



National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	Policy on Staff and Student Exchange
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/CPL/003
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Manager/Driver:	Directorate of Advancement and Linkages (DAL)
Date of Approval:	7 th October, 2024
Date of Next Review:	October, 2027

1.0 Introduction

The National Open University of Nigeria is the largest single- mode tertiary institution in the West African sub-region dedicated to providing access to quality higher education through the open, distance, and eLearning mode. NOUN is committed to strengthening its position as the leading provider of liberalised access to higher education and lifelong learning without distinction of race, creed, gender, age or political conviction, and special learning needs as provided for in the University's Act. No. 6 of 1983 and amended in Act. No. 19, 2018.

This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for facilitating staff and student exchanges of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). It reflects the institution's commitment to providing opportunities for staff and students to broaden their worldview and build capacity through engagement with the global academic community.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose is to promote internationalisation, cultural exchange, and the development of a global perspective among our university community. The primary objectives of this policy are to:

- 2.1 provide opportunities for our students to participate in international exchange programmes and gain cross-cultural experiences.
- 2.2 foster academic and professional development for both staff and students.
- 2.3 promote collaboration with partner institutions globally.
- 2.4 facilitate the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and best practices in education.
- 2.5 create awareness to students and staff on exchange programmes.
- 2.6 provide guidelines for eligibility and process of staff and student exchange agreements.

3.0 Scope

The policy is applicable to:

- 3.1 existing cooperation contracts as well as new contract agreements for staff and students exchange for programmes, research, and participation in cultural exchange activities with partner institutions.
- 3.2 confirmed permanent and fixed-term staff and students that have successfully completed at least one year of undergraduate or one semester of postgraduate study at NOUN.
- 3.3 visiting students seeking foreign studentship from institutions which do not have partnership agreement with NOUN provided they are currently enrolled in an academic programme in their home country.
- 3.4 visiting research scholars in affiliated partner universities for research, or short-term visits as an academic, research scholar, specialist visiting the university.
- 3.5 The policy excludes adjunct staff, external facilitators and inactive students.

4.0 Definitions

- i) **Student Exchange:** A programme that enables students to study at a partner institution abroad for a defined period while earning academic credits.
- ii) **Staff Exchange:** A programme that allows academic and non-academic staff members to work at a partner institution, engaging in teaching, research, or administrative activities.
- iii) **Home Institution:** The university where the student intends to graduate or where the staff is employed.
- iv) **Host Institution:** The university that has agreed to receive exchange students or staff from the home university.
- v) **Inbound Exchange:** This is an exchange which involves students or staff coming to NOUN from a partner university under the auspice(s) of a specific partnership agreement between both institutions for a duration of a few days to one academic year or more based on the terms and conditions of the agreement.
- vi) **Outbound Exchange:** An exchange which students or staff from NOUN go to a partner university under the auspice of a specific partnership agreement between the two institutions for a period lasting a few days to one academic year or more depending on the terms and conditions of the agreement.

- vii) **Long Term Exchange:** An exchange that lasts for at least a period of one semester and requires participant(s) to attend courses for credit or undertake research in the host university.
- viii) **Short Term Exchange:** An exchange that not involving transfer of credits with a duration not exceeding 10 working days of a regular semester and requires absence from classes or work in the case of staff.
- ix) **Reciprocal Exchange:** An exchange of students and staff between NOUN and partner university. It specifies the maximum number of students that can be involved annually and commits the university to reciprocity in the arrangement over a specified period.
- x) **Visiting Student:** Students seeking foreign studentship at NOUN from institutions not in partnership agreement with NOUN. Only students who are currently enrolled in a degree programme in their home university are eligible.
- xi) **Research Scholar/Visiting Professor:** A research scholar is an affiliate from a partner university visiting primarily for the purpose of conducting research, observing or consulting in an area of a research project.
- xi) **Short-Term Visitor:** An academic, research scholar or specialist on visitation to give or receive a lecture or for the purposes of conducting other university related activities such as sports or arts.
- xii) **Student Exchange Agreement:** A contractual agreement between two institutions of higher education in which they agree for the one-for-one exchange of students to attend a semester or academic year in a school in a foreign country while a student from that country attends the NOUN.
- xiii) **Study Abroad Agreement:** Allows NOUN students to study for a semester or academic year at a school in a foreign country while status is as a student of NOUN.

5.0 Principles

NOUN is committed to the development of its students as global citizens and to building the capacity of its staff. To this end, the institution staff and student exchanges with other higher education institutions, that share common academic interests and values; and that can contribute to the fulfilment of its vision, mission, and objectives, without detriment to its reputation is encouraged.

6.0 Policy Statements

- 6.1 This Policy shall guide formal agreements between the partnering institutions and organisations through the provision of a broad framework for staff and student exchange programmes.

- 6.2 NOUN shall establish formal agreements with partner institutions, outlining the terms and conditions for exchange programmes.
- 6.3 A list of partner institutions will be maintained and updated regularly by the Directorate of Advancement and Linkages.
- 6.4 Eligibility:
- 6.4.1 Eligibility for Student Exchange:
- i. Undergraduate and graduate students of good academic standing.
 - ii. Compliance with the academic and language requirements of the host institution.
- 6.4.2 Eligibility for Staff Exchange:
- i. Full-time faculty members and non-academic staff.
 - ii. Satisfactory performance in their respective roles.
- 6.5 This policy shall be subject to all other principles outlined in the institution's policy on collaboration, partnerships, and linkages.

7.0 Policy Implementation

This policy shall become operational upon Senate's approval. It shall be implemented by the proponents of approved agreements while its administration and management shall be the Directorate of Advancement and Linkages. The Standard Operating Procedures for staff and student exchange are outlined as follows:

- 7.1 Application and Selection Process:
- 7.1.1 Interested students and staff must submit applications through the Directorate of Advancement and Linkages.
- 7.1.2 A selection committee shall be constituted to review applications and assess candidates based on academic and personal suitability.
- 7.1.3 Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interviews or evaluations, if necessary.
- 7.1.4 Successful candidates will receive detailed information about their exchange programme, including financial support, travel arrangements, and visa requirements.
- 7.2 Duration of Exchange:

- 7.2.1 The duration of student exchanges can vary from one semester to one academic year.
 - 7.2.2 Staff exchanges may range from several weeks to one academic year, depending on individual agreements and departmental needs.
- 7.3 Academic Credit and Workload:
- 7.3.1 For student exchanges, academic credits earned abroad must be transferable and count toward the student's degree programme.
 - 7.3.2 Staff members must work according to an agreed-upon workload, with a focus on teaching, research, or administrative responsibilities.
- 7.4 Financial Support:
- 7.4.1 The university will provide financial assistance, scholarships, or stipends to support students and staff during their exchange programmes.
 - 7.4.2 Additional funding may be available through external grants, scholarships, or sponsorships.
- 7.5 Safety and Insurance:
- 7.5.1 The university will provide guidance on safety and security measures to ensure the well-being of participants.
 - 7.5.2 All participants must have adequate health insurance coverage during their exchange programme.
- 7.6 Evaluation and Reporting:
- 7.6.1 Students and staff are required to submit periodic reports on their progress and experiences during the exchange.
 - 7.6.2 The university will conduct evaluations to assess the effectiveness of the exchange programme and make necessary improvements.

8.0 Sanctions on Violating this Policy

Beneficiaries are expected to adhere to the University's code of conduct and uphold the institution's reputation during their exchange. Violation of the terms and conditions

outlined in this policy shall be subjected to investigation and termination of the exchange programme and all other benefits.

9.0 Policy Alignment

This policy aligns with:

- 9.1 NOUN Act, No. 19, 2018
- 9.2 NOUN ODeL Policy
- 9.3 NOUN Policy on Collaborations, Partnerships, Affiliations and Linkages
- 9.4 NOUN Strategic Brief
- 9.5 NOUN Academic Brief
- 9.6 NOUN Regional strategy
- 9.7 NOUN Quality Assurance Policy

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