

Communication Policy

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Executive Summary

Communication is the process through which an organization shares information, knowledge and plans to both its internal and external stakeholders.

It is the lifeline through which an organization perpetuates its existence and value proposition.

Communication at RU should be a two way process aimed at facilitating efficient and timely passage of relevant messages.

All University students, staff and faculty have a right to express their opinion on any issue or situation that affects or concerns their area of responsibility and overall working and studying environment without fear of retribution. Open, honest and respectful communication is the expected norm and therefore anonymous communication will not be considered.

The office of the VC /DVC/Deans will operate an open-door policy. This is an invitation for staff to come in and talk about any problem or challenges they may have.

Members of the University community as good 'custodians' should report any perceived misuse of the University's communication facilities to the relevant authorities. These include social media outlets.

1. Policy Objective

The main purpose of the RU communication policy is to streamline the communication process by providing guidelines to be followed with regard to the formal communication geared towards enhancement of effective communication on all issues pertaining to the University's affairs.

2. Policy Statement

For the purposes of this policy, formal communication is defined as the exchange of messages regarding the official work and well-being of Riara University as outlined in this policy document.

All forms of formal communication within the University will be in line with the stated values of excellence and teamwork geared towards the development of an innovative academic environment.

3. Communication Channels

The various channels of communication available for use within the University include: email, notice boards, intranet, paper, memos, letters, circulars, website, open boxes, and face to face.

3.1. Internal Communications

Internal communication within Riara University will follow the formally prescribed pattern of relationships existing between various Schools, units and departments. These have been described in the RU organization structure which serves as the graphic representation of the formal patterns of communication. It defines the RU formal and planned connections between individuals in various departments or units. The chart also indicates what different persons are responsible for and with whom they will communicate to thus ensuring that the institution operates effectively and efficiently.

3.2. External Communications

External communications will be from the VC's office or from designated officers such as DVCs, Deans, or other heads of departments for and on behalf of the VC's office.

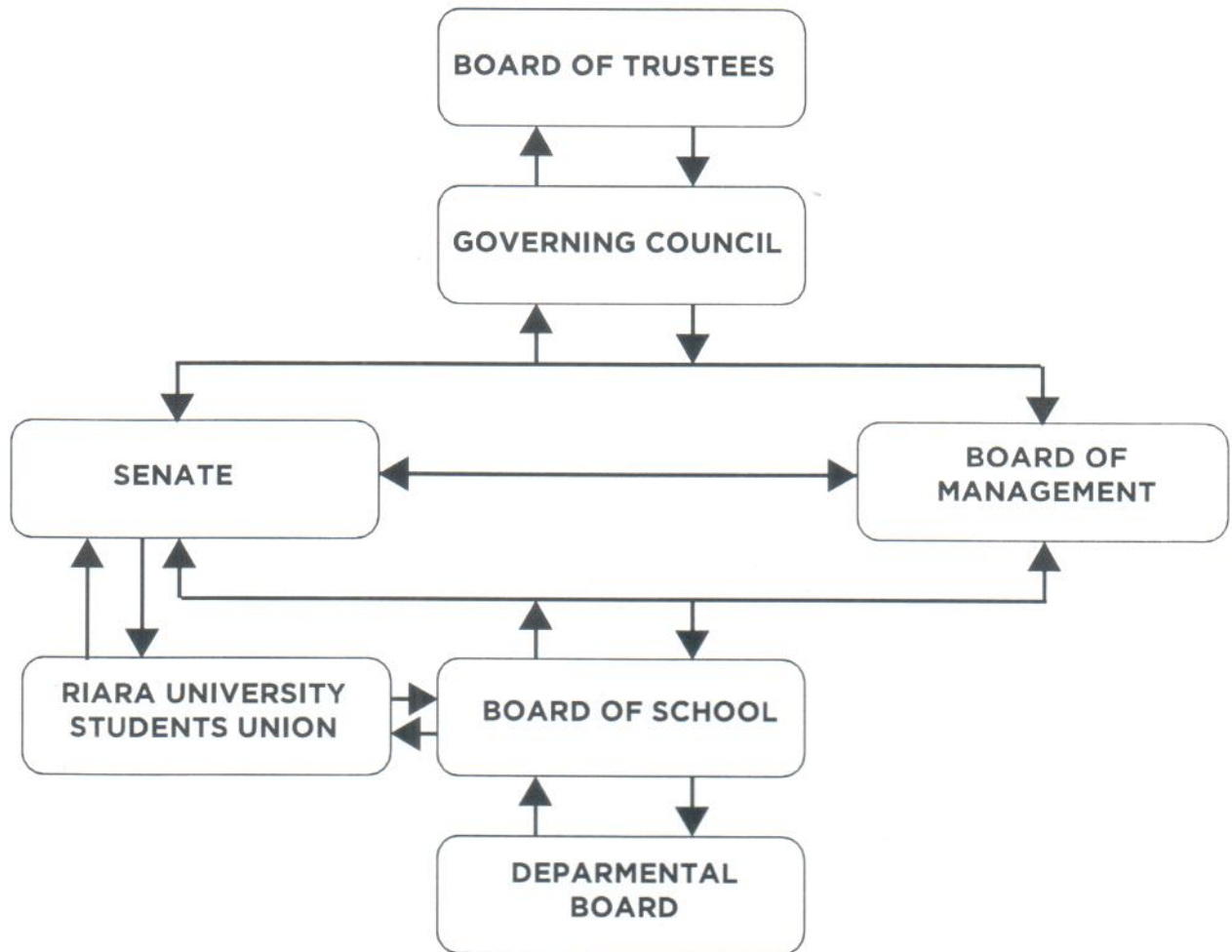
4. Directions of Communication

The RU will have three distinct directions of communications namely; downward, upward and horizontal communications.

4.1. Downward Communication

This refers to information flow from higher to lower levels. i.e Chancellor to VC, to DVCs to Deans, to course administrators and lecturers. This will take the form of speeches, messages in School journals, policy manuals, strategic plans, and procedure handbooks. The diagram below shows the University's hierarchical structure:

Riara University Governance and Communication Structure



Downward communication therefore provides directives or instructions. Below are categories of information to be passed in this manner.

4.2. Vision, mission, goals, strategies and objectives

Information in this category is given purposely to provide the big picture and hence direction that RU has taken with regard to its vision, mission and broad objectives to the lower levels. This Information will come from Chair of Board of Trustees, Chair/deputy chair of the Governing Council, VC, DVC.

4.3. Task instructions

This information will provide directives on how to do a specific task and how the job relates to other activities of the RU organization. This will enable RU management to coordinate individual and departmental objectives with RU -wide goals.

It is critical that this information is provided to avoid the individual staff members from guessing with regards to the big picture.

4.4. Procedures and Practices.

This type of information will define the RU Organization's policies, rules, regulations, benefits, and structural arrangements in order to get some degree of uniformity in organization practices. At RU this information will be transmitted to staff members through board and organization-wide policy manuals, handbooks, and the day-to-day operations of the various sections.

4.5. Performance Feedback

Information on this category includes departmental progress reports, individual performance appraisals, and other means used to tell departments or individuals how well they are doing with respect to performance standards and goals.

5. Upward Communication

This form of communication provides feedback to ensure that the downward communication has been clearly understood and will include the following:

- 1.1 Communication with regards to problems and exceptions aimed at making the management aware of serious problems and exceptions to routine performance.** This will assist in setting up mechanisms for resolving the difficulties.
- 1.2 Suggestions for improvement.** These messages are ideas for improving task-related procedures to increase the quality or efficiency of organization members.
- 1.3 Performance reports.** These messages include periodic reports that inform the leader how individual organization members and departments are performing.
- 1.4 Grievances and disputes.** These messages will be staff complaints and conflicts directed to RU hierarchy for a hearing and possible resolution.
- 1.5 Financial and accounting information.** These messages pertain to costs, accounts receivable, outstanding student debtors, Enrollment reports, and other matters of interest to the Senate, management board and central administration.

6. Horizontal Communication

In this case information is basically for coordination — to tie together activities within or across departments or within divisions in the RU-wide organizational system. Horizontal communication, enable units to work with other units without having to follow rigidly up and down channels. At RU horizontal communications will take form of task forces, committees, and liaison personnel. These include:

- 6.1 Intradepartmental regular planning and problem solving sessions.
- 6.2 Interdepartmental coordination for the accomplishment of joint projects or tasks in a School or division in the RU-wide organizational system.
- 6.3 Staff advice to line departments normally communicated as information from specialists in academic areas, finance, or computer services.

Care should be exercised to ensure that the message is not distorted as it passes from one level to next hence instructions should be clearly written.

7. Socialization

Information in this category will be geared toward establishing cultural values and also to motivate staff members to adopt the institution's mission and cultural values. This can be through invitations to participate in special events and ceremonies.

8. Policy Implementation Guidelines

- 1.1** Email is the preferred primary mode of communication and should thus be used for all official communication and in accordance. Emails should not be used to settle scores or air grievances. All grievances should be dealt with as stipulated in the Human Resources policy.
- 1.2** Heads of departments will be responsible for ensuring that information flows to all members of their respective departments accordingly through regular meetings
- 1.3** Electronic and paper communication must be supplemented with face-to-face communication where necessary.
- 1.4** All internal communication should clearly identify the author of the message.
- 1.5** Decisions made at the Management Board or the University Senate or their committees should be communicated promptly to the relevant University community members by the secretaries of these boards.
- 1.6** Student and staff forums with the University leadership bodies should be held on a regular basis. A report on recommendations and agreements made during such forums should be made available to all University community members promptly.
- 1.7** All information communicated must be done so truthfully with correct and factual information that has been collected.
- 1.8** It is the responsibility of every member of the University community to ensure that they check information regularly on the various communication platforms viz. intranet portal, email, etc

9. Communication Procedures

The implementation of this policy will require the participation of the relevant personnel as stipulated below:

9.1. Official University Announcements

These will include, and not limited to Information on public holidays, Human Resources issues e.g. medical covers, salaries, administrative issues – security, transport, amenities etc.

Dissemination Process

- Get approval from head of division
- Prepare communication for the signature of the division head where necessary
- Distribution of the communication to staff and students through official channels.

9.2. Policy Issues

These will include but not be limited to the introduction of new policies, amendments to current policies, revision of fees.

Dissemination Process

- Discuss the development of or proposed changes to the policy with the assigned committee
- Get approval from the various University organs
- Distribution of the communication to staff and students
- Circulation to the University community through the relevant channels.

9.3. Academic Issues

These may include and not limited to changes in the timetable, exam notices and updates, registration announcements, graduation announcements.

Dissemination Process

- Discuss the development of or proposed changes to the policy with the assigned committee
- Get approval from the various University organs
- Distribution of the communication to staff and students
- Circulation to the University community through the relevant channels.

9.4. General University News

This will include notifications and invitations to university events, births, bereavements, promotions, and resignations.

Dissemination Process

- Get approval from head of department
- Prepare communication for the approval of the department head where necessary
- Distribution of the communication to the University community

10. Communication with External public

All communication with the external publics should adhere to the guidelines provided in this policy and should be clear, effective and should be conducted in a professional manner.

10.1. Communication with the media, University Council, and Dignitaries

All communication with those named above media should be channeled through the VC's office.

10.2. Communication with Other General Publics.

All such communication should be approved and signed by relevant University personnel.

11. Communication with Students

- 1.1 Face to face contact will remain the primary method of establishing a relationship of communication with RU students a means of enabling a two-way exchange of information. All communication with students should be clear, courteous, accurate, appropriate and timely.
- 1.2 Email: Formal and official email communication with students and staff should be done through the University accounts. Care should be taken to copy mail to the relevant individuals only.
- 1.3 Notice boards: All communication on the notice boards should follow the administration's policy on use of notice boards.
- 1.4 Phone calls- Should be used to communicate urgent messages or to clarify written messages.
- 1.5 SMS messages: This should only be used when necessary and can be used to communicate policy decisions.

N.B: Orientation information package given to new students should cover the use of email and other sources of communication as well as information on the media of communication that the University uses to communicate to the students.

12. Communication Frequency

- 12.1 Information should be communicated in a timely manner. In cases where the information is time sensitive, this should then be communicated immediately. In cases where the information is sensitive and will affect the staff or students, a special message should be prepared and sent via email and hard copies circulated to all offices and put up on the notice boards.
- 12.2 During issue management or a crisis, a Management or Senate meeting can be called where heads of departments are advised of the issue or event-taking place. If necessary, the department heads will then be expected to call a special meeting with the members of their respective departments, to notify and or brief them of the unfolding events. This will help alleviate the spread of incorrect information through informal channels (grapevine).

Before a story is made public through the media, the University will first inform members of the University community. However, where time is of essence, the information will be sent out to both the media and the University community at the same time. This will include Notification and invitation to university events, Births, Bereavements, Promotions.

13. Malicious Communication

The University will not tolerate any communication (however conveyed) that is intended to cause damage to the institution, disrupt the cohesion of the University, undermine the proper functioning of the University, dilute the core values of the University or to cause harm or damage to individuals within the University community. Any member of the University found guilty of originating, disseminating and propagating such communication (however conveyed) will be liable to disciplinary action.

Anonymous communication will not be taken as official communication.

14. Crisis Communication

Quick and appropriate management of information and communication and effective media handling during a crisis could earn company praise and create a world of opportunities for the organization. The crisis communication policy should be part of a broader crisis communications plan and crisis management plan.

14.1. Crisis Communication Guidelines:

- Staff, faculty and students should be the first to be informed of the unfolding crisis. At the same time, concern should be shown for those affected by the crisis.
- A spokesperson should be designated to communicate to the media and off campus publics. No one else will be authorized to speak to the media during a crisis unless they have been cleared by the chair of the crisis management team.
- Messages sent out should be clear and accurate. There should be no speculation.
- Actions taken to resolve the crisis and prevent future problems should be communicated to all University publics.

Adherence to the Communication Policy

All members of Riara University community must adhere to the guidelines laid down in this policy, failure to which will be Considered a breach of the University's code of conduct.

Policy Review

It is recommended that this communication policy be reviewed or revised at least once every 2 years.



RU CONSULTANCY POLICY

Definition and Scope of RU Consultancy

Consultancy

Consultancy: The provision of expert advice and work using the intellectual prowess of the University which consists of skills and knowledge and facilities. While it may involve a degree of analysis, measurement or testing it is crucially dependent on a high degree of intellectual input from Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Such work is usually paid for at a market rate, and may deliver stronger Intellectual Property (IP) rights to the business client than would apply in a collaborative research relationship.

There are various ways in which consultancy can be done at RU

1. Training/short courses-It involves training of courses which run for a shorter time compared to an academic semester. This courses are offered at various departments of RU.

In this courses we consider Payment to internal faculty, non-university trainers And Adjunct faculty. The rates will be paid as follows.

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2. Conference and workshop hosting-No active participation by RU trainers. This means a member of staff can facilitate a group to hold an event at RU premises. The staff can be give a percentage ofout of the profit generated,
3. Full time staff-Teaching extra classes as adjuncts.
4. inventions and innovations emanating from research

Purpose

- (i) Generate extra income for the University;
- (ii) Facilitate the University to have a database of its consultancies that will aid its ranking;

- (iii) Create a market niche for the University by advertising and bidding for consultancies within its realm;
- (iv) Create an attractive brand for the University;
- (v) Provide academic staff with extra index of assessment towards promotion;
- (vi) Create an avenue for our academic staff to utilize their knowledge and skills towards Kenya's and the region's economic development.

Role of schools and academic departments

The various schools, and departments of the University shall

- Facilitate the documentation of both the expertise resident in their departments and to delineate the types of consultancies they can be involved in. An instrument to help capture this vital information will be provided by the RU University Consultancy Services Unit/Committee (RUCSU). RUCSU shall maintain and update the human expertise data base as well as technical capacity, facilities and expertise.

Be required to start Consultancy Committees to promote and manage the provision of consultancies from the school or department.

Scope of University Consultancy work.

- The University will seek to undertake consultancy primarily where it has sufficient physical and staff capacity.
- The University shall consider and is open to form consortiums with other Universities and other Research Institutions to bid for jobs where joined expertise is necessary.
- It is hereby noted staff do undertake consultancies which are not sourced by the University and hence not done under the auspices of the University. For such consultancies the concerned staff must ensure the University is fully indemnified against any claims or risks.

Who can participate in RU University consultancies?

- i. All University staff who are employed under fulltime, contract or part-time basis
- ii. Any staff engaged through consortium with other institutions. Such staff shall subscribe fully to the policy framework of the university.

Intellectual Property and Benefits Sharing

- a) All inventions and innovations emanating from research must be reported to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) through the Deans of Schools.
- b) The Committee of Research and Development shall assist in the process of patenting provided that it was involved in the possibility of patentable object/innovation
- c) RU shall recover the costs incurred in (b) in full from accruing revenues before distributing net revenues in the ratio of:
 - (i) Inventor(s) 50%
 - (ii) Committee of Research & Development (Administrative costs) 15%
 - (iii) Inventors School/Department 15%
 - (iv) University Research Reserve Fund 20%
 - (v) Where an individual is not affiliated to a department in RU the revenue accruing to the Inventor's department shall accrue to the university research fund, as follows:

Inventor(s)	50%
Committee of Research & Development	15%
University Research Fund	35%
- d) Overheads from Research Projects and Consultancy shall range from 10 to 15% or as directed by the funding agent of the total cost of the Project or Consultancy and their use is solely under the control of the University
- e) Where the University provides consultancy services, for example, monitoring and evaluation or environmental surveys etc, the net income accruing from the consultancy shall be shared as follows:
 - (i) The Principal Investigator and his/her team 40%
 - (ii) Committee of Research & Development (Administrative costs) 20%
 - (iii) Principal Investigators School/Department (shared according to seniority) 20%
 - (iv) University Research Reserve Fund 20%

The above will apply provided that the PI and team shall not be receiving honoraria from the project or consultancies. If it so happens the 40% earmarked for the aforesaid shall become part of the University Research Fund.