



PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)

P.O. Box 619 Butare-Rwanda - Phone: (+ 250)788310811

Web site: www.piass.ac.rw Email: fathebu@yahoo.fr

PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

May, 2022



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Historical background of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences

The institution which later on became the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences was founded in 1970 by mainline protestant churches which were operating in Rwanda. The institution was then called “Ecole de Theologie de Butare: ETB” (Butare School of Theology). In 1990, it was upgraded into Faculty of Protestant Theology of Butare (FTPB) which got official accreditation in 1993 by the convention No 1552 of 09 December 1993. In the same year, the convention No 1554/09.2/01/02 acknowledged the degrees delivered by the FTPB.

In the aftermath of 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the founders of the institution, in the collaboration with the FTPB national and international partners deployed a lot of efforts to help FTPB resume its activities in such a way that specific needs of a recovering society could be met. In that perspective, a so-called Special Program was launched in 1995 and lasted till 2001: three successive intakes of students have been trained over two years and educated in contextual and practical theological training through those kinds of crash courses. The graduates of the Special program were awarded with Diploma in Protestant Theology. As of 1999, the FTPB returned to the ordinary four years program of Hon. Bachelor's degree in Protestant Theology.

In 2010, the FTPB grew up and was supplemented by two new Faculties: Faculty of Education (FED) and the Faculty of Development Studies (FDS) within the new framework of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS). Those two new fields have been chosen based on the experiences and expertise acquired by Protestant Churches in Rwanda. The new Institution (PIASS) has been respectively accredited by the



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Ministerial Order no 09/11 of November 2009 licensing “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)” and the ministerial order n°29 of 19/07/2010 recognizing the Institute under the new name of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS).

PIASS Philosophy

PIASS holds the view that hope and science are indispensable tools for any society to survive and harness moral obligation of people to creatively improve the socio-economic environment in which they can survive and realize their potential. This can only be achieved through a well-conceptualized educational and scientific package through which everyone must rightfully experience and acquire the tools to facilitate this philosophy.

PIASS Vision

“To be a reference university, fostering knowledge development and research that is relevant for the society and inspired by Christian ethics and values.”

PIASS Mission

“To provide to Rwandan Society and Churches well trained personnel who are inquisitive, solution oriented, committed and equipped with intellectual tools that enable them to meeting specific needs of societies that are moving to a global, modern and pluralistic world.”

PIASS Moto

“Fides et Scientia”

PIASS Objectives

PIASS as Higher Learning Institution has the following objectives:



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- To develop practical and applicable knowledge in social as well as economic development
- To impart a high quality teaching enabling creation of employment and that proves relevant to communities is close to reality, helpful for the society at large.
- To contribute to the positive transformation of society using short teaching and training, research, consultancy and projects and respect to ethical dimension.
- To contribute to local and national sustainable development by promoting scientific and technological research as well as research for integrated development

Article 1: Aims of the PIASS Equality and Diversity policy

This policy is about promoting positive attitudes towards equality and diversity and to ensure that everyone working, living and studying at PIASS is treated fairly and with dignity. The PIASS will ensure that no prospective and existing students and employees shall receive less favorable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, nationality, colour, race religion, belief and non-belief, sexual or sexual orientation.

Article 2: Objectives of the PIASS Equality and Diversity policy

- Create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all employees and students are recognized and valued;
- Help employees and students feel appreciated rather than constrained;
- To prohibit the different manifestations of unfair discrimination, based on, but not limited to, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, conscience and beliefs;
- To prevent and eliminate any conduct of unfair discrimination by any member of the PIASS community against another, which may undermine her or his human dignity. Such conduct of unfair discrimination may include, but is not limited, to bullying and / or harassment;



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- To clarify the procedure, the responsibilities and the obligations of all to promote equality and diversity in the institution (PIASS);
- To establish appropriate and accessible interventions for staff and students to address allegations of unfair discrimination.

Article 3: PIASS functions related to Equality and Diversity policy for students

- All PIASS functions will take account of Equality and Diversity policy.

3.1 Student Admissions

- All students are equal regardless of their religious beliefs, sexual orientation, nationality, colour, race, gender and gender identity. As a result, PIASS is committed to excellence in admissions and aims to provide a professional and fair service for all applicants. PIASS aims not only to select students who have the ability and motivation to benefit from the programmes which they intend to follow and who will make a contribution to the institution life, but also to ensure that no prospective or existing student is treated less favorably.



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3.2 Teaching, learning and assessment

PIASS accepts that equality and diversity are strength and need to be respected and recognized. PIASS shall value the diversity of backgrounds and experiences that students will bring to the academic environment of the institution and will be committed to meeting the needs of a diverse and changing student body. PIASS will ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment strategies are equitable, undertaken with awareness of the different needs of students, and are directed towards the encouragement of academic and personal development. PIASS will value the importance of encouraging diversity to be reflected in the content of courses, teaching methods and all forms of assessment.

3.3 Facilities and Services

PIASS is committed to eliminating all kinds of discrimination and encouraging equality and diversity for both students and staff. All facilities and services provided by or in association with the institution will operate in accordance with its Equality and Diversity Policy. This includes catering facilities, teaching and learning facilities, accommodation services, sports provision, retail outlets, conference and social activities.

3.4 Support for Students

PIASS recognizes that the welfare of all students on its premises is of the highest priority. As a result, PIASS will establish the student support network with the aim of securing the personal development, physical and mental wellbeing and welfare of all students, supporting them in realising their academic potential irrespective of their religious beliefs, sexual orientation, race, marital status, gender, economic status, colour, and gender identity.



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Article 4: PIASS functions related to Equality and Diversity policy for staff (academic staff, administrative staff and supporting staff)

PIASS is committed not only to promoting equality and diversity for students but also to becoming an institution that appreciates and understands the different skills within its workforce. All PIASS policies and procedures will therefore be designed to benefit all employees and potential recruits in every aspect of their work.

4.1: Staff recruitment and selection

PIASS is aware that effective recruitment is the key to having the people with the right skills, expertise and qualifications in the right jobs. Diversity and equality of opportunity shall be central to the process. As well as getting the right person for the job, a fair and consistent process will help lower staff turnover, absenteeism, disciplinary issues and tribunal claims. In doing so, PIASS will ensure that discrimination and stereotyping play no part in the recruitment and selection process and that the best persons are selected on the basis of merit alone and that the selection process is free from bias on the grounds of factors such as age, disability, gender or race that are not relevant to the persons' ability to do the job.



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4.2 Staff development and promotion

PIASS will be a responsible institution for protecting people in employment from discrimination, victimization, harassment or any other detriment because of any of the protected characteristics' disability: gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, and age.

Every employee will be treated fairly in all day-to-day activities and work-related decisions (recruitment, training, promotion, allocating work, pay, etc.) and the employee's development and promotion will be based upon ability and not on stereotypical demographics. PIASS will embrace people's differences in developing and promoting its workforce, as a more diverse workforce is more profitable too.

4.2: Staff wage and remuneration

With the policy of equality and diversity, PIASS is committed to equally treating its employees and wages and remunerations will be provided on the basis of merit rather than on any prejudices. PIASS will ensure that wages and remunerations are provided to those who have made a contribution to the institution's performance and that there is a direct relationship between effort made and the reward provided.



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Article 5: Implementation and Responsibilities

PIASS seeks to ensure that all members of the institution are informed of this Policy and any associated procedures. All members of the institution are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this Policy and its implementation. The following groups have particular responsibility for various aspects of the Equality and Diversity Policy in the institution (PIASS)

5.1: PIASS leaders will have the following responsibilities:

- Within 6 months of employment, PIASS leaders are required by this Policy to undertake equality and diversity training facilitated by the Human Resources Development Unit as part of their induction process;
- To monitor the working environment to ensure that acceptable standards of conduct are observed at all times; when PIASS leaders observe a risk of unfair discrimination in the workplace, they should take the necessary steps to ensure that it is appropriately dealt with; failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action being taken against them;
- To demonstrate appropriate behaviours themselves, including ensuring that they do not engage in conduct that may breach the policy and procedures set out herein;
- To ensure employees, students and other relevant persons understand the policy and procedures set out herein.



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5.2: All employees and students of PIASS will have a responsibility to:

- ensure that they do not engage in any unfair discriminatory behavior, practices and/or vilification or breach of this policy;
- report any incidences of unfair discrimination;
- offer support to anyone who is being unfairly discriminated against and direct them to sources of help and advice; and
- maintain complete confidentiality of information and cooperate during the investigation of a complaint.

- 5.3: The Equality and Diversity Committee will be responsible for formulating, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing all aspects of the PIASS's work on equality and diversity including the Dignity at work and study policy.
- 5.4 The Equality and Diversity Office will be responsible for giving advice, support and guidance to students and staff on a range of equality matters.

Article 6: Application of the Equality and Diversity policy

This policy applies to all staff and students of the institution (PIASS), including:

- i) academic staff; whether they are full-time or part-time;
- ii) contractors and visitors while on any of the two campuses of PIASS (Karongi and Huye);
- iii) administrative staff at all levels;
- iv) sites where PIASS students and staff spend time (e.g. companies, schools) are strongly encouraged to abide by the principles and values of this policy; and
- v) students (day, week end and holiday program students).



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Article 7: Complaints and alternative dispute resolution procedures for staff and students

7.1: If any student or employee is not satisfied with their treatment under this policy they shall raise it in the first instance with their department or faculties before going to the Equality and Diversity Committee.

7.2: Mediation will be used as a preferred alternative resolution procedure to deal with any complaint regarding unfair discrimination or treatment cases. Notwithstanding the preferred role of mediation, the institution (PIASS) may undertake a formal hearing in the event that the aggrieved party prefers it, and such a preference is justified.

7.3: Mediation is always voluntary; both parties/groups of parties must agree. In case they do not agree, these parties may seek recourse to the Human Rights Commission or the Courts.

Article 8: Complaints involving visitors and independent contractors

8.1: Equality and diversity disputes involving visitors and independent contracts must be submitted to the Registrar, who in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Committee will find resolution thereto.

7.2: In the event of non-resolution of the dispute, parties may seek recourse to the Human Rights Commission or the Courts.



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Article 9: Review of policy and procedures

9.1: The policy and procedures will be reviewed after every 3 years, or when relevant legislation changes.

9.2: Appropriate changes in line with any change in legislation will be made.

Approved By PIASS Council at Huye on 25-5-2022

Chairman of PIASS Council