



MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH POLICY

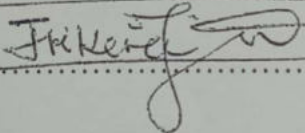
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Principal Responsibility	Vice-Chancellor
Effective Date	24th October 2022.

POLICY APPROVAL

This policy shall be known as the university research policy of Maasai Mara University (herein after referred to as "the Policy") shall take effect on the date of approval by the University Council.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Statute III (3.3.1) of Maasai Mara University, section 35(1) (a) (iii) of the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 and section 19 of the Charter for Maasai Mara University 2013, Maasai Mara University Council affirms that this policy has been made in accordance with all relevant legislations.

Dated the^{24th}..... day of^{October}.....2022

Signed: 

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FOREWORD

Maasai Mara University recognizes that, having a research policy will help entrench a research culture at the University, and foster alternative funding through research for the University's self-sustainability. This policy sets the framework for development and implementation of research at Maasai Mara University, within which academic staff members students shall carry out their required research obligations. The primary purpose of the research policy is to encourage quality research by providing an enabling environment in which researchers gain professional growth nationally, regionally and internationally. All researchers form part of a national, regional and international community of researchers and therefore, adhere to certain standards of responsibility and relevance. Research is hence carried out in accordance with relevant accepted ethical guidelines for researchers.

In furtherance of the above, this policy is aimed at addressing issues that will enhance effectiveness in running research work through addressing the following; Objectives of the Research policy, University Research Mandate, Sources, Allocation and Distribution of Research Funds, Co-ordination of Research, Research Funds and Intellectual Property Funds, University – Private Sector Research Funding and Equipment purchased using External Research Funds. The Research Policy development is anchored on the 2019/2020 to 2023/2024 Strategic Plan of the University and other documented reports availed during its compilation.

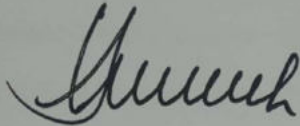
Additionally, the Research Policy outlines the general vision of the University with regard to the utilization of knowledge targeted at current development needs and demands as well as those of the near future. It also constitutes a baseline for participation by academic units at the University. An implementation strategy and subsequent development of specific action plans are described herein.

In view of dwindling financial resources from the Ex-chequer, and ever-increasing demand for it by other sectors of the University, we must regard research activities as one of our priorities and accordingly need for sourcing of alternative funding avenues to supplement University revenue streams. Through the Research Policy, the University will pay particular attention to research activities in all schools by ensuring that it is implemented. The policy will generally guide the University in all its research activities, namely, utilization of funds, addressing and providing solutions to international, regional and national problems in terms of research findings and recommendations.

Consequently, the policy will steer university visibility in the research realm by monitoring and evaluating researchers and research facilities as well as regulating how research activities are conducted by university staff and students. The policy seeks to ratify the University niche to national, regional and global development blueprints. This research policy has integrated global fundamental research standards

and ethics. The policy is based on the principles of academic freedom as guaranteed in Article 33 Section 1 (a) (b) and (c) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. Academic freedom encourages the free exchange of ideas essential for academic excellence.

Finally, the policy will strengthen academic linkages and collaborations in knowledge transfer for the benefit of all. These gains will be beneficial to the development of the university and by extension to the development of Kenya in line with Vision 2030 aimed at making Kenya a newly industrialised middle-income country providing high quality life for all its citizens by 2030.



PROF. JOSEPH S. CHACHA, PhD

AG. VICE CHANCELLOR

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic research. This is research that is normally undertaken by undergraduate and post-graduate students in partial fulfilment of their academic courses.

Administrative fee. This is the portion of research grants levied by the University for purposes of ‘monitoring’ the research project.

Commercialization. Any form of utilisation of information or information systems intended to generate value, which may be in the form of a marketable product, process or service, commercial returns, or other benefit to society. **Commercialize** is similarly defined.

Consultancy. A contracted project to be undertaken by the university or a member of the University for a Separate Institution.

Conflict of Commitment (COC). Any situation in which the authors primary professional loyalty is not to the work submitted for publication because the time devoted to other works adversely affects their capacity to meet the authorship of the works.

Conflict of Interest (COI). Any situation in which real or perceived interests of an author or funder may run counter to the interests of the other authors or publisher or negatively affect the publication process and the benefits to be realized thereof.

Copyright. An original work of authorship (in this case from a manuscript) which has been fixed in any tangible medium of expression from which it can be perceived, retrieved, reproduced or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device.

Collaborator. Somebody who cooperates in the implementation of a research project other than the Principal Investigator, the Co-Investigator

Intellectual Property (IP). Intangible property that is the result of creativity, such as patents, copyrights

Research ethics. Application of fundamental ethical principles to research activities which include the design and implementation of research, respect towards society and others, the use of resources and research outputs, scientific misconduct and the regulation of research.

Research grants. Anything from a sum of money given to a researcher for all expenses, to facilities or privileges of researchers to access certain benefits for the purpose of a given research only.

Research facilities. Buildings and structures, including machinery and equipment, used or to be used primarily for research or experimentation to improve research activities.

Research kitty. A given amount of funds set-aside for the functions of realizing specific research activities within a stipulated timeframe.

Principal Investigator/Principal Researcher. This is the representatives towards a certain research. The PI is assisted by one or a few Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

POLICY APPROVAL	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FOREWORD	Error! Bookmark not defined.
DEFINITION OF TERMS	v
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	ix
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Vision, Mission and Core Values	1
1.1.1 Vision	1
1.1.2 Mission	1
1.1.3 Core Values	2
1.2 Purpose of the Policy	2
2.0 University Research Niche areas and Sub niches	3
2.1 University Research Niche	3
2.2 University Research Sub-niches	3
2.3 Maasai Mara University Research Priorities	3
3.0 Research Governance and Management structures	4
3.2 RESEARCH, INNOVATION & OUTREACH DIVISION	5
3.2.1 Responsibilities and Powers of the DVC Research, Innovation and Outreach (Statutes IV)	5
3.2.2 The Director, Research and Innovation Terms of Reference (Statutes IV)	5
3.2.3 Senior Assistant Registrar Terms of Reference	6
3.2.4 Terms of Reference for Assistant Registrar, Research	6
3.2.5 Terms of Reference for Assistant Registrar, Innovation	7
3.3 The Research, Innovation and Outreach Committee	7
3.3.1 Membership	7
3.3.2 Terms of Reference of the Committee	8
3.4 The Research and Innovation Board	8
3.4.1 Membership	9
3.4.2 Terms of Reference for the Board	9
3.5 Ethical Review Committee	10
3.6 The University Conference Committee	11
3.6.1 Membership	11
3.6.2 Terms of Reference	11
4.0 FINANCING OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES	11
4.1 The University Research Fund (URF)	11
4.2 Sources, Allocation and Distribution of Research Funds	12
4.2.1 University Research Fund	12

4.2.2	Research Grants from Donors	12
4.3	Principles of Disbursement	12
4.4	Administration of Research Grants	13
4.5	Research Administration Costs	13
4.6	THE RESEARCH KITTY	13
4.6.1	Scope of The Research Kitty	13
4.6.2	Source of Research Kitty Funds	14
4.6.3	Operation Model of The Research Kitty	14
4.6.4	Types of Research Funds	15
4.6.5	The Research Kitty Panel	15
4.6.6	Guidelines for Conducting Calls	16
4.6.7	Project Screening and Verification	17
4.6.8	Disbursement of Research Funds	18
4.6.9	Monitoring Evaluation (M&E)	19
4.6.10	Rules and Regulations Governing use of Research Kitty	19
5.0	RESEARCH FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT	21
5.1	Research and Outreach Resource Centre	21
5.2	Establishment of Independent Research Laboratories	21
5.3	Capital Equipment	21
5.4	Equipment Purchased Using External Research Funds	21
5.5	Management of University Research Facilities	22
6.0	LEADERSHIP IN RESEARCH OPERATIONS	23
6.1	The Principal Investigator, PI	23
6.2	Co-Principal Investigators	23
7.0	RESEARCH FINDINGS	24
7.1	Records of Research Findings	24
7.2	Retention of documents	24
7.3	Access and Use of Research Findings	24
8.0	RESEARCH ETHICS AND MISCONDUCT	24
8.1	Good research practices	24
8.2	Diagnosing Research Misconduct	25
8.3	Response to a Research Misconduct	26
8.4	Penalty for Misconduct	26
8.5	Appeal	27
8.6	Notification to Funding Organization	27
8.7	Records on Misconduct	27
8.8	The Plagiarism policy	27

9.0 PROCEDURES	28
9.1 Procedures for Handling Emergencies and Catastrophes in Research	28
9.2 Procedures for Request of Research Permits	29
9.3 Conveyance of laboratory samples, specimens and extracts	29
10.0 CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS AND COMMITMENTS	30
10.1 Conflict of Interest	30
10.2 Conflicts of Commitments	31
10.3 Ownership of Inventions	31
11.0 DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	31
11.1 Publications	31
11.2 University Refereed Journals	31
11.3 Patents and other Intellectual Properties	32
11.4 Conferences, Seminars and Workshops	33
11.5 Establishment of Research Data Centers	33
12.0 DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF AND STUDENTS RESEARCH CAPACITY	34
13.0 CONSULTANCY	34
13.1 Permitted levels of consultancy	35
13.2 Pricing of consultancy activities	35
14.0 STUDENT ACADEMIC RESEARCH GUIDELINES	35
14.1 Students research	35
14.2 Academic authorship	35
14.3 Placement in publication authorship	36
14.4 Relationships between post-graduate student research and external entities	36
15.0 OUTREACH, INDUSTRIAL LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS	36
15.1 University-Industry partnership division	36
15.2 Community outreach	37
15.3 University – Private Sector Research	37
15.3.1 Acceptance of a Research Project	38
15.3.2 Sponsors’ Power	38
15.3.3 Student Involvement in Private Sector Research	38
16.0 FORCE MAJEURE	38
17.0 POLICY REVISION CLAUSE	38

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

For the purpose of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following abbreviations shall apply:

ARG: Annual Research Grant

NRF: National Research Fund

ECE: Expensive Capital Equipment

ICT: Information Communication Technology

IPR: Intellectual Property Rights

IREC: Institutional Research and Ethics Committee

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation

MMara-U: Maasai Mara University

RCS: Research Committee of Senate

URF: University Research Fund

URC: University Research Committee

STI: Science, Technology and Innovation

EoI: Expression of Interest

PI: Principal Investigator

SVF: sustainability Value Framework

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Maasai Mara University is a successor of the then Narok University College which was established as a University College of Moi University in 2008. The university is located within Narok County. It attained full university status following the enactment of the University's Act, 2012 and the award of the charter on 12th February 2013 from which it draws its mandate.

The objectives of university education as provided in 3 (1) (a) of The Universities Act of 2012 includes advancement of knowledge through teaching, scholarly research and scientific investigation. This policy therefore, provides a framework in which the research, innovation and technology development activities shall be undertaken. The development of this policy is further informed by the provisions of the University Charter 2013, Revised University statutes 2022 and MMaraU Strategic Plan and the research innovation and outreach division mandate on the same.

The integrity of a research process is an essential aspect of a university's intellectual and social structure.

1.1.3 Core Values

Teamwork, Professionalism, creativity and innovativeness; transparency and accountability; excellence, equality and social justice.

1.2 Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guiding principles, procedures and a framework regarding the development, management and support of research activities in the University. The policy shall ensure; efficiency, transparency, accountability and planning of research work.

1.3 Enabling Policy and Legal Framework

The policy implementation is enabled and guided by the following national policy and legal instruments:

a)

1.5 Scope of the Policy

This policy is applicable to research affiliated to the university by the staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students' collaborators and partners; consultants, donors amongst other concerned parties.

2.0 UNIVERSITY RESEARCH NICHE AREAS AND SUB NICHE

2.1 University Research Niche

The University has identified **Environmental Resource Management** and **Conservation** as its overall niche focused towards attainment of the University Vision and Mission.

2.2 University Research Sub-niches

The following are the sub-niche areas:

i)

XV.

Figure 2: Organogram of Research, Innovation & Outreach Managements, Committees and Boards of (Statutes VI of Revised University Statutes, 2022)

3.2 Research, Innovation & Outreach Division

The university shall establish a division of research, innovation and outreach to oversee all research, innovation and outreach matters. The Division will be headed by a deputy vice chancellor under which there shall be Directors and the Registrar. A senior assistant registrar will monitor two assistant registrars; each in charge of research and innovation and will be answerable to the director.

There shall be boards and committees to approve research deliberations for tabling to the university council, management or senate meetings.

3.2.1 Responsibilities and Powers of the DVC Research, Innovation and Outreach (Statutes IV)

- a) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation and Outreach) shall be the head of the
- b) Research, Innovation and Outreach Division which has the following responsibilities:
 - 1) Co-ordination of research, innovation, and outreach.
 - 2) Set the University research agenda in line with the Strategic Plan and Vision 2030.
 - 3) Allocate funds in each financial year as per guidelines to Professors of Maasai Mara University to;
 - i) undertake Research and innovations
 - ii) Write fundable research proposals
- c) Subject to the provisions of the Charter and these Statutes 2022, the Deputy Vice Chancellors shall perform other duties as shall be assigned or delegated by the Vice-Chancellor.

3.2.2 The Director, Research and Innovation Terms of Reference (Statutes IV)

The Terms of Reference of the Director, Research, Innovation and Outreach will be;

- i.

v.

- i. Legal Officer
- ii. Marketing and Public Relations Officer

3.3.2 Terms of Reference of the Committee

- 1) To establish research priorities for the University.
- 2) To co-ordinate all research activities in the University or from external funding agencies.
- 3) To allocate funds to researchers for use in the promotion of research activities.
- 4) To receive and consider minutes and papers from the research committees of Faculties/School Boards and take action as the committee deems fit.
- 5) To monitor the use of research funds.
- 6) To organize special seminars for presentation of research findings.
- 7) To advise and encourage responsible students and staff publications and maintain a register of all the applications.
- 8) To act as a clearing house for links initiated by faculties/schools, institutes, department, units, individuals etc.
- 9) To solicit funds for/from linkages.
- 10) To administer funds for linkages.
- 11) To promote interchange, contact and cooperate with other Universities and institutions.
- 12) To study and make known the needs of the University and as far as possible co-administrators dealing with problems of higher education.
- 13) To periodically review the operations of linkage programmes.
- 14) To Co-ordinate students exchange programmes.
- 15) To formulate detailed guidelines for faculties/schools, institutes, departments on the procedures to be followed in formulating links.
- 16) To monitor, appraise, evaluate and review links periodically upon a set criteria.
- 17) To make recommendations to the Senate concerning policies to govern linkages.
- 18) To make recommendations to the Senate of institutions to be linked to Maasai Mara University.
- 19) To deal with any other matter referred to it by the Senate, the Vice Chancellor or any other University Committee.

3.4 The Research and Innovation Board

Establishment

There shall be established a Board of The Directorate of Research and Innovation.

3.4.1 Membership

a.

3.5 Institutional Ethical Review Committee

There shall be an Institutional Ethical Review Committee which will be mandated by all research ethics and bio-safety considerations. Some of these considerations include; human welfare, publicization of individuals, exposure to harmful radiations, chemicals and other toxic compounds, protection of lab specimen and animals, protection against transportation and use of plant specimen amongst others.

3.5.1 Membership

The membership shall consist of the following members:

- i. A Chairperson, who must have some basic training and/or experience in research ethics and leadership;
- ii. At least seven members and if more, the total membership must be an odd number;
- iii. At least one member who possesses knowledge and understanding of the Kenyan Law
- iv. One lay person

3.5.2 Terms of Reference of the Committee

- 1. Review, monitor and enforce ethical standards are maintained in research at MMaraU.
- 2. Ensure that all research at MMaraU takes into consideration the need for bioethical and environmental sustainability.
- 3. Ensure that all research at MMaraU, which involves human and animal subjects adheres to ethical standards. The Committee shall, therefore:
 - a. Register and interface with the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).
 - b. Review submitted research proposals involving human subjects and animal use, including assessing risks and benefits.
 - c. Review and interrogate the adequacy of the informed consent document in relation to the risk and benefits involved.
 - d. To monitor the adherence to the authorised research protocol, monitor research procedures. Ensure that research subjects are not subjected to any psycho-social harm of any kind (for humans) and animal welfare and wellbeing (for animals).
- 4. To promote an environment that enhances trust, honesty and collaboration among researchers.

5. To establish misconduct in research and determine sufficient grounds for further investigations.

6. Ensure the confidentiality of any information in its custody

3.6 The University Conference Committee

3.6.1 Membership

There shall be a committee of eleven (11) members mandated to spearhead all International Conference activities. The standing members of this committee shall include;

i.

4.2 Sources, Allocation and Distribution of Research Funds

4.2.1 University Research Fund

The University shall set aside a minimum of 2% of the annual operational budget, being its annual research allocation.

The fund shall be distributed as follows:

i.

2.

4.6.4 Types of Research Funds

The following types of research funds will exist;

Fund type	PI minimum academic qualifications	Geographical scope of research task	Research duration (months)	Amount (Ksh.)	Number of disbursements per FY	Total disbursement amount per FY (Ksh.)
Premium	PhD	Narok county	12	500,000	2	1,000,000
Standard	Masters	Narok county	8	250,000	4	1,000,000
Basic	Masters' graduates	A sub-county within Narok	6	150,000	6	900,000
Subsidiary	Masters' students	Narok township	4	75,000	8	600,000
Junior	Bachelors' students (4 th Year)	University environs	3	25,000	20	500,000
	Total					4,000,000

4.6.5 The Research Kitty Panel

The Research kitty panel shall comprise of;

- i.

ii.

4.6.7 Project Screening and Verification

The calls will be verified by the research kitty panel and will be guided by;

- i.

7	Mentorship index	The number of direct postgraduate students who will be attached to the project	+2
8	Social component	Ability of the research outputs to be easily accepted and owned communally	+1
9	Cultural heritage	Preservation of traditions, rituals, sacred sites etc.	+1
10	Operation risks	The ability of the research projects to cause risks (human, or environmental) during its operation	-3
11	Community risks	Ability of the project to cause future community disagreements, disputes and potentially cause war	-4

iii.

v.

vii.

5.0 RESEARCH FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT

5.1 Research and Outreach Resource Centre

The University shall establish a research resource Centre to enable staff and students access journals electronically. The research Centre shall also link to journals which are accessed freely or at a modest fee.

The research resource Centre will raise the research profile of the University; focus on strengths in areas where there is a concentration of research excellence, including areas of applied research and to maximize on external research funding.

It will position and promote the University's research excellence and build the University's research reputation.

It will also serve as a vehicle for engaging with other research institutions and industry and facilitate interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary relationships.

5.2 Establishment of Independent Research Laboratories

Independent research labs or centres are distinct research centres existing outside the traditional academic programs as special purpose vehicles, (SPVs) to achieve certain research goals. They are meant to facilitate staff research while offering excellent interdisciplinary training beyond the traditional academic programs. Research labs involve more than one academic field or department (sometimes faculty) and are geared towards a specific university sub-niche. Most are funded by external research grants and have a life-cycle thus not permanent.

Independent research labs shall be directed by a Principal Investigator, the Director (research and innovation), a University Professor, a Senior Research Officer/Assistant Registrar and Senior Technologist. All should be permanent staff.

The labs shall not offer any teaching courses neither have staff billets outside regular academic programs.

5.3 Capital Equipment

The University will strive to acquire equipment for research for schools as per their need. Any Capital Equipment (CE) funds will be considered as per capacity of using the equipment. Such equipment bought through funds externally acquired through the University shall later become the property of the University at the end of the research contract.

5.4 Equipment Purchased Using External Research Funds

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c)

7.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

Maasai Mara University shall retain research data in sufficient detail and for an adequate period of time to enable appropriate responses to questions about accuracy, authenticity, primacy and compliance with laws and regulations governing the conduct of research.

7.1 Records of Research Findings

The research findings may be stored in digital and print forms, audio visuals, CDROMs or in any other retrievable forms.

7.2 Retention of documents

The University shall retain a database of all research findings within the office of the Director of Research and Innovation. The University will develop and maintain a resource Centre with an open access repository to provide MMaraU faculty and researchers with stable, long- term storage for their research outputs in digital form. It will capture, index, preserve and distribute the intellectual output of MMaraU's academics and researchers, thereby enabling online access for all potential users and researchers worldwide.

The scope of the repository will include digital format, the publicly available research and scholarly output of the staff and postgraduates of MMaraU and its subsidiaries. The following materials will be included: theses, serial publications, discussion papers, working papers, etc. The University Library will be responsible for managing the content of the archive, including the software and information architecture.

7.3 Access and Use of Research Findings

The research materials will be available for reference within the Resource Centre in the University Library and will be available for copying electronically or by photocopying unless any material will be protected by copyrights. The person asking for it will meet the cost of copying.

All research findings and publications in hard copies, electronic copies, audio typing or video tapes will be available for use by members of the University for Purposes of research and teaching with authority from the author and/or the University.

8.0 RESEARCH ETHICS AND MISCONDUCT

8.1 Good research practices

The research policy advocates for strict adherence to good research virtues. Some of these virtues include;

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i.

8.5 Appeal

An aggrieved party shall have a right of appeal to the DVC (RIO). The appeal shall be done within fourteen days from the date of communication of the committee's decision. The decision of the Senate shall be final.

8.6 Notification to Funding Organization

On the basis of the determination that there is misconduct in research, the Chairman of Senate shall inform the sponsoring entity in writing.

8.7 Records on Misconduct

All documents related to misconduct in research will become permanent institutional records and will be maintained in strict confidence.

8.8 The Plagiarism policy

This policy defines plagiarism as the unethical acquisition of data from other sources without giving due consideration to the ownership. Students may willingly or unwillingly acquire information from other sources during their projects, theses and dissertations. Plagiarism is therefore a research misconduct that should be discouraged and where possible, its perpetrators punished.

The following plagiarism procedures shall be adopted;

i.

v.

i)

Any custom duty charged will be fully met by the individual researcher.

Transportation of plant specimens from Maasai Mara University shall only be allowed by the Vice Chancellor of the university. In cases where there exists an MoU between Maasai Mara University and the transferring party, there must be a direct and specific policy or clause permitting transfer of plant specimens and other biological organisms. Even then, the individual researcher shall have to abide by the Nagoya Protocol of transportation of plant specimens.

10.0 CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS AND COMMITMENTS

10.1 Conflict of Interest

10.2 Conflicts of Commitments

- i. The university is committed to attracting research grants that will spearhead its development and increase its visibility in the global realm. For this to be achieved, several staff in the division of research and innovation will be engaged. However, the university does not commit itself to guaranteeing the staff any benefits resulting from these research projects; such as royalties, stipend or any authorships.
- ii. The university shall engage many students on attachment or internship as well as in the innovation incubation centres. While priority in employment opportunities will be given to these students or alumni, the university does not commit itself to fulfilling these priorities.

10.3 Ownership of Inventions

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ii.

The university shall spearhead and cater for all logistics and expenses for registration of patents, utility models, inventions and copyrights by these bodies generated by its staff; provided it has a stake in them.

Royalties accrued from commercialization of IP items by other industries shall be distributed as follows: 30% to the university research fund, 40% to the individual staff, 10% to the university endowment fund and 20% to develop innovation incubators.

11.4 Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

The university shall support attendance of conferences and seminars to disseminate research findings. The university shall exempt its staff from duties and provide a per diem to these staff for the days they will be out of office for research conferences and seminars.

Staff are encouraged to give the Maasai Mara University Annual Conference a priority in scoring the numbers of conferences attended/or organized. No staff shall be facilitated to attend an external conference or workshop if the staff has not participated in the Maasai Mara Annual International Conference.

There shall be no form of cash bonuses paid to staff for attending conferences and seminars.

All teaching and research staff shall be required to attend at least one conference or seminar every two years.

11.5 Establishment of Research Data Centers

Through The Directorate of Research and Innovation, The University shall establish a research data centre to;

i.

12.0 DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF AND STUDENTS RESEARCH CAPACITY

The university will be fully committed to developing research and innovation capacity for its members.

The university shall require the directorate of research and innovation to develop and implement a university-wide research and innovation matrix for each academic year.

The following policies shall be implemented to improve the research and innovation prowess of the university students and staff;

- i.

13.1 Permitted levels of consultancy

i.

ii.

iv.

15.3.1 Acceptance of a Research Project

The University will accept a research project if it is considered to be in the University's best interest to do the research. All research applications will be processed and disbursed through the University Research Committee of the Senate.

15.3.2 Sponsors' Power

The research sponsors may reasonably define broadly the project they wish to support while the Principal Investigator will have the discretion in designing, controlling and modifying their sponsored research.

15.3.3 Student Involvement in Private Sector Research

When research involves confidentiality, the students may be constrained from publishing their results freely because the results may involve handling of proprietary information.

16.0 FORCE MAJEURE

For the purposes of this policy 'Force Majeure' means an event which is beyond the reasonable control of a party and which makes a party's performance of its obligations under the policy impossible or so impractical as to be considered impossible under the circumstances. Such events shall include but not limited to emergency, war, prohibitive government regulations or any other cause beyond the reasonable control of the parties. In such an event a party shall be released from its respective obligation.

17.0 POLICY REVISION CLAUSE

This Policy shall be revised after every Three (3) years cycle or as it may deem necessary.