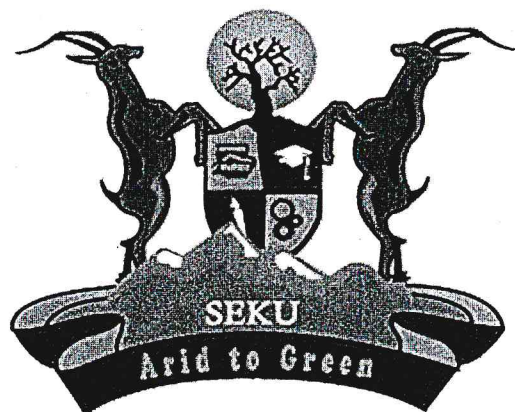




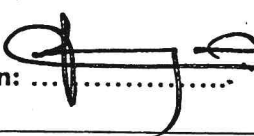
SOUTH EASTERN KENYA UNIVERSITY

REVISED RESEARCH POLICY

JUNE 2025

DOCUMENT APPROVAL FORM

SEKU – ISO 9001:2015 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS		
ISSUE FOR USE ON:	SEKU RESEARCH POLICY	REF:SEKU/CS/POL/xxx

Approved by: Prof. Francis N. Wachira Management Representative	Sign: 	Date: 13.8.25
Authorized by: Prof. Eng. Douglas Shitanda Vice Chancellor	Sign: 	Date: 12/08/2020

THE MANDATE, VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

(1) Mandate

The core mandate of the University is research, teaching and learning, community service, innovation and commercialization.

(2) Vision

A globally competitive Centre of Excellence in Research, Teaching and Learning, Community Service, Innovation and Commercialization.

(3) Mission

To provide quality education through research, teaching, extension, innovation and entrepreneurship with emphasis on food and nutrition security, health, engineering and technology, environment and natural resources management for sustainable development.

(4) Core Values

In order to achieve vision and mission, the University will be guided by the following core values:

- a) Patriotism
- b) Professionalism
- c) Democracy and good governance
- d) Innovation
- e) Integrity, transparency and accountability
- f) Inclusivity, equity and equality
- g) Freedom of thought
- h) Teamwork
- i) Sustainability

(5) Philosophy

Arid to green Transforming lives.

PREFACE

The University Council is committed to ensuring that South Eastern Kenya University fosters a thriving research environment by enhancing research infrastructure, recruiting qualified researchers, and allocating sufficient funding to support scholarly endeavors.

The university is keen to advance knowledge through rigorous research that aligns with its vision of promoting quality education through research, teaching, learning, community service, innovation, and commercialization. The revised Research Policy outlines a comprehensive framework that guides the planning, execution, dissemination, and ethical conduct of research at South Eastern Kenya University.

This policy serves as a foundational document for daily research operations and delineates the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, including researchers, departments, directorates, and the broader university community. The review of this policy reflects the university's continuous efforts to ensure the integrity, relevance, and impact of research while fostering responsible resource management and supporting both individual and institutional research goals.

We encourage our researchers and the entire university community to familiarise themselves with this policy, embrace and apply it, as it provides a framework for enhancing quality, upholding integrity and fostering a culture of innovation and accountability in research.



Prof. Crispus Kiamba

CHAIRPERSON, SEKU COUNCIL

FOREWORD

Research plays a central role in actualizing South Eastern Kenya University's mission to generate, preserve, and disseminate knowledge for the benefit of society. The Revised Research Policy provides a framework to guide the planning of research activities, execution, and dissemination of research outputs at SEKU. It ensures that research conducted is ethical, relevant, and aligned with national development priorities as well as global standards.

South Eastern Kenya University is committed to fostering a vibrant research culture by providing an enabling environment for academic staff, students, and collaborators to engage in meaningful and impactful research. The university continues to invest in research infrastructure, capacity building, and funding opportunities to support research and scholarly excellence.

Through this Policy, SEKU promotes collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and the effective translation of research outcomes into policy and practice. The university supports the dissemination of research through open access platforms, conferences, and peer-reviewed publications, ensuring knowledge generated is accessible and beneficial to a wider audience.

This Revised Research Policy, therefore, outlines the principles, procedures, and structures that govern research activities within the University. It is a key instrument in ensuring research integrity, enhancing academic output, and contributing to the realization of SEKU's vision as a leading institution in research and innovation.

Prof. Eng. Douglas Shitanda

VICE CHANCELLOR

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARI	Academic, Research, and Innovation
AI	Artificial intelligence
ASALs	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
BETA	Bottom Up Economic Transformation Agenda
DRIC	Directorate of Research innovation and Commercialization.
IGOs	Intergovernmental Organizations
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
RIC	Research, Innovation and Commercialization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEKU	South Eastern Kenya University
ST&I	Science, Technology and Innovation

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For this policy, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (1) **Research:** A systematic process of inquiry aimed at discovering new knowledge, interpreting existing information, or solving specific problems through the application of scientific methods.
- (2) **Innovation:** The process of translating ideas, inventions, or research outcomes into practical applications, products, or services that create value and contribute to socio-economic development.
- (3) **Research Ethics:** A set of moral principles and standards that guide researchers to conduct studies responsibly, with respect for human and animal subjects, communities, and the environment.
- (4) **Researcher:** Any member of staff, student, or affiliate of the University who is actively engaged in research or scholarly inquiry, either individually or as part of a group or project.
- (5) **Research Output:** The tangible results of research activity, including publications, patents, prototypes, creative works, conference presentations, policy briefs, and technical reports.
- (6) **Research Grant:** Financial support provided by an internal or external funding agency to support a specific research project or activity.
- (7) **Commercialization:** The process of turning research output into marketable products, services, or processes for societal or economic benefit.
- (8) **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Ability of machines, especially computer systems, to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DOCUMENT APPROVAL FORM	ii
THE MANDATE, VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY	iii
(1) Mandate	iii
(2) Vision	iii
(3) Mission.....	iii
(4) Core Values.....	iii
(5) Philosophy	iii
PREFACE	iv
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
DEFINITION OF TERMS	vii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Background Information	2
1.2 Purpose of the Policy.....	2
1.3 Policy Objectives	2
1.4 Rationale	3
1.5 Scope of the Policy	3
1.6 Guiding Principles	3
2.0 POLICY STATEMENT, LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND CITATION.....	4
2.1 Policy Statement.....	4
2.2 Legal Framework	4
2.3 Citation.....	5
3.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION FRAMEWORK.....	5
3.1 The university Organs	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2 The University Council.	5
3.3 The University Senate/management Board.....	5
3.4 Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic, Research and Innovation)	5
3.5 Directorate of Research, Innovation and Commercialization	6
3.6 Research Grant Management Office (RGMO).....	8
3.7 Research Guidelines	8
4.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION, REPORTING AND LEARNING.....	8
4.1 Monitoring	9
4.2 Evaluation.....	9
4.3 Reporting and Learning	9
4.4 Review	9
Annex A: Guidelines for Conducting Research.....	10
Annex B: SEKU Research Policy 5-Year Implementation Framework (2025–2030)	22

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

South Eastern Kenya University is a fully fledged public university that was awarded its Charter on 1st March, 2013, by the then President and Commander in Chief of the Defense Forces of the Republic of Kenya, His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki. The University Main Campus is located in Kitui County in a serene and conducive learning environment, 12 kilometers off Kwa-Vonza Township, along the Kitui-Machakos road.

The University develops and implements policies that provide guidance in decision-making processes. To ensure objectivity and accountability in research operations, the University will ensure that this policy and its implementation complies with established laws and regulations.

1.2 Purpose of the Policy

The SEKU Revised Research Policy streamlines and standardizes all research-related functions and activities within the university. It provides a clear framework to guide the planning, implementation, management, and evaluation of research, ensuring that all processes are carried out in a transparent, accountable, and consistent manner. By establishing defined roles, responsibilities, and procedures, the policy aims to promote a conducive environment for scholarly inquiry, innovation, and collaboration across all disciplines. It ensures that all staff, students, and external stakeholders have a clear understanding of the university's research agenda, priorities, and ethical standards. The policy seeks to enhance the visibility and impact of SEKU's research by promoting the dissemination and utilization of research outputs for the benefit of society. It will also support the development of strategic partnerships with local and international institutions, facilitate access to funding opportunities, and promote adherence to national and international research regulations. It serves as a strategic tool to foster a research culture that contributes to academic excellence, community development, and national progress.

1.3 Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to

- (1) Promote a research culture across all faculties and departments to encourage innovation, critical thinking, and scholarly inquiry.
- (2) Build research capacity by supporting staff and students through training, mentorship, and access to research infrastructure and resources.
- (3) Ensure high standards of research ethics by providing clear guidelines on ethical approval, data handling, and intellectual property rights.
- (4) Foster interdisciplinary and collaborative research within the university and with external partners in academia, government, industry, and communities.
- (5) Enhance access to research funding by supporting proposal development, grant acquisition, and effective grant management.

- (6) Promote dissemination and utilization of research outputs through publications, conferences, community engagement, and commercialization.
- (7) Strengthening community and industry linkages by supporting research that addresses local and national challenges and promotes socio-economic development.

1.4 Rationale

Research is a central mandate of South Eastern Kenya University, required for developing knowledge, shaping instruction, and addressing societal issues. As the university grows in size and scope academically, there is a need to have an integrated policy framework that guides planning, implementation, and management of research activities. The purpose of this policy is to ensure continuity, responsibility, and excellence in every research venture and foster an inquiry, innovation, and academic excellence-oriented culture among students. In addition, the policy is rooted in Kenya Vision 2030, the Bottom-up Economics Transformation Agenda (BETA), the African Union Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for national and global development, respectively, thereby ensuring SEKU's significant contribution to sustainable development. It informs research ethics, funding, collaborations, and dissemination, thereby positioning the University as a key player in the production of knowledge and evidence-based solutions for transforming the country and the region.

1.5 Scope of the Policy

This policy provides guidelines on all research activities conducted under the auspices of SEKU. It covers:

- (1) Academic staff, administrative staff, and researchers engaged in research-related activities.
- (2) Undergraduate and postgraduate students involved in academic research or innovation projects.
- (3) Research institutes, centres, and directorates operating within or in partnership with SEKU.
- (4) Collaborations with external institutions, industries, government bodies, and international partners.
- (5) Research conducted using University resources, facilities, funding, or affiliation.

1.6 Guiding Principles

The policy shall be guided by the following principles:

- (1) **Academic freedom:** Upholding the right of researchers to pursue knowledge and inquiry without undue interference, within ethical and legal boundaries.
- (2) **Research integrity and ethics:** Promoting honesty, transparency, accountability, and respect for participants and communities involved in research.

- (3) **Quality and excellence:** Encouraging high standards in the design, execution, and dissemination of research outputs.
- (4) **Relevance and impact:** Supporting research that addresses national priorities, community needs, and contributes to sustainable development.
- (5) **Inclusivity and equity:** Ensuring equal opportunities for participation in research regardless of gender, discipline, or background.
- (6) **Collaboration and partnership:** Encouraging joint research ventures across disciplines and with external stakeholders for broader impact.
- (7) **Sustainability:** Promoting responsible use of resources and long-term planning in research undertakings.
- (8) **Knowledge sharing and accessibility:** Ensuring open dissemination of research findings while protecting intellectual property rights and confidentiality where applicable.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT, LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND CITATION

2.1 Policy Statement

SEKU is committed to fostering a vibrant research environment that promotes excellence, innovation, and societal impact. This Research Policy establishes a framework to guide the planning, conduct, management, dissemination, and commercialization of research activities. It seeks to ensure that all research undertaken at SEKU upholds the highest standards of ethics, quality, accountability, and relevance to national and global development priorities.

2.2 Legal Framework

This Policy is informed by and aligned with the following Kenyan legal and regulatory instruments:

- (1) The Constitution of Kenya (2010): Recognizes academic freedom and promotes science, research, and indigenous knowledge.
- (2) The Universities Act, 2012 (Revised 2016, 2021) and their regulations: Mandates universities to undertake quality research and disseminate results to society
- (3) South Eastern Kenya University Statutes: Provide internal authority for governance and coordination of research and innovation.
- (4) Human Resource Policy, 2022
- (5) The Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) Act, 2013 and their regulations: Regulates research through NACOSTI and aligns it with national development goals.
- (6) The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Act, 2013: Encourages applied research and innovation linked to technical and industrial sectors.
- (7) National Research Priorities: Define key research themes for funding and alignment with Kenya's development agenda
- (8) The Industrial Property Act, 2001 and their regulations: Protects research innovations through patents and other intellectual property tools.
- (9) The Copyright Act, 2001 (Revised 2022) and their regulations: Safeguards authorship and ownership of research outputs, publications, and software
- (10) The Data Protection Act, 2019 and their regulations: Requires researchers to ethically handle and protect personal data.

- (11) The Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA), 1999 (Revised 2015) and their regulations: Ensures environmentally responsible research and mandates EIA for relevant projects.
- (12) Kenya's Vision 2030: Identifies research, science, and innovation as drivers of national transformation.
- (13) African Union agenda 2063: Advocates for African-led research that supports inclusive and sustainable development.

2.3 Citation

This document shall be cited as:

South Eastern Kenya University Research Policy, 2025

Abbreviated as: SEKU Research Policy (2025)

3.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION FRAMEWORK

The University organs and Management structures that will be involved in the coordination of Research policy are as follows:

3.1 The University Council.

The council approves policy for implementation, allocates resources for research and innovation, and approves strategic partnerships that support research.

3.2 The University Senate/management Board

The Senate shall be responsible for environmental management activities in academic programmes and policies, while UMB will be responsible for Research activities in administrative-related processes/operations.

3.3 Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic, Research and Innovation)

Coordination of the University's research and innovation activities falls within the academic division headed by DVC-ARI. The DVC - ARI will oversee the application of the Research Policy and make sure that research activities are in line with the university's mission and national priorities and ensure that they meet the international research standards.

3. 4 Directorate of Research, Innovation and Commercialization

(1) The Directorate of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization will serve as the coordinating and support centre for research activities at SEKU. Its key duties are:

- (a) Operationalize and oversee the implementation of SEKU's research policy.
- (b) Coordinate research activities among schools, departments, and research institutes.
- (c) Organize training, mentorship, and workshops to develop research capabilities among staff and students.
- (d) Identify potential funding sources, help prepare grant proposals and organize externally and internally funded research projects.
- (e) Oversee adherence to ethical and regulatory standards in research.
- (f) Promote innovation, intellectual property protection, and exploitation of research results for social and economic benefit.
- (g) Track research performance and reports on outputs to the university management board and stakeholders.
- (h). Facilitate collaborations and partnerships with local, national, and international partners.
- (i) Supports the publication and sharing of research findings with stakeholders

(2) The activities and functions of the Directorate will be overseen by a Board of Management, constituted and mandated in accordance with Section 39 of the SEKU Statutes.

(3) The Directorate operates through four sub-committees that report to and provide advisory support to the Management Board. These sub-committees are the Research Committee, the Research Ethics Committee, the Extension and Outreach Committee, and the Training and Dissemination Committee. Their respective terms of reference are outlined as follows:

(a) Research Sub-Committee

The Research Sub-Committee will have the following functions:

- (i) To develop and review the research policy of the University.
- (ii) To establish research priorities for the University and guide research as per government policy on research.
- (iii) To co-ordinate collaborative research projects.
- (iv) To prepare annual budget estimates or a submission for all allocation of funds from the University.
- (v) To make recommendations to the university management board on the allocation of funds available for research and conferences.
- (vi) To receive, review, and monitor all research funds and grants.
- (vii) To formulate guidelines for application for research funds for internal grants.
- (viii) To identify and recommend to the university through the board the establishment of research facilities.

(b) Research Ethics Sub-Committee

The Research Ethics Sub-Committee will have the following functions:

- (i) Provide independent, competent, and timely review of human and animal research projects in respect of their ethical acceptability.
- (ii) Facilitate ethical research through efficient and effective review process
- (iii) Provide ethical oversight, monitoring, and advice for approved human research and projects involving animals.
- (iv) Prescribe the principles and procedures to govern human and animal research projects, including handling of human biological materials and research data.
- (v) Carry out advocacy to create awareness among the university community of the benefits of observing bioethics standards in research.
- (vi) To ensure all research activities undertaken within the mandate of the university are in accordance with internationally acceptable research standards, ethics, and norms.

(c) Extension and Outreach Sub-Committee

The Extension and Outreach Sub-committee will have the following functions:

- (i) To develop and recommend to the management the extension policy of the university
- (ii) To establish extension and outreach activities.
- (iii) To receive, review, and make recommendations to the Board for approval of extension proposals and outreach activities.
- (iv) To identify and make recommendations on ways of raising funds to support extension activities.
- (v) To encourage activities in the schools and departments on matters pertaining to institutional linkages, continuing education, and extension.
- (vi) To foster close linkage of research, training, and extension through staff and student involvement in outreach programs, including public sector interaction.
- (vii) To organize seminars and workshops on extension and outreach activities.

(d) Training and dissemination Sub-Committee

The sub-committee will be responsible for the following functions:

- (i) To coordinate and approve all research-related university documents such as newsletters, magazines, and journals.
- (ii) To spearhead the establishment of a self-sustaining enterprise, University Press.
- (iii) To receive and consider manuscripts for publication by the University Press.
- (iv) To recommend to the Board publication opportunities or matters that would complement education materials availability.

- (v) To undertake student and staff capacity building in areas of grant proposal writing, grant management, scientific writing, and dissemination of research findings.

3.5 Research Grant Management Office (RGMO)

The Research Grant Management Office (RGMO) is a dedicated unit within DRIC, mandated to enhance the university's capacity to effectively manage internal and external research grants in compliance with institutional policies, donor requirements, and national regulatory frameworks. The RGMO shall operate under the supervision of the Director, RIC, and report functionally to the DVC-CS. The office shall work closely with the directorates of finance and accounts, internal audit and risk management, and procurement to ensure effective grant governance. The RGMO shall support the entire research grant lifecycle and perform the following functions:

- (a) Identifying funding opportunities, assisting with grant proposal development, and ensuring institutional compliance.
- (b) Managing awarded grants, tracking expenditures, ensuring reporting compliance, and liaising with donors.
- (c) Capacity building and mentorship on grantsmanship, budgeting, and financial accountability.
- (d) Ensuring that research grants are administered in accordance with institutional policies, donor regulations, and national laws.
- (e) Coordinating with departments, finance, and external partners to ensure efficient project delivery.
- (f) Facilitate communication between the directorate and academic departments on matters related to research grants
- (g) Any other activity that is related to research grants management.

3.6 Research Guidelines

The guidelines governing research-related activities at the University are outlined in annex A and shall constitute an integral part of the SEKU Research Policy.

4.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION, REPORTING, AND LEARNING

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) provide regular and timely information in support of evidence-based decision-making, serving as a key driver towards the realization of an organization's goals. The University shall set up an effective and results-based monitoring and evaluation system that will guarantee continuous monitoring using the identified indicators and evaluation.

4.1 Monitoring

The DVC, Academic, Research, and Innovation will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The monitoring process will ensure that the established performance targets on research are met by each unit, and appropriate feedback for continual improvement is provided. The University shall ensure that:

- (1) Effective instruments and indicators are used to evaluate whether the environmental management objectives have been achieved.
- (2) Constraints and challenges in the research process have been identified.
- (3) Ways to improve research have been devised.
- (4) Lessons learnt from the process have been documented and used in planning future public participation initiatives.

4.2 Evaluation

The Vice-Chancellor will ensure coordination of periodic evaluation is done. The evaluation of the policy will focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and measurement of actual performance against set targets arising from activities derived from the policy objectives. The differences, if there are any, will be identified, and appropriate recommendations and intervention measures recommended.

4.3 Reporting and Learning

The heads of functional areas shall prepare and submit reports on public participation exercises as and when required. The information prepared includes progress made, challenges encountered and identified emerging issues. This information can also be used to promote a culture of learning and application of lessons learned. The lessons learnt shall be considered at the time of review of the policy to ensure that the policy addresses old and emerging issues regarding environmental management.

4.4 Review

The policy may be reviewed after every five (5) years or as need arises to address emerging issues with the aim of enhancing efficient delivery of effective outcomes.

Annex A: Guidelines for Conducting Research

1.0 Research Priority Areas and Funded Projects

- (a) **Research priority areas:** The research undertaken at the university shall be aligned to international, regional, and national development goals, like addressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union Agenda 2063, and Kenya's Vision 2030 and Bottom Up Economic Transformation Agenda. The research will address cross-cutting issues like gender equity, HIV/AIDS, food security, entrepreneurship, climate change, sustainable environmental management (i.e., land and water management, green energy), market access, and energy for sustainable development, among others.
- (b) **Funded projects:** The university operates two categories of funded projects: internally funded projects and externally funded projects. Internally funded projects are those funded by the university through its budgetary allocation, while externally funded projects are those that draw funds or grants from external funders through successful proposal awards. The funders could be intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), bilateral and multilateral organizations, the private sector, government agencies, and individuals, among others. The University shall commit two (2%) percent of its revenue to research and development. Within the research framework, funds allocated for research by the university shall be used only in Kenya unless approved otherwise.

2.0 Application for Internal Research Funds

- (a) The Directorate shall publish the invitation for submission of internally funded research proposals three months prior to the end of the financial year.
- (b) Research proposals that comprise at least 30% of either gender shall stand a higher chance of success.
- (c) Researchers intending to submit research proposals shall use the standard proposal preparation format obtainable from the office of the Director for Research, Innovation, and Commercialization.
- (d) All applications for internal research support shall be addressed to the director through the respective chairman/head of department and through the dean of school or the director, where applicable.
- (e) All submitted proposals shall be initially reviewed by the Research and Ethics Committee to determine whether the proposals are consistent with the established guidelines.
- (f) If there are minor deviations from the guidelines, they shall be asked to correct the proposal, and if they are major, the proposal shall be rejected and the P notified.
- (g) Each proposal that passes the initial review shall be sent to external peer reviewers who are specialists in the subject area of the proposal.
- (h) A period of ten (10) days will be given to external peer reviewers to come to the University or another place to review the proposals and give their comments.
- (i) Each external peer reviewer shall review and rank the proposal according to the review and rating criteria.
- (j) The peer reviewer shall score proposals and rank them in one of the following categories:
 - (i) Within the top ten percent (91-100% range).

- (ii) Within the top quarter, but not among the top 10% (75-90% range).
- (iii) Within the top half but not among the top quarter (50-74% range).
- (iv) Within the bottom half (less than 50%).
- (k) Each peer reviewer shall give a detailed critique of the proposal, a copy of which shall be sent to the Directorate for the purpose of feedback and guidance to researchers involved in preparing the proposals.
- (l) All approved internally funded research projects shall run for a duration not exceeding the specified and approved schedule.

3.0 Award of Internal Research Funds

- (a) Each successful research proposal will be funded, depending on the available funds.
- (b) Expenditure on equipment shall be minimal.
- (c) Minimal costs for manpower requirements such as research assistants and casuals shall be permitted. Long-term manpower requirements shall not be permitted.
- (d) All principal investigators with ongoing internally funded projects shall not qualify for internal project funding as a principal investigator.
- (e) Part of the internal research funds will be allocated to young researchers/for mentorship.
- (f) If one applies for internal funding in more than one project as the principal investigator, and more than one is accepted, then only one will be funded.
- (g) For every approved proposal, the principal investigator shall sign the granting condition form where the principal investigator undertakes that:
 - (i) The project is not funded by any other organization. The principal investigator shall declare the funding details.
 - (ii) The research results are co-owned by the investigators and the university.
 - (iii) In the case of an invention, the principal investigator and the university shall be co-owners of the patent.
- (g) The Vice Chancellor shall be allocated annually Kenya Shillings Four Hundred Thousand (Kes. 400,000.00) and the Deputy Vice Chancellors shall each be allocated annually Kenya Shillings Three Hundred Thousand (Kes. 300,000.00) for any research need. Access to these funds is conditional and subject to approval by the Council.

4.0 Application for External Research Funds

- (a) Proposals should go through internal peer review committees at the school level prior to submission to the directorate.
- (b) Proposals and any other applications for external research support that require university endorsement shall pass through the director of DRIC to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Research and Innovation.
- (c) An application for external funding that does not require university endorsement shall be notified to the directorate.
- (d) All applicants for externally funded collaborative research projects where the project funds will not be held at the university and shall not be administered in the university.

5.0 Research fund administration (Revised)

- (a) The administration and management of funds shall follow the university's financial and procurement procedures except where the donor has specified otherwise.
- (b) All research grants shall attract a 10% administrative fee, unless otherwise specified by the respective donor. Of this administrative fee, 2% shall be paid as a token to incentivise the researchers who participated in the development of the funded research. The Principal Investigator shall be paid 50% of the 2% and the remaining 50% of the 2% shall be shared equally between the co-investigators. This payments shall be paid only to researchers who have prepared the research proposal and secured the funds. This token incentive shall not apply if the funded research provides for honoraria.
- (c) Research grants will be managed through an RGMO in section 3.6. The office will have dedicated finance and procurement staff trained on management of research grants.
- (d) All research funds shall be processed through the Directorate of Research Innovation and Commercialization.
- (e) Research funds shall only be disbursed for the activities of the project, with the approval of the Principal Investigator and the DVC-CS.
- (f) No funds shall be disbursed if the researcher has not surrendered the previous advances (imprest) released for the project.
- (g) Externally funded research shall be administered in conformity with the approved proposal, work plan, and budget and in accordance with the financiers' approved procedures.
- (h) The Directorate will monitor and evaluate projects to ensure proper utilization of funds.

6.0 Principal Investigator's Responsibilities

- (a) Any staff of SEKU who is designated as Principal Investigator as a result of his/her participation in the preparation of the proposal and the implementation of the project and being recognized as such as per the arrangements of the proposal shall be recognized as such by the University.
- (b) Principal Investigators shall be responsible for:
 - (i) Implementing the project within the agreed timelines for the award of the grant in an internally funded research project.
 - (ii) Proper management of projects to keep the research on track.
 - (iii) Adhering to the principles and rules as laid down in the research policy.
 - (iv) Ensuring timely submission of required project progress and financial reports and any other reports as required by the funding agency.
 - (v) Encouraging collaborators in the project to be aware of good research and data management practices.

- (vi) Creating awareness of the ethical implications of research and advising collaborators accordingly.
- (vii) Ensuring project budgetary and financial discipline is adhered to as per the Memorandum of Agreements with the funding Agency
- (viii) Attending project meetings as may be required from time to time.
- (c) If the principal investigator retires, changes employer, or otherwise, the funds will be managed as agreed after consultation with the funding agencies, principal investigator, and the other research team members.
- (d) If the principal investigator retires, changes employer, or otherwise, no research funds received by the university for the project shall be transferred to the retired staff or to the new employer of the principal investigator.
- (e) If the principal investigator dies, the university, in consultation with the funding agencies and the other research team members, will appoint a new principal investigator of the project.

7.0 Procedures of Requisition for Funds

- (a) The principal investigator shall submit a request (an imprest warrant) for an advance to cover research expenses as per the approved work plan and budget.
- (b) After the initial advance, no further advance shall be made unless the previous advance is fully accounted for.
- (c) Failure to provide a satisfactory progress report to the Directorate and account of funds may result in termination of the award and refund demanded.
- (d) Any unspent research funds shall be returned to the University Research Account.
- (e) Research funds shall be released by the university in accordance with the policies and procedures.
- (f) In the case of external research funding, project funds will be released in accordance with the approved work plan and budget.

8.0 Tangible Research Property

- (a) Any research equipment of a permanent nature shall remain the property of South Eastern Kenya University or as specified in the contract.
- (b) All consumable research materials, including chemicals and stationery, shall remain the property of the relevant department when the research is done.
- (c) All vehicles purchased shall be registered in the name of the university and allocated to departments that brought in money.
- (d) All the property bought through research projects will be retained by the university and not the researchers.
- (e) Laboratories and centers established through research/consultancy funds shall be the property of the university and shall be accessible for research by university staff.
- (f) The laboratories and centers established through research/consultancy funds shall primarily be headed by the principal investigator who spearheaded their establishment or as directed by the university management.

9.0 Teaching, Research and Administration Exemption

- (a) A lecturer is expected to teach, conduct research, carry out community outreach, and undertake administrative duties and/or a combination of these responsibilities.
- (b) Under certain circumstances, the Vice Chancellor may grant exemption from research, teaching, or administration, or a combination of these duties.
- (c) In situations where disproportionate emphasis is required across the core academic functions of teaching, research, and administration, the following apportionment of time may be applied:
 - (i) Teaching 60%
 - (ii) Research 30%
 - (iii) Administrative duties 10%

Academic staff are expected to engage in research-related duties listed in table

1.

Table 1: List of research activities that academic staff may engage in.

Research Activity	Description
Proposal Development	Preparing and submitting research proposals for funding.
Research Implementation	Conducting experiments, surveys, fieldwork, and data analysis.
Scholarly Publications	Writing and publishing in peer-reviewed journals, books, and conference papers.
Postgraduate Supervision	Supervising Postgraduate research projects.
Research Dissemination	Presenting at academic conferences, seminars, and workshops.
Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Research	Participating in joint research with other institutions or disciplines.
Innovation and IP Development	Creating innovations, patents, or contributing to commercialization efforts.
Community-Based and Applied Research	Addressing societal challenges through applied research.
Outreach activities	Providing community service, supporting community to uptake research findings, technology transfer to communities, mentorship of Secondary School students, communities

Academic staff may also be required to undertake administrative responsibilities, including:

Administrative Activity	Description
Administrative Roles	Serving as Chairman of Department, Dean, Director, and Coordinator among others
Committee Membership	Active participation in departmental, faculty, or university committees.
Academic Program Administration	Coordinating course delivery, timetables, and examinations
Institutional Planning and Policy Development	Contributing to university strategic plans, quality assurance, or accreditation.
Event Coordination and Representation	Organizing academic events or representing the university externally.

10.0 Research Fellows and Non-Faculty Research Appointments

Any appointment of non-faculty external researchers, visiting researchers, or research assistants for research run by the university and drawing support from funds controlled by the university shall be in accordance with the staff terms of service.

11.0 Conditions for Research Related Consultancy

- (a) All researchers engaged in external research-related consultancies shall be required to give details of the consultancies and make disclosure of any gains through the Director (DRIC) to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC-ARI) within 14 days after commencement of the activity. research
- (b) Any perceived or envisaged conflict of interest emanating from participation in a related consultancy shall be reported to the DVC-ARI for guidance and interpretation as per University Policies and Statutes.
- (c) University disciplinary procedures and/or the relevant laws related to Kenya shall apply whenever the consultant violates this policy in part or in its totality.

12.0 Training and Stipend Allowance for Students/Research Assistants

- (a) All externally funded research proposals may incorporate student training components except where not accepted by the donor.
- (b) The role of the student(s) in the project shall be clearly specified.
- (c) Students shall receive a stipend allowance as stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding and the approved proposal budget.

- (d) Recruitment of students/research assistants will be by the principal investigator in consultation with the director, DRIC, and DVC-ARI for transparency.

13.0 Rights and Responsibilities in the Conduct of Research

- (a) All researchers will be guaranteed their academic freedom of intellect, speech, and association.
- (b) A researcher or his/her collaborators shall not be discriminated against or stigmatized on the grounds of gender, sex, religion, creed, race, medical grounds, or disability.
- (c) A researcher will be accorded with the rights and privileges to carry out research in his/her areas of competence as per the university policies and available resources.
- (d) All basic and applied research work shall be based on original ideas that will not conflict with human rights, dignity, health, or ethical standards.
- (e) The university does not discriminate against any nationality, organization, or source of research funds provided it is not repugnant in law.
- (f) The university encourages collaborations with local, regional, and international organizations involved in research and development.
- (g) The university supports the establishment of industrial partnerships in research areas of interest.
- (h) All research participation agreements shall be signed after having been advised on legal matters by the University Legal Officer.

14.0 Management of Research Knowledge

- (a) The Directorate shall be the custodian of all data obtained from research projects and shall maintain a databank.
- (b) The Directorate shall facilitate the transformation of the knowledge resources by identifying relevant information and then disseminating it so that learning can take place.
- (c) The Directorate shall promote the sharing of knowledge by linking people with people, and by linking them to information so that they learn from documented experiences.
- (d) All data collected in a project shall be treated as confidential until such a time when they have to be made public.
- (e) Research results shall be co-owned by the investigators and the University.
- (f) All research conducted by the University staff, whether internally or externally funded through the University, shall be registered with the Directorate.
- (g) All data and outputs in both soft and hard copies, from internally funded research shall be deposited in the Directorate after the conclusion of the project.
- (h) All external persons or organizations that need the data and information shall access them at a fee except for collaborating partners.
- (i) Description of data types (meta-data) shall be provided for the data sets stored.

15.0 Research Ethics, Integrity and Conduct

- (a) A researcher shall not engage in acts that include, but not limited to, dishonesty, fraud, embezzlement of research funds, falsification, plagiarism, and non-compliance with the conditions stated in this policy.
- (b) A researcher shall not use research funds to improperly enrich him/herself or others.
- (c) Research shall be conducted in an open manner as required by the Memorandum of Understanding for the particular research.
- (d) Ethical clearances shall be obtained from the Research Ethics Committee where appropriate.
- (e) All researchers are expected to observe high ethical standards in the conduct of research and, when relevant, to comply with the obligations imposed by the codes of practice as outlined by the relevant funding bodies.
- (f) A researcher shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the research property that is entrusted to his/her care is adequately protected and used for the intended purpose(s).
- (g) The use of human subjects in research should require the Principal Investigator to obtain permission from an accredited Ethics Committee that shall approve the research and ensure that the ethical matters are adhered to.
- (h) The Principal Investigator shall further undertake to give tutorials about the project, any possible harm, and debriefing them after the conclusion of the research. Respect of gender, sex, health status, religion and culture shall be upheld by the researchers and their collaborators. Principal investigators shall be required to arrange for research permits as per the Kenyan government requirement for their research team.
- (i) University disciplinary procedures and/or the relevant Laws of Kenya shall apply when a researcher violates research ethical standards in such a way that he/she seriously harms the reputation of the institution or compromises the ability of the researcher to function effectively in the workplace.
- (j) In such cases where the researcher and his/her collaborators violate acceptable research practices, the researcher, together with the collaborators, shall be blacklisted and shall not benefit from the University research funds for a period of five (5) years.
- (k) A researcher who contravenes (a) above or financial indiscipline shall personally and severally, be liable for losses resulting from the contravention.
- (l) All allegations of research misconduct shall be investigated by the Research and Ethics Committee and reports forwarded to the Directorate for further action.
- (m) All grievances related to the conduct of research shall be reported to the Vice Chancellor within seven (7) days of occurrence.
- (n) All grievances shall be considered and necessary action taken within seven (7) days of reporting.
- (o) A researcher shall:

- (i) Carry out research in a manner that maintains his/her integrity and public confidence.
- (ii) Treat research subjects and collaborators with courtesy and honour.
- (iii) Respect the rights of others, to refrain from disruptive, threatening, intimidating, or harassing behavior, or behavior which is harmful to himself/herself, other person(s) or property.
- (iv) Seek to maintain high standards of research ethics and professionalism in the University.
- (v) Maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of his/her respective area of expertise or professional field.
- (vi) Make his/her research works known, locally and internationally, through publications, exhibitions, attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars and media appearances.
- (vii) Shall report any extra research sub-awards to the Vice Chancellor and the main funder of the main project within 14 days after the award.

16.0 Research Dissemination

- (a) At the end of the research, the Principal Investigator shall submit two (2) hard copies and
- (b) one (1) electronic copy of the final report and any other publication(s) to the Directorate.
- (c) All research journal papers shall include all the names of people involved in the research.
- (d) All publications should clearly indicate South Eastern Kenya University as the primary institutional affiliation of the author(s).
- (e) In all publications, the University and the donor, where applicable, shall be acknowledged and receive copies of publications.
- (f) Research results shall be disseminated through workshops, conferences and seminars and the University and donors should be acknowledged in presentations, posters etc.
- (g) The Directorate shall endeavor to build research capacity through holding workshops and seminars, taking part in exhibitions and other educational forums to train researchers in preparation of research proposals, project management, publishing, presentation of research findings and maintenance of records.
- (h) Research articles should be submitted to the library and the Directorate of Performance Contracting.
- (i) All published works must be reported to the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Commercialization. Authors shall also submit a digital copy of the publication to the University's library repository for archiving and access and the directorate of strategy, quality, and performance management.
- (j) Researchers will be expected to submit their work to peer-reviewed journals indexed in recognized databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, DOAJ, or relevant disciplinary repositories. Preference should be given to open-access journals that enhance accessibility and visibility.
- (k) Any work published in a journal without DOI will not be recognized by the university.

- (l) The university may provide support for publication fees, particularly in high-impact journals, subject to the availability of resources and compliance with institutional procedures.
- (m) The university shall recognize and reward outstanding publications through performance appraisals, research awards, and promotion criteria, in line with established policies.

17.0 Environmental Health and Safety

- (a) Researchers shall observe health standards as per the laid-down rules and regulations in the Occupational Safety and Health Policy and any other relevant policies and laws.
- (b) SEKU staff and/or their collaborators undertaking research shall undertake to ensure that their research environment is safe and healthy and that laid-down procedures and protocols are followed for the handling and release or disposal of potentially hazardous materials to ensure the safety of all persons involved.
- (c) All visitors to research laboratories and designated research areas shall be advised to take precautionary measures to reduce any possibility of harm to themselves and the research specimens.
- (d) In case of any accidental release of chemical, biological, or radioactive materials, the researcher must report the incident to the head of the occupational health and safety committee, who shall take the necessary precautions to minimize any possible harm to the environment.

18.0 Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emerging Technologies in Research

AI technologies, such as machine learning, natural language processing, and generative AI, and emerging technologies such as innovative tools and big data analytics can be used to augment research activities such as data analysis, literature search, writing research proposals, and experimental simulations. However, AI cannot replace human critical thinking, ethical judgment, and accountability during research. To enable the proper and ethical use of AI in research, the researchers should adhere to the following guidelines:

- (a) Researchers should disclose clearly if AI tools are being used, along with the way they are being used (e.g., data processing, text generation).
- (b) AI-generated content should not be passed off as original work. Researchers assume full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and validity of outputs.
- (c) Researchers must test and counter expected biases in AI-generated data or analysis.
- (d) Sensitive or confidential research data should not be processed through third-party AI tools without anonymization and compliance with data protection law

- (e) Researchers should use university-approved AI platforms to ensure data security. AI-assisted research must comply with the university's academic integrity policies. AI usage for plagiarism, falsification, or misrepresentation is prohibited.
- (f) Research based on AI-generated outcomes should undergo regular peer review and verification processes.
- (g) University should ensure that researchers are trained on how to use AI ethically and effectively in research and sensitize them to emerging AI technologies and their implications in their field of research.
- (h) DRIC will monitor the trends in AI usage and update policies as needed.

19.0 Data Protection in Research

This section establishes robust safeguards for the protection of personal and sensitive data collected, processed, or stored during research activities. All research activities should be aligned with Kenya's *Data Protection Act (2019)*, *Data Protection Regulations (2021)*, the Constitution of Kenya (Article 31 on right to privacy), and international best practices. This will ensure ethical integrity, legal compliance, and accountability in managing research data to protect participants' rights and institutional reputation. Therefore, the researchers should ensure that research involving personal and sensitive data adheres to the following:

- (a) All personal data collected in research shall be processed in accordance with the following principles:
 - (i) Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency: Data must be collected and used in a lawful, fair, and transparent manner.
 - (ii) Purpose limitation: Data shall only be collected for clear and legitimate research purposes and not further used in ways incompatible with those purposes.
 - (iii) Data minimization: Only the data necessary for achieving research objectives should be collected and retained.
 - (iv) Accuracy: Researchers should ensure that the data collected is accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
 - (v) Storage limitation: Personal data collected for purposes of the research must not be kept longer than is necessary.
 - (vi) Integrity and confidentiality: Data must be stored and processed securely to protect against unauthorized access, loss, or damage.
 - (vii) Accountability: Researchers must demonstrate compliance with data protection principles at all stages of their research.
- (b) Researchers must obtain informed consent before collecting personal data, clearly outlining the purpose of the research, how the data will be used, the duration of storage, and the participant's rights.
- (c) Researchers should understand that the participants have the right to access their personal data, request correction or deletion of inaccurate or unnecessary data, and withdraw consent at any time without penalty.

- (d) Researchers should ensure that the consent forms are stored securely and separately from research data.
- (e) The researchers should ensure that;
 - (i) All research data must be stored securely, whether in physical or digital form.
 - (ii) Digital data should be encrypted, password-protected, and backed up regularly.
 - (iii) Physical records must be stored in locked, access-controlled environments.
 - (iv) Access to identifiable personal data shall be restricted to authorized research personnel only.
- (f) Personal data must not be shared with third parties or published in identifiable form without explicit consent or ethical approval.
- (g) Where data is to be transferred across institutions or countries, the receiving party must provide equivalent data protection safeguards.
- (h) Anonymization or pseudonymization of data must be used wherever possible, especially in published findings.
- (i) Research data must be retained only for the period specified in the approved research protocol or as required by funders or regulatory bodies.
- (j) At the end of the retention period, personal data must be securely destroyed or anonymized in accordance with university data disposal procedures.
- (k) Researchers should report any data breach or suspected breach immediately to the university's data protection officer (UDPO) and Research Ethics Committee.
- (l) The directorate will take appropriate steps to investigate and address the breach, including notifying affected individuals and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner if required.

20.0 Termination of a Research Project

A research project may be terminated under the following circumstances:

- (a) If the project is not started within two (2) months of award in the case of an internally funded project.
- (b) If the project appears to be incapable of meeting its objectives and/or is being implemented unsatisfactorily.
- (c) If there is evidence of violation of any of the principles and requirements in this policy.

Annex B: SEKU Research Policy 5-Year Implementation Framework (2025–2030)

Year	Objectives	Key Activities	Responsible Unit(s)	Expected Outputs	Indicators
Year 1: 2025/ 2026	Policy Rollout & Awareness	- Disseminate the approved policy to all schools and directorates - Organize sensitization forums and stakeholder briefings - Constitution of the subcommittees - Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) Operationalize Research Ethics Committee	VC, DVC-ARI, DRIC,	- Policy widely understood - Subcommittee functional - Operational guidelines published	- % of stakeholders reached - Number of sensitization forums - Appointment letters - Number of SOPs developed
	Foundation for Research Support Structures	- Establish the Research Grant Management Office (RGMO) - Train RGMO - Set up an internal research funding mechanism - Launch internal research call	VC DRIC, Finance Office, RGMO	- RGMO operational - First batch of internally funded projects	- RGMO staff trained - Number of proposals submitted/funded
Year 2: 2026/ 2027	Capacity Building	- Train researchers on proposal writing, research ethics, AI in research, and data protection - Continue Capacity Building of Research Ethics Committee	DRIC, Sub-Committees,	- Increased research capacity - Approved research proposals	- Number of staff/students trained - Research Proposals approved - Number of trainings conducted

Year	Objectives	Key Activities	Responsible Unit(s)	Expected Outputs	Indicators
	Research Collaboration and Networking	- Map potential research and innovation partners - Sign MoUs and initiate joint research projects - Launch SEKU Research Seminars	DRIC, Legal Office, VC's Office	- Strategic partnerships - Annual research dissemination forum	- Number of MoUs - Seminar proceedings published
Year 3: 2027/2028	Policy Operationalization & Dissemination	- Implement internal grant awards and monitor projects - Support open-access publication and university journal - Train students in research participation - Strengthen extension and outreach programs	DRIC, RGMO, Training & Dissemination Sub-Committee, Senate	- University journal operational - Student research participation increased	- Number of funded projects - Number of student researchers - Extension reports
	Commercialization & IP Management	- Promote protection and commercialization of research outputs - Train staff on IP rights and technology transfer	DRIC, IPMO Legal Office	- Research translated into products/patents	- Number of IP filings - Number of innovations licensed
Year 4: 2028/2029	Evaluation and Learning	- Conduct mid-term policy evaluation - Collect feedback from researchers and stakeholders - Revise policy components as necessary - Conduct research impact case studies	DVC-ARI, DRIC,	- Mid-term report - Revised implementation plan	- Evaluation report - Stakeholder satisfaction level - Number of impact stories
	Strengthening Research Visibility	- Enhance international collaborations - Support participation in global conferences	VC, DRIC, Senate	- SEKU research gains global presence	- Number of international papers/projects

Year	Objectives	Key Activities	Responsible Unit(s)	Expected Outputs	Indicators
		- Establish awards for outstanding research			- Research awards given
Year 5: 2029/2030	Institutionalization and Sustainability	- Integrate research KPIs into staff appraisal - Institutionalize annual research conference and journal publication - Promote mentorship of junior researchers	HR Directorate, DRIC, DVC-ARI	- Research culture institutionalized	- Research KPIs tracked - Conference institutionalized - Mentorship reports
	Final Review and Reporting	- Conduct end-of-cycle policy review - Publish policy impact report - Prepare next 5-year research strategy	DRIC, Senate	- Reviewed and updated policy - Strategic plan	- Final review report - Updated policy approved

NB: While the objectives of the Policy have been scheduled for implementation on an annual basis, there are several cross-cutting activities that will span multiple years. As such, these activities will be implemented on a continuous basis throughout the Policy period. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Continuous policy awareness and training
2. Quarterly progress reports to Management Board
3. Collaborations and partnerships
4. Community service and Outreach
5. Tracking publications, grants, and innovations
6. Ensuring adherence to data protection and AI ethics
7. Building a knowledge-sharing and open-access culture