

# **PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)**



## **LANGUAGE POLICY**

## **1. 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 that 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 2009, the FTPB grew up and was supplemented by two new Faculties: The Faculty of Education (FED) and the Faculty of Development Studies (FDS) within the new framework of “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)”. Those two new fields have been chosen based on the experiences and expertise acquired by Protestant Churches in Rwanda. In 2010, the French name was changed to Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS). The new Institution (PIASS) has been respectively accredited by the 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).

### ***1.1. PIASS Philosophy***

PIASS holds the view that faith 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.

## **1.2. PIASS's Statement of Faith**

PIASS affirms the following as fundamental to Christian belief, practice, and behavior.

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word originally given by God through revelation to humans, are inspired, true, and entirely trustworthy in all that it intends to teach, and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct since they contain all things necessary for salvation.
2. There is ONE GOD, eternally existent in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the world and of life thanks to His universal sovereignty over all that He has made in heaven and on earth.
4. Our Lord Jesus Christ, incarnated God, was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, true God, and a true man without sin. His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His present mediatorial work, and His personal return in Power and Glory to judge the living and the dead remain a firm source of our hope for the present and life to come.
5. The Holy Spirit, one of the persons of the Trinity, witnesses to Christ, regenerates, and sanctifies us. His indwelling enables us to witness and serve the Triune God and humankind through different spiritual gifts and talents.
6. Man and woman were created by God in His image, free and responsible to choose good or evil. By sin, human beings were corrupted in their nature and were separated from their Creator.
7. Salvation for humans remains the work of God, accomplished through Jesus Christ's expiatory death and bodily resurrection. In His grace, God justifies the sinner through faith alone.

8. The unity of all those who, through believing and confessing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, form a community of children of God, the Church, the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.
9. The bodily resurrection of all the dead, the final judgment, and the establishment of the eternal kingdom of Christ.

As a Church-owned institution, PIASS's overall conviction and calling are to build a world in which the love of God for His creation and that we have for one another is visible and lived in concrete experiences. To stand firm in its faith and succeed in its mission, the following commitments and strategies are set as safeguards:

1. PIASS is committed to reading, teaching, and preaching the Holy Scriptures in their plain and canonical sense through an in-depth analysis, and to applying their message.
2. PIASS is committed to promoting Ecumenism within it and among Protestant Churches in Rwanda and beyond as an opportunity and strategy to affirm our Christian witness and fight against separatism, destructive fundamentalism, and any form of extremism.
3. PIASS is engaged in the ministry of reconciliation and search for peace within surrounding communities, in the Rwandan society, and in the Great Lakes sub-region.
4. PIASS is committed to supporting initiatives likely to improve the living conditions of communities.
5. PIASS is committed to supporting the weakest among us and to building healing communities where everyone finds a place.

### ***1.3. 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.”

### ***1.4. PIASS Mission***

“To provide Society and Churches with 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.”

### ***1.5. PIASS Moto***

Fides et Scientia (Faith and Science): By this moto, PIASS assumes that faith and science are interwoven to ensure the quality of life.

### ***1.6. PIASS Objectives***

PIASS as Higher Learning Institution has the following objectives:

- 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.

### ***1.7. Principles and values***

Being a Protestant institution of Higher Education, PIASS ethical values are grounded in its statement of faith.

- **Liberation:** As the Gospel of Christ liberates from all human alienations here and now, bearing witness to it cannot go without running social dialogue with the society and serving the poor.
- **Relevance:** Higher education plays a key role in construction and development of a just, equitable and stable society through the training of committed, responsible and professionally competent citizens.
- **Unity in Diversity:** Open and respectful exchange of ideas along with evidence-based documentation is essential to higher education contribution to a pluralistic society.
- **Effectiveness and efficiency:** Finding out the optimal and cost-effective way to reach objectives, in changing environment and limitation of resources and keeps on being result and solution oriented.
- **Quality Service Delivery:** Training, research, and services to both national and international communities must be qualitative and competitive.

- **Innovation:** Teaching and learning processes are considering changing needs of churches and society and therefore programs are continually assessed and improved accordingly in a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels.
- **Responsibility:** Teachers, students and administrative staff, to achieve their job, are expected to make decisions, act upon their choices, delegate and report openly.
- **Solidarity:** Promoting a gender balanced culture and stressing on the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering team spirit and looking for win-win partnerships with other institutions of higher learning.
- **Transparency:** Managing resources of the institution in a rigorous and transparent manner.
- **Good Governance:** Fairness, equity without discrimination, clear delegation and decentralization are adopted at all levels of the institution.
- **Prayerful life:** Prayer as a conversation with God and a means for self-examination can bring about a sense of inner peace, spiritual refreshment, and more commitment to serve God, fellow humans, and the whole creation.
- **Hard work:** The necessity for hard work is not only a way to attain prosperity and wealth for oneself and society, but it also remains a calling to fulfill the mandate given to human beings to take care of creation and fructify it in a sustainable way.
- **Equality and Inclusivity:** All members of the PIASS community are equal. We believe in a fair and respectful manner so that each member of the PIASS community has an equal opportunity to contribute to the University's operations. We promote the safety, security and wellbeing of society and our environment by acting in accordance with the University's equality and diversity policy.

### **Article 1: Aims of PIASS language policy**

This policy aims to ensure that students gain the language skills they need and that languages are taught in the context of the academic disciplines and in parallel with subject study. At the same time, this policy aims to ensure that students' language proficiency level is not a barrier to their studies and to assist students who have a weak language base with a particular emphasis on English as medium of instruction in Rwanda.

### **Article 2: Objectives of PIASS language policy**

- To bring all PIASS students and employees to a high level of language proficiency in a relatively short period of time;
- To enhance learners ability to cope with their program's lecture and other academic requirements;
- To enable the learners to be more competitive in the national, regional and international labor market
- To help the surrounding community improve their language skills.

### **Article 3: Classification of the learners according to the levels of English proficiency**

At least one month before the beginning of each academic year (and or intake), PIASS organize a placement test to assess the level of English proficiency. Based on the test results, the learners are classified in three categories: Beginners, intermediate and advanced levels. PIASS shall award a certificate of language proficiency to all the learners according to their individual level of language proficiency.

- **Beginners:** The candidates who get below 50% in placement test. They are required to study two modules of English in intermediate (20 credits) and advanced (20 credits) classes. After passing the exam of intermediate class on writing, reading, listening and speaking skills, the candidates at this level are awarded a certificate of intermediate level

of English proficiency. The candidates who fail at this level are allowed to register in the PIASS department they have applied for with a retake of the module of intermediate English. However, they cannot be promoted to the second year of studies before getting the certificate of intermediate level of English proficiency.

- **Intermediate level:** The learners who get between 50-79% in placement test. They are immediately awarded a certificate of intermediate level of English proficiency and to register in PIASS department they applied for. However, they are required to attend the class of advanced English to get a certificate of Advanced English proficiency after passing exam related to this level. The candidates who fail at this level are allowed to register in the second year of their studies with a retake of the module of advanced English. However, no student can register in the third year of studies before getting the certificate of Advanced level of English proficiency.
- **Advanced level:** The learners who get between 80 -100% in placement test. They are exempted of both intermediate and advanced English classes since they are immediately awarded a certificate of advanced English proficiency.

#### **Article 4: Implementation agency of PIASS language policy**

This language policy shall be implemented by the PIASS Center for Languages and Bridging courses (CLAB).

#### **Article 5: The functioning of CLAB**

##### ***5.1 Coordination of CLAB***

The **CLAB** is chaired by a coordinator who is appointed by the PIASS academic senate and fulfill the following requirements:

- Holding at least a Master's degree in English, literature, and other related domains;
- 2 years of working experience in HLI and/or in other institutions of language literacy.

The native English speakers are exempted of this requirement of working experience;

- Computer literacy and ability to use virtual platforms in teaching languages
- Competencies in teaching languages
- Editing and translation skills
- Fluency in both English and French is an added value.



### ***5.2 Other employees of CLAB***

The PIASS academic senate appoints other fulltime and parttime employees of **CLAB** when it is necessary. They have to fulfill the requirements described in the above paragraph. Apart from the academic staff of CLAB, the Senior Management Committee of PIASS shall appoint technical and supportive staff of the center when it is necessary.

### ***5.3 Key activities of CLAB***

- To organize a placement test to classify the learners according to their level of English proficiency at least one month before the beginning of the new Academic year or/and intake;
- To issue certificates of language proficiency according to the learners' levels (intermediate and advanced levels);
- To organize English teaching according the learners 'levels of language proficiency;
- To link advanced learners to international language centers to get international certificate of language proficiency,
- Teaching English and other languages (French, Kiswahili) to the surrounding community and foreigners (Kinyarwanda);
- Proofreading, editing, translation, printing, and other related services.
- To organize any other bridging course approved by PIASS academic senates and other competent organs.

### ***5.4 The cost of services offered by CLAB and other practical modalities***

- The cost of each of the services offered by **CLAB** is determined by the Senior Management committee of PIASS.
- Each bridging course is separately paid by its beneficiaries according to the rate approved by competent organs of PIASS
- The center can only proofread, edit, and /or translate students' papers upon the presentation of a recommendation issued by the supervisor to prove the level of research progress.

**Article 6: Final provisions**

This language policy comes into force on the date of its approval by the PIASS academic senate. All prior provisions contrary to this policy are repealed.

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

**Chairman of PIASS Council**