



UNIVERSITY *of*
RWANDA

Laboratory Policy of the University of Rwanda

Approved by the Board of Governors meeting of 5th April 2019

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LABORATORY POLICY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA

Name of policy:	Laboratory Policy of the University of Rwanda	
Reference number:		
Originator/Author: <i>(Position/Office)</i>	University Director for Research and Innovation Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research	
Custodian: <i>(Position/Office)</i>	Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning and Administration	
Review Approved by:	<i>Structure:</i> Senior Management Committee	<i>Date:</i> 08 May 2018
	Senate Board of Governors	05 April 2019
Policy effective date:	05 April 2019	
Policy review date:	April 2022	
Implementation responsibility:	DVC-AAR/Principals CAVM, CE, CMHS and CST	
Implementation procedures approved by:	<i>Structure:</i> SMC	<i>Date:</i> 08 May 2018

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1. Introduction

The University of Rwanda (UR) is a singular, multi-campus institution offering a wide range of academic programs and research, through its Colleges, some of which are very specialized needing laboratories and sophisticated equipment, in basic sciences, engineering and technology.

A primary strategic consideration for the University outlined in its Mission statement is the insistence on high quality both in teaching and Research. To this end, the University has committed to offering academic programmes that are of international standards and engage in excellent research that is locally relevant but having global impact.

The University also subscribes to the vision of efficiency and effectiveness in fulfilling its educational mission. Laboratories because of their strategic importance as units mostly needed for a number of teaching programmes and research activities that cross-cut departments, schools and even colleges, its effective utilization must accordingly be consistent with and give effect to the strategy, vision, values and policies of the University.

To work towards creating an environment where laboratory resources are used efficiently and effectively is one of the most important objectives for the University for the coming years.

2. Policy Objective

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that UR laboratories are well stocked, equipped, effectively and efficiently utilized and managed to deliver credible academic programmes and service to researchers at the appropriate standards.

This policy framework is the overarching document in respect of all the laboratory sub-policies, as well as other policies that have a bearing on laboratory at the University.

3. Quality Assurance

3.1 The University shall provide adequate resources including stable electricity or power supply and Internet connectivity to all the Laboratories to provide technical support to the teaching programmes and research activities.

3.2 The Laboratories shall be staffed with competent personnel to deliver quality service.

- 3.3 Internal quality control practices shall be developed and strengthened in all laboratories by the individual laboratory.
- 3.4 The University shall implement an Online Stock and Equipment Management Information Systems (OSEMIS) linking all the laboratories in the different campuses for monitoring and purchasing of stock (laboratory consumables) and procurement of equipment.
- 3.5 The individual laboratories shall put in place mechanisms to supervise, monitor, record and evaluate the usage of major research equipment.
- 3.6 As part of quality improvement of the Laboratories, University shall coordinate the participation of the laboratories in external audit or international accreditation processes.

4. Facilities and Safety

- 4.1 All laboratories designs, shall conform to the regulator minimum standards and specifications for design and safety, so as to ensure the quality, safety and efficacy of the services provided.
- 4.2 The laboratories shall develop Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) and Good Laboratory Management Practices (GLMP) to guide their operations.
- 4.3 The University shall develop health and safety regulations for laboratories and establish a health and safety committee that will enforce the regulations and the policy.
- 4.4 The University shall establish a code of biosafety practice that will be applicable to the relevant laboratories including the establishment of biosafety committee to inspect the specific laboratories and enforce biosafety standards and procedures.
- 4.5 Disposal of laboratory waste and biohazards (chemical, biological and other) shall be in accordance with relevant guidelines from relevant authorities. People in charge of the waste disposal will be trained to handle biohazardous waste.

5. Equipment

- 5.1 All teaching and research equipment donated or bought by research funds or University funds belong to the University and are open to use by all the staff and students unless strictly specified by the funder or donor.
- 5.2 The purchase of all teaching and research equipment donated or bought by research funds or University funds will include a Maintenance Agreement with the supplier. The agreement will cover maintenance services that include periodic inspections that are routine along with scheduled repairs and the replacement of parts on an as needed basis. It will also include emergency repairs when necessary whenever the Equipment becomes inoperable unexpectedly.
- 5.3 The University shall ensure that all laboratory facilities are equipped to deliver basic teaching and research requirements.
- 5.4 The management of the laboratory in every College shall ensure that equipment is properly selected, installed, maintained (including preventive maintenance and repair) and disposed of according to established standard procedures to meet the needs of the laboratory to deliver quality service.
- 5.5 Each piece of equipment will be uniquely identified by asset number in accordance to the asset policy of the University. The inventory of all the equipment will be through the Online Stock and Equipment Management Information Systems (OSEMIS).
- 5.6 A central workshop having specialized technicians shall be established by the University to maintain and repair laboratory equipment that are not under the maintenance agreement with the suppliers.
- 5.7 The University may introduce cost sharing with researchers as a way of maintaining the specialized equipment used mostly for research purposes.

6. Centralized Laboratory Management

For effectiveness and efficiency in the utilization and management of the UR laboratory facilities and services, the University shall have a centralized directorate with a specific mission of managing all UR laboratories facilities in different colleges and laboratory technical staff in their different labs and / or field of specialization. The Unit shall be responsible for:

- Developing and institutional protocol for utilization of laboratories,
- Coordinating the preparation of the laboratories for international accreditation
- Developing common laboratory safety procedures
- Coordinating ordering of reagents and equipment
- Coordinating maintenance of laboratory equipment
- Coordinating recruitment, training and deployment of laboratory technicians

(Reference should be made to UR CENTRAL LABORATORY SERVICES UNIT guideline document)

7. Purchasing of Supplies, Procurement of Equipment and Inventory

- 7.1 The management of the laboratory in every College shall coordinate with the Central Laboratories Directorate to ensure that there is an uninterrupted supply of consumables and/or services to perform all quality laboratory functions.
- 7.2 The Central Laboratories Directorate shall maintain a common list of vendors that meet the requirements for the product or service to be purchased. The laboratories shall strive to purchase high quality reagents at a reasonable cost and without bias.
- 7.3 The Central Laboratories Directorate shall establish common guidelines on purchasing procedure for ordering, receiving, documenting, evaluating and storing of all laboratory consumables supplies to ensure a coordinated process to minimise waste and wasteful expenditure. This will include streamlining the purchasing and procurement processes to minimum time.
- 7.4 The Central Laboratories Directorate shall maintain, through the Online Stock and Equipment Management Information Systems (OSEMIS), an inventory of all the laboratory supplies, including reagents and consumables.
- 7.5 The Central Laboratories Directorate shall ensure that the procurement and donation of new laboratory equipment, is coordinated and conforms to the procurement policy of the University and that unnecessary duplications of equipment is avoided. (See 5.4 for the inventory of Equipment).

8. Personnel

- 8.1 University recognizes that its most important resource is its personnel. Therefore it is committed to coordinate the recruitment, training, development, retention and deployment of laboratory personnel especially technicians, across all the laboratories to ensure effective and efficient provision of service to users.
- 8.2 University shall develop a laboratory career structure and promote opportunities for continuing education to support the implementation of laboratory standards and policies.
- 8.3 Laboratory personnel shall be provided with the tools necessary to perform laboratory operations and protective gear for their health and safety.
- 8.4 All laboratory personnel shall be expected to respect the laboratory rules concerning Health & Safety, SOP and GLMP (see 4.2).

9. Use of vertebrate animals in testing, research and training

University acknowledges that the development of knowledge necessary for the improvement of the health and well-being of humans as well as other animals requires *in vivo* experimentation with a wide variety of animal species. To ensure appropriate care and use of live vertebrate animals involved in biomedical and behavioural research testing or training activities, the University has to develop requirements that governs their use.

- 9.1 The University shall therefore establish guidelines for transportation and proper care of animals to be used in biomedical and behavioural research. This shall include the proper treatment of animals while being used in such research, testing and training. The guidelines shall not be construed to prescribe methods of research.
- 9.2 The University shall establish an animal care committee that shall assure compliance with the guidelines established.
- 9.3 All scientists, animal technicians, students and other personnel involved with animal care, treatment, and use shall be trained in the humane practice of animal maintenance and experimentation.

NOTE: *Animal means* – Any live, vertebrate animal used or intended for use in research, research training, experimentation, or biological testing or for related purposes.

10. Consultancy and Third Party Use of Laboratories

To promote third stream income generation, University shall allow the use of laboratories and its facilities for consultancy and by third party, based on approved guidelines that shall not compromise the teaching and research activities.



Prof. Philip Cotton

Vice Chancellor

