THE UNIVERSITY OF AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR
MUZAFFARABAD

ORDER:-

The Vice Chancellor, on the recommendations of the Committee constituted vide Order No.F.6-42/Establishment/7930-37/2022 dated: 28-11-2022, has been pleased to accord approval of Media Policy for the University in anticipation to the Academic Council and Syndicate (copy attached).

Additional Registrar

No. Academics & Meetings/2585-99/2023   Dated: 27-09-2023

Copy of the above to:-

1. Secretary to the Vice Chancellor, UAJ&K.
2. The Dean, Faculty of Science, UAJ&K.
3. The Dean, Faculty of Engineering, UAJ&K.
4. The Dean, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, UAJ&K.
5. The Associate Dean, Faculty of Health & Medical Science, UAJ&K.
6. All Chairmen/Directors/Coordinators of the Departments/Institutes, UAJ&K.
7. The Controller of Examinations, UAJ&K.
8. The Director, Advanced Studies & Research, UAJ&K.
9. The Director, Quality Enhancement Cell/ Resident Director KAC, UAJ&K.
10. The Director Finance & Planning, UAJ&K.
11. The Director, ORIC, UAJ&K.
12. The Director Students Affairs, UAJ&K.
13. The Director Jehlum Valley Campus.
14. The Director Neelum Campus.
15. Master file.

Assistant Registrar
(Academics & Meetings)

Media Policy for the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK)

1. Introduction:

In the contemporary landscape, Mass Media stands as a distinctive and influential pillar of modern society. It encompasses a diverse array of communication channels, including radio, newspapers, television (TV), and the vast realm of the internet. These conventional and contemporary media outlets serve as invaluable resources for the dissemination of information, news, and the latest updates to the masses. Recognizing the immense potential that lies within these channels, the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) is dedicated to developing a comprehensive media policy.

Our aim is to harness the power of various media platforms to foster enduring and mutually beneficial relationships. This extends to our institutional internal and external public, our current and prospective students, their parents, our esteemed alumnae, relevant departments, and the wider local and national media landscape.

As the largest and most venerable institution of higher education in our region, UAJK is resolute in its commitment to utilize all available means of information sharing. We seek to propagate our core competencies, accomplishments, and future plans through the formulation of a cohesive policy that empowers our employees to engage with the media effectively. In doing so, we aim to project a positive and authentic image of the university to the public.

Furthermore, our institution places great importance on the principle of freedom of expression at all levels, recognizing its role in fortifying our democratic system. This all-encompassing policy not only serves as a guideline for our employees but also extends to our students, emphasizing the responsible and ethical use of social media to maintain the integrity and prestige of our premier institution.

With a deep understanding of the pivotal role that media plays in shaping public perception and disseminating information, the UAJK presents this proposed media policy. Its primary objective is to provide clear and ethical guidelines, ensuring that our engagement with the media remains responsible, transparent, and aligned with our institutional values.

2. Aim of the Policy:

The primary aim of this policy is to:

- ✓ **Provide Guidance**: Offer clear and comprehensive guidance to both students and staff of the UAJK regarding the responsible and ethical use of media. This guidance is intended to align with and uphold the core values and principles of the University while ensuring the privacy and safety of all individuals involved.

- ✓ **Ensure Quality Content**: Ensure the quality and accuracy of content disseminated through mainstream and social media channels, particularly through UAJK's official social media accounts. This is vital to maintain the credibility and trustworthiness of the information provided to the public.

- ✓ **Regulate Engagement with Mainstream Media**: Establish defined parameters for employees and students when engaging with mainstream media outlets, fostering a consistent and responsible approach to media interactions.

- ✓ **Combat Disrepute and Fake/Malicious Agenda**: Take decisive action against individuals who engage in activities that tarnish the reputation of the University or propagate false or malicious agendas against any of its officers or authorities. This includes safeguarding the integrity and reputation of the institution and its members.

In summary, this policy aims to promote responsible media usage, safeguard privacy, maintain the quality of information shared, regulate engagements with external media, and protect the University's image from disrepute and false agendas.

3. Scope:

This policy is applicable to all members of the UAJK community, including internal departments, employees, faculty members and students. It governs the responsible use of any form of media, whether for professional or personal purposes, whether on or off-campus. Additionally, this policy extends to address any news, information, or remarks originating from external sources that target the University, its employees, or its authorities. In such cases, these external entities will also be subject to the guidelines and procedures outlined in this policy.

4. Definition:

- **Media**: Media encompasses electronic media, print media, and social media.
- **Social Media**: Social media is defined as any platform or technology that enables individuals to create, share, or exchange information, opinions, and content online.
- **Subject Experts**: Subject experts are individuals approved by the Vice Chancellor to represent the university in media interactions.
- **Outsider**: An outsider is an individual who is neither a student nor an employee of the University.

5. General Guidelines:

Following are the general guidelines for the social media users:

1) Respect the rights, privacy, and dignity of others, including University members and the public, when posting or commenting on social media.
2) Do not engage in any form of cyberbullying, harassment, or discrimination on social media, including making derogatory or offensive comments or using hateful language.
3) Do not use social media to disclose any confidential or proprietary information of the University or any of its members.
4) Do not engage in any activity that could damage the reputation of the University or any of its members.
5) Use social media responsibly and ensure that any content you share is accurate, factual, and complies with applicable laws and regulations.
6) Use social media to foster constructive dialogue and positive interactions with the University community and the public.
7) Do not make any social media channel or group or page to share the University information/ news.
8) Students are expected to uphold the privacy and dignity of their fellow students, faculty members, and University staff. It is strictly prohibited to capture photographs or videos of individuals and share them on social media without obtaining their prior consent.
9) It is duty of all the employees to report any derogatory remarks or defamatory content related to University or any of its officials to Public Relations Office.

6. Violation Consequences:

> **For Students**: Any violation of this policy by students will be addressed in accordance with their established code of conduct.

> **For Employees& Faculty**: Employees and faculty members found in violation will be subject to disciplinary action as per the University's E&D (Efficiency & Discipline) Statutes.

> **For Outsiders**: Violations committed by outsiders, electronic and social media channels, and social media page/group admins will be pursued through the appropriate legal channels, involving the concerned Law Enforcement Agency and the Courts of Law.

7. Personal Accounts:

The University respects the personal use of social media by students, staff and faculty members but expects them to be mindful of the content they post and its potential impact on the University and its members.Students, staff and faculty members are personally responsible for the content they post on their personal social media accounts.

Do not imply or suggest that the University endorses any personal views or activities shared on social media.

8. Vigilance By Public Relations Office

The Public Relations Office will act vigilantly and keep an eye on notorious and offensive activities against the University or any of its officials through media platforms. All such activities will be reported to the Vice Chancellor along with endorsement to the Registrar on priority basis so that a prompt course of action to be adopted. In case of any malign activity targeting specific official (s), the concerned official will also be communicated the happening by Public Relations Office.

A. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY UAJK

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and other social media platforms have emerged as the most effective means to communicate with a large audience in the fastest possible way. The effective use of such interactive mediums would help UAJK in connecting with its internal and external public and in providing the university's community with the most recent news and information. However, their proper utilization requires policy standards that control their use by the students and staff of the institution. In the absence of clear policy guidelines regarding social media usage, there is also a potential risk of its misuse.

I. Applicability

All UAJK students, staff and faculty members, and anyone else using social media to collaborate while disclosing their affiliation with UAJK is subject to the university's social media policies.

II. Authority for official Accounts

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) is authorized official to manage, update official social media accounts of the university of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

III. Need of Social Media Accounts

The need for and suitability of any social media accounts for usage by the university will be determined by the PRO.

IV. Preferred Names

All official social media accounts of the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir preferablybe run under *OfficialUAJK* or *UAJKOfficial*.

V. Working hours

Sharing of information on official social media accounts can be done during working hours. However, in case important and urgent nature information is required to be shared, posting can be made other than official hours. The official social media accounts of UAJK shall not be updated on holidays except the emergency.

VI. Use of Logo

The institutional social media accounts shall be run with the official logo of the university. No other internal account of any department academic or administrative department of the university is entitled to use the official logo, or the name of the university. The UAJK logo, graphics, or iconography may not be used to advertise any commercial good or service on personal social media platforms or support any political party or candidate.

VII. Confidential Information

No user is permitted to use any protective, sensitive or confidential information relating to UAJK, its faculty, staff, or students. The university's confidentiality and privacy policies must be strictly followed. Students and staff must refrain from disseminating any material that could harm the reputation of the university, their fellow students, faculty or staff of the prestigious institution. Any information pertaining to the institution may not be disclosed by employees on social media. UAJK reserved the right to take strict disciplinary action against those found involved in sharing any such information.

VIII. Social Media Feed

It is imperative that all University departments promptly share comprehensive details regarding their initiatives, events, success stories, and any other noteworthy and public interest matters with the University's Public Relations (PR) Office. Submissions should be sent via email to pro@ajku.edu.pk. This information will be considered for publication through the University's primary social media accounts, press releases, and newsletters. To enhance the quality of content, please ensure that relevant high-resolution pictures and videos of the activities are included. Please note that any information already publicly available, shared by departmental pages, individuals, or not considered fresh will not be featured on the University's official pages.

IX. Suitability of the Content

The authorized officials of the Public Relations Office of UAJK shall decide the suitability of the content to be published on official accounts.

X. Departmental Accounts, Pages

Departments other than Public Relations are permitted to manage their departmental accounts with prior approval from the competent authority. These departments must also communicate the names of the designated officials managing these accounts, along with their contact information and account URLs to the UAJK Public Relations Office.

XI. Authorized officials for Departmental Accounts

The Heads of the Departments (*HoDs*) and their designated officials who oversee departmental accounts must make sure that information of public interest about their programs and activities is shared in the appropriate ways.Stern disciplinary action would arise from the misuse of any departmental account connected to the UAJK.

XII. Promotion of personal views

No student, staff or faculty member is permitted to express his or her own personal opinions on Departmental social media platforms. Upholding the University's mission and vision should be the main priority. No political commentary is permitted unless it supports the university's already-communicated official stance on a particular issue.

B. ENGAGEMENT WITH MAINSTREAM MEDIA

The Public Relations Office of the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir recognizes the importance of mainstream media in disseminating accurate and reliable information to the public. In order to ensure the highest standards of journalism, the Public Relations Office has developed the following policy to guide its interactions with mainstream media outlets.

I. Transparency and Accuracy:

The Public Relations Office of UAJK will strive to be transparent and accurate in its interactions with mainstream media outlets. Any information shared with the media will be factually accurate and supported by evidence. The Department will take steps to correct any inaccuracies or errors in reporting as soon as possible.

II. Respect for Privacy and Confidentiality:

The Public Relations Office of the UAJK will respect the privacy and confidentiality of its students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders. No confidential information will be shared with the media without prior approval from the relevant individuals or departments.

III. Media Inquiries:

All media inquiries should be directed to the Public Relations Office of the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The Department will coordinate responses with relevant departments and individuals to ensure that accurate and timely information is provided to the media.

IV. Media Relations:

The Public Relations Office of the UAJK will maintain positive and professional relationships with mainstream media outlets. The Department will provide regular updates on University events, programs, and initiatives to the media to ensure that accurate information is reported.

V. Press Releases and Statements:

The Public Relations Office of the UAJK will be responsible to issue press release on the news-worthy events. No academic/nonacademic department, its faculty member or studentsare entitled to issue news or any clarification to media.

VI. Official stance:

The Public Relations Office of UAJK will hold the sole responsibility for issuing official statements once they have received approval from the competent authority. It is crucial to note that no official, whether from academic or non-academic departments, is authorized to provide official statements or clarifications to the media. However, the Public Relations Office is authorized to request information from any department, and it is expected that this information will be promptly provided with the utmost priority. Responses should be in writing and carry the signature of the respective Head of Department (HoD) within the given timeframe.

VII. Media Invitation Protocol and Responsibility

The responsibility for inviting media personnel to UAJK programs shall rest solely with the Media Cell of the university. No department shall independently extend invitations to the press for any function. In cases where such invitations are deemed necessary, consultation with the University's Public Relations Office is required before proceeding.

VIII. Publishing Articles in Print or Social Media:

Faculty members and employees who intend to publish an article or participate in an interview in their private capacity are obligated to seek prior approval from the Vice Chancellor. These individuals must adhere to the provisions outlined in this policy. Furthermore, any published articles or interviews must be shared with the University's Public Relations Office as per this requirement.

IX. Subject Experts:

Each department shall periodically provide a list of subject experts within their respective fields, and this list will be subject to regular updates. Subject experts are encouraged to continuously update their knowledge base to ensure the quality and relevance of their expert opinions. The University will maintain and make accessible this list of subject experts on its official website, facilitating media networks in contacting the relevant experts for informed insights and opinions.

X. Crisis Communications:

In the event of a crisis or emergency, the Public Relations Office of the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir will work closely with relevant departments and individuals to ensure that accurate and timely information is provided to the media and the public.

All concerned departments are advised to feed timely and authentic information to Public Relations Office in case of any crisis situation.

Mr. Zafar Iqbal, The Additional Registrar, (Convener Committee) _____

Mr. Muhammad Saghir, The Director - Information Technology (Member) _____

Mr. Hassan Zaka, The Assistant Registrar - Establishment-II & Legal (Member) _____

Syed Mubashar Hussain, The Public Relations Officer (Secretary Committee) _____