



**UGANDA BUSINESS AND TECHNICAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

# COMMUNICATION POLICY

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# THE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY, 2014

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IN EXERCISE of powers conferred upon the Board by Section 26(2) of the BTVET Act, 2008, this policy is made the ..... day of .....2014.

## **1. Citation**

This policy may be cited as the Communications Policy, 2013.

## **2. Interpretation**

In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires-

- (a) "brand" means the Board brand;
- (b) "communication function" means activities that involve the generation and transmission of information;
- (c) "crisis communication" means communication resorted to during a crisis;
- (h) "Board" means Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board;

- (d) "Board facilities" means utilities at the disposal of the Board community;
- (k) "Board management" includes the officers of the Board members and management team
- (l) "Board premises" means infrastructure belonging to the Board;
- (m) "Board staff" mean administrative and support staff; and,
- (n) "Board website" means the intranet, Board web sites

### **3. Preamble**

The last few decades have been characterized by fundamental changes in modern information and communication technologies (ICTs). Triggered by the search for excellence in the conduct of business and governmental affairs, the revolution in modern ICTs has been a mixed blessing. Actors in the public, the private and the not-for-profit sectors that adopt enabling information and communication technologies typically use them to boost their functionality. However, actors that are, institutionally and individually, unwilling to adopt improved ways of doing business are threatened with extinction or irrelevance. It is in light of this realization that this Communications Policy is being developed by the Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board in consultation with the Board members and staff of UBTEB;

CONSCIOUS that, communication plays an essential role in building internal institutional cohesion, advancing organizational goals and promoting core values;

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AWARE that Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board has, since its inception in 2009, never had a formal communication policy;

CONVINCED that the communication function plays a strategically crucial role in the realization of the Board vision, mission and core values;

AWARE that Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board is answerable to a multiplicity of internal stakeholders namely, staff and students; and different external publics, including, but not limited to the government, the tax-payers, the employers of UBTEB graduates, the guardians and development partners;

CONCIOUS of the opportunities associated with modern information and communication technologies, as well as the dangers posed to the image of the Board by misinformation or under-information;

CONVINCED that the constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of thought, conscience and belief, which include academic freedoms in institutions of learning (Article 29(1)(b)) are important in the pursuit of Quality examinations, Integrity, and other aspects of UBTEB's vision, mission, and strategic goals;

DETERMINED to uphold Article 29(1)(b) and Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda; the Access to Information Act (2005); the Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedoms (1990); and other international and regional human rights instruments in a socially-responsible manner;

COGNISANT of the cardinal principles of effective communication, namely, accuracy, timeliness, sensitivity, consistence, clarity and transparency;

CONCERNED about the need for staff and students of UBTEB to contribute to the positive image and brand of the Board;

NOW THEREFORE the Board, in consultation with the Board, and staff has decided to adopt this Communication Policy as a set of guidelines for the processing, storage and dissemination of information within Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board, and between the Board and other (external) stakeholders.

#### **4. Policy Context**

This policy has been developed in the context of the following laws, norms, and human rights instruments:

Article 29(1)(b) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda: This Article provides, inter alia, that every person shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and belief.

Article 41(1) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda: This Article provides for every citizen's "right of access to information in the possession of the State or any organ or agency of the State." This right may be lawfully denied under exceptional and clear circumstances, namely:

- (a) Where the release of the information is likely to prejudice the security or sovereignty of the State; or,
- (b) Where the release of the information may interfere with the right to the privacy of any other person.

The Access to Information Act, 2005: This piece of legislation was made pursuant to Article 41(2) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Its main purpose is:

- (a) To give effect to Article 41(1) on the citizen's right of access to information held by organs of the State, other than exempt records and information;
- (b) To protect persons disclosing evidence of contravention of the law, maladministration or corruption in Government bodies;
- (c) To promote transparency and accountability in all organs of the State by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information; and
- (d) To empower the public to effectively scrutinise and participate in Government decisions that affect them.

It is in the light of the above laws, norms, practices, and related international and regional human rights instruments that this policy has been developed.

## **5. Purpose of the Policy**

This policy seeks to provide guidelines for the timely, effective and appropriate flow of information within Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board, and between the Board and other (external) stakeholders. The aim is to assist staff in fulfilling the goals of the Board.

## **6. Policy Objectives**

The objectives of the policy are;

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

## **7. Vision of Communication**

To provide a pro-active approach to information management and dissemination, strengthen the Board's image and build good will among the stakeholders.

## **8. Principles of Communication pertaining to this Policy**

- (1) All communication shall be delivered in a regular and timely manner and internal communication shall precede the external communication.
- (2) Staff of the Board who wish to issue out information are encouraged to cross check the accuracy of the information before communicating within and outside the Board.
- (3) Information from the Board should be simple and clear without any ambiguities that could lead to misinterpretation.
- (4) The policy shall seek to meet the information needs of the diverse stakeholders and aspirations of staff and students.
- (5) The Board shall, subject to the principles of privacy, confidentiality and intellectual property rights conduct its activities in an open and socially accountable manner.

## **9. Internal communication roles and responsibilities**

- (1) The Executive Secretary shall communicate the official decisions of the Board.

(2) Members of the Board Management shall be responsible for communicating issues within their jurisdiction.

(3) The Executive Secretary and Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for communicating all information, decisions and policies concerning examinations related activities .

(4) The Principal Administrative Officer in conjunction with the Executive Secretary shall be responsible for setting up communication mechanisms for regular meetings between staff and management.

(5) Members of staff are free to communicate on matters within their area of expertise and are encouraged to cross check the accuracy of the information before communicating it within and outside the Board.

(6) The Public Relations Officer shall in consultation with the relevant members of the Board's staff be responsible for coordinating the communication function at the Board.

(12) Departments shall be responsible for developing specific internal communication guidelines in conformity with this policy.

## **10. Internal communication channels**

( a ) (1) Members of the Board may where appropriate use the following channels to communicate with the internal publics:

(a) Face to face communication;

(b) Formal letters;

(c) Emails;

(d) Board's website and Intranet;

(e) Minutes of Meetings;

(t) Circulars and Memos;

(g) Notice s;

(h) Mailing lists;

(i) Newsletters;

(j) Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Skype among others);

(k) Flyers, Posters, Events, Exhibitions and Presentations;

(l) Open-days; and,

(n) Any other channel that may be identified by the respective department in conformity with this policy.

(2) All members of the Board, committees and management are individually responsible for proper handling of information that comes to them in the course of discharging official duties.

## **11. Media Relations**

(1) Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board shall work towards building and maintaining positive relations with the media.

(2) The Executive Secretary shall communicate information arising from the Board to the news media.

(3) The Executive Secretary shall be the Chief Public Relations Officer of the Board.

(4) The staff and members of the Board are encouraged to check the accuracy of the information before communicating to the media.

(6) Members of staff are urged to project a positive image of the Board in communicating to the media.

## **12 Branding and Marketing**

(1) Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board 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, training institutions and other key stakeholders.

(2) For purposes of this policy, the Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board brand shall encompass more than logos, colours, mascots and taglines. The brand shall be reflected and communicated through the quality and competitiveness of its examinations, expertise of its staff and the nature of collaborations and strategic partnerships it attracts, quality and consistency in services delivered.

(3) The Public Relations officer shall oversee the promotion and compliance with the Board brand specifications and guidelines and advise the Board administration on breaches and threats to the brand.

(4) Members of the Board and accredited training institutions are encouraged to build the Board's positive image and brand awareness in all forms of communication.

## **13. Advertising**

(1) All Departments advertising Board's products or services are urged to ensure that the information contained therein is accurate and up to date.

(2) Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board shall refrain from accepting adverts that may be harmful to the positive image and brand of the Board.

(3) The Board's logo shall be included in all official communication regarding Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board news or events and presentations

#### **14. Photography and filming**

(1) The Public Relations Officer is free to identify professionals to take photographs and/or to film events/occasions.

(2) All photography and filming shall be in accordance with procedures and guidelines as may be set out by the Board.

#### **15. Crisis Communication**

(1) Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board is committed to taking a pre-emptive approach to public relations crises, using disclosure communication and engagement whenever possible as the preferred strategies for preventing or mitigating the crises.

(2) The relevant Board staff in conjunction with the Public Relations Officers shall provide information to the media in a timely and transparent manner.

#### **16. Electronic Communication**

(1) Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board recognizes Electronic Communication (email and web sites ) as an official mode of communication and information sharing.

(2) For purposes of facilitating effective official communication, all staff and Board members shall be assigned a Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board's Email address by the ICT Unit for purposes of promoting communication and information sharing.

(3) All staff and training institutions are encouraged to regularly check the Board's websites and their email addresses to receive official communication from the Board.

(4) All staff responses to electronic communication shall be made using the official Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board's email addresses.

(5) All staff shall not disguise their identity, user name and origin of email

whenever they use the Board email system.

(6) Staff shall refrain from using insulting language in the email subject or accompanying text.

(7) The Public Relations Officer in liaison with ICT Unit shall regularly update mailing lists for ease of disseminating information to all staff and training institutions.

## **17. Communication Pertaining to Research**

The Office of the Executive Secretary shall in consultation with the Senior Research and Policy Development Officer and other relevant Units be responsible for the development of institutional mechanisms to disseminate research and innovations, communicating the research agenda and research policy framework to internal and external stakeholders.

## **18. Visitor and Guest Relations**

All staff of the Board are encouraged at all times to be courteous to visitors and guests of the Board.

## **19. Implementation of the Policy**

The Executive Secretary shall in consultation with the Departments develop implementation strategies to give effect to this Policy.

## **20. Compliance with the policy**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action under the Human Resources Manual.

## **21. Review**

The Board shall, in consultation with the Departments and relevant units of Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board, review this policy every after 4 years of implementation, and forward the outcome of the review process to the Board for approval.

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**Board Chairperson**

**2014**