

# AKSUM UNIVERSITY



## **GUIDELINE FOR PREPARATION AND EVALUATION OF BOOKS, TEXTBOOKS, TEACHING MATERIALS AND LABORATORY MANUALS 01/2020**



Approved by the Senate.

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## **PREAMBLE**

WHEREAS, it is necessary to ensure the appropriate academic standard and procedures for preparing laboratory manuals, teaching materials, textbooks and books by technical assistants and academic staff of Aksum University (AkU);

WHEREAS, standardized rules and regulations regarding the academic requirements of authors for preparation of laboratory manuals, teaching materials, textbooks and books, the procedures for preparation and evaluation, the general design of the content of a teaching material or a textbook in relation to learning goals, established syllabi, the presentation of the contents, integration of content and illustration, and questions of vocabulary would greatly contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the published materials and improve student learning at AkU;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to minimize biases or subjectivity in the evaluation of laboratory manuals, teaching materials, textbooks and books;

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with Article 79 (3) (1) of the Senate Legislation of Aksum University 2018, this Guideline is issued by the Senate.



## 1. SHORT TITLE

This guideline may be cited as “**Guideline for Preparation and Evaluation of Books, Textbooks, Teaching Materials and Laboratory Manuals 01/2020**”.

## 2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this Guideline, unless the context requires otherwise:

- 1) “Academic staff” shall mean members of the academic units within the University employed in the capacity of teaching and/or research, and any other professional of the University who shall be recognized so by the Senate statutes.
- 2) “Academic unit” shall mean any of academic units listed under Article 2(5) of the Aksum University Senate Legislation 2018.
- 3) “Book” shall mean a material comprising of useful facts or specially organized substantive based on original research or findings on specific subject matter, is approved by the relevant University office after dully and positively assessed by internal and external reviewers for its academic merit and contribution to knowledge through the procedures described in this Guideline, and has undergone a thorough editorial process and refining. A book shall meet the generally accepted standard profile of books and serve as a standard resource for the study of a given subject. and approved following the procedures described in this Guideline.
- 4) “College/faculty” shall mean an academic unit of the University that coordinates and oversees the academic, research, and community service activities of departments/schools and centres within it which share similar resources.
- 5) “College/Institute/Faculty Council” shall mean a governing and advisory body of a college/institute/faculty.
- 6) “Dean” shall mean an executive manager of a college/faculty.
- 7) “Department” shall mean a discipline-based executive academic unit of a college/institute/faculty engaged mainly in teaching, research, and provision of community services and that runs at least one programme in which a degree, a diploma or a certificate may be obtained.



- 8) “Department/School Council” shall mean an academic council of each department/school defined in the pertinent sub-articles of this Article.
- 9) “Head” shall mean an executive manager of a department or school.
- 10) “Institute” shall mean an academic unit of the University with the principal objectives of carrying out multi-disciplinary research and publishing the results thereof, and whose staff may also engage in teaching at the institute itself or at home-base departments/schools/centres.
- 11) “Laboratory manual” shall mean a document that covers all (100%) of the contents of the laboratory or practical exercise of a particular course shown in the curriculum which is critically evaluated by internal and external reviewers and approved following the procedures described in this document.
- 12) “Legislation” shall mean the Aksum University Senate Legislation 2018.
- 13) “School” shall mean an executive academic unit whose main functions are teaching, research, and provision of community services and which may have a status equivalent to a department and that runs professional disciplines in: (a) at least two programmes/professional disciplines at undergraduate or graduate levels or a combination of undergraduate and graduate levels in which a degree, a diploma or a certificate may be obtained, and (b) has a minimum of ten fulltime academic staff that can handle more than seventy five percent of the required courses/modules.
- 14) “Senate” shall mean the Senate of Aksum University.
- 15) “Teaching material” shall mean a document or module that covers all (100%) the contents of the course shown in the curriculum, is approved by the relevant University office after dully and positively assessed by internal and external reviewers for its academic merit and contribution to knowledge through the procedures described in this Guideline, and has undergone a thorough editorial process and refining.
- 16) “Textbook” shall mean an original, comprehensive, coherent, and quality teaching material in a given subject/discipline, is approved by the relevant University office after dully and positively assessed by internal and external reviewers for its academic merit and contribution to knowledge through the procedures described in this Guideline, and has undergone a thorough editorial process and refining. A textbook



shall meet the generally accepted standard profile of books and serve as a standard resource for the study of a given subject.

- 17) “University” shall mean Aksum University established as per the Council of Ministers Regulations No. 225/2011.

### **3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This Guideline shall apply to and govern all academic units and offices of Aksum University.

### **4. GENDER REFERENCE**

Unless the context requires otherwise, the provisions of this Legislation set out in the masculine gender shall also apply to the feminine gender and vice-versa.

### **5. OBJECTIVE OF THE GUIDELINE**

This Guideline is enacted with the objective to

- 1) Standardize the laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook and book preparation and evaluation procedure at the University.
- 2) Ensure the appropriate academic standard and quality of laboratory manuals, teaching materials, textbooks and books prepared by the University technical staff or academic staff members.

### **6. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS TO PREPARE A MATERIAL**

- 1) A laboratory manual for a course can be prepared by:
  - a) one or more technical assistants with a rank of Technical Assistant I or above and with the experience of assisting the course for at least four semesters in a semester-based course or at least two years for a year-based course; *or*
  - b) one or more academic staff with the experience of teaching the course for at least four semesters in a semester-based course or at least two years for a year-based course; *or*



- c) a team consisting of academic staff member with the experience of teaching the course for at least four semesters in a semester-based course or at least two years for a year-based course *and* technical assistant with a rank of Technical Assistant I or above and with the experience of assisting the course for at least four semesters in a semester-based course or at least two years for a year-based course.
- 2) Notwithstanding the provision of sub-article 1 of this Article, however, in exceptional circumstances where a department confirms that there exists an immediate and urgent demand for the laboratory manual, the college/institute/faculty council (CC/IC/FC) may grant permission to prepare a laboratory manual to
- a) one or more technical assistants with a rank of Technical Assistant I or above and with the experience of assisting the course for at least two semesters in a semester-based course or at least one year for a year-based course; *or*
  - b) one or more academic staff with the experience of teaching the course for at least two semesters in a semester-based course or at least one year for a year-based course; *or*
  - c) a team consisting of an academic staff with the experience of teaching the course for at least two semesters in a semester-based course or at least one year for a year-based course *and* technical assistant with a rank of Technical Assistant I or above and with the experience of assisting the course for at least two semesters in a semester-based course or at least one year for a year-based course.
- 3) A teaching material can be prepared by one or more academic staff member(s) with an academic rank of lecturer or above and with the experience of teaching the course for at least four semesters in a semester-based course or at least two years for a year-based course.
- 4) Notwithstanding the provision of sub-article 3 of this Article, however, in exceptional circumstances where a department confirms that there exists an immediate and urgent demand for the teaching material, the college/institute/faculty council (CC/IC/FC) may grant permission to an academic staff member with an academic rank of lecturer or above and with the experience of teaching the course for at least two semesters in a semester-based course or at least one year for a year-based course to prepare the teaching material.



- 5) A textbook can be prepared by one or more academic staff member(s) with an academic rank of assistant professor or above and
- a) with the experience of teaching the course for at least eight semesters in a semester-based course or at least four years for a year-based course; *or*
  - b) having at least five published research articles in reputable journals in the subject matter, where he is a principal author in at least three of them;

*or*

A textbook can be prepared by one or more academic staff with an academic rank of lecturer or above and

- a) with the experience of teaching the course for at least ten semesters in a semester-based course or at least five years for a year-based course; *or*
  - b) having at least eight published research articles in reputable journals in the subject matter, where he is a principal author in at least four of them;
- 6) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-article 5 of this Article, however, in exceptional circumstances where a department confirms that there exists an immediate and urgent demand for the textbook, the CC/IC/FC may grant permission to an academic staff with a rank of assistant professor or above and with the experience of teaching the course for at least four semesters in a semester-based course or at least two years for a year-based course; *or* an academic staff with a rank of assistant professor or above and having at least four published research articles in reputable journals in the subject matter, where he is a principal author in at least two of them, to prepare the textbook.
- 7) A book can be prepared by one or more academic staff with an academic rank of assistant professor or above and
- a) with the experience of teaching in the same or related field for at least eight semesters in a semester-based course or at least four years for a year-based course; *or*
  - b) having at least five published research articles in reputable journals in the subject matter, where he is a principal author in at least three of them;



*or*

A book can be prepared by one or more academic staff with an academic rank of lecturer or above and

- a) with the experience of teaching in the same or related field for at least ten semesters in a semester-based course or at least five years for a year-based course;  
*or*
  - b) having at least eight published research articles in reputable journals in the subject matter, where he is a principal author in at least four of them;
- 8) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-article 7 of this Article, however, in exceptional circumstances where a department confirms that there exists an immediate and urgent demand for the book, the CC/IC/FC may grant permission to an academic staff with a rank of assistant professor or above and with the experience of teaching in the same or related field for at least three years; *or* an academic staff with a rank of assistant professor or above and having at least four published research articles in reputable journals in the subject matter, where he is a principal author in at least two of them , to prepare the book.

## **7. LANGUAGE**

Unless the curriculum requires otherwise, laboratory manuals, teaching materials, books or textbooks shall be prepared in English.

## **8. APPLICATION FOR PREPARATION OF MATERIALS**

- 1) A department or college may initiate the need for the preparation of a laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book depending on the availability of budget and demand for the material. It is after this initiation and official notification by the head of the concerned academic unit that an academic staff or a technical staff can apply for the preparation of a laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book.
- 2) Notwithstanding sub-article 1 of this Article and without prejudice to the provisions under Article 6 of this Guideline, an academic staff member up on his own initiation may also submit a proposal to prepare a textbook or book.



- 3) As a general principle, laboratory manuals and teaching materials may be prepared when there is a shortage of the resources recommended in the curriculum within the University as determined by the concerned department council; whereas, books or textbooks can be prepared for a contribution of new knowledge in a given subject or if a major update of contents or data for the subject is required.
- 4) An author seeking to prepare a laboratory manual, teaching material, book or textbook on a specific course shall submit his proposal to his department using a format to be issued by the RCSC.
- 5) The department council shall then check if all requirements in this Guideline are met and, if endorsed, submit its recommendation for the preparation of the proposed material to the respective college/institute/faculty council for approval.
- 6) The college/institute/faculty council, in approving the material preparation proposal, shall take into account the availability of budget for preparation and evaluation of the material and make sure that no such material has been prepared or is under preparation by another staff member of the University.
- 7) A staff member whose proposal to prepare a laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook, or book has been approved by the CC/IC/FC shall be informed in writing by the head of the department to start the preparation of the material within five consecutive working days from the time of approval. The head, in informing the staff member, shall also file a carbon copy of the same to the concerned college/institute/faculty and the Research and Publication Directorate (RPD).
- 8) The RPD, if not informed in accordance with sub-article 7 of this Article, shall not issue a certificate of recognition for a published material.

## **9. PREPARATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

- 1) Laboratory manuals, teaching materials, books or textbooks shall be prepared based on standard formats to be issued by the RCSC.
- 2) The soft copy and hard copy versions of a material which is prepared in accordance with sub-article 1 of this Article shall be submitted to the concerned head of the department along with a cover letter signed by the author(s) for further processing.



- 3) The cover letter shall clearly specify the full name(s) of the author(s), the educational level and academic rank of each author, the area of specialization and teaching experience of each author, the title of the material, and other relevant information as may be required by the department or other concerned body.
- 4) The relevant departmental committee assigned by the department council shall check the general requirements of a laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book described in the respective standard formats are met and submit its detailed recommendations within one month to the head of the department for further action.
- 5) If the committee adjudges that all requirements are met, the head of the department shall submit the final version of
  - a) a laboratory manual or teaching material to the college/faculty dean or institute director; or
  - b) a textbook or book to the RPD Director.
- 6) The college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director, up on receiving the final version of a amaterial, shall appoint internal and external reviewers with relevant experience and expertise in a strictly confidential manner.
- 7) A laboratory manual shall be evaluated by one internal and one external reviewers with an academic rank of lecturer or above whereas a teaching material, textbook or book shall be evaluated by one internal and two external reviewers having academic rank higher than that of the author(s) where the academic rank of of the author(s) is associate professor and below, or by one internal and two external reviewers having academic rank equal to that of the author(s) where the academic rank of of the author(s) is professor. In case of unavailability of academic staff with the required academic rank for the internal reviewing of a teaching material, textbook or book, three of the reviewers can be external from at least two different institutions.
- 8) If the committee adjudges that all or any of the requirements are not met, the head of the department shall inform the applicant in writing to revise the material as per the committee recommendations and resubmit it within one month after official notification.
- 9) If the revised material is adjudged to be not incorporating the suggested recommendations to the satisfaction of the departmental committee and/or the head of



the department, it may not be considered for evaluation by internal and external reviewers until all requirements are met.

- 10) The college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director shall remove any reference to the personal information of the author(s) (normally the cover page), prepare a coded manuscript for double blind review and send it to the appointed reviewers in strictly confidential manner.
- 11) The college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director shall inform the reviewers in writing the terms and conditions of the review process including their responsibilities and benefits. The reviewer shall normally express his consent to review the material based on a prescribed evaluation format by entering an agreement with the the college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director. Such an agreement shall be effective as of the date of approval by the relevant college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director.
- 12) The specific evaluation format for each category of the materials shall be prepared by the RPD and approved by the RCSC. The format shall consist of three parts:
  - a) Part 1: A Detailed Evaluation,
  - b) Part 2: A Detailed Report mentioning the strengths and weaknesses of the material, and
  - c) Part 3: A Final Recommendation.
- 13) Reviewers shall submit their evaluation reports to the college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director, as the case may be, within two months for a laboratory manual and three months for a teaching material, textbook or book from the date they have received the material to be reviewed.
- 14) External reviewers shall have a decisive role in determining the grade of a material. Thus, the share of the weight of evaluation by each member of the board of reviewers shall be:
  - i) 70% by the external reviewer(s), and
  - ii) 30% by the internal reviewer.
- 15) A material shall be graded based on the following rating:



<b>Marks</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Remark</b>
[90,100]	A	Excellent	Very minor or no modification
[80,90)	B	Very Good	Minor modification
[60,80)	C	Good	Major modification
[0,60)	F	Fail	Rejected

- 16) The head of the department, up on receiving from the college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director, shall communicate the review results in an anonymous manner to the principal author within one week from the date he has received the report. The author(s) shall then consider incorporating all comments and recommendations from reviewers or provide valid justification in case of declining to accept any of the recommendations and submit back the revised version of the material to the college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director within one month.
- 17) The revised version of the material shall be resent to the concerned reviewer(s) to be checked if the comments or recommendations have been dully considered, or in case of any decline to incorporate any of the recommendations, if valid justification has been given. The reviewers shall then send their final reports using a prescribed format to the college/faculty dean or institute director or RPD Director, who shall in return inform the author(s) to consider the reports.
- 18) Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-articles 16 and 17, a material graded as A or B shall be accepted for publication and be thoroughly proofread by the author(s) and edited by one language editor to be assigned by the RPD Director before it is published.
- 19) A material graded as C shall be returned to the author(s) and its revised version may be resubmitted only for one more time to the head of the department afresh for further actions in accordance with the relevant provisions set out in this Guideline.
- 20) A resubmitted material shall be evaluated by new reviewers. If the grade obtained in the second review is not improved to at least B, the material has to be rejected.
- 21) A material graded as F shall be rejected.



- 22) A laboratory material whose review process has not been completed within one year from the time of the first submission to the head of the department shall be rejected.
- 23) A teaching material, textbook or book whose review process has not been completed within two years from the time of the first submission to the head of the department shall be rejected.

## **10.CERTIFICATION AND PAYMENT**

- 1) Certificate of recognition for publication of a laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book may be issued to the author(s) by the RPD after the approval of the final version of the material.
- 2) Payments for preparation, review or editing of a laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book are made by academic units to whom the author(s) belong and shall be effected in accordance with relevant Ministry of Finance and University financial regulations. In circumstances where payment modalities and rates are not in place, academic units may not make payments to the author(s).

## **11.COPYRIGHT**

A laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book whose publication is sponsored by AkU will be the property of the University. Thus, in that case, authors shall sign contractual agreement with the academic unit to which they belong to prepare the laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book and shall agree to transfer copyright of the material to the University.

## **12.ADMINISTRATION OF INCOME GENERATED FROM THE MATERIALS**

- 1) Incomes derived from University owned intellectual property shall be received and administered by the head of the department, dean and RPD Director of the University.



- 2) Costs incurred in the process of creating, transferring, and protecting University rights and/or the rights to the property of the author(s) shall first be deducted from the gross income derived and available for distribution among the relevant units.
- 3) The deductible does not include the costs associated with the use of non-financial University resources such as printer, copy machine, etc.
- 4) The net income (gross income minus University expenses) from University owned intellectual properties shall be distributed to the University, author and author's institute/college/school and department as follows:
  - a) Author's share shall be 45%.
  - b) Author's department/school share shall be 25%.
  - c) Author's college/institute/faculty share shall be 15%.
  - d) University share shall be 15%.
- 5) The share distributed to the author's department/school shall include the author's use of non-financial resources of the department/school by the author in producing the intellectual property right.
- 6) Unless agreed otherwise, the share of multiple authors shall be presumed to be equal. If the authors are from different academic units, the share allotted to the author's academic unit as is listed in sub-article 4 (b) and (c) of this Article shall be shared among the academic units proportionally based on their author contribution.

### **13.CONTENT RICHNESS AND COVERAGE OF THE MATERIAL**

The RCSC in preparing the evaluation criteria for the laboratory manual, teaching material, textbook or book shall consider the following points:

- 1) In the preparation of the laboratory manual, teaching material and textbook
  - a) The aims, targets and objectives stated in the material align with those laid down in the relevant curriculum or subject guide;
  - b) All contents in the curriculum are well-covered, self-contained and presented with no or minimal bias or slant, taking into account the context of the particular subject being addressed;



- c) The core elements of the subject curriculum are included and sufficient to address effectively the learning targets of the curriculum without requiring the use of additional supplementary materials;
  - d) The material contains a variety of instructional materials, including reflective questions, learning activities, and other features which promote learner engagement and active learning; and
  - e) The material is pedagogically sound.
- 2) The originality and relevance of the material is well explained (the content is current, information and data are relevant and accurate without factual errors, and the sources of information are appropriately indicated);
  - 3) Concepts are correct and precise and ideas are coherent;
  - 4) Content is up-to-date and avoids presenting information that will make the text obsolete quickly, taking into account the particular subject being addressed;
  - 5) There are adequate examples and illustrations and the material does not contain distorted images or charts, and does not contain any other display features that may distract or confuse the reader;
  - 6) There is an appropriate balance between depth and breadth in the treatment of the subject content;
  - 7) The material is easily divisible into smaller sections, with text that is not overly self-referential in order to enable modularity as much as possible;
  - 8) The material contains a structured, clear, and logical progression of topics;
  - 9) The material contains no grammatical, spelling, or other typographical errors;
  - 10) The level of difficulty of the content is consistent with the curriculum requirements and the degree level of students;
  - 11) There are multiple perspectives and balanced viewpoints on issues;
  - 12) There is no bias in content, such as over-generalization and stereotyping;
  - 13) The content and illustrations do not carry any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion, culture, disability, etc., nor do they suggest exclusion;
  - 14) The materials encourage readers to read additional materials on their own, and selected further reading lists or related websites are included to let readers read extensively;



- 15) Important vocabularies/glossaries are properly and accurately defined;
- 16) Content is reviewed by subject matter experts through a peer review process – preferably, but not restricted to, double-blind peer review.

#### **14. CITATION AND REFERENCE STYLES**

Specific citation and reference styles shall be determined by the respective department councils.

#### **15. INTERPRETATION OF THE GUIDELINE**

- 1) The Guideline shall be interpreted in good faith in accordance with the ordinary meaning to be given to the terms of this Guideline in their context and in the light of its objective.
- 2) Interpretation of provisions of this Guideline shall be compatible with the Legislation and the objective of this Guideline.
- 3) The VPRCS shall be responsible for the appropriate interpretation of this Guideline.
- 4) Where controversies ensue in interpreting the provision of this Guideline, the interpretation proffered by the Senate shall be final and binding, not only for the specific case in relation to which the interpretation was needed but for all subsequent applications of the provision concerned.

#### **16. AMMENDMENT**

This Guideline can be amended by the Senate when needed.

#### **17. ENTRY INTO FORCE**

This Guideline shall enter into force as of this 7<sup>th</sup> Day of September 2020.

Done at Aksum, this 7<sup>th</sup> Day of September 2020.



KIROS GUESH (PhD)  
ACTING PRESIDENT

