

MBEYA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING POLICY

MAY 2025

FOREWORD

Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) is dedicated to promoting the well-being of its staff, students, and the surrounding community by establishing a comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Policy. Acknowledging that students and staff face a range of academic, financial, social, and psychological challenges that can impact their mental health and academic and professional success, this policy aims to offer structured professional support across the University.

University life can be stressful, with pressures related to academic performance, financial responsibilities and personal issues often contributing to stress, anxiety, and even burnout. In the pursuit of academic and professional excellence, mental health support is frequently under-prioritised. Through the introduction of this policy, MUST affirms the importance of holistic support to well-being, recognising that mental and emotional health is crucial to both personal fulfilment and professional success.

With a centralised framework for guidance and counselling, MUST ensures that support resources are both accessible and effective, fostering a campus culture where seeking help is encouraged, normalised and valued. This policy not only addresses immediate needs but also aims to create a supportive environment that empowers individuals to navigate challenges with confidence and productivity. Our vision is to cultivate a community where staff and students feel valued, connected and equipped to reach their full potential.

In this context, the Guidance and Counselling Policy at MUST is designed to foster a compassionate, resilient, and harmonious campus environment where every community member can thrive personally and professionally. The policy represents a strong commitment to creating a balanced, inclusive space for well-being, empowering the University community to face challenges with confidence and support.

Prof. Aloys N. Mvuma

Vice Chancellor

May, 2025

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AHRMC	-	Appointment and Human Resource Management Committee
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
FTC	-	Full Technician Certificate
HIV	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MIST	-	Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology
MTC	-	Mbeya Technical College
MUST	-	Mbeya University of Science and Technology
NACTE	-	The National Council for Technical Education
SAC	-	Student Affairs Committee
TCU	-	Tanzania Commission for Universities

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In the context of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Counselling	A process where an individual, group, couple, or family meets with a trained professional counsellor to talk about issues and problems they are facing in their lives or the provision of professional assistance and guidance in resolving personal or psychological problems.
Counsellor	A professional person who is trained to actively listen, guide, support, and intervene with individuals to deal with personal, emotional, or psychological problems.
Guidance	Help and advice about how to do something or about how to deal with problems connected with your work, education, or personal relationships
Mental health	A state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.
Non-Communicable Diseases	Diseases that are not spread through infection or other people but are typically caused by unhealthy behaviour/lifestyle.
Students at Risk	Students who are facing challenges that could negatively impact their academic performance, well-being, or ability to complete their studies.
Vulnerable Situations	A condition caused by a physical or psychological state or by external circumstances, which takes away or limits the ability to comprehend actions (inactivity) or have control over making free-will independent decisions, or resist violent or other unlawful actions.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Background Information

The history of Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) dates back to 1986 when the Government of Tanzania established Mbeya Technical College (MTC) to train Full Technician Certificate (FTC) under the Russia-Tanzania Training Support. The College existed up to mid-2005 offering programmes in Architectural Technology, Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. In July 2005, MTC was transformed into the Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) by the National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) Establishment Order, 2004.

The transformation was a government move to strengthen the College to become a fully-fledged University. Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology registered several achievements including the restructuring of the FTC to Ordinary Diploma and the introduction of Undergraduate Degree programmes, which eventually led to the expansion of student enrolment. Following these achievements, on 29th March 2012, after being issued with a University Provisional License by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), the Institute was transformed into a full-fledged University, namely Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST). The University was granted the Mbeya University of Science and Technology Charter on 20th August 2013.

1.2 MUST Vision

The Vision of Mbeya University of Science and Technology is to become the leading centre of excellence for knowledge, skills, and applied education in science and technology.

1.3 MUST Mission

The Mission of Mbeya University of Science and Technology is to develop academically, technologically, and socially competent students, staff and

other stakeholders who shall be responsive to the broader needs and challenges of society, as specified by:

- (a) Facilitating appropriate tuition, practical training and support according to the needs of students and other customers;
- (b) Encouraging staff commitment to quality education and services, including research, consultancy, and innovation;
- (c) Fostering lifelong learning, honesty and responsibility;
- (d) Promoting an environment conducive to human development; and
- (e) Promoting effective entrepreneurship and usage of appropriate technology that meets national and international needs and standards through skills and practical-oriented training, research, and consultancy.

1.4 Situational Analysis

Since its establishment as a Technical College (MTC) in 1986 and the subsequent transformations to MIST in 2005 and MUST in 2012, the University has experienced a population increase on both staff and students. This has led to changes in the teaching and learning environment and a high demand for student, staff and other services. The increase in population has attracted various challenges, including academic, behavioural, financial, relationships, health, psychological problems, alcoholism, drug abuse, family relationships and burnout. To address those challenges, professional intervention is required.

However, the practice of addressing guidance and counselling challenges at MUST has been offered informally by the Human Resources office, the student services office, and the academic staff. Staff involved in counselling and guidance services have been employed with specific job descriptions, so they face time challenges when offering the services. In addition to time constraints, the staff have no formal training in guidance and counselling services and lack experience in professional practicum on the role of providing guidance and counselling services. Moreover, the addressed challenges from 1986 to 2005 were few and manageable, though not at a reasonable rate.

The increase in student enrollment and staff recruitment observed during the transition of MTC to MIST in 2005/2006 and MIST to MUST in 2012/2013 requires a professional approach to address guidance and counselling challenges to staff and students.

In addition, experience informs that educational institutions are facing guidance and counselling challenges on academic, behavioural change, financial, relationships, health and psychological problems, alcoholism, drug abuse, family relationships and burnout. In addressing those challenges, the government deliberated on including issues of guidance and counselling in the Education and Training Policy of 2014 (2023 Edition). The policy states that Educational Institutions, including Higher Learning Institutions, should incorporate guidance and counselling services alongside the provision of education.

Considering the challenges addressed in the situational analysis and based on the importance and necessity for compliance with the education and training policy, Mbeya University of Science and Technology is obliged to establish an institutional-based guidance and counselling policy with a definite philosophy, mission and scope. By having that policy in place, MUST can excel academically and socially.

1.5 Rationale of the Guidance and Counselling Policy

The provision of guidance and counselling services at MUST has historically been conducted in an informal and unstructured manner, primarily relying on general guidance from the University's Strategic Plan. This approach lacked the professional framework necessary to offer comprehensive support despite the crucial role such services play in the well-being of students and staff. The absence of a formal Policy has led to inconsistent service delivery and has left both students and staff vulnerable to the negative effects of poor performance and mental health challenges.

The Education and Training Policy of 2014 (revised in 2023) stipulates that Guidance and Counselling Services should be established in Educational

Institutions. In addition, the Guidelines for Controlling HIV/AIDS and Non-Communicable Diseases in the Workplace within the Public Service (2014) emphasise the importance of maintaining good mental health for students and staff. Mental health issues alongside social, financial and psychological challenges have a significant impact on individuals and the broader community, thereby contributing to decreased quality of life, diminished productivity and escalating healthcare costs.

Guidance and counselling services are not only essential for addressing specific personal issues but also serve as a foundation for broader life skills education. While these services are non-medical and non-psychiatric, they can offer therapeutic support for individuals with specific personal problems. Further, they can form the foundation of a life skills training programme that equips students and staff with the tools to navigate the challenges of personal and professional life.

At MUST, both students and staff face significant pressures related to academic demands, lifestyle adjustments and workplace dynamics. Therefore, the establishment of a structured Guidance and Counselling Policy would provide a systematic approach to supporting the mental health, emotional and psychological needs of the University community, thereby enhancing academic performance, improving professional outcomes and fostering overall well-being.

CHAPTER TWO

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING POLICY

2.1 Introduction

Guidance and counselling are crucial for supporting the well-being and success of students and staff. While a Guidance and Counselling Unit is beneficial, a formalised Guidance and Counselling Policy is essential to ensure consistent, high-quality support that fully addresses the complex needs of the University community.

Development of a Policy provides a framework that defines the objectives, standards, and scope of guidance and counselling services. The Policy establishes mechanisms that ensure support services are accessible, inclusive and aligned with best practices. The Policy also provides for the involvement of qualified counsellors in offering counselling services. This addresses the limitations of informal support currently provided by Wardens. While Wardens play a valuable role in fostering a supportive environment, many challenges require intervention by trained professionals who can offer specialised assistance for mental health, academic stress, social integration, and career development issues. Moreover, a policy-driven approach goes beyond establishing a unit by creating accountability and clear procedures for accessing guidance and counselling services. It allows for a proactive, university-wide commitment to guidance and counselling services, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively and services are sustainable and adaptable as the university grows and faces new challenges.

In essence, a formal Guidance and Counselling Policy institutionalises support, creating a consistent, organised system that serves every community member effectively. This policy-driven approach reflects MUST's commitment to a holistic environment where all students and staff can thrive.

2.2 Policy Vision

To be a leading Unit that fosters a supportive and inclusive environment where students and staff thrive in their personal, academic and professional

development through accessible, holistic and proactive guidance and counselling services.

2.3 Policy Mission

To provide comprehensive guidance and counselling services that promote the mental well-being, academic professional success, career development, and social adjustment of students and staff. The policy aims to empower individuals with the knowledge, skills and resources to make informed decisions, overcome challenges and realise their full potential in alignment with the university's mission of excellence in science and technology.

2.4 Objectives of the Guidance and Counselling Policy

2.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the Guidance and Counselling Policy is to create a friendly, safe and secure environment in which equality, diversity, differences and experiences are valued.

2.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the Guidance and Counselling Policy will be to:

- (a) Assist students and staff facing personal, social and teaching and learning challenges;
- (b) Support students and staff in behavioural change and maintaining the University's culture of self-confidence, trust, and a safe environment where values and uniqueness are respected;
- (c) Give support to staff in dealing with teaching and learning issues arising in the lecture rooms;
- (d) Assist peer educators in providing a nurturing environment within and outside the University;
- (e) Ensure that the stakeholders are aware of the services offered by the guidance and counselling unit; and
- (f) Support students in dealing with unhealthy competition, bullying, social exclusion, family crises, financial challenges,

underperformance, abuse, mental health issues, peer pressure and racism as they go through the different stages of career development.

2.5 Policy Philosophy

The Guidance and Counselling philosophy at Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) is based on the belief that every individual is unique, with distinct abilities and potential. It emphasizes supporting students and staff in navigating socio-emotional, academic, and professional challenges, enabling them to grow into responsible, mature individuals who embody the values of MUST and positively contribute to the university and society.

2.6 Scope

This Policy applies to both students and staff at all MUST Campuses and the surrounding communities.

CHAPTER THREE

POLICY ISSUES, STATEMENTS AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Academic Achievement

Academic success is a core goal for students and trainees, but can be hindered by factors such as lecturer/instructor effectiveness, inadequate learning resources, misalignment between programmes and student abilities, and lack of motivation or guidance. MUST should address these issues proactively to prevent low Grade Point Average, absenteeism and discontinuation from studies. Strong academic support systems including counselling and personalised guidance are essential.

3.1.1 Policy Issue

Lack of motivation and limited understanding of academic matters among students and in-service staff often lead to underperformance.

3.1.2 Policy Statements

The University shall:

- (a) Provide equitable, accessible and personalised academic guidance and counselling services; and
- (b) Create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

3.1.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Organise and conduct orientation and ongoing academic sensitization programmes;
- (b) Ensure availability and easy access to key university documents;
- (c) Train counsellors on emerging issues like mental health and crisis response;
- (d) Assign academic advisors and use technology to monitor student and staff progress;
- (e) Offer workshops on time and stress management; and

- (f) Create and provide digital tools for academic planning.

3.2 Personal Development

Personal development includes emotional, ethical, social and cognitive growth, which is vital for the holistic success of student and staff . Barriers to adaptation and self-fulfillment must be addressed to foster independence, responsibility and well-being.

3.2.1 Policy Issue

Failure by some individuals to adapt, grow and achieve personal fulfilment.

3.2.2 Policy Statements

The University shall:

- (a) Promote holistic development through mentorship, inclusive learning environments and wellness programmes.
- (b) Encourage leadership, ethics and civic engagement.

3.2.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Integrate soft skills and ethics into curricula;
- (b) Offer extracurricular, wellness and diversity programmes;
- (c) Assign mentors to students and conduct personal development workshops;
- (d) Provide career support and host leadership, civic and cultural events; and
- (e) Encourage student feedback and regularly evaluate personal development programmes.

3.3 Guidance and Counselling Services

Structured guidance and counselling are essential to help staff and students manage academic, personal and social challenges. However, MUST currently lacks comprehensive systems to deliver effective guidance and counselling services to its community.

3.3.1 Policy Issues

- (a) Staff and students face a range of challenges, including academic, social and financial; and
- (b) Absence of formal policies and strategies for counselling.

3.3.2 Policy Statement

The University shall offer accessible, comprehensive and well-coordinated guidance and counselling to support both academic and personal success.

3.3.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Establish a dedicated and well-staffed counselling unit;
- (b) Provide academic, personal and career counselling both online and in-person;
- (c) Conduct skill-building and time management workshops;
- (d) Launch peer mentorship programmes;
- (e) Implement early identification and referral mechanisms; and
- (f) Regularly review services based on feedback.

3.4 At-Risk and Vulnerable Situations

At-risk and vulnerable individuals due to personal, academic or social/financial issues require targeted support. Without structured interventions, these challenges lead to mental health crises, higher dropout and turnover rates.

3.4.1 Policy Issue

Difficulty in identifying and supporting vulnerable individuals, risking exclusion and underachievement.

3.4.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Create a safe, inclusive and supportive environment with early detection and tailored support; and
- (b) Employ professional counsellors to manage risks effectively.

3.4.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Establish early identification, referral and support systems;
- (b) Provide mental health and academic interventions;
- (c) Offer inclusive programs and crisis management protocols;
- (d) Address addiction and other risky behaviours through targeted support; and
- (e) Build a culture of openness to reporting and seeking help.

3.5 People with Special Needs

Individuals with physical, sensory, learning, mental health disabilities, chronic illnesses or neurodevelopmental disorders often face challenges in academic, career and social participation without proper support. Despite efforts to promote inclusivity, universities still struggle with insufficient infrastructure and unclear policies.

3.5.1 Policy Issues

- (a) Lack of skills and procedures to support students and staff with special needs; and
- (b) Unfriendly teaching, learning and working environment that supports individuals with special needs.

3.5.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Ensure an inclusive and accessible environment for students and staff with special needs;

- (b) Provide appropriate support services to help individuals with disabilities fully participate in academic, career and social activities; and
- (c) Promote diversity and equal opportunities for all members regardless of abilities.

3.5.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Make academic programs and campus facilities are fully accessible, including housing and dining areas for individuals with special needs;
- (b) Offer support services addressing academic, emotional and social needs and strengthen resource centres for special needs;
- (c) Provide training for staff to raise awareness and better support individuals with disabilities;
- (d) Ensure access to assistive technologies and resources for both students and staff;
- (e) Create Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) for students with significant disabilities to address their specific needs; and
- (f) Partner with disability services organisations and regularly assess and improve support services based on feedback and best practices.

3.6 Sexual Harassment and Assault

Sexual harassment and assault include inappropriate comments, unwanted physical contact and coercive behaviour, which create hostile environments that harm both academic and professional performance. Although awareness is increasing, the lack of formal policies at MUST has hindered effective prevention and response. The University is committed to implementing clear and structured mechanisms to prevent, report and address all forms of sexual misconduct.

3.6.1 Policy Issue

There is a likelihood of sexual harassment and assault within academic and work environments that undermines safety, dignity and equal participation.

3.6.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Promote awareness and education about sexual harassment, its impact and consequences;
- (b) Protect individuals from retaliation when reporting incidents or assisting investigations; and
- (c) Establish clear, confidential and accessible reporting procedures, including online and anonymous options.

3.6.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Conduct regular training, orientation sessions and public campaigns to educate students and staff on recognising and preventing harassment;
- (b) Provide multiple confidential reporting channels and ensure victims have access to counselling, legal support and medical services;
- (c) Investigate all reports promptly, fairly and confidentially with support from trained professionals;
- (d) Collect data on reported cases, review policies regularly and adjust based on emerging trends and best practices; and
- (e) Work with local authorities and relevant partners to support survivors and pursue justice when needed.

3.7 Health and Medical-Related Issues

Promoting health and well-being is essential to academic success and personal development. While MUST provides on-campus health facilities,

gaps remain, particularly in psychological support and integrated health counselling. Addressing both physical and mental health issues, including chronic non-communicable diseases, sexual health, disabilities, and disease prevention, is critical for the well-being of the university community.

3.7.1 Policy Issues

Insufficient mechanisms to effectively address both physical and mental health needs, including preventive and psychosocial care.

3.7.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Prioritise the health and well-being of students and staff by ensuring inclusive, equitable and access to medical and mental health services.
- (b) Uphold strict confidentiality of all health-related information and provide appropriate support with physical or psychological conditions.
- (c) Promote health education, respond to health emergencies and integrate wellness into its institutional policies and communication efforts.

3.7.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Conduct regular campaigns on nutrition, mental health, substance use, sexual health and physical fitness;
- (b) Maintain health clinics offering primary care, guidance and counselling, chronic illness support and emergency response services;
- (c) Launch initiatives to reduce stigma, provide emotional support and assist students and staff with mental health challenges;
- (d) Offer academic flexibility, medical leave and light duties for those recovering from illness or managing chronic conditions;

- (e) Encourage regular medical checkups, vaccinations, health insurance enrollment and emergency response readiness; and
- (f) Partner with external health providers and local health authorities to facilitate referrals, advanced treatment, public health compliance and training opportunities.

3.8 Peer Education

Peer Education is a program where trained individuals provide support and assistance to their peers in areas like academics, emotions and social well-being. Peer educators often offer guidance, resources and mentorship as students and staff may feel more comfortable seeking help from peers rather than formal authorities. Currently, the university lacks a structured peer education system to support its community. Introducing policies for peer support programs could significantly enhance the overall effectiveness of guidance and counselling services, fostering a more supportive and approachable environment for all.

3.8.1 Policy Issues

The absence of a structured peer education mechanism hinders the ability of peer groups to support and assist one another effectively.

3.8.2 Policy Statement

The University shall create a collaborative campus culture that supports academic, social, and emotional well-being.

3.8.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Equip peer educators with essential skills, such as active listening, cultural awareness, and mental health literacy, to ensure empathetic and informed support;
- (b) Pair experienced students and staff with newcomers for mentorship and offer peer coaching to build academic skills and work performance, like time management and goal setting;

- (c) Create inclusive, judgment-free environments, both in group and individually, where students and staff can openly share personal, academic and social challenges;
- (d) Develop digital platforms and on-campus drop-in centres for flexible, easy access to peer education without needing appointments;
- (e) Integrate peer support programmes into students and staff orientation to raise early awareness and encourage participation from the beginning; and
- (f) Celebrate peer educators through awards, certificates and public acknowledgement at university events.

3.9 Confidentiality and Ethical Issues

Confidentiality is a legal and ethical obligation aimed at protecting the privacy of individuals by securing their personal, academic, medical, counselling, and disciplinary information. The University shall be committed to upholding this principle to foster trust and integrity. However, confidentiality may be ethically and legally breached in cases involving abuse, threats, or risks to personal or public safety.

3.9.1 Policy Issues

There is no clear policy or guidelines to govern the confidentiality of clients in the provision and access of guidance and counselling services.

Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Develop and enforce strict measures to protect the confidentiality of all stakeholder information;
- (b) Ensure that staff, students and service providers adhere to confidentiality standards when handling sensitive data;
- (c) Establish clear records retention and disposal procedures to prevent misuse; and
- (d) Implement strong data protection protocols, including controlled access.

3.9.2 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Provide regular training for staff and contractors on data privacy and confidentiality, and educate students and staff on their rights regarding personal data;
- (b) Implement role-based access systems and require confidentiality agreements to ensure only authorised individuals handle sensitive information;
- (c) Use encryption for digital records, maintain secure physical storage, and ensure the use of compliant databases and cloud services;
- (d) Automate record-keeping through electronic systems and apply certified disposal methods, such as shredding and digital wiping;
- (e) Conduct regular audits and maintain a comprehensive data breach response plan, including procedure for mitigation and notification; and
- (f) Communicate policies widely through multiple channels and consult legal counsel to ensure compliance with current data protection laws.

3.10 Financial Issues

Financial management involves planning, monitoring and the responsible use of financial resources to support personal goals, development and well-being. The University recognizes that some staff and students face challenges in budgeting, saving, loan management and responsible spending. The University acknowledges the growing need for accessible financial literacy support.

3.10.1 Policy Issues

Many University staff and students lack essential financial management skills, leading to difficulties in saving, budgeting, investing and handling debt.

3.10.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to offer financial education, counselling, and support services;
- (b) Ensuring access to qualified professionals who can provide personalized financial guidance to staff and students.

3.10.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Organize regular workshops and seminars focused on budgeting, saving, responsible spending, debt management, and financial planning;
- (b) Establish specialised counselling and advisory services tailored to individual financial needs and challenges;
- (c) Collaborate with financial institutions, non-profits, and experts to deliver expert-led sessions and support during financial crises; and
- (d) Continuously evaluate financial support initiatives, gather feedback from users and adapt services to reflect best practices and emerging needs.

3.11 Outreach guidance and counselling Services

Outreach counselling services are vital in bridging the gap for individuals and groups with limited access to mental health support. These services aim to address psychological, emotional and social challenges in particular marginalised, rural and high-risk populations. By extending professional support beyond the campus, the University promotes mental well-being, resilience and inclusivity.

3.11.1 Policy Issue

Limited access to guidance and counselling services, especially among vulnerable and underserved communities, which calls for proactive outreach initiatives.

3.11.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Deliver outreach guidance and counselling services that support mental health and well-being for individuals and groups beyond the traditional campus setting.
- (b) Ensure inclusive and equitable access to professional support for communities facing geographical, social and economic barriers.

3.11.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Conduct regular assessments to determine communities and populations, such as rural, low-income, or high-risk groups, with limited access to counselling services;
- (b) Use demographic and cultural data to design counselling programs that reflect the specific social, cultural, and educational contexts of target groups;
- (c) Collaborate with local governments, schools, healthcare providers, and community leaders to expand the reach and impact of counselling services;

- (d) Promote outreach programs through workshops, community forums, media campaigns, and public events to encourage participation and reduce stigma;
- (e) Deploy mobile counselling units and digital platforms to bring mental health services to remote or underserved areas; and
- (f) Equip counsellors and outreach workers with training in culturally sensitive practices, crisis response and community-based mental health support.

3.12 Termination of Employment

Employment termination may occur due to various reasons, including public interest, medical grounds, structural reorganisation, abolition of posts, reaching retirement age, contesting political positions or disciplinary actions. Whether disciplinary or non-disciplinary, termination often leads to emotional distress and financial uncertainty for affected staff. Providing appropriate support during these transitions is essential for maintaining individual well-being and dignity.

3.12.1 Policy Issue

The absence of adequate support systems for employees facing termination or retirement contributes to emotional instability and financial vulnerability.

3.12.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Offering guidance, counselling, and mental health services for terminated or retiring personnel;
- (b) Establish clear and transparent termination procedures and appeal mechanisms;
- (c) Provide career transition and reskilling training to help staff adapt to post-employment opportunities; and
- (d) Ensure access to legal support to uphold fairness and accountability in all termination processes.

3.12.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Organise workshops and seminars on financial planning, retirement readiness and managing unexpected financial transitions;
- (b) Develop and disseminate clear guidelines to ensure a smooth and respectful termination process;
- (c) Equip HR staff and counsellors with skills to implement termination policies consistently and with empathy; and
- (d) Launch communication campaigns to inform staff about available support services before, during, and after termination.

3.13 Relationships, Marital and Marriage Issues

Interpersonal relationships, including romantic and marital ones, can significantly influence personal well-being, academic performance and workplace productivity. While healthy relationships provide emotional safety and growth, unhealthy ones can cause stress, anxiety, emotional abuse and underperformance. In this case, professional support services are essential to help students and staff build and maintain healthy and respectful relationships.

3.13.1 Policy Issue

Limited access to professional relationship support and reluctance to seek help often result in unresolved conflicts, emotional distress and communication breakdown.

3.13.2 Policy Statement

The University shall:

- (a) Foster a campus culture that encourages healthy and respectful relationships among students and staff; and
- (b) Raise awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence, communication, and support in managing relationship challenges.

3.13.3 Strategies

The University shall:

- (a) Enforce appropriate rules and regulations governing relationships within the university community;
- (b) Conduct seminars, workshops and campaigns to educate students and staff on building and sustaining healthy relationships; and
- (c) Provide confidential and accessible guidance to individuals facing relationship, marital or family-related challenges.

CHAPTER FOUR

POLICY COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Introduction

In realizing the Guidance and Counselling vision and mission as specified in this Policy, there shall be a well-defined communication and implementation mechanism. Implementation of the activities of this Policy will be discussed in the Appointment and Human Resource Management Committee (AHRMC) and the Students Affairs Committee (SAC) respectively, and recommended to the Council for noting or approval. This chapter, therefore, presents the governance organizational structure of the implementation of the Guidance and Counselling Policy and the roles of the responsible organs.

4.2 Guidance and Counselling Organizational Structure

The Governance organizational structure of the Guidance & Counseling Policy is shown in Figure 1.

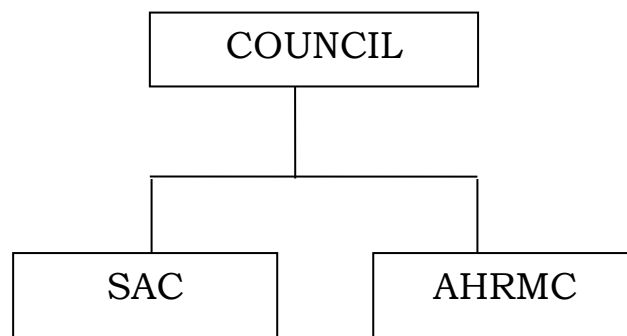


Figure 1: Governance Organizational Structure

4.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Governance Organs

4.3.1 The University Council

The University Council is responsible for approving the Guidance and Counselling Policy and endorsing the required budget for its implementation.

4.3.2 Appointment and Human Resource Management Committee (AHRMC)

The roles and responsibilities of the AHRMC shall be to receive, discuss and review staff-related matters and submit recommendations to the University Council for noting or approval.

4.3.3 Students' Affairs Committee (SAC)

The roles and responsibilities of the SAC shall be to receive, discuss and review student-related matters and submit recommendations to the University Council for noting or approval.

CHAPTER FIVE

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 Introduction

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential for assessing the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of implemented activities. At MUST, the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning, Finance, and Administration) will have overall responsibility for coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of guidance and counselling services provided to students and staff. This chapter, therefore, outlines the key components and focus areas for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Guidance and Counselling Policy.

5.2 Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuous process that tracks the implementation of planned activities, focusing on inputs, processes and outputs. The monitoring of this Policy will emphasize the following indicators:

- (a) Number of competent counsellors recruited;
- (b) Number of sensitization campaigns promoting guidance and counselling services;
- (c) Number of counselling sessions conducted;
- (d) Number of staff and students accessing counselling services;
- (e) Availability of essential resources, including personnel, infrastructure and funding;
- (f) Access to and use of appropriate evaluation tools;
- (g) Budget allocation for staff capacity building and training;
- (h) Establishment of outreach services to support the local community;
- (i) Assurance of confidentiality in counselling services;
- (j) Availability of Guidance and Counselling trained Peer Educators (among academic staff, support staff and students); and

- (k) Compliance with ethical standards for guidance and counselling services.

5.3 Evaluation of the Policy

Evaluation involves measuring the outcomes and overall impact of implemented activities. The Head of Guidance and Counselling Department will prepare an annual evaluation report that compares actual performance with planned targets to determine effectiveness and areas for improvement.

5.4 Policy Review and Amendments

The Guidance and Counselling Policy will be formally reviewed every three years, or at any time as may be deemed necessary to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

APPROVAL

At its 47th Meeting held on 28th day of May 2025, the Council of Mbeya University of Science and Technology Received, Discussed and Approved the Guidance and Counselling Policy.

Hon. Zakia Hamdani Meghji
CHAIRPERSON

Adv. Lugano Mwakilasa
SECRETARY

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