



The American University of Kurdistan Policy of Communications

Policy Number: GA014
Effective Date: May 28, 2023

1. **Policy:** This policy establishes standards for institutional communication to ensure accuracy, consistency, and coherence across all University materials. It strengthens information verification and quality assurance processes and promotes consistent implementation across the American University of Kurdistan (AUK). The policy will be communicated openly to the University community and reviewed periodically to ensure continued relevance, institutional integrity, and alignment with AUK's mission, strategic objectives, and academic framework. All members of the AUK community are expected to adhere to this policy.
 - a. **Purpose:** The purpose of this Policy is to incorporate guidelines and resources, including the AUK Style Guide, News Article Style Guide, Guidelines for Celebrating International and National Days, and the Press Release Information Form. This policy ensures that all faculty, staff, and students are directed to the correct standards and procedures for official communications, promoting consistency, professionalism, and clarity across all University-facing materials. The policy:
 - Lays out the appropriate rules for any public messaging or communication.
 - Seeks to have multiple gatekeepers who will check to ensure all information is complete, accurate, accessible, current and transparent.
 - Recognizes the importance of consistent, appropriate, and successful internal and external communications in helping the University to fulfill its goals and objectives and maintain its credibility as a transparent organization.
 - b. **Scope:** This policy applies to all members of the AUK community: Faculty, staff, and students.

2. **Definition of Terms:**

Copyright: Copyright is a set of legal rights granted to the author of an original literary, artistic, or scientific work, giving them exclusive authority to use, reproduce, distribute, and benefit from their work for a specified period.

External Communications: Messages and information that the University disseminates to various audiences, whether directly (through telephone calls, emails, letters, newsletters, articles, marketing materials, social media platforms, online and/or press releases) or indirectly through the media and word of mouth. All communication and information shared with AUK visitors and stakeholders, such as trustees, sponsors, partners, supporters, and important suppliers, are included in external communications.

Internal Communications: Any verbal and written messages and information exchanged within the University primarily between staff members, but also between Trustees and staff. Information provided to franchise employees, volunteers and staff members of companies collaborating in AUK projects is included in internal communications.

Social Media: A software system or service provided via the Internet used to communicate and share information between people through interactions with video, audio, text, visuals or multimedia. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Wikis, Google Plus, Flickr, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Wordpress, chatrooms, forums and other similar services.

Transparency or Being Transparent: The process of being open, honest, and direct about various arrangements, activities, and initiatives being performed regarding the operations of AUK.

3. Responsibilities:

- a. **Issuing Unit:** Office of Communications (OC)
- b. **Other Stakeholders:** Faculty, Staff, and Students

4. Procedures:

- a. **AI usage in internal and external communications:** AI tools may be used to amplify and improve human work; not to displace human creativity, judgment, or accountability. The University recognized that the quality, inclusivity, and attention to detail that define AUK's communications cannot be replicated by AI alone. All use of AI in University communications must reflect this commitment.

General Principals

- All tools are assistive mechanisms. They support productivity and value creation but do not replace human responsibility for accuracy, tone, and integrity of any content produced.
- Individuals remain fully accountable for all content they produce or publish, regardless of whether AI tools were used in the process.
- AI tools must not be used to deceive, spread misinformation, or violate any University policy or guideline.
- All AI-assisted content must undergo human review for factual accuracy, appropriate tone, alignment with AUK's Brand Guidelines and Style Guide (See Section 6: Related Documents), and ethical integrity before use or publication.
- AI tools may be used to assist in drafting internal documents, reports, and announcements, provided the output is carefully reviewed and edited by the responsible individual before distribution.
- The use of AI for image and video enhancement (e.g., color grading, noise reduction) is acceptable, provided it does not substantially alter the authenticity of the content. If scientific data is presented, any enhancement must be reviewed with the originating source. The OC will notify individuals to remove non-compliant content, with serious or repeated violations escalated to direct supervisors and the relevant Vice President, and subject to the Policy of Employee/Student Code of Conduct.
- The individual producing the content is responsible for:
 - fact-checking all AI-generated output;
 - Ensuring the content complies with AUK Style Guide and applicable University policies;
 - Ensuring no text is reproduced verbatim from external sources.

b. Internal Communications Guidelines

- The University shall promote the use of communication channels (Social Media/Website) that enable authentic discussion and feedback.
- Email announcements intended for the campus community must be reviewed to ensure accuracy and alignment with AUK's tone. AI-generated emojis must be removed before distribution.
- The Director of OC will establish mechanisms to continuously monitor media coverage and respond to such coverage accordingly, providing the media with accurate, pertinent, and verified information.
- The University shall promote a marketing approach intended to build the University's reputation among the public and private sectors while also generating interest in the education and services AUK offers. Such advertising aims to continuously foster a positive image of the University and assure observance of the best marketing strategies via print, broadcast and new media.
- Branding is a potent identity tool for every institution. The University shall always portray its identity to its stakeholders through the use of the appropriate logo, name, fonts, and colors as published in the AUK Logo Branding Manual Guidelines (See Section 6: Related Documents).
- All communications shall be in English; the University will also determine which publications and messaging should be concurrently posted in Kurdish and Arabic.
- All forms of communication should be respectful and free of discriminatory remarks, including those based on race, ethnicity, or gender.
- All interactions with TV stations and journalists must go through the OC.
- Procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the University's communication activities:
 - Monitoring communication channels and engagement metrics; tracking website traffic, social media engagement, and email open rates.

- Soliciting feedback from stakeholders.
- Analyzing media coverage: monitoring media and how the University is portrayed in the media.
- Conducting periodic reviews of communication efforts for improvement and ensuring that communication strategies are aligned with the University's goals and objectives.

c. External Communications Guidelines

- The AUK web site and platforms are crucial for effective external communications. The University website's editorial oversight falls under the purview of the OC.
- The content on the website should always be current, user-friendly and managed to comply with the institutional mission.
- In accordance with applicable policies and procedures, the University community will utilize AUK email addresses in an ethical and responsible manner. The official AUK email address is a primary means of communication both within AUK and externally.
- AUK has official social media accounts on outlets including; Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Flickr.
- Communications should be considered as a component of the larger field of advocacy in which the University aims to:
 - Ensure those who are supporters and donors of the University (governmental and nongovernmental, public and private sector) are informed via high-quality information on its projects, plans, and programs of activity.
 - Reach out to target audiences (e.g. prospective students, their parents, school administrators, current and potential institutional collaborators) with the objective of developing its teaching and learning and community outreach initiatives.
 - Ensure that the University's visual identity, as displayed in all of its print and digital communications, is transparent, consistent, coherent, and conveys the University's core mission and institutional learning goals.

d. Personal Social Media Platforms

- When promoting AUK activities or events on personal social media platforms, individuals are encouraged to use graphics and content created and published by AUK's official channels rather than generating their own.
- AI-generated graphics for personal platforms that reference or promote AUK activities are discouraged. Where used, they must align with AUK's Brand Guidelines and Style Guide and must not misrepresent the University.
- Individuals remain personally responsible for ensuring that any AI-assisted content they publish in connection with AUK is accurate, appropriate, and consistent with University values.

e. Standards and usage:

- The University's Brand Guidelines provides the standards and usage for all internal and external communications formats and design styles.
- All requests for content to be posted and published on AUK's website, webpages, and all Social Media platforms need to correspond to the Policy of Website Management (See Section 6: Related Documents) and be officially petitioned via a request form.

f. AUK Style Guide:

- The AUK Style Guide (See Section 6: Related Documents) establishes the University's official standards for written communication, covering abbreviations, formatting, capitalization, program naming, and institutional terminology. All faculty, staff, and students are expected to consult this guide when preparing official documents, reports, and publications.
- The News Article Style Guide (See Section 6: Related Documents) outlines the standards for writing informative, fact-based news content at AUK. It provides guidance on paragraph structure, fact selection, and coherence to ensure clear and professional reporting. This guide is available on the AUK website and should be referenced when producing news articles on behalf of the University.

- g. Guidelines for Celebrating and Recognizing, International, World, and National Days**
- The AUK Guidelines for Celebrating and Recognizing International, World and National Days (See Section 6: Related Documents) ensure that observance events are handled in a strategic, culturally appropriate, and consistent manner. These guidelines clarify responsibilities, support quality assurance, and prevent cultural insensitivity in campus-wide celebrations.
- h. AUK Press Release Information Form**
- The AUK Press Release Information Form (See Section 6: Related Documents) must be completed by the organizing Unit for any event requesting media presence and submitted to the OC at least one business day before the event. The OC will use this information to draft and distribute the official press release
- i. Policy Violation**
- Violations of any University policy are deemed a serious breach of AUK’s Policy of Employee Code of Conduct (See Section 6: Related Documents).

5. Timeline and Communication/Implementation Plan:

6. Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Communication Channels	Details
Policy Revision Announcement	Communications	May, 2026	University website, email, Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, Academic Council	Announce the revision of the policy, assessment metrics & objectives
Feedback Collection	Communications	June, 2027	Suggestion form sent via email	Gather feedback from AUK community on the policy’s effectiveness, challenges & areas for improvement
Periodic Reviews and Updates	OIEP, University Leadership, Communications	As necessary	University website, email	Review the policy & its enforcement mechanisms & procedures annually or as necessary to ensure continued relevance & compliance

6. Related Documents:

- [Policy of Website Management](#)
- [Policy of Social Media](#)
- [Policy of Freedom of Expression](#)
- [Policy of Employee Code of Conduct](#)
- [Policy of Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Policy of Use of University Name](#)
- [AUK Press Release Form](#)
- [AUK Style Guide](#)
- [OC Social Media Form](#)
- [Talking Points](#)
- [AUK Brand Guideline](#)
- [Secondary Brand Guideline](#)
- [News Article Style Guide](#)

7. Ways to Measure Success:

Compliance rate: Percentage of internal and external communications that follow the AUK Style Guide, branding guidelines, and approved communication procedures.

8. Policy History

- a. **Approved by:** Board of Trustees
- b. **Adopted:** May 28, 2023
- c. **Revised:** April 30, 2026