KUMI UNIVERSITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2024-2029

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Official Approval

Confirmed on this day ……6th……..of ……February…… 20……25……..

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His Lordship Justice Ajiji Alex Mackay
Chairperson
Kumi University Council

Signed on this day……7th……of ……February…… 20……25……

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Prof. Jong-In Hong
Vice Chancellor,
Kumi University

A Word from Chairman of University Council

Kumi University was established to address the socioeconomic challenges that were posed by war, cattle rustling and insurgency in the Teso sub region. I am happy that the University has surpassed numerous challenges including the COVID 19 pandemic and is in a position to acquire a Charter status.

The University Council is fully committed to provision of good quality, credible education and services as a world class higher education institution in Uganda and the region. We fully support the Government of Uganda's international commitments such as the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially goal # 4 to *"ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"*. Uganda is also a signatory to the African Union's declaration for provision of quality education as a requisite for achievement of the Africa Vision 2063.

Uganda's vision 2040 commits government to provide education as a human right. The privatization and liberalization policies have widened access to quality education by enlisting the participation of private actors like Kumi University. Good quality, accessible and affordable education has also been consistently underscored by the National Development Plans (NDPs, I - IV). The University remains compliant with the regulatory functions of the NCHE as well as the 2008 Education Act for the delivery of a high level quality and affordable education service, and; guidelines for professional and ethical conduct of our personnel.

As a Christian founded, private Higher Education Institution, Kumi University seeks to contribute to these national aspirations and yet remain relevant to the needs of local communities in the Teso sub region. These policies are a welcome step for ensuring that admissions, teaching and learning processes, assessments, research, and stakeholder engagements are well aligned with the NCHE regulations, standards and guidelines. The University Council remains committed to providing all the support required to facilitate professional best practices in the University.

For God and my Country

His Lordship Ajiji Alex Mackay
Chairman, Kumi University Council

Forward by the Vice Chancellor

Kumi University is a private higher education institution in Uganda licensed by the Ministry of Education and Sports since 2004 and is in advanced stages of acquiring a Charter status. As a Christian faith-based institution, we are committed to academic excellence and nurturing servant leaders through integrity, and the spirit of service by emphasizing character development and mentorship in dormitory-based community life experience.

The University promotes community engagement through service-learning to address societal challenges and ensures that community service is a core curriculum requirement. Kumi University also remains a global player in research and innovation by promoting international collaborations, student exchange, and partnerships with institutions in Korea, Japan, and the U.S. We will endeavor to upgrade the infrastructure, including classroom renovations, dormitories, a modern library, and online learning facilities.

Policy development is another indicator that Kumi University is fully compliant to supervision and guidance by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) under the UOTIA cap 262. Regulation 9 of Statutory Instrument 34 of 2008 (QAR) requires institutions to develop quality assurance systems.

This policy outlines the operational procedures for University Outreach programming, community and stakeholder engagements. Kumi University upholds high moral and ethical standards and all its stakeholders to exhibit good behaviour, respect and humility when dealing with other partners outside the University. The Policy also highlights the significance of Outreach and students' service programmes as credible vehicles for difusing research outputs and innovations to the public. The University shall engage in cultural galas, exhibitions within and outside the University based on professionalism and Christian values, and code of conduct. Sexual harassment and exploitation of human subjects shall be strictly punishable including involvement of other statutory law enforcement authorities. However, the University shall uphold freedom of expression, open communication and mutual respect befitting of a higher institution of learning.

Prof. Jong-In Hong
Vice Chancellor

Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Kumi University is one of the Private Christian based Universities in East Africa and licensed by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). Its' origin dates back to 1996 with the establishment of Africa Leaders Training Institute (ALTI) by Korea Food for the Hungry International (KFHI) – a South Korean based NGO. Later in 1999 ALTI was transformed into Kumi University.

The Kumi University Foundation was approved by Uganda Government in 2004 with document **No. 66491.** In the same year (2004), the University acquired its operational License from the National Council For Higher Education **NCHE (UI..PL..002 NCHE)**.

Kumi University is established in the scenic country side of Teso's spectacular inselbergs, next to the famous Old Stone Age Site Nyero Rock Paintings in Kumi District in the Eastern part of Uganda.

1.1.1 University Vision, Mission and Philosophy

1.1.2 KUMU's Vision

"To become a World class center for holistic, quality, community-tailored higher education and research"

1.1.3 Mission

"To provide holistic education tailored to transforming individuals and communities".

1.1.4 The Philosophy of KUMU

"The fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom".

1.1.5 The University Motto

"Godliness and Excellence for Servanthood"

1.1.6 Objectives of the University

1. To equip students with Christian worldview.
2. To give students practical and field-oriented knowledge with clear understanding of contemporary situations.
3. To provide quality higher education, research and training

1.1.7 Core values of KUMU

Diversity, Teamwork, Professionalism, Godliness, Integrity, Confidentiality, Loyalty, Accountability, and Excellence.

1.2 Introduction

By mandate, Kumi University has three core mandates which are Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Engagement. It is against this background that there is a global need for Higher Institutions of learning to connect more with communities in which they are situated and are surrounded. Community engagement refers to the partnership of university knowledge and resources with the external community to enrich research, scholarships, internships, curriculum content and process to benefit students while addressing community needs and challenges.

Kumi University Community Engagement (KUCE) Policy is in line with Kumi University's vision, "*To be a world class center for quality and affordable community tailored higher education.*" This vision reveals Kumi University's desire to be relevant to its communities and society at large. Community Engagement in Kumi University is therefore geared towards addressing the social, economic and cultural needs that affect the well-being of communities.

KUCE in joint efforts with Community members, University staff and students shall work together to identify needs, problems, issues and find solutions for the community. This policy looks at community engagement as an opportunity for communities to acquire skills, knowledge and benefit from Kumi University through research, learning, outreaches and Service.

Kumi University is therefore committed in all its structures, values and practices to provide service to the community and contribute to socio-economic transformation of communities while also enhancing practical learning for students and creation of new knowledge.

1.2.1 Policy Name

Community Engagement Policy

1.2.2 Situation Analysis

Community engagement is recognized as a critical function of higher education institutions in Uganda. Universities are expected not only to teach and conduct research but also to contribute meaningfully to societal development. However, there is limited awareness among students and staff in understanding community engagement as part of their academic role, there are also resource constraints for outreach activities. Therefore, KUMU needs to play an active role in national development by supporting surrounding communities in education, social development, agriculture, information technology among others.

1.2.3 Policy Rationale/Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide the practices and promotion of community engagement at Kumi University as one of the University's Core functions which are to be integrated in teaching, learning and research. Therefore, the policy envisions that Kumi University Community Engagement (KUCE) shall:

i. Foster research and training to make Kumi University relevant and responsive to societal needs and problems of communities while contributing to sustainable development.
ii. Create strong partnerships with communities through engaged learning, teaching, research and outreach.
iii. Develop and provide Kumi University staff and students with opportunities for community engagement through service learning, research, and outreach activities.
iv. Streamline structures and mechanisms to promote, document and coordinate community engagement and outreach.

1.2.4 Definition of key terms in the Policy

The following terms shall be applicable in understanding this policy;

Community: Groups of people with collective interests, affiliated by geographical proximity or shared goals, who work with Kumi University to address issues affecting their well-being and development.

Kumi University Community Engagement: Collective initiatives by the university to respond to community challenges and provide mutually beneficial services through reciprocal engagement and collaborative partnerships.

Community Engagement: A process of working together with community groups to achieve long-term outcomes and address issues that affect them.

Community Outreach: Provision of services to communities that may not have access to them, through knowledge sharing, skills provision, technology, and products.

Community Partnerships/Collaborations: Mutually beneficial relationships between the university and community, guided by institutional strategy and community development requirements.

Internships/Field Attachment/School Practice: Practical work experiences for students related to their field of study or career interest, providing hands-on learning outside academic settings.

Service Learning: A form of community engagement that combines community service activities with academic credit, involving reflective discussions on how these activities connect with course material or academic field.

1.2.5 List of Acronyms

KUMU- Kumi University

KUCE- Kumi University Community Engagement

1.3 Policy Objectives

The policy has the following objectives;

i. To coordinate and integrate community engagement activities with teaching, learning and research at Kumi University.
ii. To create an environment that ensures all Kumi University staff, students and alumni engage in community activities that create change.
iii. To strengthen partnerships with local and international stakeholders in community engagement activities.
iv. To promote initiatives for community transformation.

1.4 Scope of the Policy

This policy shall act as a guideline to all staff, students of Kumi University and other stakeholders in their respective faculties and departments on what community engagement is and how it is to be carried out.

The following activities are under the KUCE policy;

i. Student Internships /Placements/School practice and other forms of professional training.
ii. Community-based learning or community-based research by the academic staff and students.
iii. Community service-learning course modules.
iv. Capacity-building activities for the stakeholders.
v. Research projects such as community action research.
vi. Education promotion activities in schools and other institutions of learning.
vii. Students' activism and advocacy activities on issues that affect communities.
viii. Public dialogues and media on community issues.
ix. Sports activities with communities.
x. And any other activities

The university departments and faculties shall have the mandate to design their community engagement guideline plans specific to their situations but in line with the KUCE policy.

1.5 Guiding Principles

This policy is in line with the University's mission and vision and is committed to improving communities through research, teaching, learning and provision of services to communities. The policy will serve as a guide to the University on all matters relating to community activities.

In reference to the above objectives, the following guiding principles are expressed;

i. Community engagement activities shall be promoted and integrated into teaching, learning and research in the University.
ii. Kumi University's commitment to community engagement shall be reflected in the strategic planning, policies and procedures.

iii. There shall be an annual allocation of funds for the effective running of community engagement activities as a core function of Kumi University.

iv. The University shall ensure sustainable partnerships and collaborations with communities for mutual benefit.

v. Kumi University shall have a database where all community engagement activities are registered and managed.

vi. The committee shall monitor and evaluate the impact of community service.

1.6 Part II: Policy Issues, Statements and Strategies

Policy Issue	Policy statement	Implementation strategies
Limited effective and transparent communication between KUCE and community stakeholders	KUCE activities shall be communicated and undertaken in open and honest ways using available means to reach the respective communities.	Develop and maintain a multi-channel communication strategy for example through meetings, radio, letters etc Cooperate with community representatives to ensure timely sharing of information and establish continuous feedback.
Limited mechanisms to capture and integrate diverse cultural, social and community perspectives in engagement processes	KUCE shall provide opportunities for its stakeholders to engage freely and fairly on a diverse range of values and perspectives.	Create a clear plan to find, group and involve all kinds of stakeholders from different backgrounds. Help KUCE staff and students to learn how to avoid bias and engage all groups in a respectful and inclusive way. Hold community meetings in local languages so that people can share their views openly.

1.7 Part III: Policy Implementation and Compliance

1.7.1 Governance and Management

i. The University Senior Management in collaboration with the Senate shall supervise community engagement initiatives across all academic faculties and units within the institution.
ii. There shall be a Directorate of Community Engagement which shall supervise the overall programmes, projects and activities of the department.
iii. There shall also be the Community Engagement Director who shall be directly involved in the implementation of the University community engagement initiatives.
iv. The Directorate shall have a Community Engagement committee as a focal point linking different stakeholders.
v. All departments shall work with communities to identify specific community engagement initiatives tailored to community needs.
vi. All departments shall document all community engagements and share them with KUCE.

1.7.2 KUCE committee

The composition of the committee shall be nine (9) and will include the following.

1. The director
2. Representatives from the faculties (5)
3. The district community development office representative
4. Two representatives from the local community (male and female)
5. Two student representatives (male and female)
6. A representative from senior management

1.7.3 Community Engagement Directorate

The Directorate of Community Engagement shall have the responsibility to;

i. Identify, promote and coordinate community engagement initiatives and activities within the University and community.
ii. Encourage and facilitate sustainable collaborations and partnerships with communities.
iii. Develop and maintain a community engagement database.

iv. To involve students in community engagement activities that enhance their discipline-specific learning, their social responsiveness and their sense of social and civic responsibility.
v. Assist in identifying funding opportunities for KUCE activities.
vi. Periodically evaluate the need for revision of the KUCE policy.
vii. Develop and implement tools for monitoring and evaluation of community engagement projects and activities.

1.7.4 Recognition of Staff and Students Involved in KUCE

The department of KUCE shall design modalities to reward Kumi University staff and students for demonstrating excellent performance and contribution towards community engagement.

1.7.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

i. The Directorate of KUCE shall in collaboration with the quality assurance office, design guidelines for regular monitoring and evaluation of the KUCE.
ii. Monitoring shall be an ongoing activity and shall be done by all stakeholders.
iii. Evaluation of the policy shall be done annually and as deemed necessary.

1.7.6 Quality Management

Through the Senate and the Directorate of KUCE, the University shall ensure efficient and effective support for community engagement in collaboration with the Quality Assurance department.

1.8 Part IV: Miscellaneous Provisions

1.8.1 Sources of Funding

The Coordinating office for Community Engagement shall prepare an annual budget for its activities. Additional funding may be sourced from partners and research projects with outputs for the community.

1.9 Part V: Policy Guidelines

The University shall ensure the following in its engagement with communities:

a) All engagement activities must be programmed through the line departments of the University

b) Community entry must include seeking permissions and support of the local leaders and opinion leaders in order to ensure the safety of the University students and personnel.
c) The University shall not be held accountable for the individual actions of persons who fail to uphold its core values
d) Participants in the Community engagements programming shall uphold the values of the University and avoid any occasions that may put its name to disrepute
e) The participating departments may sign memoranda of understanding with host communities clarifying expectations, roles and responsibility of the parties
f) All the intellectual outputs of a community engagement activities shall be exclusive property of the University which can be subjected to publication
g) Community engagements must begin with situation analysis and needs identification and each field day must be supported by a report of activities undertaken to the responsible head of department
h) Representatives of the University should show humility and respect for local peoples values and cultures.

1.10 Policy Review

This policy shall undergo a review every three years or sooner if necessary, to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Specific circumstances that may trigger a review include:

i. **Conflict with other policies:** Ensuring alignment and consistency within the University's regulatory framework.
ii. **Need for amendments:** Addressing changes that enhance service delivery or adapt to evolving institutional needs.
iii. **Other identified reasons:** As determined by the University Administration or the Public Relations and Communications Committee to better serve the institution's goals.
iv. Regular reviews will ensure the policy remains robust, responsive and reflective of KUMU's mission and aspirations.