



UNIVERSITY OF BAHRAIN

University of Bahrain

Media Policy

Authority / Owner of Policy: Communication Directorate

Effective: October 24, 2024

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POLICY INFORMATION

Title:	University of Bahrain Media Policy	
Policy Description:	This policy governs the media and publishing activities of the University of Bahrain and its affiliates. It sets out the mechanisms for representing the university and expressing both institutional and personal opinions to ensure a balance between freedom of expression and the protection of the university's reputation. It ensures fairness of media appearances for the various groups within the university community. It also clarifies responsibilities and procedures for engaging with the media, and regulates the use of the university's institutional identity and personal accounts, thereby enhancing the clarity and consistency of messages in alignment with the university's values and regulations.	
Policy Scope:	☐ Academic ☐ Administrative ☐ Research ☐ Student ☒ General	
Policy Status:	☐ New policy ☒ Revision of existing policy	
Approval Authority:	University of Bahrain Council	
Authority/ Owner of Policy:	Communication Directorate	
Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	☐ 1. No Poverty ☐ 2. Zero Hunger ☐ 3. Good Health and Well-being ☒ 4. Quality Education ☐ 5. Gender Equality ☐ 6. Clean Water and Sanitation ☐ 7. Affordable and Clean Energy ☐ 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth ☒ 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	☒ 10. Reduced Inequalities ☐ 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities ☐ 12. Responsible Consumption and Production ☐ 13. Climate Action ☐ 14. Life Below Water ☐ 15. Life on Land ☒ 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions ☒ 17. Partnerships for the Goals

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Related Documents:	Legislative Decree No. (12) of 1986 on the Establishment and Regulation of the University of Bahrain and its amendments. The Civil Service Law and its Executive Regulations. Decision No. (1) of 2006 issuing the Regulations for Faculty Members at the University of Bahrain and its amendments. The Guideline for the Use of Social Media Networks in Government Entities. Decision No. (4) of 2006 issuing the Code of Student Conduct Violations at the University of Bahrain. Code of Employee Conduct and Ethics of the Public Position - Annexed to Civil Service Instructions No 16 / 2016.

Policy Stakeholders

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ President | ☐ Faculty members |
| ☐ Vice Presidents | ☐ Students |
| ☐ Legal Advisor | ☐ Admin Staff |
| ☐ Deans | ☒ All University Affiliates |
| ☐ Directors | |

1 Definitions

Media Policy:	Principles and parameters for media work and publishing at the university, including a statement of the regulations, methods, and procedures adopted by the university in communicating its messages to the public.
Public Sphere:	The media and communication environment in which information, opinions, or messages are made accessible to the general public.
Media Content:	All media materials or messages issued by the university or any of its affiliates, whether written, audio, visual, or digital, that are published or broadcast through any publishing or communication channel.
Stakeholders:	Individuals or entities that have a direct or indirect interest in the university and who may affect or be affected, positively or negatively, by the university's actions.
Media Outlets (Traditional Media):	All media outlets, including radio, television, and newspapers, whether official or unofficial.

Social Media:	Electronic platforms that allow users to create profiles to communicate with other users within a virtual community environment, participate in discussions and activities, and create digital content.
Media Appearance:	The appearance of university affiliates in any media channel, including social media.
Media Publishing:	The publication of any media content related to the University of Bahrain in the media.
University Affiliates:	All students, academic and administrative staff members, and university graduates when formally mandated by the university to represent it.

2 Policy Purpose

This policy aims to set out the foundations of communication within the university and externally and to regulate its management, thereby contributing to the enhancement of the university's positive institutional image through its activities and services, and highlighting its identity and mission, in accordance with professional standards based on transparency, objectivity, accuracy of information, and speed and efficiency of performance. Accordingly, the policy seeks to achieve the following objectives:

2.1 Regulate the media appearances of university affiliates in the public space and across various means of communication, striking a balance between freedom of expression and the requirements of institutional representation of the university, and ensuring fairness in media appearances.

2.2 Ensure consistency of media publications issued by the university or its affiliates with its principles, mission, and objectives, thereby contributing to supporting its strategic directions.

2.3 Facilitate the flow of information through official media channels to highlight the university's efforts, projects, and achievements, and enhance responsiveness to relevant events.

2.4 Enhance the university's institutional image and elevate its reputation locally, regionally, and internationally, thereby supporting the attraction of outstanding students and expanding opportunities for academic and research collaboration.

3 Policy Scope

This policy governs the media activities of the University of Bahrain and its affiliates within the public sphere and across all forms of media. Accordingly, it applies to all content published by the University and to content published by its affiliates when their affiliation with the University is stated, identifiable, or reasonably implied.

4 Policy Statement

This policy is based on core principles from which all media-related activities of the university and its affiliates stem. It includes the rules and general guidelines to be followed in this regard, as set out below.

4.1 Principles

- 4.1.1 The University of Bahrain is committed to implementing a media policy based on the Respect for freedom of opinion and expression for university affiliates, and encouraging their participation in public discourse, particularly in scientific and academic fields, while distinguishing between personal opinions and the institutional positions of the university, in a manner that preserves its reputation and standing.
- 4.1.2 Clarity, accuracy, and objectivity in media content.
- 4.1.3 Focus on the university's priorities across various dimensions, particularly academic, research, extracurricular activities, and community service.
- 4.1.4 All stakeholders must be treated professionally and respectfully.

Use following principles:

- 4.1.5 of the latest media technologies and tools to disseminate the university's message.

4.2 Rules

Activities attributed, whether explicitly or implicitly, to the University of Bahrain in the public domain must be guided by the following rules:

- 4.2.1 Media content must reflect the university's identity, mission, objectives, and strategy.
- 4.2.2 All information published must be accurate, reliable, and reflect a positive image of the university.
- 4.2.3 Approval from the Communication Directorate must be obtained prior to media engagements and media appearances, and prior to the publication of all posts, electronic newsletters, web pages, and promotional materials.
- 4.2.4 Compliance with the laws and regulations in force in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

4.3 General Controls

All stakeholders and individuals subject to this policy must adhere to the following general controls:

- 4.3.1 Media content must be handled responsibly, so as not to provoke controversy or confusion, distort the university's image, harm its reputation or that of its affiliates, or contain anything that violates regulations and laws, offends public decency, or offends any components of society.
- 4.3.2 Only media materials of good quality, such as articles and reports, shall be accepted in terms of their content, substance, language, and form. Such materials must be clear and complete in their elements, so as not to give rise to inaccuracies or fundamental ambiguities for the recipient
- 4.3.3 The various media materials must be linked to the general context of the university's objectives and the overall perspective on the subject or event to be covered, and their connection to the government program and Bahrain Vision must be indicated.
- 4.3.4 All media materials pertaining to the university, in all their various forms, must be issued with the approval of the Communication Directorate or in coordination with it.

- 4.3.5 Care shall be taken to avoid unduly amplifying or exaggerating university achievements in the media in a manner contrary to true and factual data.
- 4.3.6 When publishing information about projects and events, the focus shall be on highlighting the university's institutional roles rather than individuals, in keeping with the university's mission as an institution of education and cultural and intellectual enrichment.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Communication Directorate

The Communication Directorate is the competent body responsible for implementing the provisions of this policy, monitoring its application, and submitting periodic reports thereon. It is also responsible for managing communication with external parties, exercising its supervisory authority over the Communication Directorate team, and coordinating among the various entities within the university regarding publishing and media affairs, in accordance with the provisions of this policy and the regulations in force at the university.

Subject to obtaining the approval of the University President, the Communication Directorate shall exercise the following competencies:

- a) Engaging with media outlets and external parties, organizing their visits, and accompanying them when entering the university campus or covering university events.
- b) Coordinating and cooperating with the relevant deanships, directorates and entities to implement media campaigns in accordance with approved plans.
- c) Preparing and issuing press releases, articles, and media updates related to the university.
- d) Monitoring any content or practice suspected of constituting an infringement upon the University of Bahrain or its affiliates, or a violation of applicable regulations and laws, and submitting reports thereon to the Vice President or the relevant Dean for appropriate action.
- e) Reviewing and updating this policy periodically and submitting necessary recommendations regarding it.
- f) Raising awareness of the provisions of laws and regulations governing publishing and media appearances and ensuring compliance therewith by university affiliates.

- g) Raising awareness of the mechanisms for maintaining the confidentiality of university information and regulating the handling of relevant data and information.

5.2 Deans and Directors

- a) Implement this policy within their respective colleges and departments.
- b) Raise awareness of this policy among faculty members and staff.

5.3 Faculty Members and Staff

- a) Comply with the provisions of this policy.
- b) Cooperate with the Communication Directorate in implementing this policy.

6 Policy Procedures

6.1 Control for Dealing with the Media

- 6.1.1 The Communication Directorate is responsible for engaging with the media, including responding to inquiries received from journalists, writing press releases and official university statements, and scheduling interview appointments on campus, in studios, or at press conferences involving university officials.
- 6.1.2 The Communication Directorate shall arrange for media and press interviews, whether written, visual, or audio, with university affiliates, whether on or off campus, subject to the approval of the University President.
- 6.1.3 Media outlets are permitted to enter the university campus for filming, event coverage, or other needs with prior permission from the Communication Directorate, following official approval from the University President, provided that a member of the Communication Directorate staff accompanies the media outlet.

6.2 Controls for Media Appearances of University of Bahrain Affiliates

- 6.2.1 The President of the University of Bahrain is the official spokesperson for the university and may delegate or assign others to act in that capacity. In cases other than this, prior approval from the Communication Directorate must be obtained, in accordance with the

procedures established in this policy, if the media appearance involves representing the university or expressing its positions, policies, decisions, or plans, or if the affiliate is presented as a representative of the university.

6.2.2 University affiliates may request assistance from the Communication Directorate in responding to media inquiries or when preparing key talking points for approved interviews.

6.2.3 A university affiliate may express their opinions and participate in the media in a personal capacity on various topics, whether within or outside their field of expertise, without such participation being considered representation of the university, provided that the statement is not explicitly or implicitly attributed to the university. In this regard, the university affiliate must adhere to the following controls:

- If the media participation, given its context, manner of presentation, or emphasis on the affiliate's academic or professional title, might suggest to the recipient that the affiliate is speaking on behalf of the university or expressing its position, the affiliate must explicitly state that the views expressed are their own and do not reflect the university's position.
- Examples of what may suggest institutional representation include: using an academic title, using phrases that attribute the opinion to the university, continuing the media participation even after being introduced by the media outlet or others as a representative of the university without correcting that impression, or speaking about university policies, decisions, or future plans.
- A media appearance in one's capacity as a representative of an entity other than the university shall be considered personal expression, provided that such capacity is clearly disclosed and does not create any ambiguity regarding representation of the university.
- In all cases, the determining factor in identifying the nature of the appearance shall be its character, content, and overall context, not merely the description the affiliate uses to identify themselves.

6.2.4 Any college, deanship, department, or directorate seeking to promote or market a program, event, or achievement through the media must contact the Communication Directorate. The Communication Directorate may then contact the media outlets and work with university affiliates to coordinate promotion and marketing efforts, appearances on programs or at events, or the presentation of issues worthy of publication.

6.3 Controls of Publications and Printed Materials

- 6.3.1 All publications, electronic newsletters, web pages, and promotional materials must be approved by the Communication Directorate before use in any media outlet, including brochures, advertising flyers, posters, banners, and other publications used on or off campus, or for any other promotional purpose.

6.4 Controls on the Use of Social Media and Professional Platforms

- 6.4.1 The University of Bahrain uses a single official communication account on the platforms it employs, overseen by the Communication Directorate. No entity within the university is permitted to create accounts on social media platforms except with the approval of the University President.
- 6.4.2 With respect to their personal accounts on social media, the university affiliate shall not include in their personal profile their job title or position and official work contact information for the purpose of correspondence or use of social media platforms.
- 6.4.3 When university affiliates use their personal accounts on social media, they must do so in a responsible and professional manner that reflects their academic and professional standing, and in a way that does not undermine the dignity of the position or the entity to which they belong or its status, whether in terms of appearance, manner of expression, nature of published content, or context of publication. They must distinguish between their personal opinions and any content that might be understood as expressing an institutional position, in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct and Ethics of Public position, and as stipulated by civil service regulations, bylaws, and instructions.
- 6.4.4 Examples of use that undermines the dignity of the position or the entity include: public appearance or publishing content in forms or situations that do not align with what is required by the academic and professional standing of a university affiliate; presenting content in a manner involving vulgarity, mockery, or crudity; using personal accounts to raise general or personal topics in a manner inconsistent with the decorum and responsibility expected of a university affiliate; or publishing comments or clips that would undermine the affiliate's professional image or negatively affect the standing of the university or its affiliates, whether related to university work matters or otherwise.

- 6.4.5 Commenting or responding on social media accounts that deliberately seek to provoke media controversy must be avoided.
- 6.4.6 The university encourages its affiliates to benefit from specialized professional platforms, such as LinkedIn and similar platforms, for the academic and professional identification of its affiliates, building scientific and professional networks, disseminating scientific and research outputs, and enhancing opportunities for cooperation and communication with academic and research institutions. In this context, it is permissible to mention the job title or affiliation with the university within the limits of personal identification, provided it does not create an impression of speaking on behalf of the university.
- 6.4.7 University affiliates are prohibited, in any capacity whatsoever, from photographing others or recording their voices inside classrooms or while students are taking examinations or photographing their examination papers or any materials or documents related to tests or assessments, or from publishing or circulating such content on social media platforms, live streaming services, or instant stories on other digital media.

6.5 Use of the University of Bahrain Logo

- 6.5.1 The University of Bahrain logo must be used clearly and visibly on all official media materials of the university, including publications, websites, and social media platforms.
- 6.5.2 The University of Bahrain logo may not be used except with the approval of the Communication Directorate. Where such approval is granted, any use of the official university logo must not conflict with policies and laws relating to intellectual property and trademarks.

6.6 Use of Photographic Images

- 6.6.1 It is prohibited to use images available on unofficial websites to represent the university campus or university students.
- 6.6.2 To the greatest extent possible, all images depicting students, faculty members, campus life, or facilities must be authentic images taken within the context of university work or activities.

6.7 Content on the University Website

- 6.7.1 The Communication Directorate is the entity responsible for the university's website. It has the authority to approve content before publication, or to refuse or remove from the website any information or material that is outdated, incorrect, misleading, unlawful, or harmful to the university's reputation.
- 6.7.2 Colleges, centers, directorates, offices, and other entities are responsible for the content of their respective pages on the university website and shall provide the Communication Directorate with any changes or updates to the content of their pages.
- 6.7.3 The Information Technology and Digital Education Directorate is the entity responsible for non-institutional or academic websites and web-based applications (such as conference websites, academic journal websites, and database applications), subject to coordination with the relevant college or department.

7 Contact Information

For further assistance regarding the implementation of this policy, questions may be directed to the Communication Directorate:

Email: communication@uob.edu.bh

Contact No.: 17438889 / 17438555