staff and that research sustains community service.

It places high premium on creating enabling environment for research and dissemination of research results for the benefit of society. This document presents the Research Management Policy of the University and provides guidelines for best practices in research enterprise.

2.0 Objectives.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 2.1 maintain an ethical and safe research environment.
- 2.2 encourage sustainable research culture.
- 2.3 ensure that research outcomes translate to sustainable community engagements.
- 2.4 ensure that researchers are informed of appropriate professional standards that apply to their research areas.

3.0 Research Ethics and Integrity

- 3.1 Researchers must comply with relevant university guidelines, policies and directives with regard to ethical and safe practices in research.
- 3.2 The University shall empower the Ethics Committee to also handle research ethics issues and concerns.

4.0 Research Records, Data Storage and Retention.

- 4.1 Research records and data must be retained and stored appropriately to ensure the integrity and accuracy of research findings.
- 4.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Development) will issue guidelines specifying the university's requirement for reporting on research records, retaining and storing research data.
- 4.3 Each researcher will be responsible for:
 - i) Reporting on his or her research activities for the University's Annual Research Report/Data Collection Exercise.
 - ii) Completing and lodging an Authorship Form in respect of any research outcome that has been submitted for publication.
 - iii) Maintaining records in respect of the conduct of experimentation involving animals and human subjects in accordance with the provisions of the Research Ethics Policy.
- 4.4 Researchers are bound by the terms and conditions in the use of research data in any research agreement signed between the university and an external agency or institution.

5.0 Confidentiality

- 5.1 Access to research data may be limited by confidentiality provisions, for the purposes of protecting:
- i) A third party who is the subject of the research.
 - ii) Intellectual property that may be the subject of a commercial or contractual agreement.
 - iii) Confidential source materials.
- 5.2. Any confidentiality provisions that apply to research intended for publication should provide for data and records to be kept in a way that will enable a third party to have access to them without breaching confidentiality.

6.0 Authorship and Publications

- 6.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Development) will issue guidelines on authorship and publications, and an Authorship Form.
- 6.2 The Authorship form must be completed by each researcher, in respect of each manuscript to be submitted for publication, and lodged with the Director, Centre for Research Management otherwise any publication emanating from such manuscript shall not be used for career progression.

7.0 Conduct of Research by Students.

- 7.1 Students conducting research must comply with the provisions contained in:
- i) The Research Management Policy
 - ii) The University's Policies and Procedures for Higher Degree Research
 - iii) Other relevant policies and guidelines on research.
- 7.2 Students conducting research must comply with the following guidelines.
- i) maintain regular contact with their supervisors and complete an Annual Research Progress Form.
 - ii) participate in the University's Research Data Collection Exercise.
 - iii) complete an Authorship form in respect of any research manuscript to be submitted for publication.
 - iv) notify the supervisor and Director Centre for Research Management in advance of any proposal to enter into a contractual arrangement/ agreement involving a research work to earn a higher degree.
- 7.3 Research Project supervisors will be responsible for providing guidance to their supervisees on all matters of research practice and ensure that supervisees are informed of relevant University policies and procedures that affect the conduct of their research.
- 7.4 A supervisor must:
- i) inform his/her supervisee the need to maintain confidentiality in respect of the research data and methodology
 - ii) ensure that integrity of the supervisee's research data is preserved.

iii) where a supervisee is conducting research as part of a research team, inform the supervisee at the commencement of the research project of any protocols or operating conditions that may apply in the conduct of the research project, the use and storage of research data, publication of research outcomes, confidentiality or other arrangements/agreements that may apply to the research.

7.5 Where a supervisor has concerns about the validity of a supervisee's data or about research practices, the following steps must be taken:

- i) the supervisor should provide written advice to the supervisee, and document any steps taken by the supervisee to address the concern.
- ii) if the concern is not addressed within a reasonable period of time, the supervisor should inform the Dean of Graduate School and notify the supervisee accordingly.
- iii) if the Dean is unable to resolve the concern within a given time frame, the concern will be referred to the College Board.

8.0 Conflict of Interest

Researchers must disclose to the Dean of School, Provost of the College of Graduate Studies and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Development) of any affiliation or financial involvement with any organization entity with direct interest in the subject matter or materials of the researcher. The researcher must identify:

- i) direct benefits such as sponsorship of the research; or
- ii) indirect benefits which may include provision of materials or facilities; or support of individual researchers through provision of travel or accommodation expenses to attend conferences, or similar benefits.

9.0 Research Misconduct.

9.1 Research misconduct may include, but not limited to the following:

- i) fabrication of data: claiming results where none has been obtained.
- ii) falsification of data, including changing records.
- iii) plagiarism, including the direct copying of textual material without acknowledgement.
- iv) misleading ascription of authorship, including the listing of authors without their permission, attributing work to others who did not contribute to the research, and the lack of appropriate acknowledgement of the work of a supervisee or an associate.
- v) other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the research community as good practices.

Misconduct does not include honest errors, or honest differences in interpretation or judgment about data

- 9.2 a complainant alleging research misconduct may be made to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Development) through the Dean of School copying the Provost College of Graduate Studies. The complaint may be made in writing.
- 9.3. Once a complaint has been received, the following steps must be taken:
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (R&D) will consider the material that has been provided, and if necessary seek such additional information and advice that may be required to establish whether the matter warrants further investigation, and will either:
- a) Decide that the allegations have no substance and dismiss the complaint, or
 - b) Decide that the allegation requires further investigation as a potential matter involving misconduct and initiate an investigation of the matter in accordance with section 9.4 below.
- 9.4. In the event that an investigation is to be conducted, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (R&D) will take the following actions:
- i) In the case of a staff (academic or non academic), refer the matter to the University Ethics Committee for investigation and make appropriate recommendations.
 - ii) In the case of a research student, refer the matter to the College Board of Graduate studies Ethics Committee for investigation and make appropriate recommendations.
 - iii) In the case of a person affiliated with the University but who is not a staff or a student, the matter will be referred to the Vice-chancellor who will take such action as he deems appropriate.
- 9.5. Where an investigation of misconduct is under investigation, the Vice Chancellor will, as appropriate
- i) Inform grant funding or other parties with a direct and legitimate interest in the matter that is under investigation and of the status of any proceedings; and
 - ii) Take such other action as maybe necessary to protect the interests of the University, and exercise a duty of care towards staff, students, the public or any other parties involved in the matter.
- 9.6 In a case of misconduct, the university may exercise its right to take legal or other action against the researcher or a third party.

10.0 Intellectual Property

- 10.1. Research may be commercialized, and may be conducted under a contractual arrangement or agreement with a third party, for commercial purposes or otherwise, subject to authorization by the university.
- 10.2. Research conducted for commercial purposes, or that is to be commercialized or conducted under a contractual arrangement or agreement must be carried

out, as appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of the University Intellectual Property Policy.

11.0 University Entities for the Implementation of the Policy

The following University entities shall drive the implementation of this Research Management Policy

- (i) Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. (Research &Development)
- (ii) Centre for Research Management
- (iii) Academic units: Colleges, Faculties, Research Institutes and Centers, and Departments.

12.0 Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed periodically.