KUMI UNIVERSITY

Open Distance Education and Learning (ODeL) Policy 2025 - 2029

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Official Approval

Confirmed on this day ……6th……..of ……February……. 2025……..

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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 admission of students to KUMU in order to maintain the quality and integrity of the University's programmes and processes. The policy ensures that all admission decisions shall be in compliance with statutory regulations and guidelines. It spells out the entry requirements for the prospective applicants, other stakeholders and the public. The policy includes the procedures concerning entry, progression, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT). It is my hope that this policy will further help the university to align itself to the NCHE regulations and standards.

Prof. Jong-In Hong
Vice Chancellor

Preamble

Kumi University recognizes the growing demand for flexible, accessible, and high-quality education tailored to meet the needs of diverse learners. Through its External Programmes, operational during the holiday periods of January, May, August, early September, and December, the University offers structured pathways for in-service teachers and other professionals to enhance their academic and professional qualifications.

The External Programmes cater to a broad spectrum of learners, including nursery teachers, Grade 3 teachers, and Grade 5 diploma holders in primary and secondary education. These programmes provide opportunities to upgrade to diploma qualifications or advance to bachelor's degree levels, depending on individual educational backgrounds and aspirations.

Aligned with the Government White Paper on Education (1992) and Sustainable Development Goal No. 4, the External Programmes emphasize inclusive and equitable quality education. They employ a blended learning model combining face-to-face interactions, self-study with modules, weekend cluster sessions, and online engagements. This approach ensures participants can balance their professional responsibilities with academic advancement.

This policy serves as a comprehensive guide for the effective management, delivery, and quality assurance of all external programmes at Kumi University, supporting the University’s mission to provide holistic education that transforms individuals and communities.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

1. To regulate the delivery of external programmes and ensure fairness and transparency.
2. To provide clear guidelines on facilitator compensation and the provision of learning materials.
3. To integrate the contributions of full-time staff while balancing their responsibilities with regular programmes.
4. To address stakeholder concerns, including facilitators, learners, and administrative staff, for the successful implementation of external programmes.

Scope

This policy applies to all facilitators, students, and administrative staff involved in external programmes at Kumi University.

Programme Framework

Academic Calendar

External programmes shall run the face-to-face sessions during the school holiday periods in the months of January, May, August, early September, and December.

Each session shall last for designated period of not less than two weeks, followed by issuance of self-study materials, take-home assignments and continued online engagements with facilitators.

Semester Examinations shall be preceded by two weeks of on-campus study and preparations

Admission Requirements

Candidates shall be deemed eligible for admission to the programme of choice basing on the minimum entry requirements as stipulated in the curriculum.

Target Groups

The programmes target are:

1. Nursery teachers seeking to upgrade their qualifications to diploma level.
2. Grade 3 teachers in primary and secondary education aiming to upgrade to diploma or bachelor's degree qualifications.
3. Grade 5 diploma holders in primary and secondary education aspiring to advance to bachelor's degree programmes.
4. Other eligible applicants wishing to upgrade their education through flexible programming due to work constraints or preference

Mode of Delivery

External Programmes shall be delivered as follows:

1. 50% face-to-face interactions.
2. 50% self-study through modules, supplemented by weekend cluster center sessions and online engagements.
3. Online self-study assignments and e-library research tasks under the guidance of the instructors. Lecturers shall ensure learners have the necessary information and guidance which they require to complete tasks including modes of completing and submitting online assessments
4. Blended Modular face-to-face sessions and Interactive online learning sessions conducted through e-learning platforms such as Zoom, Google meet, Moodle, MOOCs, references to Open Educational Resources (OER); interactive social media platforms, g-groups, d-groups, email and other ICT resources provided by the University. The University shall ensure that lecturers and students have full access to e-libraries and other ICT support

services including capacity building for staff through In-house Continuous Professional Development sessions.

Facilitator Engagement and Compensation

Engagement of Facilitators

1. Facilitators shall include full-time staff and part-time lecturers with relevant expertise.
2. Full-time staff involved in the external programme shall have their workload adjusted to ensure their programme responsibilities are not compromised.

Compensation

1. Facilitators shall be paid based on contact hours and receive additional compensation for module preparation and online support.
2. For full time staff, their facilitation shall be on the basis of whether their workload including external is within recommended limits
3. Payments shall be processed promptly at the end of each session.

Code of Conduct

1. Facilitators shall not charge students for handouts or supplementary materials. Such materials shall be provided free of charge by the University.
2. Breaches of this provision shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Student Support and Learning Materials

Student Responsibilities

1. Attendance: Students are required to attend at least 75% of the scheduled sessions to qualify for assessments.
2. Material Access: Students must ensure they access and utilize the provided learning materials to enhance their learning experience.
3. Students are required to contribute for each learning material at a subsidized fee agreed by the external department and paid at the university account.

Provision of Learning Materials

1. Institutional Support: The University shall ensure that all students receive high-quality modules covering the required curriculum.
2. Digital Access: Materials shall be uploaded to a university-managed platform, allowing students to access them free of charge. Printed copies may be requested at a subsidized fee.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance of external programmes in KUMU shall be based on the following criteria:

1. **Standardized Modules**: Develop standardized modules for each course, reviewed annually by the academic committee.
2. **Performance Reviews:** Conduct regular reviews of facilitator performance and student feedback to improve programme quality.
3. **Orientation Programmes:** Organize orientation for facilitators and students at the start of each session to clarify expectations.

Ethical Practices and Compliance

The programme administrators and facilitators comply with the following:

1. **Code of Conduct:** All facilitators must adhere to the university's code of ethics, which prohibits charging for handouts or engaging in other unethical practices**.**
2. **Audits:** The University will conduct periodic audits to ensure compliance with this policy.
3. **Reporting Mechanism:** Establish a secure, anonymous reporting system for students and staff to raise concerns about unethical practices.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Programme monitoring and evaluation shall be a continuous process involving the following:

1. **Programme Review:** The effectiveness of the external programmes will be reviewed annually by a task force appointed by the Vice Chancellor.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Feedback from facilitators and students will be incorporated into the review process.

Management Committee for External Programmes

The committee comprises of the following members with the designated roles:

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs (DVC-AA)

Role: Strategic Oversight and Policy Implementation

The DVCAA shall:

1. Provide overall leadership and strategic direction for the external programmes.
2. Approve key decisions regarding the structure, delivery, and evaluation of programmes.
3. Ensure alignment of external programmes with university policies, national education standards, and strategic goals.
4. Coordinate with stakeholders to secure resources for effective programme implementation.

Academic Registrar

Role: Operational Leadership and Monitoring

The Academic Registrar shall:

1. Oversee the overall administration of external programmes, including admissions, scheduling, and examinations.
2. Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks for programme performance.
3. Coordinate with facilitators, Heads of Departments (HODs), and the Quality Assurance Office to maintain academic standards.
4. Handle grievances and feedback mechanisms for students and facilitators.

Quality Assurance Officer

Role: Standards and Compliance

The Quality Assurance Officer shall:

1. Monitor the delivery of external programmes to ensure compliance with university policies and accreditation standards.
2. Conduct regular evaluations of facilitator performance, curriculum content, and student feedback.
3. Submit periodic quality assurance reports to the Academic Registrar and DVC-AA.

University Bursar

Role: Financial Oversight

The University Bursar shall:

1. Manage the financial aspects of external programmes, including budgeting and payments to facilitators.
2. Ensure timely disbursement of facilitator compensation for contact hours, module preparation, and online support.
3. Monitor student payments and generate financial reports for external programmes.

Public Relations Officer (PRO)

Role: Recruitment and Marketing

The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for:

1. Marketing and Promotion: Develop and implement targeted marketing strategies using various media platforms to advertise admissions and schedules.
2. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage schools, education boards, community leaders, government bodies, and NGOs to encourage enrolment and align programmes with educational policies.

3. Information Dissemination: Provide timely and accurate information about programme requirements, timelines, and updates to prospective students and stakeholders.
4. Reputation Management: Represent the university positively in public engagements, address concerns, and resolve grievances effectively to maintain the institution's image.
5. Monitoring and Improvement: Track the effectiveness of recruitment and marketing efforts and recommend improvements based on feedback and emerging trends.

Faculty Deans

Role: Academic Leadership

The Dean of Faculty shall:

1. Provide leadership for curriculum, and module development, stakeholder engagement and provision of supplies and enabling learning environment
2. Coordinate with HODs and facilitators to ensure academic programme meets the required standards including face-to-face sessions, tutoring, assessment of learning and for learning as well as external moderation of exams
3. Facilitate capacity-building workshops for facilitators.

Heads of Department

Role: Programme Coordination

The Heads of Department shall:

1. Provide operational leadership at department level
2. Develop teaching schedules and assign facilitators for respective programmes.
3. Supervise the preparation and distribution of modules and learning materials.
4. Oversee programme implementation including timetabling, tutoring, face-to-face sessions, assessment for learning and of learning and coordinate grading of students' work
5. Address challenges faced by facilitators and students.

Policy Implementation

This policy shall be implemented through:

1. **Awareness Campaigns:** Communicate this policy to all stakeholders through meetings, emails, and official university platforms.
2. **Enforcement:** The Academic Registrar's office, in collaboration with relevant departments, will ensure strict adherence to this policy.

Conclusion

This policy underscores Kumi University's unwavering dedication to providing accessible, flexible, and high-quality education through its External Programmes. By integrating a blended learning model that combines face-to-face sessions, online engagement, and self-directed study, the University ensures that learners can balance their professional responsibilities with academic advancement.

The policy framework addresses the critical needs of diverse stakeholders, including facilitators, students, and administrative staff, by providing clear guidelines on programme structure, facilitator roles, compensation, and the provision of learning materials. Furthermore, it emphasizes ethical practices, quality assurance, and monitoring mechanisms to maintain the highest academic and operational standards.

Through strategic marketing and stakeholder engagement, the University aims to maximize enrolment, particularly targeting nursery teachers, Grade 3 and Grade 5 educators, and other professionals seeking to upgrade their qualifications. The policy fosters a culture of inclusivity and equity, aligning with Uganda's national education priorities and Sustainable Development Goal 4, which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education.

By leveraging technology, promoting innovation, and adhering to strict ethical practices, the External Programmes enhance the University's mission to transform individuals and communities through holistic education. This policy serves as a roadmap for achieving these goals while continuously adapting to the evolving educational landscape and stakeholder feedback.

Kumi University remains committed to fostering academic excellence and contributing to national development goals by empowering learners with the knowledge, skills, and qualifications needed to thrive in a competitive and dynamic world.

Policy Review

This policy is subject to periodic review and may be amended as necessary to align with the evolving needs of the university and its stakeholders. This policy shall undergo a review every five years or sooner if necessary, to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Specific circumstances that may trigger a review include:

1. **Conflict with other policies:** Ensuring alignment and consistency within the University's regulatory framework.

2. **Need for amendments:** Addressing changes that enhance service delivery or adapt to evolving institutional needs.
3. **Other identified reasons:** As determined by the University Administration or the Public Relations and Communications Committee to better serve the institution's goals.
4. Regular reviews will ensure the policy remains robust, responsive, and reflective of KUMU's mission and aspirations.