



LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY

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Responsible Officer	Director, Library & Information Services nmaphakwane@staff.bou.ac.bw Tel: 3646061
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Academic libraries have long enjoyed their status as the 'heart of universities' because of their role as endless sources of information and knowledge. In the past the libraries did not need to vigorously market themselves as their position, role and services in the academia seemed to be indispensable. The advent of technology and ever-expanding internet has presented new challenges and demands for Libraries to adopt new applications of technology for learning, research and information. In the light of this, the University Library has to respond appropriately by continuously introspecting and reviewing its role and services to ensure relevance. This Policy serves to encourage and regulate the creation, use, storage, access, communication, dissemination of information as well as to ensure monitoring and evaluation of the library services of the Botswana Open University.
- 1.2. The Library and Information Services fully subscribe to the Vision of the Botswana Open University (BOU) of "Inspired Excellence and Empowered Learners for Life Long Learning". To meet the Vision, the Library has developed this Policy as a foundation for a set of procedures and initiatives meant to provide access to information while assuring preservation of library materials and resources. The Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies of the University, such as the Research and Innovation Policy and the Quality Policy, and with relevant Government policies such as National Library Policy; Government of Botswana Paper No.1 of 2013.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Circulation** – the process of checking in and out library materials to clients.
- 2.2. **Clients** – the Library's customers, users and patrons.
- 2.3. **Collection Development** – the selection and acquisition of library materials to expand the library holdings and decisions on the materials to be included in the collection.
- 2.4. **Databases** – information that has been organised and classified according to type of content, bibliographic, full-text, numeric or images etc. so that it can be easily accessed.
- 2.5. **Information resources** – include but not limited to monographs or books, electronic resources, multi-media resources.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- 3.1. Guide the establishment and management of a comprehensive framework of initiatives designed to deliver library and information services.
- 3.2. Establish and manage risks in library planning and management.
- 3.3. Serve as a tool to guide the library staff to uphold best practices and standards in service delivery.
- 3.4. Guide the library users on availability and on the use of the resources as well as all other activities of the University.
- 3.5. Integrate the Library and Information Services into the teaching, learning and research activities of the University.
- 3.6. Enable the monitoring and evaluation of the Library's performance across the University.

4. SCOPE

The Library and Information Services Policy applies to all learners, academic and non-academic staff of the Botswana Open University as well as its stakeholders.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1. The Botswana Open University commits to providing high quality Library and Information Services that will support learning and teaching and, research and scholarship across the institution and which will be responsive to the information needs of the University's diverse stakeholders. In order to meet this obligation, the Library will make sure it provides access to information to its users guided by best library service practices and international standards as well as periodic monitoring and evaluation. To do this the University Library shall:
 - 5.1.1. Support learning, teaching, research and other activities of the University by ensuring that there are proper library spaces, appropriate technologies, expertise, and availability of relevant and up to date information resources.

- 5.1.2. Increase the discoverability, use and impact of the University's research outputs through information leadership, collaboration and application of information management as well as contributing to the development of the researcher's knowledge and inquiry skills.
 - 5.1.3. Be a dynamic, effective, accountable, and responsive organ that contributes to the institutional effectiveness and the achievement of the University's mission.
 - 5.1.4. Develop alliances, collaborations and partnerships with local, regional, international organizations to expand the resource base of the University.
- 5.2. The Library is committed to the on-going development of its collections and long-term provision of high quality information resources which will meet the varied and changing needs of its users. Collections development at BOU shall be guided by the following principles:
- 5.2.1. **Continuing relevance** – the Library shall develop the collections to preserve and enhance their relevance and usefulness to researchers and users based on the recommended textbooks as designed by programme developers.
 - 5.2.2. **Global scope** – the Library shall acquire materials from different cultures and different parts of the world and shall source information resources locally, internationally and through subscriptions to online information resources.
 - 5.2.3. **Collaboration** – the Library shall seek appropriate collaborative and other opportunities to reduce overheads, rationalize holdings and otherwise maximize the unique impact to achieve through collaborative relations with other Universities.
 - 5.2.4. **Technological advancement** – the Library embraces technological developments and shall provide computers and the internet in the Library to ensure access to digital resources, electronic books and databases.
- 5.3. The Library is committed to adherence to local and international copyright and intellectual property laws and it is the user's responsibility to ensure that use of the internet, electronic and non-electronic resources complies with any applicable laws, as well as with usage restrictions imposed by database and e-journal providers.

- 5.4. The University Library is committed to serve all its internal and external members through all channels of service. (See the Library Procedures Manual on the membership categories.)
- 5.5. The Botswana Open University Library commits to provide quality service to its members at all times and keep records of transactions taking place either manually or electronically. (See the Library Procedures Manual for regulations relating to the circulation of library materials.)

6. IMPLEMENTATION

The following shall be accountable for the implementation of the Policy:

6.1. Deputy Vice Chancellor – Student Services

The Deputy Vice Chancellor-Support Services serves as the overseer of the implementation of the Policy and ensures related goals and strategies are adhered to.

6.2. The Director – Library & Information Services

The Director shall provide the strategic direction, administration and management of the Library and Information Services.

6.3. Librarians

The Librarians, both at Headquarters and Regional Campuses, shall implement the Policy and ensure compliance across the University. They shall also participate in relevant committees according to their job profiles.

6.4. Deans

The Deans shall participate in relevant committees of the Library and Information Services and ensure compliance to guidelines concerning their areas of operations.

6.5. Library Advisory Committee

There shall be a Library Advisory Committee to provide advice on library operations, facilities, policy, support, budget, collection development and to provide advocacy for library development.

7. REVIEW

The Policy shall be reviewed after three years or earlier as necessary.