



RITMAN UNIVERSITY

Ritman University Policy for Artificial Intelligence

Abstract

The Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy outlines the guidelines and ethical considerations for responsible integration of AI technologies in teaching, research, community service and quality assurance in Ritman University. The development and implementation of an AI policy represent a significant milestone for the university, signaling its readiness to embrace and leverage the transformative potentials of AI. The following form the content of the AI Policy: acceptable level of AI use, sanctions for transgression of acceptable levels of AI use, procurement plan for AI infrastructure and software, legal implications, roles and responsibilities, responsible data use, capacity building, privacy and ethical considerations, interdisciplinary collaboration, diversity and inclusion, monitoring and evaluation. By adopting this AI policy grounded in ethical principles, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement, Ritman University envisions a future where AI serves humanity's best interests.

Introduction

Ritman University, located at Ikot Abia Idem Village, Ikot Ekpene LGA of Akwa Ibom State was given an operating license by the Federal Government of Nigeria as the 58th Private University on 5th March, 2015. The university was founded by Senator Emmanuel Ibok Essien and late Dr. Mrs. Grace Emmanuel Essien. The Co-Founders are Engr. Sunday Umoh and Mrs. Rita Umoh. The Founder and his wife had earlier founded Ritman Schools, comprising Ritman Nursery/Primary and Ritman College. Encouraged by the success achieved by Ritman Schools and motivated by the Federal Government's liberalization of the establishment of tertiary institutions, the Distinguished Senator inaugurated a Planning and Implementation Committee (PIC) for the laying of the foundation for the university. The PIC composed of university scholars and administrators

with late Prof. (Amb.) Okon Edet Uya as the chairman. Ritman University is known for its commitment to innovation and technological advancement. Faculty, staff and students at the University have leveraged on AI for academic research, learning and support. As AI continues to evolve, Ritman University will explore new opportunities to harness AI for innovation and excellence in teaching, research and community service.

Vision

To be a first rate, virile centre of academic excellence for educating scholars and leaders capable of solving societal problems.

Mission

Ritman University is a Liberal Arts, Science and Technology university with emphasis on teaching experiential learning, cutting edge research, character building and investing relevant knowledge in community development.

Motto

Knowledge for Development

Core Values

1. Faith in God
2. Moral and Ethical Responsibility
3. Excellence in Service
4. Commitment to Success
5. Critical Thinking
6. Physical and Mental health
7. Ownership Mentality

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems. These processes include learning (the acquisition of information and rules for using it), reasoning (using rules to reach approximate or definite conclusions), and self-correction. AI encompasses various sub-fields such as machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision and robotics. As AI technologies continue to evolve, they have the potential to profoundly impact society, reshaping industries, transforming the way we work and live, and raising important ethical and philosophical questions about the nature of intelligence and consciousness.

Contents of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

1. Acceptable Level of AI Use in the University

There shall be an acceptable level of AI use for teaching, research, community service and other activities of staff and students, including academic papers and students' project reports and theses. Academic staff shall ensure that AI tools used in teaching are accurate, unbiased, and appropriate for the educational context. All staff and students shall ensure the ethical use of AI, considering data privacy, fairness, and potential biases in algorithms. When AI is used in academic papers, projects, dissertations and theses, it shall be clearly disclosed and described in relevant sections, including details of the algorithms used, data sources, and any pre-processing or post-processing steps. The level of plagiarism in the use of AI tools is pegged at 15%. Proper citation and credit shall be given to AI tools, datasets, and other resources utilized in academic work.

2. Sanctions

Sanctions for the transgression of acceptable levels of AI use are an essential aspect of regulating the ethical and responsible deployment of artificial intelligence. These sanctions serve to enforce compliance with established guidelines, protect against potential harm, maintain public trust in AI systems and deter staff and students from engaging in harmful or unethical AI practices. Sanctions shall include issuance of letter of warning, letter of caution, suspension, advice-to-withdraw, expulsion and dismissal, depending on the gravity of the offence, as applicable in the Staff and Student Handbooks. Clear guidelines outlining the types of AI misuse and corresponding penalties shall be made available to staff and students to avoid ambiguity and promote fairness in enforcement. There shall be training and workshops on responsible use of AI and the consequences of misuse.

3. Procurement Plan for AI Infrastructure and Software

The University shall:

- i. identify the specific AI applications and capabilities required by different programmes;
- ii. determine the goals and objectives of integrating AI infrastructure and software into various academic and administrative functions;
- iii. make the budget available for procuring AI infrastructure and software;

- iv. consider long-term costs including maintenance, upgrades, and training;
- v. identify reputable vendors specializing in AI infrastructure and software solutions;
- vi. evaluate vendors based on factors such as reliability, scalability, support services, and alignment with the university's needs and goals;
- vii. prepare a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) outlining the university's requirements, specifications, and expectations;
- viii. invite qualified vendors to submit proposals that address the specified criteria;
- ix. select a committee comprising of stakeholders from relevant programmes;
- x. evaluate vendor proposals based on predetermined criteria such as functionality, cost-effectiveness, technical support, and compatibility with existing systems;
- xi. select a subset of AI infrastructure or software solutions for pilot testing in real-world university environments;
- xii. evaluate the performance, usability, and impact of the pilot solutions;
- xiii. identify potential risks and challenges associated with the implementation of AI infrastructure and software;
- xiv. develop strategies to mitigate risks related to data security, privacy, compliance, and technical issues;
- xv. conduct regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of AI infrastructure and software in meeting the university's goals; and
- xvi. iterate on the procurement plan as needed based on feedback, evolving technology trends, and changing needs of Faculty, Staff and Students.

4. Legal Implications

- i. **Intellectual Property Rights:** The University shall determine ownership rights over AI-generated works if AI is used to create intellectual property such as research papers, software, or inventions.
- ii. **Data Privacy and Security:** AI systems often rely on vast amounts of data, including personal information about students and staff. The University shall ensure compliance with data protection regulations.
- iii. **Bias and Discrimination:** AI algorithms can inadvertently perpetuate biases present in the data they are trained on, leading to discriminatory outcomes. The University shall take measures to address bias and ensure

fairness in AI systems, particularly in areas such as admissions, hiring, and grading, to prevent legal challenges related to discrimination.

iv. Transparency and Accountability: As AI systems become more autonomous, the University shall ensure transparency in their decision-making processes as stakeholders and regulatory bodies like National University Commission, may demand explanations for AI-driven decisions, necessitating transparency and accountability mechanisms to prevent legal disputes.

v. Liability for Errors: The University shall ensure the reliability and accuracy of AI technologies to prevent damages to individuals and the University.

vi. Ethical Considerations: The University shall ensure that AI applications align with ethical principles and societal values, mitigating the risk of legal challenges stemming from ethical violations.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of staff and students in the use of AI in the University are:

a. Staff Responsibilities:

i. Developing AI Applications: Staff shall be responsible for developing AI applications relevant to educational purposes, research, administration, and other areas within the university;

ii. Teaching and Training: Faculty members shall be responsible for integrating AI into the curriculum where relevant, teaching students about AI concepts, applications, and ethics, and providing training on AI tools and techniques;

iii. Governance and Policy Development: The University shall be responsible for developing policies and guidelines for the ethical and responsible use of AI within the University; and

iv. Support and Maintenance: ICT staff shall be responsible for maintaining AI systems, providing technical support to staff and students using AI tools, and ensuring the reliability and security of AI infrastructure.

b. Student Responsibilities:

- i. Learning and Application: Students shall be responsible for learning about AI concepts, applications, and implications for their field of study, and applying AI techniques in their research projects or coursework where appropriate;
- ii. Ethical Use: Students shall understand the ethical implications of AI and use AI tools and data responsibly, adhering to university policies and guidelines;
- iii. Feedback and Collaboration: Students shall provide feedback on AI tools and applications used in their courses or research, collaborate with staff and researchers on AI projects, and contribute to the improvement of AI systems within the university; and
- iv. Continuous Learning: Students shall engage in continuous learning and stay updated on advancements in AI technology and its applications in their field of study or research.

c. Shared Responsibilities:

- i. Data Management: Staff and students shall share responsibility for ensuring the quality, security, and privacy of data used in AI applications, including data collection, processing, and storage;
- ii. Bias Awareness and Mitigation: Staff and students shall collaborate to identify and mitigate biases in AI algorithms and datasets, ensuring fair and equitable outcomes;
- iii. Promoting Transparency and Accountability: Faculty, staff and students shall promote transparency and accountability in the use of AI within the University; and
- iv. Education and Awareness: Faculty, staff and students shall collaborate to raise awareness about AI concepts, applications, and ethical considerations within the university community, organizing workshops, seminars, and other educational activities.

6. Responsible Data Use:

- i. Transparency and Consent: Staff and students shall ensure transparency about data collection, storage, and usage practices. How AI will be used and what data will be collected shall be clearly communicated;
- ii. Data Privacy and Security: The University shall implement robust data privacy measures to protect sensitive information;

- iii. Fairness and Bias Mitigation: The University shall regularly assess AI algorithms for biases and ensure fairness in decision-making processes; implement bias detection and mitigation techniques to prevent discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, or other protected characteristics;
- iv. Accountability and Oversight: The University shall establish clear accountability mechanisms for AI systems within the university; designate responsible individuals or committees to oversee AI projects, monitor their impact, and address any ethical concerns that may arise; create channels for reporting and addressing issues related to data misuse or algorithmic bias; and
- v. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Consultation: The University shall involve students, staff, and other stakeholders in decision-making processes related to AI deployment; seek input from diverse perspectives to ensure that AI initiatives align with the values and needs of the university community.

7. Capacity Building:

The University shall engage staff and students in capacity building.

- i. Skill Development: This involves training staff, researchers, and students in AI-related concepts, tools, and techniques. Workshops, seminars, online courses, and formal degree programmes shall be used to impart skills ranging from basic AI understanding to advanced machine learning algorithms and data analysis;
- ii. Curriculum Development: AI-related topics shall be integrated into existing academic programmes; the University shall create specialised AI-focused courses that will equip students with relevant knowledge and skills. This may involve updating course content, designing new modules, or even establishing dedicated AI programmes.
- iii. Research Support: The University shall provide resources and support for AI research projects, access to computing infrastructure, collaboration opportunities with industry partners, and support for publishing findings in relevant journals and conferences.
- iv. Infrastructure Enhancement: The University shall build or upgrade computing infrastructure, such as high-performance computing clusters or cloud-based platforms.

Implementation of the AI Policy

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being utilized in the realm of higher education. After approval by the Senate and the Governing Council, the staff and students shall be trained on the use of AI in teaching, research and community service. Help desk shall be provided to answer questions promptly. There shall be guidelines to ensure that AI systems are developed, used responsibly and ethically within the educational contexts. A detailed implementation plan outlining the timeline, milestones, and responsibilities for deploying AI infrastructure and software shall be provided.

Monitoring and Evaluation

There shall be a continuous process of monitoring, evaluating, and enhancing the quality of education to meet defined standards and objectives through Quality Assurance Unit and accreditation exercise. All aspects of education delivery, including curriculum design, teaching methodologies, assessment practices, student support services, and institutional governance shall be monitored and evaluated periodically. Compliance with established benchmarks shall be adhered to. Regular monitoring, assessment, review, and improvement activities shall be conducted throughout the academic year. Mechanisms for monitoring the performance and usage of AI infrastructure and software shall be established. There shall be feedback from students and staff to identify areas for improvement and optimization.

Funding

The University shall:

1. allocate a portion of the university's annual budget to support AI-related initiatives.
2. encourage staff to apply for external grants and research funding from industry partners and organisations to support AI research projects.
3. offer continuing education and professional development programmes in AI-related fields to generate revenue.
4. collaborate with stakeholders from academia, industry, government, and civil society.

Conclusion

The AI policy outlines the objectives, principles, guidelines, and ethical considerations for responsible use of AI technologies in the University. By fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and ethical stewardship, Ritman University shall position itself as a leader in AI deployment, empowering its students and faculty to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in alignment with its motto of “Knowledge for Development”. The policy has pegged the level of plagiarism in the use of AI tool to 15%. By implementing the strategies and investing in the necessary infrastructure, capacity building, and governance mechanisms, the University shall effectively integrate AI technologies into its teaching, research, community service, and quality assurance practices, thereby realizing the potential benefits of AI.