



BLANTYRE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

BIU RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS POLICY

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Introduction

This policy is founded upon the vision of Blantyre International University (BIU), encapsulated in its mission and vision statements. BIU aspires to be recognized as a world-class institution of academic excellence. Its mission entails offering comprehensive educational programs of international caliber, fostering inquisitiveness, competence, and the application of knowledge, concepts, and skills while nurturing ethical leadership and responsibility. BIU is dedicated to research and knowledge development guided by principles of integrity, quality, and rigor. Furthermore, it cultivates an institutional ethos and intellectual culture that facilitates critical discourse, intellectual curiosity, tolerance, and diversity of perspectives.

Principles and Research Definition

The definition of research adheres to several fundamental principles:

- Research is inherently a human endeavor, never devoid of values or mechanistic notions. Researchers are influenced by social, political, cultural, and gender-related preconceptions, which shape both their theories and findings.
- Research is a collective activity, with researchers operating within a national and global community of scholars. This community determines the prevailing research paradigms within specific disciplines and subjects.
- The criteria for acceptable research may vary according to the discipline, field, and subject, signifying its subject-specific nature.
- Research is contingent upon prevailing theories within a particular discipline and, reciprocally, theories are shaped by the overarching paradigm.
- Research is directed towards the exploration of natural and human/cultural (and even metaphysical) phenomena.
- The primary aim of research is to enhance our comprehension of the functioning of the world through the study of natural and cultural/human phenomena.
- Research encompasses inventive, systematic, and original work that elucidates phenomena and involves the critical appraisal of such phenomena in both natural and human sciences.
- Research encompasses basic, applied, strategic, and reflective research.

Principles Underlying BIU Research Policy

The central objective of the Research Policy is to foster high-quality research by creating a conducive environment that enables researchers to excel nationally and internationally. Researchers are integral to both national and international research communities, and as such, are expected to adhere to established standards of relevance and responsibility. Research is conducted in accordance with pertinent professional codes and internationally recognized ethical guidelines. Proper acknowledgment must be given when incorporating data or information from other studies or publications. Plagiarism, piracy, or falsification



of research findings are considered grave disciplinary offenses.

Objectives of Research at BIU

The objectives of research at BIU are as follows:

.To establish a comprehensive research agenda and policies at BIU, focusing strategically on areas aligned with national priorities and global significance.

- To promote and support researchers across all fields and disciplines.
- To elevate the university's reputation as an internationally renowned research institution.
- To nurture the development of emerging researchers into established scholars.
- journals and books.
- To enrich teaching and professional practice through research.

Support for Research at BIU

In pursuit of these objectives, the University provides the following support to researchers:

- Financial assistance to help researchers meet predetermined benchmarks.
- Provision of essential research infrastructure, including office space, library facilities, laboratories, electronic equipment and services, support for editing and publishing scholarly journals, and various administrative and support services.
- Granting researchers research and development leave and recess leave specifically to promote research.

Research Management

BIU has established the Research Committee, composed of the following members:

- a. The Academic Dean (Chair)
- b. Dean of Applied Studies
- c. Dean of Commerce
- d. Departmental Heads
- e. Librarian

Terms of Reference of the Research Committee

The Research Committee is entrusted with the following responsibilities:

- Development and implementation of the institution's research policy.
- Formulation and execution of the institution's strategic research plan.
- Preparation and submission of the institution's research budget.
- Monitoring the allocation and utilization of the research budget.
- Oversight of the implementation of the institution's research policy and strategic plan.

- Coordination of all research activities within the institution.
- Ensuring the quality assurance of research conducted within the institution.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of research reports for submission to the Senate.
- Reviewing research and development leave reports.
- Establishment of subcommittees as deemed necessary.

Experienced researchers are expected to view it as part of their academic responsibility to aid less experienced colleagues in developing research skills, especially in areas of research planning, design, and publication.

Measurement and Benchmarking

To fulfill the aforementioned objectives, research outputs need to be systematically evaluated, measured, and benchmarked. The following principles are applied during the evaluation and benchmarking of research:

- Academic excellence, as determined through peer review, serves as the only realistic, objective criterion for evaluating research.
- Each researcher is expected to produce a specified number of research outputs over a five-year period, effective from January 1, 2017, based on their academic rank.
 - a) Professor: 7 (5)
 - b) Associate Professor: 6 (4)
 - c) Senior Lecturer: 5 (3)
 - d) Lecturer: 4 (2)
 - e) Junior Lecturer: 3 (1)

Implementation at Departmental Level

- Research, akin to teaching, is primarily managed at the departmental level, governed by the University's research policy. Heads or Chairpersons of Departments assume responsibility for research management and are accountable for the allocation of time and resources dedicated to research within their respective departments.
- Each department is guided by a departmental research plan, aligned with the University's policy, which outlines the department's research objectives and delineates how student and researcher projects contribute to these objectives.
- Master's students' research is a crucial part of BIU's research effort, and departments are encouraged to enroll master's candidates who can contribute to the department's research plan and align with the university's research objectives.
- Lecturers and students who have completed a master's dissertation or research report are encouraged to submit articles for publication based on their research findings.