

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF MOMBASA

A Centre of excellence

COMMUNICATION POLICY





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TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF MOMBASA

COMMUNICATION POLICY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

AB	BREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ii	ii		
DE	FINITIONS i	v		
PR	EFACE	v		
FO	REWORD v	'i		
AC	KNOWLEDGEMENTSvi	ii		
EXECUTIVE SUMMARYviii				
1.0	INTRODUCTION	1		
1.1	Vision	1		
1.2	Mission	1		
1.3	Core Values	1		
1.4	Motto	2		
2.0	COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES	3		
2.1	Statement of Purpose	3		
2.2	Scope of the Policy	3		
2.3	Guiding Principles	3		
2.4	Policy Objectives	4		
2.5	Legal Framework	4		
2.6	Communication Channels	5		
3.0	POLICY ADMINISTRATION	6		
3.1	Chairperson of the Council	6		
3.2	The VC and Members of the Council	6		
3.3	Head of Corporate Communications	6		
3.4	University DVC's	7		
3.5	Academic Experts	7		
3.6	Responsibilities of Leadership	7		
3.7	Responsibilities of all Staff	8		
3.8	Responsibilities of Students	9		
3.9	Responsibilities of Managers	9		
4.0	COMMUNICATION CHANNELS1	1		
4.1	General Communication Channels1	1		
4.2	Internal Communication1	1		



4.2.2	1 Internal Communication Roles and Responsibilities	12
4.3	External Communication	
4.3.2	1 External Communication Roles and Responsibilities	13
5.0	CRISIS COMMUNICATION	15
5.1	Crisis Communication Principles	
5.2	Crisis Response	
5.3	Crisis Communication Management Team	16
6.0	MARKETING AND BRANDING	
6.1	Marketing	
6.2	Branding	
6.3	Corporate Colours	
7.0	MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW	19
7.1	Monitoring and Review	
7.2	Review of the Communication Policy	
7.3	Organization Chart for Corporate Communication	

Page ii

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCMT	Crisis Communication Management Team
ССО	Corporate Communication Officer
DVC (AFP)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration, Finance and Planning
DVC (ARE)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Research and Extension
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
Registrar (AA)	Registrar Academic Affairs
Registrar (AP)	Registrar Administration and Planning
TUM	Technical University of Mombasa

Page iii

DEFINITIONS

"Corporate communication" refers to the set of activities involved in managing communication with internal and external stakeholders as well as with the wider public.

"Crisis communication" refers to the form of communication to protect and defend the university in case of a swelling public challenge to its reputation, coupled with its brand or community or both.

"Internal Communication" refers to the exchange of information and messages between employees, students or departments across all levels or divisions of the university.

External Communication refers to the exchange of information and messages between the university and organizations, groups or individuals outside its formal structure.

"Spokesperson" refers to **s**omeone engaged, elected or appointed to speak on behalf of the university.

"Collaborating institutions" refers to the institutions with which the university has entered into formal partnership agreements.

"Stakeholder" refers to a person, group or organization with an interest in the university.

"Media" refers to a means of communication that reaches or influences people widely and rapidly where necessary.

Page iv

"University community" refers to the University Council, Staff and students.

"University" refers to Technical University of Mombasa

"Users" include the University community as well as its stakeholders.

Communication Policy

PREFACE

There have been changes in the handling of corporate communication all over the world, with an implication that if an organization has to survive and thrive then it must communicate effectively with all its stakeholders. Generation of knowledge being TUM's core business, it must ensure that this knowledge is appropriately transmitted to stakeholders. Consequently, the content of a communication, the manner of communication, and the feedback received are powerful indicators for the University to position herself as a global provider of Higher Education in Kenya.

A major challenge facing universities is updating of content or information and presenting it in appropriate forms to its' diverse audiences. The range of audiences makes it imperative that the university develops appropriate approaches to sharing information and gauging feedback.

This policy was developed against this backdrop as part of the university's commitment to providing her stakeholders with timely, accurate, objective and complete information. The policy will enable a smooth flow of information, create feedback mechanisms and manage communication.

To this end, the Council commits to provide stakeholders with timely, accurate, objective and complete information to all its stakeholders through this policy.

Page v

Dr Robert Arunga Chairman of Council

Communication Policy

FOREWORD

Technical University of Mombasa occupies a social and cultural space particular to itself in the Kenyan academic arena. Taking into consideration the dimensions and complexity of communication, it is prudent that the University establish a policy to define how communication is utilized as well as relayed to its stakeholders.

This Policy sets out the framework for both internal and external communication amongst staff, within Student and Academic Services, and stakeholders. The policy is intended to promote communication in an environment of fluid change.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that communication is well managed, deliberate and reliable and thus valued by staff. Senior staff within TUM encourage openness in sharing information with colleagues and are committed to consulting with staff on a regular basis. The policy recognises the need for a range of styles of communication, but encourages face-to-face communications whenever possible, as face-to-face communications are generally more effective. Departmental Communications Policies must operate within the spirit of this policy and deliver, as a minimum, the specifics articulated in the Framework articulated by this policy.

While acknowledging the ever-changing communication channels, this policy addresses the current trends in the communication arena as well as provides for the acceptable channels of communication within the University. I welcome TUM fraternity to read and engage the spirit of this policy in all their communications within and without the University.

Page vi

Prof. Laila U. Abubakar Vice-Chancellor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is a group of special people who burned their midnight oil to see to the fruition of this policy manual. I wish to take this opportunity to that each of the staff below for their commitment following their appointment to the Communication Policy Taskforce. I wish to mention the persons below for appreciation following the successful completion of the task of reviewing this Policy:

- i) Prof. Joseph Rasowo
- ii) Dr Mvurya Mgala
- iii) Dr Wanyenda Chilimo
- iv) Dr Rosephine Nyiva
- v) Mr Mohammed Swaleh
- vi) Mr Salim Chiro
- vii) Ms Serah Okumu

Prof. Joseph Rasowo Deputy Vice Chancellor (AFP)

DVC (AFP) Director ICI University Librarian CoD Communication Studies Department. Manager ICTS Corporate Communications Officer Deputy Chief Legal Officer

Pagevii

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy document stipulates how Technical University of Mombasa will handle communication between its internal and external stakeholders. TUM's Communication Policy is founded on the strength of its Strategic Plan 2018-2022 which perceives communication between the University and its stakeholders as a two-way process based on open communication and feedback.

This Policy offers a solid communication structure that will give every facet of the University life adequate visibility. The structure will ensure that academic and research activities and community relations are anchored on different communication platforms to reach the targeted stakeholders. Communication of research from scholars and students will be prioritized as a key output of the revamped communication office.

To ensure that the University takes advantage of information communication technology which has become a new frontier of communicating, a revamped structure providing for personnel in each college is catered for in the Policy. The personnel will ensure that our communication strategy is timely and focused on creating mutual understanding with our stakeholders and shall ensure that our products and services are available through different interactive forums.

The Policy demonstrates that our institution is among organisations that have embraced best communication practices. It defines how communication is structured and practised. The university has chosen this path to realize its vision of moving towards world-class academic excellence that emphasizes the centrality of the stakeholders in its communication.

Pageviii

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Technical University of Mombasa (TUM) was established by the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 and University Charter, 2013 to offer technological, professional and scientific education and training.

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the principles, guidelines, practices and processes that the University will embrace in fostering excellent internal and external communication. In implementing the Policy, the University will realize its vision, mission and core values by reaching out to its stakeholders with messages that help to create a sense of ownership of the institution. This policy is guided by the following:

1.1 Vision

A Technical University of Global Excellence in Advancing Knowledge, Science and Technology

1.2 Mission

To advance knowledge and its practical application through teaching, research and innovation to serve both industry and the community

1.3 Core Values

The Council, Senate, Management, staff and students of TUM will endeavour to institutionalize and inculcate values fostering a strong corporate culture while promoting quality service delivery, cohesion in our diverse community and achieving the targeted goals. These will be realized by espousing the following values:

- *Excellence*. We strive for excellence in quality teaching, learning and research, and customer focus by continuously assessing ourselves, applying our own and international benchmarks.
- ii) *Integrity and Professionalism.* We expect high standards of integrity, ethics and respect from one another across the institution and honour collegiality

and a climate of critical professionalism among staff and students.

- iii) *Equity.* We are committed to equity, diversity and fairness, and seek to nurture and build on our diverse cultural heritage
- iv) *Teamwork.* We place a high premium on teamwork and shared responsibility working with each other and with external groups in ways that are mutually beneficial.
- V) Creativity, innovativeness and environmental sustainability. We embrace innovative problem solving and promote creative value-based solutions. We cultivate a socially secure, responsive and sustainable green environment.

Page 2

1.4 Motto

Jiddu Tajidu (Endeavour and Achieve)

2.0 COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

2.1. Statement of Purpose

This Policy statement articulates the University's commitment to appropriate and effective communication to all stakeholders both internally and externally. It provides a structural framework for planning and delivery and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

2.2. Scope of the Policy

The University is committed to the pursuit of knowledge and excellence and loyal to itself as a community of learning. Communicating our mission and institutional goals should be underpinned by the principles of respect for difference and cultural diversity, transparency, equity and fairness with all stakeholders. This Policy applies to official interaction with the media by all components, employees and students of the university.

2.3. Guiding Principles

In its endeavour to provide its stakeholders with timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information about its policies, programmes, services, and initiatives, TUM shall adopt the following principles in its communications strategy with stakeholders:

- i) Championing the University and what it stands for.
- ii) Contributing to increased University visibility in key recruitment markets.
- iii) Maintaining consistency with the University's strategic plan.
- iv) Crafting fit-for-purpose content relevant and well communicated; coordinated, joined-up, inclusive, accurate, succinct and timely.
- v) Remaining customer service/client-focused, establishing relationships across a wide range of audiences.
- vi) Perpetuating best practice within existing IT infrastructure and budget.
- vii) Continually improving where necessary challenging the status quo.

- viii) Cost-effective efficient use of resources.
- ix) Focusing effort to maximize impact across multiple channels.
- x) Providing measurable results.
- xi) Where possible, using the expertise available at the University in communications activities.

2.4. Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- To streamline the flow of information within the University, with a view to promoting the educational, research and innovations, information sharing and networking activities of the University faculty, staff and students.
- ii) To streamline the flow of information between the University and other (external) stakeholders in Government, the knowledge industry, the wider society, the labour market, and donor circles.
- iii) To provide guidance for effective and responsible electronic, print and verbal communication.
- iv) To provide a framework for integrated and consistent marketing and branding programmes aimed at enhancing the university's brand identity.
- v) To establish a mechanism for communication in times of crisis.

2.5. Legal Framework

The following; but not limited to, legal instruments and institutional policies shall be applicable with this policy:

Page 4

- i) The Constitution of Kenya,2010;
- ii) The Kenya Information and Communications Act (Amended 2013);
- iii) The Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act 2018;
- iv) The Universities Act 2012;
- v) The Access to Information Act of 2016;

TUM is ISO 9001:2015 Certified

- vi) The Copyright Act 2014;
- vii) The Trademarks Act 2012;
- viii) The Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act 2015;
- ix) The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act 2012;
- x) The Records Disposal Act 2015;
- xi) Defamation Act 2012;
- xii) Anti-corruption and Economic Crimes Act, 2016;
- xiii) Technical University of Mombasa Statutes, 2019;
- xiv) ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System.

2.6. Communication Channels

To maintain a good working environment for the realization of its vision and mission, the university aims at facilitating efficient and effective communication to all its stakeholders. Members of the University may where appropriate use the following channels to communicate with the internal publics:

- i) Face to face communication: Open days, University events, Exhibitions and presentations
- ii) Written Communication: hardy copy, communication, Formal letters, memos, newsletters, academic publications and mailing lists; Noticeboards
- iii) Electronic means: fax, Email, webpage, radio, TV, video conferencing, magnetic media
- iv) Social Media: YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype;
- v) Notice boards;
- vi) Other additional forms: Flyers, Posters, Events, Exhibitions and Presentations;
- vii) Academic publications;
- viii) Open-days; and
- ix) Any other channel that may be identified by the respective units in conformity with this policy.

3.0 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Communication is the responsibility of each member of the University. We must, therefore, be aware of and take full responsibility for, legislative responsibilities, and those outlined in this policy. We acknowledge and respect the legislative requirements placed upon us and will work at all times to ensure that communications are open, transparent and consistent. The key roles and responsibilities of Internal Communication are outlined below:

3.1 Chairperson of the Council

The Chairperson of the Council shall be the official spokesperson of TUM on all Council-related matters, but in the event of the Chairperson's absence or incapacity, or at his/her own request, the Vice-Chancellor shall perform this function.

3.2 The VC and Members of the Council

- In all but Council-related matters, the VC shall be the primary spokesperson of TUM, but in the event of the VC's absence or incapacity the Acting VC shall perform this function; and
- Members of TUM management shall form the second tier of respondents to engage with the media on matters related to their respective portfolios.

3.3 Head of Corporate Communications

- The Head of Corporate Communications shall be responsible for implementing the TUM Communications and Media engagement strategy;
- The director must channel media enquiries to the appropriate spokesperson and monitor whether the matter receives the required attention; and
- iii) S/he shall be responsible for media monitoring across the University and advise the Vice-Chancellor on all issues or events relevant to the university.

3.4 University DVC's

TUM DVCs shall be official spokespersons on specific matters related to their portfolios.

3.5 Academic Experts

- The academic experts of the university shall be encouraged to engage in public debate and to provide expert commentary on matters falling within their area of expertise;
- The Head of Corporate Communication shall capture the details of academic employees in a list of experts, which may be provided to the media who wish to promote their media exposure; and
- iii) For the purposes of ensuring effective coverage and the limitation of possible negative publicity, the Head of Corporate Communication shall provide advice to academic employees regarding the release of controversial information that may reflect on the university.

3.6 **Responsibilities of Leadership**

The University operates a distributed leadership policy. Leaders refer not just to those with Executive Leadership responsibilities but to leaders of teams, programmes and projects and Chairperson of Department. All such leaders shall be expected to:

- i) Ensure, as individuals and teams, we foster a culture of free discussion and exploration;
- Ensure all stakeholders are kept updated on relevant University College activities to enable them to be as effective as possible;
- iii) Promote best practice in communication appropriate for our University College environment;
- iv) Ensure a communications strategy, policy and action plan is in place;
- v) Manage strategic communication through an identified communication framework and a team of communications advocates;

- vi) Ensure that information is made available to all stakeholders in a timely manner and via appropriate channels;
- vii) Ensure that all stakeholders have appropriate skills and relevant information to enable effective communication with all parties;
- viii) Maintain open channels of communication of two-way communication and listen to feedback and comment from all stakeholders; and
- ix) Monitor the effectiveness of the communications strategy, policy and infrastructure and ensure the communication action plan evolves to meet the needs of the University.

3.7 Responsibilities of all Staff

Staff refers to those employed by, or responsible for delivering services on behalf of the University. Staff shall be expected to:

- Ensure individual execution of good communication practice in accordance with this policy;
- ii) To be informed and have information in order to be as effective as possible in a role and supportive of the strategic direction of the University;
- iii) Take responsibility for communicating with stakeholders;
- iv) Use open channels of two-way communications to keep line managers, colleagues and stakeholders informed;
- v) Consider the need to communicate and ensure this happens in all work undertaken;
- vi) Take responsibility for communicating to the Principal's Office about activity, news, successes;
- vii) Continually measure and evaluate communication to review the success and achievement of the key messages and aims and objectives; and

Page 8

viii) Act as ambassadors of the University.

3.8 **Responsibilities of Students**

The University considers its students as partners. A sound basis for this partnership is effective communication; in this instance, that means a shared responsibility in establishing and maintaining effective dialogue and information exchange. Students shall:

- Participate actively in their learning engaging comprehensively with all the University's key channels of communication;
- ii) Communicate using their own words or by referencing the work of others;
- iii) Be aware of and actively use communication tools and processes that are designed to enhance and support the student experience;
- iv) Respond to communications from the University or from representatives of the University in a timely manner;
- v) Act responsibly in the use of internal and external communications as ambassadors of TUM;
- vi) Actively engage with formal and informal feedback processes that provide the University with an insight into how it might improve its service and infrastructure for students;
- vii) Take an active role in opportunities provided for student representation; and
- viii) Inform the University at the earliest opportunity of concerns or issues that are affecting your ability to study.

3.9 **Responsibilities of Managers**

Managers, refer to those who manage people and/or processes across the University. TUM managers shall:

- Manage and implement Strategic Communication through an identified Staff
 Communication Framework and a team of communications advocates;
- ii) Communicate the Annual Strategic Plan to stakeholders;
- iii) Communicate regularly with their teams, ideally face-face, to ensure relevant information is available, communicated and understood;

- iv) Support and encourage teams to communicate about projects, news, updates, expertise;
- v) Help to ensure all colleagues maintain good communication practice in accordance with this policy;
- vi) Maintain two-way channels of communication to ensure feedback is obtained and to keep the University's senior team informed; and
- vii) Consider the needs of all stakeholders to enable effective communication to take place in all pieces of work undertaken.

4.0 COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

4.1 General Communication Channels

In its commitment to take forward its desire to pursue knowledge, excellence and loyalty to itself as a community of learning, the University shall:

- Have a clear and well-articulated Vision and Mission that enables all to understand and engage with the strategic direction and the aims and priorities of the University;
- Provide, and be provided with, the appropriate information to enable us to deliver against roles and the agreed strategic direction of the University;
- iii) Ensure a robust corporate strategy for staff communications; and
- iv) Be involved in the creation of an action plan, its implementation and review.

4.2 Internal Communication

The University aims to enable effective internal communication by providing a range of channels and engagement opportunities. These allow the University community to disseminate and discuss important information and topics of interest. Communications provide strategic communications advice to support Universitywide initiatives and manage operational communications on behalf of the University, its senior management and the University Council. Staff should approach Communications for advice on the best communications approach to meet specific needs.

The University shall ensure that its goals and policies are clearly communicated by:

- Providing staff with the information in order to build commitment and support for the University's strategies;
- Disseminating and sharing good news stories throughout the institution to encourage staff and promote pride in the University's achievements;

- iii) Raising concerns and issues with staff in order to promote the University's strategic goals; and
- iv) Promoting the sharing of information to improve/inform decision making.

4.2.1 Internal Communication Roles and Responsibilities

- The Secretary to the University Council shall communicate the official decisions of Council;
- The Chairperson of the University Senate or the Secretary to the Senate shall communicate the official decisions of the Senate;
- iii) The chairperson of the University Management Board or the Secretary to the University Management Board shall communicate the official decisions of the University Management Board;
- iv) Members of the university management shall be responsible for communicating issues within their jurisdiction;
- v) The Dean of Students shall be responsible for communicating all information, decisions and policies concerning students' welfare.
- vi) The Dean of students will in conjunction with student leaders set up communication mechanisms for regular dialogue between the students and the University Management Board.
- vii) The Registrar (AA) shall be responsible for coordinating; and or communication on academic matters. The Registrar (AP) shall be responsible for coordinating or communication on administrative matters.
- viii) The Head of Corporate Communications shall in consultation with the members of the university management be responsible for coordinating the communication function at the University.

4.3 External Communication

The external audiences of the university include; the Government of Kenya, the Commission for University Education, the Ministry in charge of University Education, collaborating institutions, suppliers, industry, donors, development partners, parents

or guardians, alumni, media and the general public. The University shall ensure that its goals and policies are clearly communicated by:

- Supporting the priorities and strategies outlined in the University Corporate Plan;
- ii) Sharing information with key stakeholders; and
- iii) Managing the University's Public Relations and public profile.

4.3.1 External Communication Roles and Responsibilities

- i) Government agencies, suppliers, donors, development partners; The Vice-Chancellor is the spokesperson.
- Media; The Vice-Chancellor and the Head of Corporate Communications will spearhead communications.
- iii) Parents and Guardians; The Dean of students shall coordinate all communications.
- iv) Visitors and external Guest Speakers; The Vice-Chancellor and the Head of Corporate Communications and Heads of concerned departments will spearhead communications.
- v) Industry; The Vice-Chancellor and the Head of Corporate Communications and the liaison office will spearhead communications.

4.4 Photography and Filming

The University shall have a designated Photographer under Corporate Communications Office who shall be responsible for maintaining an archive of University photos for use in publications and on websites. Use of TUM's name, other trademarks and emblems, or images in connection with any photograph or film without the written authorization by the University.

- Indoor shooting is inherently disruptive of the functions of the University and shall be prohibited unless with permission of the University and by a faculty member charged with the responsibility for the space;
- ii) Filming in the residence halls, dining halls and classrooms shall be prohibited,
- iii) No filming shall be allowed in classrooms or libraries during the midterm examination, end of semester examinations or any other related times. Filming in the classroom shall not be permitted without written permission of the Corporate Communications Officer;
- Filming or photography on the University lands for academic purposes is limited to only TUM students, staff and others attending programmes offered by the University. The produced films shall not be used for commercial purposes;
- All professional filmmakers and photographers working on the University campus shall be expected to seek permissions and to produce such permissions when required.
- vi) TUM's express permission shall be required for any filming or photography on TUM's property by:
 - a) News professionals;
 - b) Professional or commercial photographers and filmmakers;
 - c) Campus visitors taking pictures or filming for commercial purposes;

Page14

d) Anyone taking a wedding or portrait photography.

5.0 CRISIS COMMUNICATION

5.1 Crisis Communication Principles

In the event of an occurrence which causes a significant disturbance in the university's activities which has the potential of causing long-term reputational damage, crisis communication will be applied in accordance with the following principles:

- Whenever possible, crisis communication shall be undertaken pre-emptively to prevent or minimise a crisis;
- Crisis communication shall be open, accountable and accessible to all audiences, keeping in mind all legal and privacy concerns;
- Speedy, pro-active and regular communication of crisis information shall be maintained as circumstances change;
- iv) Relevant crisis information concerning all affected components of the University shall be made available to all concerned;
- In view of the importance of the media in times of crisis due to their role in informing the general public, effective relationships with media shall be maintained; and
- vi) Taking into account that different media are relevant for different stakeholders, all the different traditional and new media channels must be used to communicate with stakeholders.

5.2 Crisis Response

The University shall continue to proactively prevent events that are likely to lead to loss of stakeholder confidence and to take care of events stemming from rumours, speculation and insider lack of confidence that give the university negative publicity. In these cases, appropriate crisis communication should enable the university to respond rapidly and effectively to potentially negative situations. Given the importance of crisis communication:

- Only the Vice-Chancellor or any authorised person shall give information to the media. When a crisis occurs, the Vice-Chancellor shall call the CCMT and advice on appropriate strategies to deal with the situation and communicate appropriate information to relevant stakeholders.
- ii) The Head of Corporate Communication shall maintain regular contact with stakeholders and give advice where issues or developments appear to cause problems.
- iii) The Corporate Communication Office shall monitor local and international news and events and advise the Vice-Chancellor on issues or events relevant to the university.

5.3 Crisis Communication Management Team

In case of a crisis, the University Management Board and The Corporate Communication Officer shall become the Crisis Communication Management Team (CCMT) and co-opt other members as the situation may demand. The CCMT shall constantly monitor, interpret and manage issues with the potential to escalate into crises and shall gather details about crises and approve strategies for internal and external communication.

5.4 Releasing Information to the Media

The Corporate Communications office shall institute guidelines to continually monitor media coverage and respond accordingly. The Vice-Chancellor shall release relevant, appropriate and verifiable information to the media regarding any crisis.

6.0 MARKETING AND BRANDING

6.1 Marketing

There shall be a Marketing and Community Service Committee which shall be in charge of all marketing matters. The DVC (ARE) shall be the chairperson of this committee. The membership of this committee shall be as per the university statutes. This committee shall come up with a marketing strategy for the university.

6.2 Branding

There shall be a corporate communications committee which shall be in charge of all branding and oversee all corporate communication activities. The DVC (AFP) shall be the chairperson of this committee. To maintain its strong brand, the University will use the correct logo, name and staff uniforms as well as the right fonts and corporate colours at all times to reflect its true identity to all its stakeholders:

- The University shall work towards building a strong brand in order to remain visible and competitive, communicate a consistent message, influence choices of the various stakeholders and build loyalty among students, staff, alumni and other key stakeholders;
- ii) For purposes of this policy, the TUM brand shall encompass more than logos, colours, mascots and taglines. The brand shall be reflected and communicated through the quality and competitiveness of its students, expertise of its staff and the nature of collaborations and strategic partnerships it attracts, quality and consistency in services delivered;
- iii) The Head of Corporate and the University Marketing Committee shall oversee the promotion and compliance with the University brand specifications and guidelines and advise the University administration on breaches and threats to the brand; and
- iv) Members of the University and Alumni shall be encouraged to build the University's positive image and brand awareness in all forms of communication.

Instances of disclosures (or "whistle-blowing") protected by legislation are not subject to this policy.

6.3 Corporate Colours

TUM corporate colours are Black, White, Green and Gold. The font used at TUM is Book Antiqua. Friday is a branding day. All staff shall normally put on a TUM branded shirt or T-shirt. All University presentations should be branded with the University colours and logo.

7.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

7.1 Monitoring and Review

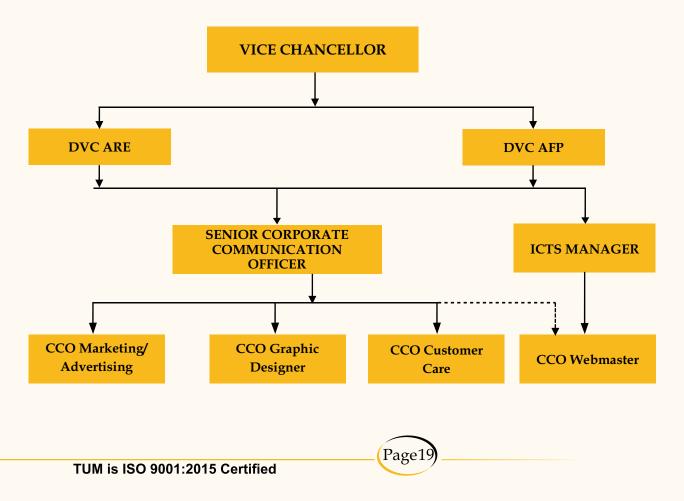
The Corporate Communication Office shall:

- Develop appropriate strategies for monitoring and evaluation of the Communication Policy;
- ii) Carry out an annual evaluation on the implementation of the policy;
- iii) Define the short-term, mid-term and long-term evaluations based on the outcomes of the evaluation reports.

7.2 Review of the Communication Policy

To enhance uniformity with national and international higher education aims, this policy shall be reviewed after every three years in line with emerging global trends in communication.

7.3 Organization Chart for Corporate Communication



THIS COMMUNICATION POLICY IS EFFECTIVE FROM THIS 15TH DAY OF APRIL 2019.

SIGNED **COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON**

Communication Policy

Communication policy

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