



## BOU ALUMNI RELATIONS POLICY

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## ALUMNI RELATIONS POLICY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Botswana Open University (BOU) takes cognisance of the crucial role that its Alumni can play in marketing the University programmes and services; enhancing University and industry relations; and helping to build and grow the University brand. One of the strategic pillars of the University is community engagement and by embracing Alumni as part of University governance, BOU stands to tap into the mentoring, attachments, internships and career opportunities that the Alumni can provide. The University further recognises the various networking opportunities that its students stand to gain through interacting with Alumni, thus leading to a rich student engagement. Through the Alumni, the University aims to give opportunity to its graduates to give back to the University and its students, to show appreciation and share their own student experiences. Developing and nurturing Alumni relations will also help the Alumni to develop lifelong bonds with the institution.
- 1.2 BOU recognises the need to develop and sustain an institutional culture that promotes active student and community engagement, and it seeks to do this by encouraging a vibrant Alumni engagement environment. The Alumni Relations Policy is aimed at achieving vibrant Alumni engagement.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms and abbreviations are used as defined:

- 2.1 **BOU** - Botswana Open University
- 2.2 **BOU ALUMNI** - all former students of BOU and its precursor, Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (**BOCODOL**).
- 2.3 **BOU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (BOUAA)** - the association of all BOU Alumni aimed at fostering relations between the Alumni and their alma mater as well as advancing their mutual interests.
- 2.4 **BOU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHAPTER** - a group of BOU Alumni or a cluster of BOU Alumni established along commonly shared interests, such as (School, Department, regional Campus, and country). Chapters are established under the guidance of and in accordance with the by-laws of

the BOUAA and they determine their objectives and activities in line with the overall purpose of BOUAA.

- 2.5 **BOU ALUMNI PROGRAMME:** all activities developed and implemented by BOU Alumni Office with the objective of building and strengthening the relations between BOU and its Alumni for their mutual benefits.

### **3.0 PURPOSE**

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework governing BOU and its Alumni relations.
- 3.2 This policy aims to ensure that BOU Alumni exists to support University goals and to strengthen the ties between the Alumni, the Community and BOU.
- 3.3 The policy aims to outline how the Botswana Open University shall comply with its obligations with respect to its Alumni.
- 3.4 This policy provides a platform for likeminded graduates of BOU and or BOCODOL, to network for purposes of raising the University profile.

### **4.0 OBJECTIVES OF BOU ALUMNI RELATIONS POLICY:**

- 4.1 To guide implementation of an Alumni office.
- 4.2 To give oversight of activities of the Alumni.
- 4.3 To serve as a reference point for setting up an Alumni Office and its operations.
- 4.4 To guide planning and running of Alumni initiatives at BOU.

### **5.0 THIS POLICY IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING ALUMNI OBJECTIVES:**

- 5.1 To establish a comprehensive database of BOU Alumni;
- 5.2 To ensure that the information available in the Alumni Database is used only for BOU and BOUAA related purposes;
- 5.3 To keep Alumni informed about developments taking place within BOU;
- 5.4 To foster positive and progressive relations among Alumni;

- 5.5 To provide opportunities for Alumni to be involved in BOU activities such as but not limited to graduation, public lectures, academic conferences and community engagement;
- 5.6 To recognise and honour BOU Alumni for their achievements and contributions to society, as well as their service to the university;
- 5.7 To organise fundraising by BOU Alumni for BOU development;
- 5.8 To offer Alumni privileged access to BOU learning resources to facilitate their life-long learning;
- 5.9 To support community engagement initiatives of BOU Alumni Association and its chapters for recognition and visibility of BOU and its Alumni.

## 6.0 SCOPE

- 6.1 This policy covers all BOU staff, BOU Alumni and stakeholders conducting Alumni activities for and on behalf of BOU.
- 6.2 It serves to guide and regulate the structures as well as the activities aimed at building the relations between BOU and its Alumni with the view of advancing their mutual interests.

## 7.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 7.1 Botswana Open University recognises and values the importance of maintaining ties with its graduates and involving them in the life and development of the University. This policy is therefore intended to give oversight to all BOU Alumni initiatives.
- 7.2 By institutionalising the Alumni, BOU is embracing collaborative governance with BOU graduates and the industry they come from.
- 7.3 It is the intention of this policy to stipulate major benefits that BOU stands to accrue from active relations with its Alumni, such as BOU Alumni serving as:
  - 7.3.1 Role models, mentors and an inspiration for the current BOU students;
  - 7.3.2 An important link between BOU, the public and private stakeholders;
  - 7.3.3 Reviewers of university teaching and research programs to make them market and industry relevant;

- 7.3.4 Mentors and guides for new BOU graduates entering the job-market;
- 7.3.5 Ambassadors and best marketers for BOU;
- 7.3.6 Mobilisers or sources of funding for BOU's development initiatives;
- 7.3.7 Source of mutual support to each other as they move through post-University life.

## **8.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

This Policy shall be implemented through the following structures:

### **8.1 The Executive Management**

- 8.1.1 The Executive Management role is facilitative only. The Deputy Vice Chancellor- Student Services has overall responsibility for the policy.

### **8.2 Department of Student Affairs and Welfare**

- 8.2.1 The office of the Director- Student Affairs and Welfare is responsible for implementation and compliance of this policy.

### **8.3 BOU Alumni Relations Office**

This office will be responsible for coordinating university-wide activities related to Alumni Relations, including among others:

- 8.3.1 Creation of a database of all BOU Alumni;
- 8.3.2 Establishing an efficient communication system between BOU and its Alumni;
- 8.3.3 Keeping the Alumni abreast of all major events and developments at BOU that have an impact on the Alumni responsibilities;
- 8.3.4 Documenting major career achievements by fellow Alumni;
- 8.3.5 Developing a strategic plan, action plan and budgets for BOU Alumni Relations activities;
- 8.3.6 Recognising Alumni who have made exceptional achievements;
- 8.3.7 Facilitating Alumni's involvement in the life of BOU;
- 8.3.8 Fundraising activities involving BOU Alumni;

8.3.9 Coordinating Alumni chapters.

#### **8.4 Botswana Open University Alumni Association (BOUAA)**

8.4.1 This is an association for all BOU former students and its precursor, BOCODOL.

8.4.2 The association is responsible for electing an Executive Committee and with guidance from the BOU Alumni Relations office, plan and coordinate the implementation of the BOUAA.

8.4.3 The BOUAA develops its constitution, which determines its vision, mission and values as well as setting its organisational and operational guidelines.

#### **8.5 BOUAA Chapters:**

8.5.1 These are groups of BOU Alumni members established along shared backgrounds or interests such as same geographic region (District and City/Town), Campus, School, Profession, etc., but pursuing objectives that are consistent with BOUAA's purpose and mission.

8.5.2 Their role is to strengthen the relations between BOU and its Alumni for the furtherance of each other's mutual interests.

### **9.0 REVIEW**

9.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or as and when necessary.