UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

Custodian /Responsible Executive	**Pro Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research**
Responsible Division	**Scholarly Communications Coordinating Committee**
Status	**Prepared by the Scholarly Communications Taskforce, reviewed by the UNAM Press Committee and the Deans Committee**
Recommended by	**Recommended to Senate by the UNAM Press Committee, 30 April 2013**
	Recommended to Senate by the Deans Committee, 6 May 2013
Approved by	**Senate**
Date approved	**29 August 2013**
Review date	**2018**
Stakeholders affected by this policy	**All UNAM staff, students, research collaborators and visiting Scholars**

RELATED DOCUMENTS

UNAM DOCUMENTS	NATIONAL DOCUMENTS
• UNAM Strategic Plan 2011-2015 • Research Strategy 2005 • Research Policy and Guidelines 2013 • Research Ethics Policy 2013 • UNAM Press Policy 2011 • Draft Intellectual Property Policy • Plagiarism Policy • Consultancy Policy, 2005	• University of Namibia Act of 1992, Act 18 of 1992 • Vision 2030 • National Development Plan NDP4 • Research, Science and Technology Policy, 1999 • Research Science and Technology Act of 2004 • Draft National Research and Development Policy of Namibia (Feb 2013) • Draft National Research and Development Strategy (March 2013)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1   CONTEXT

Scholarly communication encompasses the creation, transformation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge. This is the process by which academics, scholars and researchers publish and share their work in the academic community and beyond. In essence, scholarly communication is at the heart of the University's mission and mandate.

In recent years, changes in the process of communicating and disseminating research findings have created challenges for teaching, conducting research, and providing library and information services. Some of these challenges include:

- Changes in information technology
- The use of the internet as the primary distribution method in many fields
- The transition from print to digital formats
- The complexity of research in the 21st century
- Increased expectations for quick and easy access to research
- The evolution and transformation of traditional publishing models
- New imperatives for universities to take on the role of publisher
- Transforming intellectual property and copyright frameworks
- The changing pattern of research funding
- The expectation that publicly funded research should be freely accessible
- New initiatives to facilitate global data infrastructure coordination.

Higher education institutions are called upon to engage with these changes in order to ensure ongoing participation in global knowledge production. Transformation of the scholarly enterprise in terms of how institutions and individual academics manage their scholarly communication in open, participatory frameworks is additionally important in terms of ensuring adherence to new funder stipulations, securing competitive position in global ranking systems and addressing national socio-economic development imperatives.

A Research Policy and Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines for the University have been developed and are being submitted to the University Senate for approval. Section 7.5 (a) of the Research Policy states that: 'As the University is a publicly funded institution, the standard expectation is that all research outputs will be published in a publicly available form.'

However, much of the research done at the University is not easily accessible and this limits its impact and value for the purposes of development and/or further scholarly enquiry and debate. What is needed is a policy that defines how research and other scholarly outputs will be shared and disseminated.

Guidance is also needed on the management of publications coming from the University, of different types and different standards, to avoid duplication and encourage good scholarly practices.

The UNAM Press policy of 2011 identified the need for an overall scholarly communications policy at the university 'to cover the range of publications emanating from the University… different types of publication, different forms of dissemination, e.g. print and online, sales or free distribution.' It

further states that such a scholarly communications policy 'also needs to address the University's position regarding online publication, the sharing of data, and open access to some University research' (UNAM Press Policy adopted by Senate 31 October 2011, Resolution SEN/11/2211/100, point 14).

The University needs to position itself with regard to the growing international Open Access movement whereby academic institutions, including more than twenty in Africa, are opening up and making their research available through the internet, often free of charge.

The Scholarly Communications in Africa Project of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (2011-2013) has proved to be a valuable pilot project in this regard and has identified many of the issues to be considered in the development of a scholarly communications policy for the University.

Other discussions on scholarly communication at UNAM and in the broader Namibian society, have also led to an increased awareness of the issues.

In December 2012, the Pro Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research established a Scholarly Communication Taskforce charged with developing a scholarly communications policy for the University of Namibia. It drew its terms of references from point 14 of the UNAM Press policy document cited above and developed this current document.

2   DEFINITION OF TERMS

Scholarly communication encompasses the creation, transformation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge. This is the process by which academics, scholars and researchers publish and share their work in the academic community and beyond.

Scholarly outputs are outputs coming from University staff, visiting scholars, and students, as part of their academic work. These include the whole range of publication types and other forms of knowledge production and sharing: conference papers, books, monographs, journal articles, research abstracts, consultancy reports, sound, video and film recordings, artistic and creative works, and the interactive multimedia.

Academic work refers to the systematic collection of information, scientific research, the synthesis and analysis of existing knowledge, and the application and production of knowledge.

Communicate – to share or exchange information or ideas.

Publish – to assess, review, edit, prepare and issue a book, journal or other scholarly output.

Disseminate – to spread scholarly outputs widely.

Open Access – The use of the internet to make scholarly outputs accessible online, free of charge to the reader, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions (see section 9).

Author – the person who writes a text.

Knowledge producers are responsible for the creation of new knowledge.

Copy-editing – The final editorial check before design and layout. This includes checks for structure and logical sequence of argument, repetition, ambiguity, heading levels, consistency, spelling; as well as marking up illustrations, checking references and bibliographical citations, etc.

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to:

a)   All Schools, Faculties, Campuses, Academic Centres, Academic Departments and other Academic structures under the umbrella of the University;

b)   All staff, whether temporary or permanent, part-time or full-time, who are active in research at the University;

c)   All students, whether full-time or part-time, visiting or resident, engaged in research activities at UNAM; and

d)   Visiting scholars and collaborating research partners under the auspices of UNAM during their stay.

4 RELATED POLICIES AT UNAM

The Scholarly Communications Policy is grounded in the University's mandate and the UNAM Strategic Plan 2011-2015.

It draws on and is in line with the UNAM Press Policy, the Research Policy, the Research Ethics Policy, and the Research Guidelines of the University, which collectively establish the framework for international standards of scholarly research at UNAM, and the publishing of that research. It is also in line with the Intellectual Property Policy and the Plagiarism Policy.

5 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The fundamental purpose of the Scholarly Communications Policy is to increase access to information, knowledge, research, and artistic and creative works, in order to facilitate the academic enterprise at the University and advance the progress of society.

The Policy aims to:

a)   provide a framework and guidelines for communicating scholarly outputs from the University of Namibia;

b)   raise the profile of the University's research and enhance its impact and its contribution to national development;

c)   establish common standards of academic writing and scholarly outputs at the University;

d)   ensure quality by promoting adherence to best practices in the University's scholarly outputs;

e)   make scholarly outputs of the University accessible in different formats to different audiences;

f) establish sustainable management strategies for the communication of scholarly outputs at the University;

g) strengthen the preservation and archiving of the University's scholarly outputs.

6   STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Cognisant of the importance of scholarly communication, the University of Namibia supports and affirms the following principles:

a) Scholarly outputs have greater impact if communicated to the desired audience. Thus communication of scholarly outputs is an essential part of the academic discourse.

b) The communication of scholarly outputs requires infrastructure, capacity and strategic engagement for long-term curation in order to ensure that scholarly communication activity can be sustained; and that knowledge is preserved for future generations.

c) The effective communication of scholarly outputs supports the advancement of knowledge and its application to the socio-economic and cultural development of society.

d) Scholarly outputs benefit from peer input and should be of high standard.

e) The peer-review process – the independent opinion of subject experts – adds value to research and affirms its scientific integrity. This is a key process of quality assurance.

f) Scholarly outputs benefit from editing and formatting for presentation to the desired audience. This is a process of quality assurance and value addition.

g) These communication processes incur costs. Therefore funding proposals for research should also include the costs of communicating the results of that research.

h) Communication should not be confined merely to the academic sphere but should also be directed at policy makers, development partners, the concerned and affected parties, and the general public.

i) Dissemination of scholarly outputs therefore needs to be in different forms for different audiences.

j) New technologies, new publication and dissemination models, and a variety of media should be used to communicate the results of scholarly outputs.

k) Online access provides almost immediate communication of scholarly outputs and is to be encouraged.

l) The University supports and should become a signatory to regional and international Open Access initiatives and protocols.

m) The preservation of scholarly outputs for long-term future use is of vital importance.

n) The University is committed to the fair use of copyrighted information and the protection of intellectual property rights (including patents) of authors, knowledge producers, and publishers, in accordance with the University's Intellectual Property Policy and Research Policy.

o) Rights-holders and users should be made aware of their rights and responsibilities.

p) The University recognises the rights of indigenous knowledge holders to fair benefit sharing from any knowledge outputs/products coming from indigenous knowledge systems and practices, in accordance with Article 95(l) of the Constitution of the

Republic of Namibia, which refers to the 'utilization of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future'.

q)   The University respects and is bound by the provision of Article 21(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia regarding the right of freedom of speech and expression, which includes academic freedom, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the University.

r)   Raw data from University-funded research should, where ethically possible, be made available for other researchers.

7   TYPES OF SCHOLARLY OUTPUTS

Scholarly outputs published in the name of the University, its Faculties, Autonomous Academic Centres and Departments, should be subject to peer input and/or peer review.

To ensure that scholarly outputs are presented to high standards, UNAM Press and the Research and Publications Office will develop guidelines for different types of scholarly outputs published or otherwise communicated/disseminated in the name of the University:

- Technical reports
- Research reports
- Discussion papers
- Book chapters
- Books
- Monographs
- Textbooks
- Conference papers
- Conference proceedings
- Occasional publications
- Journal articles
- Journals
- Sound/video recordings
- Creative and artistic works
- Book reviews
- Theses and dissertations
- Honours research projects
- Policy and other briefs

These guidelines will include formats, referencing standards, peer-review procedures, copy-editing, and data presentation.

Non-scholarly outputs such as newsletters, Annual Reports, popular mass media articles, opinion pieces, media briefings, and radically new and innovative publications, are not covered by this policy.

Any work written or done in the name of the university must clearly indicate affiliation and acknowledgement of the University of Namibia.

Any work written or done in an individual capacity must carry a statement from the author that this is so.

8   QUALITY ASSURANCE

8.1   The Peer-review Process

The University is committed to a rigorous academic peer-review process. However, innovation in peer review procedures, including open peer review and less formal web based approaches, are encouraged.

Less formal peer input is encouraged when formal peer review has not yet taken place.

It should always be made clear what process of peer-review the publication has gone through.

If scholarly outputs are updated, revised, or annotated after being disseminated, this should be clearly stated and the timeline clearly established so that users can see the development of the work.

8.2   Technological Advances

Through changes of technology, content can be delivered in new ways. Attention should be paid to the rapid developments in digital publishing, social media, and other changes in technology, and different ways of communicating scholarly outputs.

Whatever the form of dissemination, scholarly communication, however, remains rooted in the best practices of scholarly research, peer-review, quality control, and editing. Print or online scholarly outputs must be subject to the same scrutiny, review, revision, copy-editing and proofreading.

9   OPEN ACCESS

The University recognises that as a largely public-funded institution, it has an obligation to share its research findings and scholarly outputs with all stakeholders and the wider society. It also recognises that the Open Access model of scholarly communication is a means to advance research. It allows scholarly outputs to reach a much wider audience, and thus to be cited more often, which raises the profile of the author/knowledge producer and the University.

Through Open Access, scholarly outputs are made accessible online, free of charge to the reader, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. What makes this possible is the internet and the consent of the author or copyright holder, while ensuring proper attribution of their work. This approach is compatible with peer review, and it is widely acknowledged that there is no correlation between quality of work and the extent of openness in the publishing model. Open access publishing additionally has the benefit of making scientific work open to scrutiny and re-use after publication.

Hence:

   a)   The University encourages authors/knowledge producers to communicate their work via the internet, according to the principles of the Open Access paradigm.

b) The University encourages authors/knowledge producers to communicate their materials in Open Access journals that are accredited.

c) Authors/knowledge producers are encouraged not to surrender copyright to publishers but to negotiate copyright terms to allow the archiving, re-use and sharing of scholarly outputs.

d) The University encourages Creative Commons licensing arrangements that provide a flexible range of protections for authors/knowledge producers.

e) Guidelines shall be developed to assist authors/knowledge producers to communicate their scholarly outputs through Open Access.

10   INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY

The University shall further develop its digital Institutional Repository as a route to Open Access, to make its scholarly outputs publicly accessible free of charge. This will make scholarly outputs more visible, encourage greater reuse, enable them to have greater impact, and preserve them for the long term. This will require the active commitment of all producers and holders of scientific and indigenous knowledge.

Hence:

a) Authors/knowledge producers shall provide electronic copies (soft and/or hard) of their full scholarly outputs where they retain copyright of their intellectual property.

b) Authors/knowledge producers shall provide raw data, source materials, scientific research results, digital representations, multi-media, conference papers, and others.

c) Authors/knowledge producers shall provide abstracts and metadata of scholarly outputs if they are published in copyrighted publications.

d) Author/knowledge producers shall retain the right to be properly acknowledged and cited for their work.

e) The University may limit access to specified scholarly outputs for specific periods of time due to copyright or ethical considerations.

11   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR GOVERNING SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS AT UNAM

Cooperation and collaboration among the Research and Publications Office, Faculties and Autonomous Academic Centres, UNAM Press, the ILRC and the Computer Centre, is essential to create an information infrastructure that will make scholarly outputs accessible.

11.1   Scholarly Communications Coordinating Committee

A Scholarly Communications Coordinating Committee shall be established to oversee the management and implementation of this policy. It will report to the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Research.

The aims of the Scholarly Communications Coordinating Committee shall be to:

a) Increase awareness of the issues related to scholarly communication.
b) Encourage discussion on scholarly communication issues at UNAM and in the broader Namibian society.
c) Develop capacity at the University to ensure ongoing evolution and sustainability in scholarly communication activity.
d) Foster and promote traditional and alternative methods for communicating and preserving the scholarly outputs of the University.
e) Provide author tools that will enable UNAM staff, researchers, scientists and students to access, share, and transform content that results in new scholarly output.
f) Reduce barriers caused by publisher-imposed licensing restrictions.
g) Gather and address concerns/questions from the University community regarding copyright, author rights and author publication agreements; distribution and preservation of digital works; open access issues; public access mandates; self-archiving options; digital repositories; data retention and storage; publication practices; funding policies; and other scholarly communication issues.
h) Develop guidelines to assist authors/knowledge producers to communicate their scholarly outputs.
i) Deal with any violation of this policy in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations of the University.

11.2   Faculties and Autonomous Academic Centres

Faculties and Autonomous Academic Centres are responsible for content production and depositing materials in the Institutional Repository and any other arrangements made to implement scholarly communication at UNAM. They also have the responsibility to ensure quality and other obligations are adhered to in the production of scholarly outputs, including the responsibility to ensure that scholarly outputs adhere to this Scholarly Communications Policy.

11.3   Research and Publications Office

The Research and Publications Office shall offer coordination, facilitation and support for research activities at UNAM and the publication of scholarly outputs in journals outside the University. They shall maintain a database of research projects undertaken by UNAM staff and ensure that all UNAM and externally funded research is deposited in the institutional repository.

11.4   UNAM Press

UNAM Press is responsible for maintaining the quality of scholarly publications by managing the editorial development of manuscripts, the design, layout, production and printing, marketing, distribution and sale, of books and journals approved for publication in the name of the University of Namibia.

11.4.1 UNAM Journals

UNAM Press shall develop guidelines for journals in the name of the University and its Faculties and Academic Centres.

Existing journals shall conform to these guidelines if they do not already do so.

Proposals to develop new journals shall be submitted to the UNAM Press Committee, which will evaluate them to ensure that guidelines and best practices are followed, and to avoid duplication.

UNAM Press shall propose ways of managing journals on a sustainable and cost-effective basis.

UNAM Press shall develop an online journal publishing platform and capacity to host journals from Faculties and Centres, linked to the institutional repository.

All online journals published by the University of Namibia shall be free of charge to the authors and users.

11.5 Library and Information and Learning Resource Centre (ILRC)

The ILRC shall administer and maintain the Institutional Repository and ensure the integration of scholarly outputs with the overall ILRC collections by creating multiple access points.

It shall train the UNAM community on how to deposit and access publications from the Institutional Repository,and provide ongoing support to the academic community in the development and utilisation of the Institutional Repository.

11.6 Computer Centre

The Computer Centre shall be responsible for the acquisition of hardware and software and the provision of latest technologies to support scholarly communication. It will host the server for the Institutional Repository, and do back-ups.

11.7 School of Postgraduate Studies

The School of Postgraduate Studies shall establish and maintain a database of on-going postgraduate students' research.

11.8 Centre for External Studies

The Centre for External Studies has the responsibility of ensuring quality and other obligations are adhered to in the production of scholarly outputs for distance education students. Distance education materials and lecture notes produced by the Centre for External Studies shall be made available to students online.

11.9 Multidisciplinary Research Centre (MRC)

The MRC's mandate is to carry out both commissioned and non-commissioned research. In accordance with the provisions of section 10 above, the MRC will be encouraged to submit copies of both types of research reports to the University's Institutional Repository, in full or in the form of abstracts. In this way the research will be widely accessible to the University community and beyond. The Scholarly

Communications Coordinating Committee will assist regarding copyright issues where work has been commissioned.

11.10   University Central Consultancy Bureau (UCCB)

The UCCB carries out commissioned research. In accordance with the provisions of section 10 above, the UCCB will also be encouraged to submit copies of its research reports to the University's Institutional Repository, in full or in the form of abstracts. In this way the research will be widely accessible to the University community and beyond. The Scholarly Communications Coordinating Committee will assist regarding copyright issues where work has been commissioned.

12   BUDGETARY PROVISION

Traditional publishing models, where scholarly outputs are published for sale in books and journals, are being challenged by a worldwide drop in sales of scholarly publications, and increasing expectations that research, especially if it is publicly funded, should be accessible to the user free of charge. However, Open Access scholarly outputs are not without cost.

Scholarly communications are a core function of the University of Namibia and the effective and ongoing communication of the University's scholarly outputs requires commitment and investment from the University.

The University will also engage in ongoing exploration of opportunities for further development and conversation with prospective funding partners to facilitate future development in this area.

13   EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy will take effect when approved by the University Senate.

14   REVISION AND AMENDMENT OF THE POLICY

The policy will be reviewed in 5-year cycles.