Research and Innovation Draft Quality Assurance Policy



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| **Responsible Executive** | **Vice Chancellor** |
| **Responsible Division** | **Directorate of Quality Assurance** |
| **Approved By** |  |
| **Date Approved** |  |
| **Review Date** | **After every four (4) years** |
| **Stakeholders affected by this policy** | **All categories of staff and students of University of Nigeria Nsukka as well as their partners (JAMB, ALUMINI, FGN and local and International****collaborators)** |

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# **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework that ensures the quality, integrity, and relevance of research and innovation activities at the University of Nigeria. This policy supports the creation of a research culture that adheres to ethical standards, promotes excellence, and contributes to societal, industrial, and scientific advancement.

# **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all research and innovation activities undertaken by staff, students, and external collaborators at the university. It covers:

* Academic research (basic and applied)
* Collaborative and interdisciplinary research
* Innovation and commercialization of research outputs
* Sponsored research, including industry-funded projects
* Student research at undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate levels

# **3. Objectives**

The QA policy for research and innovation seeks to:

* Ensure that research is conducted to the highest standards of integrity, ethics, and rigor.
* Promote a culture of innovation and creativity that contributes to the university’s strategic goals and the wider community.
* Foster collaboration with industry, government, and other research institutions to enhance the impact of research outputs.
* Facilitate continuous improvement in research quality through monitoring, evaluation, and feedback mechanisms.
* Support researchers in securing external funding, protecting intellectual property (IP), and translating research into practical applications.

# **4. Principles of Research and Innovation Quality Assurance**

The following principles guide all research and innovation activities at the university:

* **Excellence**: All research must aim for academic rigor, originality, and significant contributions to knowledge or practice.
* **Ethics and Integrity**: Research must adhere to ethical standards, including transparency, honesty, and respect for all participants, subjects, and communities involved.
* **Collaboration and Impact**: Research should aim to have a meaningful impact on society, policy, industry, or academia through collaboration and knowledge transfer.
* **Inclusivity**: The university encourages participation from diverse groups, ensuring equitable access to research opportunities and innovation resources.
* **Sustainability**: Research activities should consider environmental, social, and economic sustainability, ensuring long-term benefits.

# **5. Research and Innovation Process**

## **5.1 Research Planning and Proposal Development**

1. **Needs Identification and Conceptualization**: Researchers identify topics and areas of research based on societal needs, scientific gaps, or strategic priorities of the university.
2. **Proposal Development**: Research proposals must clearly articulate objectives, methodology, expected outcomes, resources required, and potential ethical issues.
3. **Ethics Approval**: All research involving human participants, animals, or sensitive data must undergo review by the university’s Research Ethics Committee to ensure ethical standards are upheld.
4. **Funding and Resources**: Researchers are encouraged to seek internal or external funding. The university will support grant writing, budgeting, and resource allocation to ensure the feasibility of research projects.

## **5.2 Research Conduct**

1. **Data Management**: Research data must be collected, stored, and managed following institutional data management policies, ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility.
2. **Supervision and Mentorship**: Researchers, particularly students, must have access to qualified supervisors and mentors to guide them in research methodology, analysis, and dissemination.
3. **Monitoring and Reporting**: Progress of ongoing research is monitored through regular reporting, and milestones are tracked to ensure research objectives are met.

## **5.3 Dissemination and Knowledge Transfer**

1. **Publication**: Research findings should be disseminated through peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and academic publications, ensuring rigor and transparency in reporting results.
2. **Intellectual Property (IP) and Commercialization**: The university encourages researchers to protect their intellectual property, and where applicable, supports commercialization efforts, including patents, licensing, and startup incubation.
3. **Community Engagement**: Researchers are encouraged to communicate their work to the broader community, engaging stakeholders such as industry, policymakers, and the public through outreach and knowledge-sharing activities.

# **6. Innovation and Commercialization Support**

The university is committed to fostering a culture of innovation by:

* **Innovation Hubs and Incubation**: Providing spaces and resources for idea development, product design, and commercialization through innovation centers and incubators.
* **Technology Transfer Office (TTO)**: Offering support for patenting, licensing, and collaborative research agreements with industry.
* **Collaborative Research Grants**: Facilitating partnerships with industry and government bodies for collaborative research and development (R&D) initiatives.

# **7. Research Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

The following mechanisms ensure continuous improvement and excellence in research:

* **Peer Review and Evaluation**: Research proposals, publications, and projects will undergo internal and external peer reviews to ensure academic rigor and relevance.
* **Research Audits**: Periodic audits of research processes, including data management, publication practices, and ethics compliance, will be conducted to identify areas for improvement.
* **Research Performance Indicators**: The university will track key performance indicators (KPIs) such as research output (publications, citations), external funding secured, IP generated, and societal impact to evaluate research quality.
* **Capacity Building**: Continuous professional development opportunities, such as workshops, training on research methods, grant writing, and innovation, will be offered to staff and students to enhance their research capabilities.

# **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

## **8.1 University Management**

* Ensure alignment of research activities with institutional strategic goals.
* Provide resources and infrastructure for high-quality research and innovation.

## **8.2 Academic Departments**

* Encourage research and innovation at all levels, integrating it into academic curricula.
* Monitor the quality and progress of departmental research activities.

## **8.3 Research Office and Ethics Committee**

* Oversee research quality, ensure compliance with ethical standards, and manage external funding applications and collaborations.
* Provide administrative support for the research process, including ethics review, grant applications, and IP protection.

## **8.4 Individual Researchers**

* Adhere to ethical guidelines and quality standards in conducting and disseminating research.
* Actively seek opportunities for collaboration, funding, and knowledge transfer.

# **9. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement**

* **Annual Review**: The university will conduct annual reviews of its research portfolio to assess the quality and impact of research outputs.
* **Stakeholder Feedback**: Feedback from internal and external stakeholders (e.g., industry partners, funders, academic peers) will be sought regularly to ensure the relevance and impact of research and innovation activities.
* **Research Impact Assessment**: Regular assessments will be conducted to evaluate the societal, economic, and environmental impact of research outputs, ensuring alignment with the university’s mission and community needs.

# **10. Communication and Dissemination**

The results and achievements of the university’s research and innovation activities will be communicated to relevant stakeholders through:

* **Annual Research Reports**: Public reports highlighting key research achievements, funding obtained, and impact assessments.
* **Public Engagement**: Outreach initiatives, including public lectures, exhibitions, and collaborations with media, to showcase research contributions to the community.
* **Online Platforms**: Research and innovation outputs will be disseminated through the university’s website and academic repositories, ensuring open access where possible.

# **11. Compliance**

All research activities must comply with this policy as well as relevant national and international regulations, including ethical standards and IP laws. Non-compliance may lead to disciplinary action or withdrawal of research funding.

# **12. Review of the Policy**

This QA policy will be reviewed every five years, or sooner if necessary, to ensure its continued relevance, alignment with international best practices, and effectiveness in promoting high-quality research and innovation.

# **13. Conclusion**

The university is committed to fostering a vibrant research culture that promotes excellence, innovation, and societal impact. This policy ensures that research and innovation activities are conducted to the highest standards of quality and integrity, with a focus on continuous improvement and alignment with the university’s strategic objectives.