

<b>Policy subject:</b> Academic Freedom <b>Support Policy</b>	<b>Policy number:</b> 68/P.D/2024	<b>Date of last revision:</b> 2024/11/15
<b>Implementing body:</b> Administrative Affairs Department	<b>Implementing start date:</b> 2024/11/20	<b>Policy reference:</b> Planning and Development Department

**Overview:** Palestine Ahliya University (PAU) is committed to fostering a supportive environment where academic freedom is upheld as a fundamental principle. This policy ensures that faculty members and students can freely pursue their research, teaching, and intellectual inquiries without undue interference, thereby promoting innovation, intellectual growth, and academic independence within the university and the Bethlehem community.

#### Objectives:

➤ **Ensure Freedom of Expression:**

Create and maintain an academic environment that supports the free exchange of ideas and independent exploration in research and teaching.

➤ **Protect Academic Rights:**

Safeguard the rights of faculty and students to choose their research and teaching fields without restrictions or fear of retaliation.

➤ **Promote Integrity and Inclusivity:**

Enhance transparency and academic integrity practices while encouraging constructive, diverse, and inclusive discussions.

#### Scope:

This policy applies to all faculty members, students, and researchers at PAU. It encompasses:

1. Rights to choose research and teaching fields freely.
2. Freedom to express ideas and opinions in academic settings.
3. Mechanisms to address and resolve complaints related to academic freedom restrictions.

## Statements:

PAU is dedicated to ensuring academic freedom as a cornerstone of its educational and research mission. The university will protect the rights of its faculty and students to engage in independent research and teaching and to express diverse ideas, fostering an environment of academic independence and innovation.

## Procedures:

### 1. Define the Framework:

- Review national and international policies on academic freedom.
- Develop a guide outlining faculty members' rights and responsibilities regarding academic freedom.

### 2. Establish a Review Committee:

- Form an independent committee with faculty, academic administration, and student body representatives.
- Develop a process for periodic reviews and handling complaints about academic freedom.

### 3. Conduct the Review:

- Ensure university policies align with international standards for academic freedom.
- Review academic contracts and procedures for faculty recruitment and promotion to protect academic freedom.

### 4. Complaint Follow-Up and Investigation:

- Set up a secure, confidential system for reporting violations of academic freedom.
- Create an impartial investigation process for addressing complaints about academic freedom restrictions.

### 5. Periodic Evaluation:

- Conduct annual or semi-annual assessments of the university's commitment to academic freedom.
- Prepare reports with recommendations to enhance academic freedom.

### 6. Awareness Promotion:

- Organize workshops and training to promote understanding of academic freedom.
- Provide guidance materials about faculty and researcher rights.

#### **7. Prepare the Final Report:**

- Develop periodic reports on compliance with academic freedom.
- Publish the reports internally to ensure transparency and trust within the university community.

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#### **KPIs:**

- Number of academic freedom restriction complaints received annually.
- Percentage of complaints resolved fairly and promptly.
- Increase in participation in academic forums promoting freedom of expression and intellectual diversity.