

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



OFFICE OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

# **UG RESEARCH POLICY**

## 1 Purpose of Policy

The University mission statement is to:

**Develop** world-class human resources and capabilities to meet national development needs and global challenges through quality teaching, learning, research and knowledge dissemination.

In furtherance of this mission, the University outlines its strategic objectives as follows:

1. **Build** on our core strengths as a centre of excellence for high quality teaching and research; relevant institutions and good infrastructure; and our unique competencies in the sciences, medicine, engineering, humanities, law and business, cultural studies, information technology and other emerging disciplines, to secure and sustain world-class competitive advantages in a stable democratic environment.
2. **Build** deeper awareness of the needs of our consumers, especially students, the private and public sectors, government and the world community and re-orient our teaching, research and extension activities and harmonize synergies between disciplines to achieve operational excellence.
3. **Promote** innovation, relevant and cutting-edge technology, leadership development and an enterprise culture, to enhance the delivery of value to our consumers and stakeholders.
4. **Govern** its operations by the highest level of integrity, ethical standards, openness, and fairness underpinned by a reward and recognition system that is performance driven.

In view of the aforementioned, the objectives of the University of Ghana's Research Policy shall be:

1. To ensure through collaboration with stakeholders that research is of the highest quality.
2. To ensure institutional commitment to uphold the highest ethical standards for the conduct of research.
3. To implement the University's approach to research consistent with international guidelines

To realize these objectives, the University has formulated a research policy to inform and guide research with a view to increasing research output and improving the quality of research.

The aim of this Research Policy is to ensure that research carried out in the name of the University of Ghana (UG) or on its premises is consistent with that of world class universities.

## 2 Key Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Conflict of Interest	A conflict of interest is a divergence between an individual's professional obligations and his or her private interests. Such conflicts may not be unethical and do not constitute or imply any wrong-doing. But they may lead to actual misconduct when considerations of personal gain, financial, influence or compromise an individual's judgment and actions in the performance of his or her primary responsibilities.
Copyright	(Copyrightable Works) Under Ghana's copyright law, copyright subsists in "original works of authorship" which have been fixed in any tangible medium of expression from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device. These works include: a) Literary works <i>such as books, journal articles, poems, manuals, memoranda, tests, computer programs, instructional material, databases, bibliographies</i> ; b) Musical works including any accompanying words; c) Dramatic works, including any accompanying music; d) Pantomimes and choreographic works (if fixed, as in notation or videotape); e) Pictorial, graphic and sculptural works, including photographs, diagrams, sketches and integrated circuit masks; f) Motion pictures and other audiovisual works such as videotapes; g) Sound recordings.
Intellectual Property	The legal rights which result from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary and artistic fields. Includes an Invention, Trade Secrets, Creative Works ( <i>i.e. literary and artistic works as well as performances of performing artists, phonograms and broadcasts</i> ), Scientific works, Scientific discoveries, Industrial designs, Trademarks, Commercial names and designations as well as Research Material.
Invention	Refers to any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter (e.g. life forms), or any new and useful improvement thereof, relating to Creative Works, Research Material and Trade Secrets. An invention can be made solely or jointly with others as co-inventors. To be recognized legally, a co-inventor must have conceived of an essential element of an invention or contributed substantially to the general concept.
Inventor	Refers to the creator of Intellectual Property.
Patent	A patent is a grant issued by the Government giving an inventor the right to exclude all others from making, using, or selling the invention within Ghana for a period of 20 years. When a patent application is filed, the Ghana Patent Office reviews it to ascertain if the invention is new, useful, and non-obvious and, if appropriate, grants a patent - usually two to five years later. Other countries also grant similar patents.
Research	A systematic investigation (i.e., the gathering and analysis of information) designed to develop or contribute to knowledge.
Research Material	Refers to records of research, data and materials such as chemical compounds and biological materials, whether patentable or not.
Scientific Misconduct	Is defined as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the scientific community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. Also included as "scientific misconduct" for this purpose is retaliation of any kind against a person who, acting in good faith, reported or provided information about suspected or alleged misconduct.
University	Refers to the University proper (i.e. the University of Ghana) and to all affiliated institutions or organizations controlled by the University and governed by the members of the University Council.

### **3 Application & Scope - Exclusions or Special Conditions (if any)**

This Research Policy applies to the University of Ghana and all its employees and students at all its locations.

### **4 Policy Principles**

The Research Policy is based on the following principles:

1. Assurance of Academic Freedom, Creativity and Innovation
2. Promotion of High Quality Cutting Edge Research which advances Knowledge
3. Ensuring that Research meets National Development Priorities
4. Ethical Research
5. Protecting Intellectual Property
6. Good Practices in Data/ Material Management
7. Making Research Findings Understandable and Accessible
8. Effective Resource Mobilisation and Support for Research

Further details on the above principles are provided in the “Guidelines for the Research Policy”

### **5 Policy Statements**

#### **5.1 Assurance of Academic Freedom, Creativity and Innovation:**

The University of Ghana’s central functions of teaching, learning, research, and scholarship depend on an atmosphere in which freedom of inquiry—thought, creativity, innovation, expression, publication, and peaceable assembly, are given the fullest protection. Expression of the widest range of viewpoints shall be encouraged, free from institutional orthodoxy and from internal or external coercion. Furthermore, the holding of appointments at the University of Ghana should in no way affect the rights of faculty members as citizens as set out in the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. These central functions can only be realised if the University creates a conducive, nurturing and enabling environment. The University will provide resources for research and create opportunities for researchers to access funds/ resources both locally and internationally. Mechanisms required include:

1. Intellectual space
2. Mutual respect for all branches of knowledge
3. Suitable physical space and infrastructure to increase research productivity
4. Appropriate teaching and service loads
5. Capacity building and mentoring
6. Promotion of research networks and interdisciplinary research, within Ghana and internationally
7. Recognition of excellence

#### **5.2 Promotion of High Quality Cutting Edge Research which advances Knowledge**

High quality cutting edge research is the bedrock of a university; it drives knowledge creation, innovation and funding. The University of Ghana maintains its dedication towards engaging in world class research by placing research as a high priority. The University shall also be positioned at the centre of national networks of innovation and entrepreneurship in all important and emerging fields. The University shall encourage international collaboration and funding from external/international agencies/institutions. The University will expand, and diversify its range of research by:

1. Scientific and academic partnerships,
2. Incentives for productive Faculty to promote research culture
3. Significantly increase the number and proportion of graduate (Masters and PhD) students
4. Research partnerships to increase graduate student research productivity
5. Independent monitoring and evaluation of research practice to ensure quality
6. Create an enabling environment for publication
7. Encourage faculty to seek international collaboration/funding

### **5.3 Ensuring that Research meets National Development Priorities**

Ghana's development agenda is to consolidate its middle income status, generate wealth, promote growth and provide decent employment and reduce poverty levels. The realization of these aspirations requires serious attention to Research and Development. The University will proactively develop and pursue a research agenda that is directly targeted towards the national development needs. This research agenda would be prioritized according to core strengths of the University. In order to achieve this, the University will:

1. Promote the public-private partnerships in identifying relevant research needs to support national development.
2. Influence the development and implementation of national policies and programmes in areas such as:
  - a. Science, Technology & Innovation (STI)
  - b. Research and Development (R&D).
3. Actively work with key national development policy institutions such as the NDPC in order to ensure the effective prioritization of the research agenda.
4. Proactively engage at the highest level, with government to ensure that the university's research agenda is supported and adequately funded.
5. Where necessary shall encourage international collaboration to achieve these goals.

### **5.4 Ethical Research**

The University of Ghana (UG) recognizes that ethics is an integral part of the research endeavour, and should be valued throughout the process of research, from planning through implementation to dissemination of results. The University will ensure the protection of the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of human participants and the prevention of cruelty to animals in all research associated with UG. Ethical research also encompasses the avoidance of misconduct, plagiarism, data forgery, misuse of university resources and conflict of interest, among others. All research undertaken at the University of Ghana and by faculty, students and research affiliates of the University shall comply with UG ethical guidelines in order to promote best practice. To achieve this, the University will:

1. Mandate relevant Units to set up ethics and research committees.
2. Establish a university-wide system of ethical clearance for research building on existing Ethical Review Committees in relevant academic units.
3. Train and certify researchers working with human and animal subjects in ethical research.
4. Provide guidance on research ethics for all staff and students.
5. Prepare a code of practice for research.
6. Put in place a system for monitoring compliance by researchers by relevant Units.

### **5.5 Protecting and Exploiting Intellectual Property**

University of Ghana will hold all rights to all intellectual property conceived, first used or reduced to practice, discovered, or created, by any employee and student of the University, during their association with the University, except where explicitly provided for. Employees and students are required to disclose any patents, discoveries, inventions and other intellectual property to the University prior to public disclosure. Prior patentable intellectual property should be identified by the inventor(s) and acknowledged by the University in writing at the time of appointment or enrolment. In cases where UG decides to waive its right to Intellectual Property, the University shall have the duty to inform the researcher as soon as practicable. The University shall make rules and produce guidelines as appropriate for the disclosure, registration, development, commercialization and use, including the sharing of royalties arising from any intellectual property. UG will:

1. Put in place modalities to recognize and/or compensate the student or employee of the University
2. Take steps to patent and license the IP

## 5.6 Good Practices

The credibility of research findings depend on record keeping and good data management. In order to achieve this, the University will create a meta-database of research materials/ data repositories. Under normal circumstances the original materials and data sets will be held by the PI who undertook the research. The PI is expected to maintain this data set for a minimum of ten years after the final project close-out. In certain special circumstances, this minimum period may be extended. The University shall put in place a system for:

1. acquiring and storing research materials and data in a robust and confidential manner
2. managing research data/ material
3. academic authorship
4. handling research misconduct
5. the regular/annual review of research protocol
6. ensuring annual progress reports are submitted to ORID

## 5.7 Making Research Findings Understandable and Accessible

The results of research or scholarship undertaken at the University of Ghana will be disseminated in an open and timely manner to the broader scholarly community and public in keeping with University of Ghana's mission. In addition to dissemination in academic publications, critical target audiences for research findings include policy and decision makers, the private sector as well as civil society organizations. In order to reach all its audiences, it may be necessary to present research findings in formats which are understandable and accessible which could include non-traditional forms of presentation such as theatre, radio and documentaries. The University will:

1. Support training of researchers in appropriate communication techniques and methods.
2. Encourage on-line publications and support university journals
3. Support faculty dedicated to liaise with the media
4. Enhance university participation in public events such as lectures, seminars, workshops, exhibitions and trade fairs.
5. Require publications resulting from research to be made available at the Institutional Repository

## 5.8 Effective Resource Mobilisation and Support for Research

The University of Ghana shall promote effective resource mobilisation to support its research. These shall include but not be restricted to:

1. Grants from research funding agencies
2. Donations and endowments
3. Internally generated funds
4. Contract research funds

The University shall ensure efficient financial management of research funds.

The University shall provide the necessary administrative support to ensure efficient implementation of all research projects. Prescribed institutional overhead charges shall apply to all funded research projects to facilitate this.

## 6 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	November 1, 2012	Council of the University of Ghana	<First Version>