



**Title: Communications Policy**

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**Approval Authority:** Board of Trustees

**Document Owner:** University President

**Review:** The policy is subject to a periodic review every 4 years or in a shorter cycle as per amendments of regulations and policies

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Gulf University's commitment towards fair, transparent, reliable, just and timely communication with and between staff, students and other University' constituents internally and with external stakeholders. It aims to ensure consistency with the quality standards, branding and reputation of the university, external stakeholder engagement and strategic positioning. This policy guides how to apply appropriate security controls for maintaining the information displayed in digital space.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all Colleges, Departments, Centers, Units, Offices (both Academic and Administrative), Councils, Committees and their communications at Gulf University.
- all academic and administrative staff and students at Gulf University.
- all types of distance content management users of university official websites and social media platforms, content creators, approval authority and third-party vendors regardless of geographic location

## 3. Acronyms

<b>BQA</b>	Education and Training Quality Authority
<b>HEC</b>	Higher Education Council
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Department
<b>ITD</b>	Information Technology Department

## 4. Definitions

**Communication Channel:** Communication channel is a method/tool to communicate with stakeholders of the university.

**SMS Communication:** SMS stands for Short Message Service which is a communication sent to mobile phone and is also known as text message.

**Social Media:** Website and applications that enable users to create and share content and engage in networking for example, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp.

**Social media platforms:** Social media platforms offer universities a powerful means to reach prospective students. By sharing engaging content, including campus tours, student testimonials, and academic highlights, universities can showcase their unique offerings and attract potential applicants.

**Student:** A student is any individual who has completed the formal procedures necessary to register on a program offered by Gulf University.

**University Constituents:** University Constituents are Colleges, Departments, Centers, Units, Offices (both academic and administrative), Councils and Committees at Gulf University.

**Newsletter:** A newsletter is a printed or electronic report containing news concerning the activities of a business or an organization that is sent to its members, customers, employees or other subscribers.

**Resources:** University resources include all hardware, software, systems, services, information, and all other electronic and network devices.

**Information:** It includes all resources that has a value to the university.

**Sensitive:** It refers to high classified information for the university associated with authorized access.

**Web site:** Web site is a group of Web pages structured to provide a coherent body of information about a particular subject.

## 5. Policy Statement

Gulf University is committed to promote transparent communication and share information in open environment. Clear and effective communication is essential for evidence based decision making. This policy ensures that all staff members and students are fully aware of the University’ policies, procedures, regulations, events, activities in timely manner. Gulf University encourages two-way communication and feedback for effective decision making. This policy articulates the formal communication channels to inform staff members and students about a diverse range of topics/issues/practices/events/activities with mutual respect and empathy. It further shows the commitment of the university in managing communication with regulatory bodies and other external stakeholders.

## 6. Policy Principles

- 6.1 Gulf University ensures clear, transparent, fair, timely communication in hard and soft format with staff members, students and University' constituents to achieve the strategic directions.
- 6.2 Gulf University commits for providing opportunities to management and staff members to share information and provide feedback through formal meetings, emails, resolutions, memos, reports, face to face meetings, website, intranet and social media announcements.
- 6.3 Gulf University ensures that students are well communicated about the events, activities, achievements, announcements, academic information related to enrolment, grades, class schedule, examinations schedule, attendance and graduation through emails, SMS, University's website, bulletin boards, social media announcements, newsletter and meetings.
- 6.4 Gulf University ensures that all staff members are aware of their responsibility in maintaining effective communication for day to day operations, strategic issues, activities, events and institutional projects, aligned with appropriate reporting mechanism in the organizational hierarchy.
- 6.5 Gulf University commits for maintaining effective communication with external regulatory bodies, media and community at large and only authorized person/ senior management is responsible to access and disseminate such information. GU commits to provide academic and non-academic information including events, activities, achievements in education, research and community engagement in the website and social media.
- 6.6 GU is committed to use web site and social media as important communication channel for impactful promotion, positioning, branding and operations of the university. The University's website ([www.gulfuniversity.edu.bh](http://www.gulfuniversity.edu.bh)) is the primary source of information for students, alumni, staff, affiliates, individuals, public, and other visitors. GU is committed to publish the relevant information in the domain and sub-domains of the websites where the design and content of the university website (except the news) and the logo are the property of the university.
- 6.7 GU ensures that website and all other social media channels are regularly reviewed and updated. GU ensures that content creation and update is the responsibility of the content writer provided the authentic information comes from the designated persons in the management.
- 6.8 GU focuses on usability and accessibility of the website by creating user friendly content, responsive design, and search engine optimization to reach target audience.
- 6.9 GU ensures stability and effectiveness of the website by providing regular maintenance and solving technical difficulties.
- 6.10 GU commits to involve actively in official social media accounts (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Snap Chat, TikTok, LinkedIn) for students, alumni,

staff, affiliates, individuals, public, and other visitors to maintain the reputation of the university.

- 6.11 GU is committed to the principle of honesty, ethics, integrity and transparency while communicating and engaging in any discussion about university activities, events, announcements, achievements in social media platform and website. The university encourages freedom of speech within social media platform without compromising with the image and brand of the University.
- 6.12 GU ensures to refrain staff and students from making abusive comments against any person, religion or political party in social media platform. GU commits to remove any sensitive personal information or confidential information posted in social media sites.
- 6.13 GU commits that students and staff shall not indulge in insult, harassment or defamation against another staff, student or any third party in social media platform.
- 6.14 GU ensures that website and social media content do not reflect any harmful, inappropriate or misleading content. Content shall be clean and checked very well before posting in social media and website after getting necessary approval from the relevant persons.
- 6.15 GU commits not to post any material or information in website and social media platform infringing the intellectual property rights of third party. The university is committed not to post any material or information in the digital platform which amounts to identity of third party without getting explicit consent from the party.
- 6.16 GU commits that any personal achievement shall not be published or announced in the website or social media without the consent of the concerned staff/student.
- 6.17 Gulf University is committed to increase the University's reach and foster sustainable and long-term relationships internally and externally in and outside Bahrain.
- 6.18 The university has the authority to take appropriate action for the non-compliance or violation of the policy.

## **7. Responsibilities**

### **Academic and Administrative staff are responsible for:**

- following this document appropriately.

### **Heads of Academic Departments are responsible for:**

- ensuring that all faculty members are fully informed of this document.
- ensuring appropriate implementation of this document.

### **Directors, Heads, and Managers of Centers, Units, and Departments are responsible for:**

- ensuring that all administrative staff members are fully informed of this document.
- ensuring appropriate implementation of this document.

**Deans are responsible for:**

- ensuring that all faculty members follow this document.
- ensuring appropriate implementation of this document.

**The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for:**

- ensuring appropriate implementation of this document.

**University Policy Development and Review Committee is responsible for:**

- systematic review of the effectiveness of this document.

**8. Related Policies**

- All Policies

**9. Related Procedures**

- All Procedures

**10. Related References and Standards**

<b>BQA</b>	National Qualifications Framework Handbook
<b>BQA</b>	Programs-within-College Reviews Handbook
<b>MOL</b>	Ministry of Labor