

# UNIVERSITY OF VENDA



## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

VERSION NUMBER	DATE (dd.mm.yyyy)	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION	Reviewed and Approved By	Approval Date
PR 1.01	25.11.2008	Takalani Dzaga	Original Draft	Senior Management Committee	10.12.2008
PR 1.02			1 <sup>st</sup> Revision 1	Institutional Forum	30.07.2009
PR 1.03			2 <sup>nd</sup> Revision 2	Council	27.11.2009

**Signature:**

**University Registrar (Secretary to Council)**

**Date. 21/ 01/ 2010**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	PAGE
1. POLICY STATEMENT	3
2. PURPOSE	6
3. OBJECTIVES	6
4. SCOPE	7
5. DEFINITIONS	7
6. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK	7
7. POLICY CHANGES	7
8. IMPLEMENTATION	8
8.1 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	9
8.2 COMMUNICATION	9
8.3 SIGN OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OWNERSHIP	9
9. POLICY REVIEW	9
10. LINK TO OTHER POLICIES	9
11. APPROVAL	9
12. REFERENCES	9

## **1. Policy Statement**

### **1.1.1 General Policy statements**

The Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement;

- 1.1.1 Is responsible for giving direction, guidance and advice within the University regarding the formulation and implementation of internal communication plans and programmes;
- 1.1.2 It is responsible for evaluating and monitoring the implementation of internal communication plans and programmes within the University;
- 1.1.3 It gives direction, guidance and advice regarding the usage of communication tools and channels. In addition, the department evaluates and monitors the usage of these communication tools and channels in order to avoid information overload and unnecessary duplication of information, and
- 1.1.4 Ensures that each department discusses its projects and objectives for each financial year with it and gives advice on how internal communications should be implemented.

### **1.2 Internal Communication mass mails**

- 1.2.1 Mass mail provides a facility to convey timely information and daily updates to stakeholders. Internal communication audiences are segmented into the following categories: University of Venda All, Executive /Senior Management, Student Representative Assembly, Union/s etc.

### **1.3 Internal Communication e-mail policy statements**

- 1.3.1 To ensure control over the use and what gets communicated to various internal stakeholders, the dissemination of mass e-mail is centralised and this has to be done through the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement.
- 1.3.2 Employees who wish to send out a communiqué/announcement have to prepare and check the content themselves, and thereafter forward it to the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement for distribution. The Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is not

responsible for the content sent out, therefore individuals within different schools/departments must obtain clearance of the content from their managers/supervisors before giving it over to the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement.

- 1.3.3 Information to be communicated through this channel includes announcements on the following: Staff issues, professional awards and accomplishments, facility problems, promotions, acting authority, deaths etc. Policy and policy change issues will be handled by the Department of Human Resources. NB. ***Only business related announcements are allowed on the internal communication mass e-mails.*** In the case of deaths, only the deaths of University employees will be announced by the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement. Those of their spouses, parents, and children will be announced by the relevant department or school. Those of other relatives are excluded.
- 1.3.4 No emails and communiqués would be sent out with colourful fonts or massive attachments as these adversely affect the bandwidth. The originators of messages must therefore ensure their communiqués are as plain and straightforward as possible.
- 1.3.5 Every effort is made to ensure, whenever reasonably possible, that stakeholders are informed in advance of any potential coverage of the University in the media as opposed to hearing about this from the media.

#### **1.4 Internal publications**

- 1.4.1 The Media and Publications Officer determines the timeframes for the internal newsletter, ensures that it captures relevant business issues, and that the newsletter is disseminated timeously whilst the content is still up to date.
- 1.4.2 The design and layout of all publications must be in line with the Corporate Identity policy.
- 1.4.3 The final versions of all internal publications e.g. newsletters and brochures, must be approved by the Director: Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement as the ultimate person in charge and is accountable to executive management, before it can be sent for printing.

#### **1.5 Employee briefings and staff presentations**

- 1.5.1 The most important of all the presentations to various internal stakeholders should be a quarterly Vice-Chancellor & Principal's road show or Open Forum

Session which is aimed at sharing important business developments, strategic plans and directions with all the stakeholders.

- 1.5.2 The Vice-Chancellor & Principal's road shows or open forum sessions are arranged and facilitated by the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement and they allow the Vice-Chancellor & Principal and his Senior Management team to interact and directly engage stakeholders about important business developments and strategic issues.
- 1.5.3 It is essential that the Vice-Chancellor & Principal commits to and ensures that he/she personally attends and addresses stakeholders at regular intervals through relevant road shows.
- 1.5.4 Other presentations to stakeholders by members of senior management or any other employee must also be arranged by the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement on an ad hoc basis.

## **1.6 Website/Intranet**

- 1.6.1 The Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is responsible for the branding aspects and content of the website whilst the Department of Information Technology Services is responsible for the technological aspects. There needs to be a collaborative effort by both parties to ensure a quality and professional website.
- 1.6.2 The Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is responsible for the content and design of the website and must work together with representatives of other departments to ensure accuracy and timelines of the content of the intranet.
- 1.6.3 The Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is responsible for the branding aspects and content of the website whilst the Department of Information Technology Services is responsible for the technological aspects. There needs to be a collaborative effort by both parties to ensure a quality and professional website.
- 1.6.4 The Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is responsible for the content and design of the website and must work together with representatives of other departments to ensure accuracy and timelines of the content of the intranet.
- 1.6.5 Although the representatives of the schools/departments are allowed to work on the content of their respective schools/departments, they need to do so in

consultation with the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement to ensure consistency of brand applications.

- 1.6.6 The Director: Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement must ensure that the website reflects the needs of relevant stakeholders, and should therefore work with the website specialists to achieve this.

## **1.7 Audio Visual material**

- 1.7.1 All the corporate Audio-Visual materials should be produced and procured through the Media and Publications Section of the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement. The audio-visual must be aligned with the Corporate Identity and brand requirements.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that gives clarity regarding the roles and interaction between the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement and other schools, departments /divisions within the University.

## **3. Objectives**

The objectives of this Policy are:

- 3.1 To facilitate an open and two-way communication system between management and employees/students as well as external stakeholders.
- 3.2 To outline the conditions, roles and responsibilities conducive for effective communication within the University.

#### **4. Scope (Who will use it)**

4.1 The policy is applicable to all members of staff and students of the University of Venda.

#### **5. Definitions**

##### **5.1 Group emails/ mailing lists.**

The internal communication group email facility allows for communiqués/announcements to be sent to pre-defined lists of recipients. This includes mailing lists for executive/senior management, heads of departments, deans of schools, all employees, all students with legitimate access to the university e-mail system, union/s and/or their representatives, the Student Representative Assembly and other stakeholders deemed necessary.

##### **5.2 Employee and/or union/student/SRA/stakeholder briefings:**

Employee and/or union briefings is an interactive session between management and employees (also amongst employees themselves) to share information about important developments, strategic plans and direction.

#### **6. Regulatory Framework**

6.1 Higher Education Act, 1997

6.2.1 Government Communication Strategy etc.

#### **7. Policy Changes**

The following stakeholders must be consulted in respect to policy changes:

7.1 Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement Department

7.2 Senior Management Committee

7.3 Senate/Institutional Forum

7.4 Council

## **8. Implementation**

### **8.1 The Director: Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is responsible for:**

- 8.1.1 Monitoring that relevant officers convene meetings with representatives of all schools and departments to facilitate planning, discussion, measurement and management of all internal communications campaigns, programmes and needs;
- 8.1.2 Monitoring that officers integrate and co-ordinate all internal communication initiatives within the departments and schools; and.
- 8.1.3 Ensuring that the media and publications officer develops internal communications objectives, policies, standards and controls.
- 8.1.4 Media and Publications Officer is responsible for:
  - 8.1.4.1 Advising schools and departments on Internal Communication strategy/issues;
  - 8.1.4.2 Developing internal communication strategy and ensuring proper execution of plans.
  - 8.1.4.3 Overseeing the implementation of effective Marketing (Accurate & consistent Corporate Identity at all times, ensuring strong University of Venda Branding, Corporate Advertising & intranet);
  - 8.1.4.4 Managing the production of all internal publications;
  - 8.1.4.5 Monitoring the procurement and appointment of suppliers that specialise in internal communication throughout the University;
  - 8.1.4.6 Assisting in writing and preparing internal documents, speeches, presentations and articles for newsletters;
  - 8.1.4.7 Producing and co-ordinating the production of all corporate audio-visual materials;
  - 8.1.4.8 Disseminating internal messages via mail lists to internal stakeholders, and
  - 8.1.4.9 Acting as internal custodian of the University's brand and corporate identity.

### **8.2 Communication**

- 8.2.1 Policy roll-out
- 8.2.2 Intranet/Quality Management Systems (QMS)
- 8.2.3 Nendila
- 8.2.4 Policy File



### **8.3 Sign of acknowledgement of ownership**

## **9. Policy Review**

The policy will be reviewed whenever necessary, after approval by relevant authorities.

## **10. Links to other Policies**

10.1 Internet Policy

10.2 Media Relations Policy

10.3 Corporate Identity Policy

## **11. Approval**

This policy must be approved by:

11.1 Senior Management Committee

11.2 Senate/Institutional Forum

11.3 Council

## **12. References**

## **COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL**

The following is a Communication Protocol relating to the University of Venda's different stakeholders:

### **C.1. INTERACTION WITH THE MEDIA**

The Director of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is the spokesperson of the University. As such, he/she has direct interaction with the media and may be quoted. Technical aspects on news items may be handled by individual staff members via the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement. Where a specific member of staff must comment or give information on some specialised or technical area where such member is an expert, such member shall do so with the knowledge and concurrence of the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement. In such an instance, such members may only confine their dialogue with the media or stakeholder(s) only to their area of expertise and within the parameters agreed on, and to, with the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement.

The Director is also responsible for responding to media queries. All media releases will be handled by the Director Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement. The Director Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement will organize and coordinate meetings between media representatives and the University Management.

### **C.2. INTERACTION WITH THE SPONSORS**

For the purpose of effective coordination, Staff members are encouraged to inform and register their intention to approach any donor with the University of Venda Foundation.

### **C.3. INTERACTION WITH EMPLOYEES**

The Director, Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement is responsible for communicating with employees on all matters pertaining to the

corporate image of the Institution and related matters. Policy matters will be communicated to the employees by the Department of Human Resources.

Communication with employees may take place through meetings, memoranda, e-mail, newsletter as well as organised information sharing sessions.

Employees should communicate with senior level office through the head of Department. This implies that under no circumstances should an employee refer any matter to a higher office without necessarily communicating with the Head of Department.

#### **C.4. INTERACTION WITH GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS**

Communication with the Ministry of Education shall be limited to the Offices of the Vice- Chancellor and Principal and the University Registrar. Schools and Departments may interact specifically with Government Departments for matters that directly affect their respective fields of specialisation. However, the Department of Communications, Marketing and Institutional Advancement should be informed of such correspondence.

#### **C.5. INTERACTION WITH THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL**

Communication with the University Council should be channelled through the Office of the University Registrar who is the Secretary to Council.

#### **C.6. ELECTRONIC MAIL/INTRANET**

- The University e-mail provides the corporate means for rapid dissemination of official information to academic and administrative staff, and students. The University e-mail policy prohibits any type of mass-mail and the distribution of chain letters. Distribution lists and mass mailing may only be used for the distribution of official notices, policies, decisions of Executive Management, Senior Management, Senate as well as Council and any other official documents.

- The e-mail service is provided for communication relating to official matters.
- Upon receiving personal e-mail, users should read and delete same. Personal e-mail may not be forwarded to a mailing list.
- According to the e-mail Access and Message Retention Policy, the University-wide staff and student distribution lists are intended only for communication connected to the business of the University. They are not to be used under any circumstances for communication of a personal nature, for non-University business, chain letters and other “junk mail” or for any form of advertising.