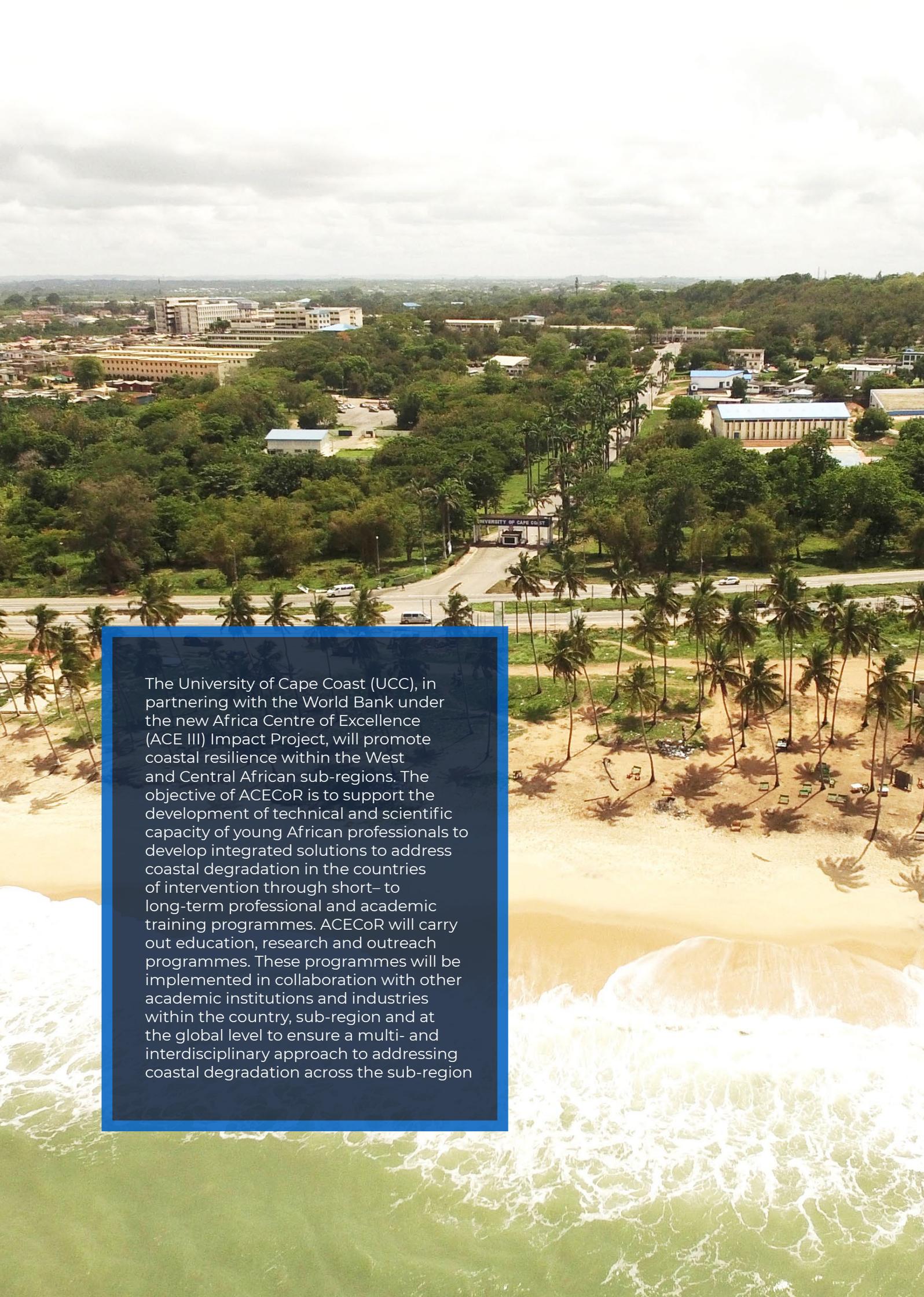




# RESEARCH GUIDELINES



An aerial photograph showing the University of Cape Coast campus, a sandy beach with palm trees, and the ocean waves. The campus includes several large buildings, a central entrance gate with a sign that reads 'UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST', and a road leading to the gate. The beach is lined with many palm trees, and the ocean waves are breaking on the shore. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

The University of Cape Coast (UCC), in partnering with the World Bank under the new Africa Centre of Excellence (ACE III) Impact Project, will promote coastal resilience within the West and Central African sub-regions. The objective of ACECoR is to support the development of technical and scientific capacity of young African professionals to develop integrated solutions to address coastal degradation in the countries of intervention through short- to long-term professional and academic training programmes. ACECoR will carry out education, research and outreach programmes. These programmes will be implemented in collaboration with other academic institutions and industries within the country, sub-region and at the global level to ensure a multi- and interdisciplinary approach to addressing coastal degradation across the sub-region



# Welcome message from the Director of ACECoR



**Prof. Denis Worlanyo Aheto**  
**Director**, Centre for Coastal  
Management - Africa Centre  
of Excellence in Coastal  
Resilience (ACECoR)

Welcome to ACECoR. As a research candidate you are a part of the wider research community and an important part of the University of Cape Coast's strategic goal to continuously invest in developing human capacity for the accelerated development of Africa through innovation, research and partnerships.

## Our vision

To be a global centre of excellence in coastal resilience through collaboration with industry, private and public institutions.

## Our mission

To achieve sustainable management and use of coastal environment through training of human resource, and demand-driven research to support coastal policy development in Africa.

## Our aims

ACECoR aims at achieving excellence in training both students and professionals in selected areas as a way of enhancing coastal resilience and promoting policies through;

- Training Professionals
- Learning Environment
- Human Resource Capacity
- Industry Sector Partnerships

**We are committed to building a youthful workforce to drive Africa's emerging blue economy through research and innovation.**

Visit <https://acecor.ucc.edu.gh>

# ACECoR RESEARCH GUIDELINES

## 1. Background

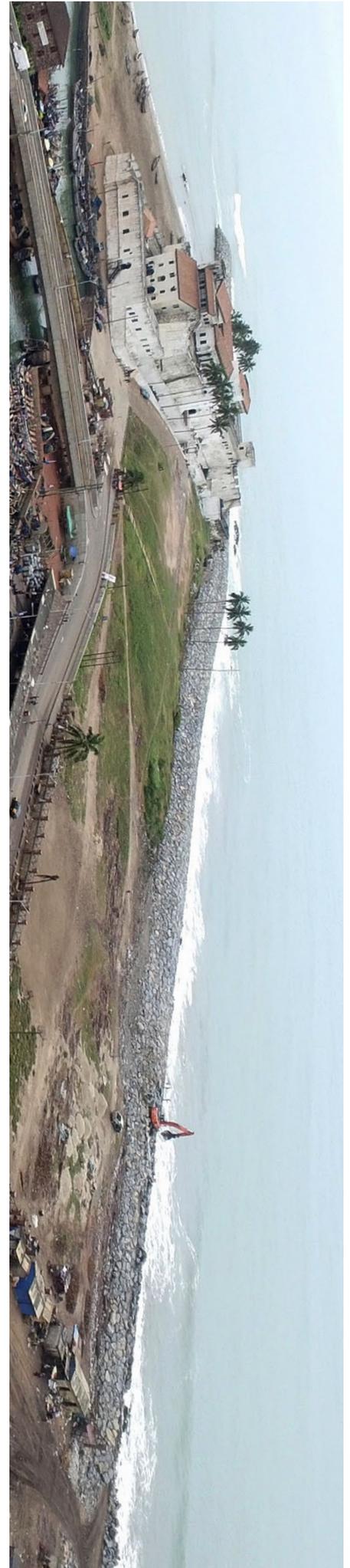
The Africa Centre of Excellence in Coastal Resilience (ACECoR) of the University of Cape Coast is a World Bank sponsored project to train 120 or more students at the Masters and PhD levels. In the University of Cape Coast, the project is liaising with various departments including Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, Economics, Environmental Science and others to train the students. The academic training involves courses in the academic areas of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Fisheries, Oceanography and other related programmes as well as research in various thematic areas. Research in ACECoR project is grouped into five thematic areas and students' research activities are to be aligned with the thematic areas. This research guideline presents the overall expectations regarding the conduct of students and faculty members on research under ACECoR. The guideline seeks to ensure that research and thesis supervision activities under ACECoR are conducted in line with the highest professional standards in order to deliver a holistic training to students as well as ensure quality research at the centre.

## 2. Research Scope

The main aim of ACECoR's research activities is to generate data that will address coastal degradation in West and Central Africa. It is also to imbue resilience among coastal communities in the sub-region. Considering the complex and multifaceted nature of coastal degradation issues, all research activities have been grouped under five main thematic areas. These thematic areas are:

- » Coastal Geomorphology and Engineering,
- » Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation,
- » Blue economy, Governance and Social Resilience,
- » Disaster and Risk Management and
- » Ecosystems and Biodiversity.

All research activities under ACECoR whether students' project, research consultancy to the centre and/or individual research activities to be sponsored by the project have to be aligned to the five thematic areas. Also, all ACECoR's collaborative activities must be in line with the thematic areas. Research projects that cut across thematic area boundaries are encouraged to promote resilience in all spheres of coastal management in West Africa.



### 3. Research Organisation

The Centre for Coastal Management (CCM) which hosts the ACECoR project is committed to ensuring that a suitable environment that promotes academic and professional success for all research staff is observed. The Centre therefore endeavours to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, fairness and collegiality for its students, trainees and staff. Research activities by Senior Members on ACECoR project are guided by the CCM's Project Management Policy. Students, interns and postdoctoral fellows' research activities shall however be governed by the following guidelines:

#### (i) Assigning of supervisors

All students, interns, postdoctoral fellows and other non-faculty members conducting research with the Centre shall be assigned specific supervisors who are faculty members. Masters and PhD students shall be assigned two supervisors each, one being the Principal Supervisor and the other being the Co-Supervisor in line with guidelines of the School of Graduate Studies - UCC. Duties and responsibilities of supervisors are outlined in Section 4 of this guideline.

#### (ii) Presentation of Research Proposal

Graduate students on ACECoR project shall be required to give a presentation of their thesis/dissertation proposals during a seminar to faculty members who shall critique and provide feedback on the presentation. The presentation forms part of Seminars registered by the students as a course, and shall be scored and graded. Students must pass with a minimum mark of 60% before the proposal is approved for commencement of the research work.

#### (iii) Approval of Research Proposal including Budget

After the proposal presentation, students are required to submit corrected version of their proposal to the Academic Coordinator who will organize a meeting for all senior members on ACECoR to discuss and approve the research budgets. Upon approval of proposals and budgets, students and their supervisors will be formally notified to commence fieldwork subject to acquisition of ethical clearance.

#### (iv) Ethical Clearance

All planned research by students, postdoctoral fellows and interns must consider ethical clearance from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCC-IRB) before commencement of research. Ethical clearance for involvement of human or animal subjects should be obtained for fieldwork, pilot studies and/or laboratory work. Collaborative research projects involving other universities or research institutions will often require the ethical clearance of all participating institutions and can be quite time consuming, so students must start application on time. Please ensure you allow enough time to make the appropriate applications, as approval from one institution does not automatically give you ethical clearance from the other participating institutions. Ethical Clearance forms can be obtained from the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy (DRIC), UCC.

#### (v) Field and Laboratory Safety Orientation

All faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows, students, interns and visitors working, studying, conducting, and supporting research in field and laboratory at ACECoR shall be provided with field and laboratory safety orientation seminar that includes

Occupational Health and Safety with specific emphasis on:

- » Right to know about workplace hazards and controls;
- » Right to participate in decisions about their personal health and safety; and
- » Right to refuse unsafe work.
- » Emergency procedures;
- » Health and safety policies;
- » Accident, incident and occupational disease reporting procedures;
- » Hazards/unsafe conditions reporting procedures;
- » Instruction on safe work practices and procedures required to work safely in the laboratory, work area, facility, or field research placement;
- » Description of existing hazards and what controls are in place
- » Personal protective equipment required performing work safely; and
- » Safety and survival techniques in aquatic environments.

#### (vi) Data collection, processing, storage and retention

The commitment of both the University of Cape Coast research policy and the ACECoR research guidelines are to protect both the researcher and the institution with measures devised to tackle compliance requirements and to disperse some of the burden related with data management. All data produced by students, postdoctoral fellows, interns and staff with funding support from ACECoR and its collaborators are primarily owned by the ACECoR. Therefore, the students are mandated to release or make available their obtained data to ACECoR. These data will be stored, managed and protected by the Data Hub and Information Systems Unit of ACECoR, and the Unit will provide modalities for submission of the data. For purposes other than writing of their thesis, such data could be used by the students only upon consultation with their

supervisors and should promote the interest of ACECoR.

#### (vii) Confidentiality

Researchers have a duty to assure their research participants of confidentiality and all risks associated with their involvement in the research. In order to ensure that risks are appropriately reduced and alleviated, researchers are required to submit their proposals and protocols to the Institutional Review Board of UCC for critical review.

#### (viii) Quarterly Reporting

A research plan shall be developed at the beginning of each research study and students must give their progress report every quarter. The quarterly report must outline the extent of work done in that period with consent from the supervisors following the format in the approved research plan template. The quarterly reporting form is made available on the ACECoR website. Section 7 of the quarterly research reporting form provides details on the documents that must accompany the progress report.

#### (ix) Clearance for transport of samples across borders

The packaging and transportation of biological materials across borders are subjected to strict local customs and other international regulatory protocols. Researchers who intend transporting samples across international borders should inform the Applied Research Coordinator of ACECoR in writing for necessary support in acquiring required permits.

## 4. Supervision

ACECoR is committed to fostering an environment that promotes academic and professional success for all research personnel (students and Supervisors). The intricacy of modern scientific methods, the need for careful experimental design and the precautions one must take in data analysis, all require that the Supervisor assume an active role in guidance and supervision.

The following shall be the duties and responsibilities governing the operations of the supervisors on the ACECoR project in addition to the responsibilities outlined by the Graduate School of UCC:

1. Supervisors shall help their students to develop sound research practices, technical expertise and also good research ethics.
2. Supervisors shall support students to develop suitable research plan covering the entire period of the student's research and ensure that as much as possible, students follow the research plan.
3. Supervisors should have realistic expectations regarding the performance of students and should inform them of these expectations.
4. Supervisors shall work with their students to develop, present and have their thesis/dissertation proposals approved for research.
5. During the research years, they shall have quarterly meetings with the students and together with the student produce a quarterly research report to ACECoR project management team.
6. They shall be keenly involved in the field research activities of the students and make sure authentic data is collected for analysis.
7. Supervisors shall essentially mentor the graduate students under their supervision.

## 5. Publication

### (i) Technical Reports, Conference posters, Newsletters and other briefs

All technical reports, poster presentations for conferences, newsletters, briefs and other such publications emanating from:

- » ACECoR
- » staff, students and other affiliates of ACECoR who produce such publications for ACECoR or with funding from ACECoR
- » any other individual, group or cooperate entities who produce such publications for ACECoR or with funding from ACECoR

should follow the provision on authorship in Section 5iii as well as the acknowledgement and disclaimer in Section 5v of this guideline. The logos of University of Cape Coast, ACECoR, the World Bank, and any other institution(s) required to be acknowledged should be placed at the appropriate areas of the publication. The placement of logos should follow branding rules of the World Bank, ACECoR and UCC and should be done with the support of the Communications Office of ACECoR to ensure compliance and conformity with the rules.

### (ii) Articles in peer reviewed journals

Articles for peer reviewed journals including conference proceedings authored by students, staff, researchers and faculty of ACECoR should follow the provisions on authorship in Section 5iii, affiliation in Section 5iv as well as the acknowledgement and disclaimer in Section 5v of this guidelines. The category of journals for publication of studies carried out under ACECoR are the journals indexed by Scopus, Web of Science, Science Citation Index (SCI), SCI-Expanded and Social Science Citation Index. Students are required to publish

their first papers in the category of journals indexed by the the abstracting services listed. The second papers, however, are required to be published in the Journal of Fisheries and Coastal Management (JFCoM) published by the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences and the Centre for Coastal Management of the University of Cape Coast. Any subsequent papers may be published in the prescribed journals or JFCoM subject to the descretion of the author(s). The Centre will annually provide updates on the category of journals for publication.

### (iii) Authorship

Authorship should be based on intellectual contributions to the conception, design, collection of data, analysis, writing of the research, and other significant contributions. To provide clarity on consideration and qualification for authorship, the Centre has temporarily adopted the CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) guidelines provided by Elsevier which

covers the following:

- » Conceptualization
- » Methodology
- » Software
- » Validation
- » Formal analysis
- » Investigation
- » Resources
- » Data Curation
- » Writing - Original Draft
- » Writing - Review & Editing
- » Visualization
- » Supervision
- » Project administration
- » Funding acquisition

All authors must take responsibility for the content of their paper.

### (iv) Affiliation of authors

All publications authored by students, staff, researchers and faculty of ACECoR must have ACECoR as their primary affiliation, except faculty from other Departments in UCC working at ACECoR who may wish to use ACECoR as their

secondary affiliation. Associate faculty of ACECoR (i.e. Faculty from other Universities than UCC) are also mandated to use ACECoR as their secondary affiliation on research papers funded through ACECoR. Students and staff whose institution of affiliation at the time of publishing their papers is not ACECoR but received funding from the Centre for the research being published at the time of their engagement at ACECoR as students or staff should provide ACECoR as their previous affiliation.

### (v) Acknowledgement of source(s) of funding and Disclaimer

All publications funded by ACECoR or through ACECoR should duly and appropriately acknowledge the project, the World Bank and any other source(s) of funding as follows:

The authors are grateful for funding for this research from the World Bank through the Africa Centre of Excellence in



Coastal Resilience (ACECoR) Project [Credit No.: 6389-GH] implemented by the University of Cape Coast's Centre for Coastal Management. In addition, appropriate disclaimer(s) should also be issued. A format or template for Acknowledgement of the project and Disclaimer will be provided for use.

## 6. Intellectual Property

This section is provided in accordance with the University of Cape Coast Intellectual Property Policy. Any Intellectual Property (IP) that results from this project or from activities carried out by student(s) and staff as part of this project shall primarily reside with the University of Cape Coast. In circumstances where there may be joint ownership or multi-party ownership between the UCC and the other institution(s), a written agreement will be prepared and signed. The decision to have a joint ownership of an IP shall be determined by ACECoR on the grounds of the merits of contribution of the student or staff, and/or any institution towards the IP.

## 7. Other Research Ethical Considerations

Claiming to have carried out experiments, observations, interviews or any sort of research, which actually have not been undertaken or claiming to have results, which have not been obtained, are considered serious academic offences. In academic and professional writing, it is very important to provide evidence for your claims by citing your sources. Copying another person's work and/or making substantial use of other people's work and submitting it as one's own without proper acknowledgement is academically unacceptable and considered a serious and punishable offence. Re-wording another person's work and presenting it as your own, quoting from someone else's work, copying from the work of another person, using another person's ideas or data, and copies from your own previous work without acknowledging the source are all considered serious issues of plagiarism as pointed out in the SGS-UCC policies and regulations.

The penalty for fabrication of data and plagiarism shall be the cancellation of the result for

the course or thesis. To avoid the incidence of plagiarism, student theses and manuscripts are verified through plagiarism software (Turnitin) to ensure they conform to ethical standards before submission. Students are required to ensure that they have checked their write-ups for plagiarism before submission.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[acecor.ucc.edu.gh](http://acecor.ucc.edu.gh)

