

SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE



GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF AS RESEARCHERS

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1. Introduction

One of the core functions of the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) is to generate, advance and share knowledge for development through research. Hence, conducting research is one of the key duties and responsibilities of all academic staff. In practice, academic staff participate in research mainly in two ways 1) preparing and implementing research projects and 2) supervision of students' research projects. Traditionally, a well-known research performance indicator is the number of publications produced by an academic staff in a given period. Like in many other universities, publications are considered as key criteria for promotion of academic staff at SUA. While this practice has been accepted, and believed to reward promotion to those who deserve, it does not comprehensively measure the effectiveness of member of staff as a researcher. This calls for additional criteria for assessing effectiveness of academic staff as researchers by considering different aspects of research process.

2. Guidelines

In order to operationalize these assessment criteria, academic staff effectiveness as researchers should be assessed by considering their level of participation in research projects, attraction of research funds, publications produced and supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate research projects. Each item should be assessed separately as indicated in section 2.1 – 2.4. The overall grade will be categorized as *Outstanding performance*, *Performance above average*, *Average performance*, *Poor performance* and *Very poor performance* as it is done in OPRAS. The overall research effectiveness (Table 1) shall be a total score obtained from Sections 2.1 – 2.4.

Table 1: Overall research effectiveness

Overall effectiveness*	Total score
1. Outstanding performance	≥ 7
2. Performance above average	3 – 6.9
3. Average performance	1 – 2.9
4. Poor performance	0.10 – 0.9
5. Very poor performance	0-0.09

*Ratings of effectiveness are as per OPRAS

2.1 Number of publications

Recognized types of publications (journal articles, books, book chapters, registered consultancy report, extension manuals), patents and other property right from innovations are stipulated under the the Harmonized Scheme of Service for Academic Staff (2014) and Appendix 6 of the SUA Up the Ladder 5th ed. (2016). Assessment of staff member's effectiveness as a researcher in terms of publications productivity should be done as it is stipulated in the referred documents in order to obtain the required scores.

2.2 Supervision of students' research projects

It is proposed that academic staff be assessed for their effectiveness as researchers using the supervision/co-supervision criteria as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Supervision of students' research projects

Staff category*	Criteria	Score
PhD holders	<i>At least 3 postgraduate students or 5 undergraduate students</i>	3
	<i>At least 2 postgraduate students or 4 undergraduate students</i>	2
	<i>At least 1 postgraduate student or 3 undergraduate students</i>	1
	1 – 2 undergraduate students	0.5
	Not supervised any student	0
None PhD holders (these cannot supervise postgraduate students)	<i>At least 4 undergraduate students</i>	3
	3 undergraduate students	2
	2 undergraduate students	1
	1 undergraduate students	0.5
	Not supervised any student	0

*For the purpose of quality assurance PhD degree is a requirement for supervising postgraduate students.

2.3 Participation in research projects

It is proposed that academic staff be assessed for their effectiveness as researchers using the research participation criteria for each project as indicated in Table 3. Scores will be awarded for each new project. In subsequent years, scores will be awarded for timely submission of progress/terminal reports based on compliance of reporting as per SUA Research Policy, Focus Areas, Guidelines and Regulations (2010) and with good progress/implementation.

Table 3: Participation in research projects

Level of participation	Scores for securing new projects	Implementation of projects	
		Scores for timely submission of project reports	Scores for timely submission of terminal reports
Principal investigator or Co-principal investigator	2	2	2
*Investigator	1	1	1
No involvement in projects	0	0	0

*Each investigator in a project will get 1 point

2.4 Attraction of research funds

It is proposed that academic staff be assessed for their effectiveness as researchers using the research funds attraction criteria for each project as indicated in Table 4. In project(s) where SUA is a collaborator, only the amount of funding allocated for SUA shall be considered. Principal Investigator (PI), co-Investigator(co-PI) and each team member in a project will score equally. Scores will be given only for new projects in that particular year.

Table 4: Attraction of research funds

Level of funding (USD)*	Score for PI & Team members
>200,000	2.0
100,000 –199,999	1.5
40,000 – 99,999	1.0
5,000 to 39,999	0.5
2500to 4,999	0.2
0	0

*The values are US dollar equivalent

3. Assessment Forms

Forms that will be used for assessment of academic staff effectiveness as researchers shall take into consideration the criteria set in section 2.1 – 2.4 above.

