



**MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MUST)**

**Guiding Principles of the MUST Communication Policy**

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## Definition of Key Concepts

- 1) **“Confidentiality”** means any information that requires protection from unauthorized access or disclosure this includes but is not limited to stakeholders’ personal details and information, sensitive University information, proprietary knowledge, legal agreements including information protected under non-disclosure agreements.
- 2) **“Channels of communication”** means specific means or mediums used to transmit messages.
- 3) **“Crisis”** means an event or situation that poses a significant threat to an organization's reputation, operations, stakeholders, or overall well-being.

## 1. Introduction

The communication policy guidelines are designed to align the University's communication with its MUST vision, mission, values and strategic goals. The guiding principles define the framework for expected behavior and decision-making in communication.

## 2. Purpose

The communications policy guidelines are intended to guide actions and decisions regarding MUST's communication with external and internal stakeholders in accordance with the communications policy, Strategy and all relevant legislations.

## 3. Objectives of the Guidelines

- a) To facilitate the efficient, consistent and effective handling of MUST's communication.
- b) Provide for communication guidelines (generally accepted customs, procedures, codes of behavior, as far as communication is concerned).

## 4. Communication

Communication at MUST shall adhere to the following;

### 4.1 Respect:

- 4.1.1 All stakeholders must be respectful to each other.
- 4.1.2 Use the right language in all communication channels of MUST which include written, oral and non- verbal communication.
- 4.1.3 Avoid the use of abusive language and being casual when communicating official matters.
- 4.1.4 Follow the hierarchy of communication in your Faculty, Department and Unit.
- 4.1.5 Avoid defamatory communication among all stakeholders. Staff and students shall be individually responsible for the proper handling of information during the execution of their official duties and studies.

### 4.2 Confidentiality:

- 4.2.1 All stakeholders shall ensure the confidentiality of all sensitive and private information, handling it with care to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure.

- 4.2.2 Formal acknowledgement of receipt of confidential documents is mandatory to ensure proper tracking and management of sensitive information.

#### **4.3 Feedback mechanisms:**

The University commits to fostering an environment of open communication and continuous improvement.

- 4.3.1 All stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness of communication within the University.
- 4.3.2 Feedback is encouraged through designated channels like meetings, feedback forms, surveys, emails and suggestion boxes. The Communication Office whenever possible will review feedback periodically and propose adjustments to communication practices as necessary.
- 4.3.3 Stakeholders are required to give timely, specific and detailed feedback as requested. All feedback and acknowledgement shall be through the designated communication channels.

#### **4.4 Effective communication:**

The University commits to having effective communication with all stakeholders as below.

- 4.4.1 Avoid inappropriate topics
- 4.4.2 Be detailed
- 4.4.3 Be formal and avoid use of jargons, slangs, emojis.
- 4.4.4 Communicate with a clear purpose.
- 4.4.5 Be consistent.
- 4.4.6 Be precise and not overwhelm stakeholders with information.
- 4.4.7 Have appropriate packaging to the different stakeholders.
- 4.4.8 Use the C's of communication; Correct, Complement and Cooperate rather than Complain, Criticize and Condemn.
- 4.4.9 Be inclusive of relevant stakeholders.

#### **4.5 Transparency:**

- 4.5.1 All communication should be genuine, transparent and truthful to all stakeholders.

- 4.5.2** All communicators should be authentic or acknowledge the original sources of the message and should not rely on informal sources of communication for decision-making.

## **5. The University Spokesperson**

- 5.1.3.1 The Vice Chancellor (VC) is the designated spokesperson for the University and shall be responsible for internal and external communication with various stakeholders and approves all official notices and memoranda before they are released to the public.
- 5.1.3.2 The Vice Chancellor has the authority to delegate specific communication responsibilities to his/her Deputies, Heads of Administrative Departments, Deans and Directors, Heads of Units or subject matter experts.
- 5.1.3.4 When delegating communication tasks, the Vice Chancellor shall ensure these engagements are coordinated through the Public Relations Office to maintain consistency and accuracy in public messaging.
- 5.1.3.5 Where required, the Head of the Legal Unit shall provide advice on all legal issues related to both external and internal communication.
- 5.1.3.6 To ensure timely dissemination of accurate and relevant information, the delegated officers should;
- a) Be fully informed on the developments in the University requiring external communication or response. Heads of Departments are expected to keep the spokespersons abreast on significant developments in the University.
  - b) Communicate on behalf of MUST to ensure that timely and accurate information is shared to the relevant stakeholders while upholding the image of MUST.
  - c) Ensure stakeholder feedback is considered as and when it is required to inform MUST decision making.

## **6. Stakeholders**

The University recognizes a diverse array of stakeholders, comprising students, faculty, alumni, parents/guardians, governmental entities, partnering organizations, and the public, as essential components of its communication network. Both internal and external stakeholders play an important part in attaining the University's vision and mission. Their involvement ensures that MUST activities align with the needs and expectations of its various constituencies, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement within the broader community. By actively involving stakeholders in decision-making

processes and communication initiatives, the University cultivates a culture of transparency, trust, accountability and collaboration, which are integral to its success and sustainability.

## **7. Approved Communication types and Channels**

MUST shall use different types and channels of communication. Each sort of communication can use different channels based on the nature of the message, the audience, and the context in which it takes place.

### **7.1 Types of communication**

MUST uses verbal, non-verbal and written communication in different modalities as below;

- a) Verbal Communication involves the use of spoken words, either face-to-face or through telecommunication devices like phones, online engagements.
- b) Non-verbal Communication involves gestures, body language, and facial expressions
- c) Written Communication involves written format like letters, emails, memos, reports, visual aids such as graphs, charts, diagrams, videos.

### **7.2 Channels of communication**

External and internal channels of communication are expounded in section 8.

## **8. Internal and External Communication**

- a) To streamline the flow of information within and outside the University in order to promote transparency and openness in all University operations, MUST articulates the specific communication.
- b) The flow and chain of official communication at various Departments and Units with internal and external stakeholders shall be done through respective heads of Units and Departments from one level to another as per the University structure.
- c) Through clear communication channels, stakeholders should ably pass on information and also give feedback through the established avenues.

### **8.1 Internal Communication**

Clear communication with internal stakeholders is grounded in upholding MUST's core values.

#### **8.1.1 Internal Communication Flow**

In order to ensure efficient and organized flow of information in the University, leaders will present their Units to communicate.

- a) The Chairperson of Council and or Secretary to Council shall communicate the official decisions of the Council.
- b) Communication to the University Council should be addressed to the Secretary of the University Council.
- c) The Chairperson of the Senate and or Secretary to the Senate shall communicate the official decisions of the Senate. Communication to the University Senate should be addressed to the Secretary of Senate.
- d) The Chairperson and or secretary to Top Management shall communicate the decisions of Top Management. Communication to Top Management should be addressed through the Secretary.
- e) Members of the University Management, Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments/ Units through their supervisors shall be responsible for communicating issues within their jurisdiction. It is important to copy in the party/parties concerned.
- f) The Dean of Students and or the Guild President shall be responsible for communicating issues pertaining to students' welfare.
- g) The Guild President shall always liaise with the Dean of Students before communicating matters relating to students to Top Management.
- h) No staff or student shall commit the University to any obligation. This responsibility is solely vested with the Vice Chancellor or the University Secretary.
- i) Invitation of delegates on behalf of the University by staff and students shall be in consultation with the Vice Chancellor.
- i) **Communication Regarding Supervisors:** To maintain a respectful and transparent work environment, any communication from subordinates regarding their supervisors, or matters that involve their supervisors directly or indirectly, should adhere to the following protocol:
  - i) **Direct Communication Concerns:** If the matter concerns the immediate supervisor, the communication should be addressed directly to them with a copy (cc) to their immediate supervisor or the relevant office overseeing the department or unit. This ensures transparency and allows for oversight and support where needed.
  - ii) **Escalating Concerns or Assignments:** In cases where communication pertains to a formal complaint against a supervisor or relates to an assignment given by any superior (not necessarily

the direct supervisor), it should be directed appropriately through the organizational hierarchy. This means addressing the concern to the immediate supervisor with a cc to the next level of management or directly to the next level if the immediate supervisor is the subject of the complaint.

- iii) **Involvement of other Offices:** For matters requiring attention or action from specific offices within the University, these offices should be included in the communication as necessary. This ensures that all relevant parties are informed and can contribute to resolving the matter efficiently.
- iv) **Confidential and Sensitive Matters:** For sensitive issues, especially those involving formal complaints against supervisors, confidentiality must be preserved to protect the interests of all parties involved. Such communications should follow the established protocols for reporting and addressing grievances within the University, ensuring that they are handled discreetly and professionally.

f) **Communication About Supervisees:** In fostering an environment of respect, fairness, and transparency, supervisors or higher authorities communicating about their supervisees must adhere to the following guidelines:

- i) **Respectful and Constructive Feedback:** Communication regarding a supervisee whether it pertains to performance, conduct, or any matter requiring attention, should be conveyed in a respectful and constructive manner. Feedback should be specific, fact-based and provided in a way that supports the growth and development of the supervisee.
- ii) **Direct Communication:** Whenever possible, supervisors should communicate directly with the supervisee about concerns or feedback before escalating the matter or involving others. This direct approach encourages open dialogue, mutual understanding and provides an opportunity for immediate clarification or resolution.
- iii) **Inclusion of Relevant Parties:** In situations where it is necessary to involve additional parties (e.g., Human Resources, next-level management), such communication should be done transparently, with the knowledge and when appropriate the involvement of the supervisee. This includes cases where formal performance reviews are shared or disciplinary actions are discussed.
- iv) **Confidentiality and Sensitivity:** Supervisors must ensure that discussions about supervisees, especially those that are sensitive or potentially disciplinary in nature are conducted confidentially

to protect the privacy and dignity of all involved. Only individuals who need to know or are part of the resolution process should be included in these communications.

- v) Documentation and Follow-Up: Formal communications about a supervisee's performance, conduct, or any actions taken should be properly documented. This documentation should be accessible to the supervisee and included in their personal file, ensuring transparency and accountability. Follow-up meetings or communications should be scheduled as necessary to monitor progress, provide ongoing support, and address any subsequent concerns.

### **8.1.2 Communication channels**

For the MUST internal communication audiences, the communication channels include; Face-to-face communication, memos, formal letters, Emails, social media platforms, University website, SMS (Short Message Service), voice calls University portal, internal newsletters, notice boards, official, meetings, billboards, notice boards, signage, forums, official telephone lines, video conferencing and any other communication channel approved by the University management.

Below is a detailed guidance for effective and responsible e- print and verbal communication;

#### **8.1.2.1 Electronic mails (Emails)**

The University shall use electronic mail as an official information sharing/communication channel.

- a) The University shall use official email addresses that will bear the 'must.ac.ug' suffix.
- b) All bonafide staff shall be assigned a University official email address on recommendation by the University Secretary's Office.
- c) At the end of a member of staff's tenure, the Computing Services Unit shall suspend their use of the official email address on the recommendation from the Human Resources Department.
- d) All bonafide students shall be assigned a University official email address on recommendation by the Academic Registrar's Office.
- e) Students shall maintain the use of the official email address of the University even after completion of their studies, to ensure continued electronic communication by the University to the alumni.
- f) Official communication of staff and students by email shall only be done using the University's official email addresses.
- g) Mailing lists shall be created for different categories of staff and students to streamline dissemination of information to staff and students.

- h) Communication to mailing lists by staff and students shall only be for official purposes.
- i) Students and staff are required to publish using their official MUST emails.
- j) Marketing and/or personal information shall not be communicated through the mailing lists, this shall only be done with official permission from the line departments e.g. University Secretary's office, Human Resource Office, Academic Registrar's office etc.
- k) The Computing Services Department shall enforce security and access permission to receive or send content to and from respective mailing lists.
- l) Staff/students shall;
  - i) Not disguise their identity when using the official University email platform.
  - ii) Use the official University email platform for official business ONLY.
  - iii) Not use insulting language when using University official email platform.
  - iv) Regularly check their email address to receive official communication from the University.

### **8.1.2. 2. Social media**

The University shall use appropriate social media platforms as official communication channels to share information with stakeholders

- i) The University Social Media Accounts shall;
  - a. Bear the logo and branding of the University.
  - b. Shall be verified as authentic University accounts.
- ii) The Public Relations Office shall;
  - a. Manage communications/conversations on the University's social media accounts.
  - b. Be respectful, polite and patient when engaging on behalf of the University on Social Media.
- iii) The Computing Services Unit shall;
  - a. Ensure operation of the appropriate social media platforms.
  - b. Provide secure access privileges to appropriate staff to continuously update the content on the social media platforms.

**Guidance on Personal Social Media Use:** While the University values the freedom of expression and encourages the use of social media for personal and professional growth, stakeholders are advised to use discretion in their online presence. Posts, comments, or shares that could negatively impact the University's

reputation should be avoided. Additionally social personal accounts should not be used to disseminate official University communications unless expressly authorized however sharing already published official content is permissible.

### **8.1.2.3 Website**

The University shall use the website(s), web platforms or web applications as official communication channels. The website(s) shall;

- a. Run under the University's official web domain address (must.ac.ug).
- b. Bear the logo and branding of the University.
- c. Provide public information about news, events, activities, projects, partnerships, collaborations and research activities/findings/publications at the University.
- d. Provide all necessary information to prospective students.
- e. Provide all relevant information to continuing students.
- f. Bear information relevant to alumni of the University.
- g. Provide information and back links to key stakeholders like the Government of Uganda, Partners, Collaborators, funders.
- h. All official and public information should be accessed via the MUST Website such as policies, acts, institutional Memoranda of Understanding, strategic plans.
- I. The university shall operate sub-domains or sub-websites for Faculties/Departments/Units if;
  - i) The Faculty/Department/Unit is a bonafide unit under the University's administrative structure.
  - ii) The Faculty/Department/Unit proves to be able to generate sufficient media content to run the sub-website.
  - iii) The Faculty/Department/Unit provides a suitable strategy to continuously update the sub-website.

- iv) The proposed sub-website's address is recognizable, consisting of a known keyword, official name, function or service in line with the Faculty/Department/Unit's mission and vision.
- v) The technology used to host the sub-website is compatible with the University's existing web technologies.

#### **8.1.2.4 SMS and Voice calls**

- a) The University shall use official phone numbers to communicate both internally and externally via SMS and Voice.
- b) Responsible University Officers shall ensure the phones within their jurisdiction are used appropriately.
- c) Communication using University phones shall only be for official purposes.
- d) Personal information shall not be communicated using University phones; this shall only be done with official permission from the line departments.

#### **8.1.3 Principles of Internal Communication**

For Internal Communication the following shall be ensured:

- i. **Confidential Information:** Any information deemed confidential should not be shared without proper authorization.
- ii. **Email Etiquette:** All emails should be professional, concise, and free from offensive language. Staff and faculty are discouraged from using University email for personal matters.
- iii. **Meetings:** Regular departmental and inter-departmental meetings should be held to ensure smooth communication flow.

#### **8.2 External Communication**

As the spokesperson of the University, the Vice Chancellor shall identify appropriate communication channels between the University and the public. The Vice Chancellor may however delegate the communication function to other jurisdiction offices.

##### **8.2.1 External Communication Channels**

External communication channels shall include the University website, media releases, emails, official social media platforms, business cards, official telephone lines, official University publications and any other communication channel approved by the University management. Guidance on use of the main channels is below;

- a) Print media: newspaper articles and supplements, varsity focus, fliers and ad-hoc publications; this written communication will remain a vital component of communication in the University.
- b) Broadcast: documentaries, podcasts, advertorials, interviews, television and radio.
- c) New media: web-based communication; controls on these will be professional at the level of content. All communication should be easy to understand and devoid of slang, obscene, offensive or discriminatory remarks, ethnic slurs, or sexist innuendoes. At the same time, the University shall promote e-learning as an avenue for disseminating educational content.

### **8.2.2 Principles of external communication**

For all external communication, the following standards shall be ensured:

- b) **Media Relations:** Only designated spokespersons are authorized to speak on behalf of the University. All media interactions must be reported to the University's Public Relations Office.
- c) **Social Media:** While staff and faculty are free to express themselves, they should avoid making defamatory statements or sharing confidential University information on personal social media accounts.
- d) **Publications:** All publications, including research papers that bear the University's name, must be vetted for accuracy and relevance to uphold the University's integrity.
- e) **Collaborations and Partnerships:** To enhance cooperation and networking among stakeholders:
  - d) Each partnering institution must provide a link of their institution website to MUST and vice versa. These backlinks enhance visibility, networks, and information sharing.
  - e) The University will establish formal partnership agreements with key partners and collaborators.
  - f) The logos of partnering institutions should be used in conjunction with the University logo in all joint activities.
  - g) The Communication Officer – International Relations Officer will coordinate all international relations partners, collaborators, and related activities.

## 9. Language of Communication and Instruction

- a) The official language of communication in the university is English but whenever necessary and to the extent possible the university may communicate through interpretation and translation.
- b) MUST shall promote inclusive communication and is committed to ensuring all communication materials are accessible to Persons with Disabilities. This includes providing alternative formats like Braille, large print, audio descriptions for key documents and ensuring digital content is compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies.

## 10. Crisis Communication

- a) The Vice Chancellor or the delegated officer shall be authorized to give information on crisis situations to the media, public or other stakeholders.
- b) Any identified crisis will be reported to the Public Relations Office for assessment and incidents that require response shall be approved by the Vice Chancellor or their delegate.

### 10.1. Crisis Communication Preparedness

To enhance preparedness for a variety of crisis situations, MUST has identified specific types of crises and developed tailored communication strategies for each. These are categorized as follows:

- i) **Natural Disasters:** Activation of emergency alerts through digital channels, updates on the University website, and social media channels providing safety instructions and updates.
- ii) **Public Health Emergencies:** Coordination with public health officials to disseminate accurate health advisories, preventive measures, and updates on the University's operational status through official emails and the University website.
- iii) **Security Threats:** Immediate alerts through the University's emergency notification system followed by regular updates through emails and social media on the evolving situation and safety instructions.
- iv) **Reputational Crises:** Transparent and timely communication through press releases, official statements from the Vice Chancellor, and updates on social media and the University website to address the issue and outline the steps being taken.

In each case, the Communication Office, in coordination with the Crisis Communication Team, will lead the communication efforts, ensuring messages are accurate, timely, and consistent across all channels. The Vice Chancellor or designated spokesperson will serve as the primary voice during major crises, with the support of the Communication Office to manage inquiries and disseminate information.

## 11. Roles of Key Stakeholders in Communication

Different internal and external stakeholders hold key roles in communication

**11.1.1 Students:** Students are vital communicators within the University, responsible for maintaining the integrity of information shared among their peers, with their faculty and across social platforms.

They are encouraged to engage with official University communications, provide feedback and participate actively in dialogues that fosters an academic community.

**11.1.2 Staff:** Staff members, including faculty and administrative personnel, play a crucial role in shaping and disseminating information within and outside MUST. They are expected to follow the established communication hierarchy and protocols, ensuring that all messages are accurate, respectful, and uphold the University's values.

Key in academic communication are faculty members, tasked with not only educating but also engaging in scholarly discourse. They must ensure that their communication, whether in research, teaching or public engagement aligns with the University's standards and promotes its academic mission.

**11.1.3 Alumni:** All MUST alumni are brought together under the MUST convocation for the purpose of developing their alma mater. Convocation plays a key role in upholding and advancing the brand of MUST. As ambassadors of the University, alumni contribute to its external image and engage with current and prospective students, providing insights and opportunities that enhance the University's reputation and network.

**11.1.4 Parents/Guardians:** They are external stakeholders who require clear and timely communication about University policies, student progress and events, ensuring they are well-informed partners in the students' educational journey.

**11.1.5 Governmental entities, national and international partnering organizations:** These stakeholders require formal, strategic communication to foster collaborations and partnerships, comply with regulations and advance the University's goals. Maintaining professional relationships

with these entities is crucial for securing funding, accreditation and other essential support to attain MUST's strategic plan.

**11.1.6 Public:** The University communicates with the public to share knowledge and educational opportunities and events thereby enhancing its role as an academic leader and community partner. This communication must be accessible, accurate, and reflective of the University's commitment to societal contribution.

## **11.2 Communication Oversight Committee (COC)**

- a) To ensure optimal formulation, revision, and oversight of the MUST communication policy, the Communication Oversight Committee (COC) will be established.
- b) The Vice Chancellor shall provide the terms of reference under which the COC shall operate.
- c) The COC, while overseeing the foundational principles of the policy will strive to find innovative means to enrich the policy through active dialogue with its members and broader stakeholders, leveraging multiple media channels.

### **11.2.1 Composition and Appointment of the COC**

- a) There shall be a COC comprised of a diverse assembly of representatives: The Communication Officer (Public Relations Officer), Communication Officer (International Relations Officer), Faculty communication coordinators, and the Head of the Computing Service Unit. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by the Vice Chancellor.
- b) The Vice Chancellor holds the discretion to finalize appointments to the committee ensuring a well-rounded representation.
- c) Within the committee, faculty communication coordinators have a critical role. Their tasks involve content aggregation, monitoring upcoming events, and maintaining open communication channels with the Public Relations Officer and International Relations Officer.
- d) Members from the Computing Services Department will focus on the technical aspect, ensuring that the University website operates flawlessly and receives timely updates.

Below are the specific roles of the COC that ensure proper management of communication at MUST

### **11.2.2 The Communication officer in charge of Public Relations**

The Public Relations Officer deals with managing and disseminating information on behalf of MUST. All stakeholders shall be required to coordinate with the Public Relations Office for the dissemination of the information.

The office shall have the following guiding principles;

- a) Ensure that all information published and shared on the University's website(s) reflects a good image of the university.
- b) Develop mechanisms for collecting and editing content to be published on the university's website.
- c) Ensure the information going to the public is correct and represents University interests and values.
- d) Identify appropriate communication channels between the University and the public.
- e) Coordinate press releases, conferences, and statements.
- f) Use the official email [pro@must.ac.ug](mailto:pro@must.ac.ug) for all communication to the stakeholders.
- g) Work with relevant University Officers to disseminate information required to address crisis situations.
- h) Ensure compliance with University brand elements and shall issue brand guidelines to staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders.
- i) Ensure the University promotional content is accurate before it is published.
- j) Ensure promotion of University events and activities complies with established brand guidelines and procedures.
- k) Be in charge of protocol at all University events.
- l) Be responsible for approving and publishing the content on all communication platforms.

### **11.2.3 The Communication Officer in charge of International Relations**

The International Relations Officer fosters global partnerships, facilitating international exchanges, promoting cross-cultural understanding and promotes internationalisation at MUST. The office deals with all international stakeholders and their welfare while in Uganda. The office offers guidance and support to MUST staff and students as they travel abroad. All stakeholders are required to contact the International

Relations Office way before for proper planning, coordination and organization for their stay while in Uganda.

The office shall have the following guiding principles;

- a) Coordinate the establishment and maintaining of links with Universities and institutions outside Uganda.
- b) Coordinate the drawing of international Memoranda of Understanding for partners and collaborators and monitor their implementation through working closely with the Vice Chancellor, University Secretary, Legal Officer and the implementing Faculty/Department/Unit at MUST. The agreements enable student and staff exchange programs and joint research projects.
- c) Use the official email [iro@must.ac.ug](mailto:iro@must.ac.ug) for all communication to the stakeholders.
- d) For proper planning and coordination the hosting Faculty, Department, Unit, project shall inform the International Relations Office about the visiting International students and staff.
- e) Hold orientation sessions of international visitors, staff and students within the first week of their stay. This shall focus on signing of commitment to adhere to institutional security expectations among others.
- f) Coordinate with Faculties, Departments, Units, staff to access information for international engagements for systematic and organised coordination for MUST staff and student exchanges and; events involving international students and staff. This information is vital in updating the University website and underscoring MUST's endeavours in line with its mission and vision.
- g) Support international visitors, staff and students with the required documents by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs including – visas, work permits, licenses and vaccines.
- h) Require International staff and students to reside in the expatriates quarters and designated areas.
- i) International full time and occasional students will be required to pay dues and fees as and when required in line with MUST policies.
- j) More information can be accessed via the international relations link on the MUST website.  
[https://www.must.ac.ug/university\\_unit/international-office/](https://www.must.ac.ug/university_unit/international-office/)

#### **11.2.4 The Computing Services Department shall;**

- a) Ensure the continuous design, development and maintenance of the University's website(s).
- b) Uphold the security of the University's website(s).

- c) Ensure operation of the University's official email platform.
- d) Uphold the security of the University's official email platform.
- e) Assign/de-assign staff/students with university official email addresses.
- f) Create, maintain and update mailing lists.

#### **11.2.5 University Faculties/departments/units shall;**

- a) Assign person(s) with the duty of generating content for publication on the University website(s).
- b) The assigned persons will give timely information about national and international engagements in their Faculties.
- c) Staff shall regularly check the University website(s) to receive official communication from the University.

#### **11.2.6 Secretariat Support to the COC**

- a) A dedicated Public Relations Office and or Communication office will be set up, operated by the Public Relations Officer, International Relations Officer and additional officers as outlined in the University's Human Resource Structure. The Vice Chancellor bears the responsibility to ensure this office is both established and functions effectively.
- b) The team stationed at the communication office will act as the secretariat, providing administrative and logistical support to the MUST Communication Committee.

#### **11.2.7 Activation of the Implementation Committee**

For the efficient roll-out and administration of this policy, the Vice Chancellor will oversee its execution, collaborating closely with the Public Relations and International Relations Offices. The VC shall, in consultation with Faculties, Institute, Directorates, Centres and other relevant academic and administrative units will develop an implementation strategy to give effect to this Policy.

## 12. Events, Protocol and Guest Relations

a) **Initial Planning and Budgeting:** The Department or office hosting the event is responsible for initiating all preparations including planning, budgeting, and preliminary implementation. This Department will manage the event's budget and ensure all preparations align with the allocated funds.

b) **Collaboration with Public Relations Office:** Early in the planning process, the hosting department must collaborate with the Public Relations Office to outline how the event will transpire. This includes agreeing on roles for event management, publicity, and protocol to ensure a unified approach.

c) **Communication of Upcoming Events:** Information about upcoming events must be communicated to the Public Relations Office or the International Relations Office at least two weeks prior to the event date. Event hosts are required to inform the respective communication officer about the necessary services for the event, such as photography, social media coverage, program direction, documentary production, promotional posters, promotional videos, and media engagement.

d) **Notification of Vice Chancellor's Attendance:** The Public Relations Office must be informed about all events and functions attended by the Vice Chancellor on behalf of the University.

e) **Publicity Budget:** The event hosting Department is responsible for covering the primary costs related to the event. The Public Relations Office will assist in determining the budget for publicity and protocol, ensuring these expenses are adequately planned for within the overall event budget.

f) **Master of Ceremonies:** Communication officers under the Public Relations Office shall serve as the official Master of Ceremonies (MC) and in their absence a suitable delegate will be appointed.

g) **Protocol Oversight:** The Public Relations Office will oversee protocol at all University events to ensure proper etiquette and order are maintained.

h) **Stakeholder Engagement:** While the hosting department handles the preliminary activities, the Public Relation Office must be involved from the outset in all University activities involving stakeholder relations to ensure effective coordination.

### i) **Communication and promotion of University events**

- I. Every University officer planning an event within or outside the University shall be required to inform the Public Relations Office officially.

- II. The Public Relations Officer shall ensure that promotion of University events and activities comply with established brand guidelines and procedures.
- III. Every University event shall be published on the University website, social media platforms and newsletter before and after.

k) **Media Relations**

- I. The Public Relations Office shall be responsible for all media relations before, during and after an event and shall develop a media relations strategy to include proactive media engagements.
- II. All media enquiries including requests for interviews shall be directed to and handled by the Public Relations Office.
- III. Departments shall seek clearance from Vice Chancellor or Public Relation office for any media interactions.
- IV. The Public relations Office in collaboration with other Departments through their respective Communication Coordinators shall develop media content on any relevant emerging issues.

### **13. University Corporate Branding and Marketing**

The University is committed to maintaining a strong and recognizable brand that reflects MUST's values of excellence in education, research and community engagement. Branding includes the use of the University logo, official colours and other visual and textual elements that represent our identity.

**13.1 Corporate Advertising:** As part of our branding strategy, MUST actively engages in corporate advertising to enhance visibility and foster strategic partnerships. All corporate advertisements must:

- a) Align with the ethical standards and values of the university.
- b) Be approved by the Communications office to ensure consistency with MUST's branding guidelines.
- c) Clearly and accurately convey the intended message without compromise to the University's integrity.
- d) Be placed in suitable contexts that positively reflect the University's reputation and outreach goals.

**13.2 University Corporate Branding:** The University shall uphold the University brand and image to promote MUST's reputation and visibility. This is to inform, remind, persuade convincingly, and influence all

the stakeholders to drive their decision towards MUST services under a brand. The University brand elements are explained below.

- i. The University brand elements shall include; the name, official logo, colors, font and tagline.
- ii. The University shall maintain its brand name and reputation through outstanding and quality graduates, quality of teaching, research and innovation output and community engagement.
- iii. Every University officer communicating on behalf of the University shall maintain brand elements in the communication function.
- iv. The Communication officer in charge of Public Relations Office shall ensure compliance with University brand elements and shall issue brand guidelines to staff, students and alumni.
- v. All stakeholders such as partners and Alumni shall obtain approval from the Public Relations Officer and or the Vice Chancellor before using University brands for any purpose.
- vi. The Communication officers – International Relations Officer (IRO) and Public Relations Officer (PRO) shall ensure the University promotional content is accurate before it is published.

### **13.2.1 University color codes**

The University colours are in the order of green, gold and blue. These colours were chosen to complement the MUST logo while maintaining its distinct brand quality. Below are the MUST colours and their meanings;

- Green: going a head
- Gold: we always shine
- Blue: the sky is no longer the limit

The colour codes are annexed in the schedule.

### **13.2.2 Formal Letters**

Official letters are written on MUST letterheads. The University shall use formal letters as official communication channels to communicate both internally and externally. The University formal letters should;

- a) Have the MUST logo on the extreme left, the name of the University, post office address, contact of the Faculty or Department or Unit or office. The footer should have the University website and the department/ office official email.
  - b) Bear the signature and title of the officer
  - c) Be written in the official language
  - d) Have the official font of Arial Narrow font 12 and 14 (14 for headers and 12 for the body)
- A sample of a formal letter is shown in the schedules.

### **13.2.3 University email signature**

The University email signature is aimed at creating MUST visibility. Staff and students will have their name title contact (with preference) email, Department, Faculty, as of when applicable. Below is how the email signature should appear;

Name/ Title

Contact/ORCID No.

Email

Department/ Faculty

[www.must.ac.ug](http://www.must.ac.ug)

Mbarara University of Science and Technology

*Succeed we Must*

### **13.2.4 Information, Education and Communication (IEC)**

Stakeholders representing the University will be required to carry some University IECs for visibility. For uniform branding and marketing, the items below shall have University colours, logo and motto. The IECs will be accessed for download by all stakeholders.

- a) University business card
- b) University power point template
- c) Obituaries for staff/Student
- d) Obituaries for immediate family
- e) University official envelope

- f) Buildings branding
- g) Partnerships IECs
- h) Posters, banners and signage
- i) Stickers
- j) Parking permits
- k) Brochures for Faculties, Institutes, Centres and Directorates
- l) Document wallets/ Notebooks
- m) Notices board branding
- n) Internal memo template
- o) Pull up banners
- p) University flag
- q) Congratulatory Banners and Flyers
- r) Magazines
- s) Contact of the University (post office box, official contact no. plot no)
- t) University Identification Card (ID). Designed in MUST colors, this shall have:
  - i. The name of the university
  - ii. Name of staff
  - iii. Academic Rank/Title
  - iv. Department
  - v. Faculty/Unit

u) Faculties

Different Faculties have different dress codes that should be adhered to as outlined below;

- i. Faculty of Medicine (FOM) - Scrubs and Clinical Coats
- ii. Faculty of Science (FoS) - Laboratory coats
- iii. Faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology (FAST) - Overall and coats
- iv. Faculty of Computing Informatics (FCI) - Overalls
- v. Faculty of Interdisciplinary Science (FIS) - Outreach reflectors
- vi. Faculty of Business and Management Sciences (FBMS) – Outreach reflectors

### 13.2.5 Help desk communication

The University shall have a help desk to handle all inquiries from stakeholders. This may be physical or online. The help desk will handle all communication and ensure that all communication is handled in a professional manner

### **13.2.6 Content Management and Publication**

- a) The University shall ensure information such as Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)/ agreements, staff profiles, partnerships, research publications, grants, admission and graduation lists, call for post and undergraduate applications, PhD defenses and abstracts is published on the website using approved communication channels.
- b) The University shall ensure all the content is posted on the University website before it is published in other communication channels.
- c) The University Officers wishing to publish content via University communication channels shall coordinate with the Public Relations Officer and International Relations Officer.
- d) The Vice Chancellor through the Public Relations Officer and International Relations Officer shall be responsible for approving and publishing the content on all communication platforms.
- e) The Public Relations Office reserves the right to decline publication of content in case it does not comply with brand guidelines and procedures.

### **13.2.7 Photography**

- a) The University shall have annual photo shoots per Faculty/ Department/ Unit to update the University database and promote visibility.
- b) The Public Relations Office shall create a database that shall provide the University's memory lane.
- c) All photos taken at a University event shall be a property of MUST under which they can be used for the University's advertising and promotional events.

## **14. Use of MUST's Intellectual Property**

The guidelines below shall be followed to use MUST's Intellectual Property.

- a) **Request Submission:** Individuals or entities seeking to use MUST's intellectual property should submit a detailed request to the Public Relations Office, outlining the intended use, duration, and scope.
- b) **Preliminary Review:** The Public Relations Office will conduct a preliminary review to assess the request's alignment with University policies and the potential impact on the University's brand and reputation.
- c) **Legal Clearance:** Following initial approval, the request will be forwarded to the Legal Office for a review of legal implications and IP rights compliance.
- d) **Final Approval:** The Vice Chancellor will review recommendations from both the Public Relations Office and the Legal Office to make the final decision on the request.
- e) **Documentation:** Approved uses of intellectual property will be documented, through a Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the interested party including terms and conditions of use, to ensure clear understanding and compliance.

## 15. Consequences of Unauthorized Use for Intellectual Property

Any unauthorized use, reproduction, or misrepresentation of MUST's intellectual property will result in immediate revocation of any granted permissions, potential disciplinary action (up to and including termination or expulsion) and may lead to legal proceedings. The University will take all necessary steps to safeguard its intellectual property rights and uphold its reputation.

## 16. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the policy

The Key performance indicators for M&E include;

- a) **Website Traffic:** Tracking the number of visitors to the University's official website.
- b) **Social Media Engagement:** Monitoring the growth in followers, likes, and views across all University social media channels.
- c) **Content Distribution:** Evaluating the percentage of official University content disseminated through its various communication channels. Develop appropriate strategies for monitoring and evaluation of the MUST Communications Policy.
- d) Carry out annual evaluation on the implementation of the policy.

- e) Define the short-term, mid-term and long-term interventions based on the outcomes of the evaluation reports.

## 17. Violation of Policy

In the event of policy violations, established University disciplinary protocols shall be invoked.

## 18. Monitoring and review

The Public Relation Office shall monitor and periodically review of these guidelines.

### A) Schedules of the Communication Policy Guidelines

#### Schedule 1: MUST Colour Codes

The University's colour scheme follows a sequence of green, gold, and blue. These specific colours were selected to harmonize with the MUST logo while preserving its unique identity. These colours help create a consistent and recognizable image for the University in all its communications. Below are the MUST colour codes.

Green- #4d7902

Gold- #FFB300

Blue- #003166



#### Schedule 2: MUST Logo

The University logo is a visual representation of MUST's identity and values. It embodies the spirit of science, technology, academic excellence, innovation and community engagement. Designed with careful consideration, the MUST logo reflects the University's commitment to quality education and its aspirations

for the future. It is a symbol of pride and unity for students, staff, alumni and the wider community associated with MUST. Below is the MUST logo.



### Schedule 3: MUST Flag

The MUST flag displays the MUST's colours: green, gold, and blue. These colors symbolize progress, excellence, and limitless possibilities. The flag serves as a visual representation of the University's identity and values, fostering a sense of unity among students, faculty, staff, and alumni. It flies high as a beacon of academic achievement.



### Schedule 4: Formal Letter

Official correspondence at MUST is conducted using University letterheads. These letters serve as the formal means of communication both internally and externally. A sample formal letter is provided below.



### Annex I: Funding of the Policy Dissemination

S/N	Activities	Item	Units cost	Persons	Total cost	
1	Branding of the policy	Graphics designing	2,500,000		2,500,000	
		Policy dummy	1,000,000	1	1,000,000	
2	Translation of the policy	Voicing and creation of video version of the policy	2,000,000	1	2,000,000	
		Transcribing the policy	1,000,000	1	1,000,000	
		Animated communication	3,000,000		3,000,000	
3	Publicity and media	Influencers	100,000	3	300,000	
		Professional photographer	150,000	1	150,000	
		Backdrop	350,000		350,000,	
		PA system	500,000		500,000	
		Pre and post social media flyer	100,000	50	100,000	
		Communication crew jackets	50,000	10	500,000	
4	Communication experts	Guest speakers	1,000,000	3	3,000,000	
		Stationary	Notebook	2000	100	200,000
			pens	25000 @ box	2	500000
			Flip chart	30000	1	30000
5	Secretariat	Rapporteur	150000	1	150,000	
		Registration and ushering	50,000	3	150,000	
6	welfare	Breaktea	10000	100	1,000,000	
		Session water	1000	100	100,000	
		Lunch	25000	100	2,500,000	
		Fuel for coordination			300,000	
		Airtime			100,000	
7	IEC material	Communication Souvenirs	3000@ stickers	100	300000	
		Stickers	5000@ key holders	50	250000	
		Key holders	50000@ wooden flasks	30	1,500,000	
		Wooden flasks				
8	Gazetting the policy				6,000,000	

<b>9</b>	<b>Brand guide and interpretation</b>	Downloadable IECs and Brand Items interpretation of Brand Items	4,000,000	2	8,000,000
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