

**MBEYA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**



**VIRTUAL EDUCATION POLICY**

**MAY, 2022**

## **FOREWORD**

Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) is one of the universities in Tanzania which strives to contribute to the achievement of national development goals. This Policy is geared towards the fulfilment of Development Vision 2025, which among others, requires Tanzania to be a nation with a high level of education at all levels; a nation with educated people sufficiently equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills to solve society's challenges, meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels.

The vision of MUST is to become the centre of excellence for knowledge, skills, and applied education in Science and Technology. This is achieved through the provision of high-quality training and community outreach activities, which include conducting applied research and providing consultancy services. In this regard, MUST is dedicated to effectively providing knowledge, technology, and skills through various modes of delivery, one of which is Virtual Education (VE). The University recognizes the value of VE as a means of furthering its educational mission and reaching a diverse population of learners with a wide range of needs. Virtual learning takes a variety of forms, including full-time virtual schools, supplemental course offerings, and blended learning programme. The MUST-VE Policy encompasses key issues to be followed when imparting knowledge and skills through open, distance, and flexible learning modes to the learners. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that VE courses offered by MUST meet the same rigorous standards offered through traditional means of teaching, meet the needs and expectations of clients, and comply with the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU). It is envisaged that through effective implementation of this Policy parallel with other existing policies, guidelines, and regulations, desirable outcomes will be practically realized within communities in Tanzania and beyond.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CD-ROM	Compact Disk Read-Only Memory
CE	Continuing Education
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CVCE	Centre for virtual and continuing education
e-Learning	Electronic Learning
FBL	Flexible and Blended Learning
FSD	Flexible Skills Development
FTC	Full Technician Certificate
HoD	Head of Department
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
INVEST	Innovation in Vocation Education and Skills Training
MUST	Mbeya University of Science and Technology
NACTE	National Council of Technical Education
OERs	Open Educational Resources
TCU	Tanzania Commission for Universities
VE	Virtual Education
VED	Virtual Education Department

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS**

**E-Learning** refers to the use of electronic media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education.

**Virtual Education** refers to a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Virtual education is synonymous with distance education (defined below).

**Distance Education** is the educational strategy in which access to learning happens when time or distance, or both separate the source of information and the learners through the web or other network technologies, electronic, multimedia, or print media.

**Virtual Education Programme** is an educational programme where 50% or more of the instruction to earn an academic credential is delivered via virtual education.

**Flexible Learning** is a mode of knowledge delivery that focuses on providing learners with increased choice, convenience, and personalization so that learners can choose for themselves where, when, and how learning occurs.

**Blended Learning** is a formal education programme that uses a mixed-mode of learning content delivery. This includes face-to-face, paper-based, and online/offline alternatives. Learners make use of self-instructional materials or activities that enable them to exercise greater control over the time, place, path, and/or pace of learning. It can be used synonymously with hybrid learning.

**Flexible and Blended Learning** is an approach that combines characteristics of flexible and blended learning as aforementioned.

**Open Learning** refers to an approach to learning that focuses on freeing learners from limitations of time and place while offering flexible learning opportunities.

**Online Course** is credit-bearing with at least 76% of the course content,

activities, and assessments using virtual-learning modes.

**Faculty** are Instructors who teach one or more VE courses.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) is a public university located in the southern highlands zone of Tanzania which was established in March 2012. MUST is a result of the transformation of the Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) which was established in 2005, before which there was the Mbeya Technical College (MTC) which was officially launched in September 1986. MTC offered a Full Technician Certificate (FTC) in the fields of civil, mechanical, and electrical engineering as well as architecture. MUST so far offers several programmes in applied science and technology, engineering, and business studies at the diploma, bachelor, and postgraduate levels.

It is more than ever clear that virtual learning will be an important element of future education and training systems. It is approaching acceptance within mainstream education and training in such a way that it will make up part of the repertoire of most educational institutions in the future. The emergence of new forms of distance learning based on new information and communication technologies, in particular those supported by the Internet and using the World Wide Web, has significant pedagogical, economic, and organizational implications. Furthermore, there is a significant trend towards intensifying globalization. Institutional and inter-governmental cooperation is increasing, and the global classroom has been realized in quite many projects, particularly in connection with emerging global communication networks. The regional overview shows great differences between all regions of the world, although there are also several similarities. Virtual learning has existed for about one hundred years in the more developed regions and one or two generations in the developing regions. In the high-population countries of the developing world, virtual learning has been seen to offer very significant opportunities for education and training. Lack of infrastructure and professional competence in

virtual learning remain important barriers. Nevertheless, these forms of educational delivery have come to stay, and many countries are looking at virtual learning as a major strategy for expanding access, raising quality, and ensuring cost-effectiveness.

As in every other walk of modern life, the answer to the challenge of education for development will include the use of information and communication technologies, provided the necessary organizational and policy changes can be implemented to make the technologies effective. A range of technological devices is now widely available and relatively cheap (e.g. CD-ROM, various Internet services). They are accepted and often available for domestic use as well as in the workplace. Governments are concerned that educational institutions become connected to the emerging networks, that curricula include the knowledge of and acquaintance with new technologies, and that teachers are prepared and trained to use these new resources. Among the benefits expected from new information and communication technologies, besides that of outreach, are efficiencies derived from economies of scale and qualitative improvements such as greater individualization of learning, easier access to information, and more use of simulation techniques. In addition, the use of new forms of technology will have an impact on the cognitive functions of children and youth. The courses offered via virtual learning will adhere to the same academic standards, policies, and rigor as those offered physically on campus. The courses offered via VE will also be approved through the same curriculum-approval processes as campus-based courses and programme, being comparable in quality, content, assessment, and credit to those offered physically on campus.

## **1.2 MUST Vision**

The vision of MUST is to become the centre of excellence for applied education in science and technology, research, and consultancy.



This vision can be reached if the University can provide virtual and continuing education (VCE) to reach clients outside of the usual face-to-face formal education system.

### **1.3 MUST Mission**

The Mission of MUST is to develop academically, technologically, and socially competent students who will be responsive to the broader needs and challenges of society specifically by:

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

In line with the University's Mission, the Centre for Virtual and Continuing Education (CVCE) intends to supplement the core activities of academics, research, and consultancy of MUST through VCE services for the attainment of equitable socio-economic development.

### **1.4 Situational Analysis**

MUST has done the following intervention to promote virtual-related activities:

- (a) The establishment of CVCE;
- (b) The establishment of the Virtual and Continuing Education (VCE) Management Committee;

- (c) Training academic staff members on awareness of VE-related issues; and
- (d) Development of the MUST VE Policy.

However, before the transformation of the VE Department (VED) into the CVCE; VE activities were taken care of by the Flexible Skills Development Department.

### **1.5 Justification of the Policy**

The formulation of a VE Policy is in the context of its revised mission and implementation strategies. Although the functions are all intertwined within the three core functions of education and training, research, and public service, the specific university's functions that address VE are to:

- (a) Assume a leading role in the responsibility of the university education and make the provision for centres and places of learning, education, professional or vocational training, and research;
- (b) Excel in knowledge and human resources capacity building by ensuring a balance between quality and quantity;
- (c) Stimulate and promote intellectual, cultural, scientific, and technological development;
- (d) Promote economic, political, social, cultural, scientific, and technological research with particular reference to the interest of mankind; and
- (e) Establish mutually negotiated, beneficial and durable links within institutions of learning and research nationally, regionally, and globally.

The VE Policy embraces these institutional ideals and functions. Furthermore, research has to be relevant to the developmental responsibility of addressing national or societal problems with immediate or long-term impacts.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **POLICY BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The overall aim of this policy is to make sure that MUST expand and harnesses the existing knowledge and skills opportunities among the societies in a manner that accommodates the underprivileged individuals who have the unleashed potential to make a significant contribution to the national economy. This document outlines specific policies for online education at MUST but also contains specific suggestions for the policies, processes, and structures that should be assessed for the successful implementation of VE at the university. Through the VE mode of delivery, the learner will be furnished with all the necessary knowledge, skills and support needed. This policy will support the development of technology-enhanced learning across both online and face-to-face teaching environments that will assist in:

- (a) Enhancing the student experience;
- (b) Supporting innovative teaching strategies; and
- (c) Building digital capacity during pandemics cases.

In doing so, the policy supports the MUST Strategic Plan (2018 - 2022) and related strategies concerning the educational experience of MUST students and academic staff.

#### **2.2 Policy Vision**

To provide students with flexible and rigorous online learning opportunities that will help them acquire the knowledge, skills, and characteristics necessary for college and career readiness. Providing a rigorous, relevant, cutting-edge, technology-based VE for the global community of lifelong learners by engaging one student at a time.

### **2.3 Policy Mission**

The Mission of this Policy is to develop academically student-centered education including the following:

- (a) Students experience a rigorous blended online learning environment that prepares them for advanced education options, future employment, and post-secondary education;
- (b) Students have meaningful communications through face-to-face interactions, and virtually throughout their school experience;
- (c) Solve challenging problems while interning in the community by learning and applying academic skills consistent with real-world expectations, standards, and knowledge;
- (d) Know what they have learned, and can identify what they still need to learn;
- (e) Know how to seek out opportunities to work on relevant projects and curriculum that interests them;
- (f) Staff seeks to continually improve and expand their knowledge of teaching online, curriculum, and innovative technology; and
- (g) The union community embraces the diversity of the population by fostering a culture of safety, acceptance and respect.

### **2.4 Policy Goal**

To make use of flexible and blended learning approaches that suit the needs of the learners.

### **2.5 Objectives**

The objectives of this Policy are divided into two main parts, where the main objective explains the general objective of the Policy and the specific objectives explains in detail the Policy objectives.

#### **2.5.1 Main Objective**

Advise and assist the Vice-Chancellor in planning, coordinating, directing, and controlling all matters related to VE in the University.

### **2.5.2 Specific Objectives**

This Policy aims at achieving the following specific objectives:

- (a) To guide, regulate and manage the running of VE courses within the University through CVCE;
- (b) To promote and coordinate VE courses /activities which are not covered in other University policies;
- (c) To create a conducive entrepreneurial environment for staff regarding VE courses;
- (d) To facilitate members of staff to explore different avenues for VE courses;
- (e) To explore the existing market for VE activities;
- (f) To create a positive attitude toward VE courses/activities;
- (g) To motivate staff to generate income by the provision of VE services to the community;
- (h) To guide the plans and directives for the promotion, development, and improvement of the quality of education and training being offered to trainees through VE offered by the University; and
- (i) To promote and encourage trainers and other staff in applying their innovativeness, and readiness in their fields of specialization and study in running and managing VE.

### **2.6 Policy Philosophy**

Change has ever required education professionals to evolve their teaching philosophies. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, digital literacy has prevailed as the common status quo where the Internet and e-mail are second nature in our technology-driven world. Educators of the future will not thrive unless they are willing to unlearn past practices and take risks with new technology. Teaching and learning have become more transparent and diverse than ever before. However, there are shared principles among face-to-face and online frameworks which are desirable to be an effective educator:

- (a) Building relationships with student-faculty contact;

- (b) Collaborative learning among students (i.e. discussion boards or traditional settings);
- (c) Emphasize deadlines and balancing time;
- (d) Offer alternative methods of assessment to match the setting;
- (e) Peer feedback/evaluation challenges the learner to know content;
- (f) Prompt feedback by the instructor;
- (g) Respect diverse learners; and
- (h) Sets high expectations for students and teaching staff.

## **2.7 Policy Scope**

This Policy applies to all students, teachers, instructors, lecturers, management-level staff, and other stakeholders in the provision of quality training with the following:

- (a) This Policy applies to the institutional VLE regarding teaching and learning activities; and
- (b) This Policy does not apply to the technical service level to support the institutional VLE which is the responsibility of IT Services.

A formal timeline for the adoption of the VE Policy is not proposed. However, it is expected that the Policy is adopted at an academic's earliest convenience, and where difficulties arise, they address them promptly.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **POLICY ISSUES, STATEMENTS, AND STRATEGIES**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

MUST will ensure that equity and fairness are embedded in all VE operations. Moreover, the integration of technology into teaching and learning for the existing face-to-face courses to be flexible and blended will be emphasized. This helps to increase access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and offers learners the flexibility to choose where, when, how and the pace at which they study and learn. However, access to education will not be determined by age, gender, ethnicity, or religious beliefs and will positively support the rights of women and girls in society and work thus increasing access to life skills training for all.

#### **3.2 Policy Issues**

The VEPolicy has the following issues to address:

- (a) Academic issues;
- (b) Governance/Administration issues;
- (c) Financial issues;
- (d) Learner Support Services;
- (e) Legal Issues;
- (f) Technological issues
- (g) Cultural issues;
- (h) Gender issues; and
- (i) VE Organization and Management.

##### **3.2.1 Academic issues**

The University registers new and existing students following the semester system, which is twice a year. The rigidity in the semester system makes it difficult to admit many students. Likewise, the lack of reliable and stable ICT infrastructure and minimal technologically enhanced pedagogical skills to

MUST staff pose other challenges to the implementation of VE and flexible and blended learning (FaB) techniques. All VE programme must provide academic rigor, quality, and assessment of student learning objectives consistent with face-to-face programme at the University. Accordingly, instructors must hold VE students to the same academic standards consistent with those to which students participating in face-to-face learning are subjected.

Policy implementation will focus on the following key issues: planning of all academic issues and calendar for the year is flexible to all the staff and learners; course integrity, transferability, transcripts, student/course evaluation, Admission standards, curriculum/course approval, delivery methods (flexible and blended), accreditation, class cancellations, course/programme availability, recruiting/marketing.

**(a) Thematic Objective**

To ensure the equitable expansion of students' enrolment, gender equity, and a favorable quality learning environment in open and distance flexible learning programme.

**(b) Policy Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Increase access to educational opportunities at MUST for unrepresented and under-represented groups by introducing more flexible entry procedures;
- (ii) Provide quality training to learners by making learning resources available in a variety of media;
- (iii) Introduce new courses and adapt existing courses that are directed at addressing the demands of society;
- (iv) Develop VE course at different levels that makes use of appropriate technologies that are accessible and affordable for students;
- (v) Consult and seek course accreditation and approval from the relevant competent authorities;



- (vi) Draw up a course outline that specifies the criteria for admission, registration procedures, provisions for orientation/continuity, course duration, and pedagogical methods using flexible and blended approaches;
- (vii) Identify and develop VE course curricula for identified programme;
- (viii) Introduce assessment and evaluation methodologies compatible with VE approaches; and
- (ix) Ensure that all VE courses are taught by qualified, personnel approved and assigned by the head of department.

### **3.2.2 Governance/Administration**

Virtual education approaches involve all education stakeholders such as national policymakers, regulatory authorities, and users. Due to its convenience, several institutions have adopted this learning strategy to supplement the traditional learning strategy. Under this approach, governance/administration will focus mainly on the following key issues: Space, procurement of facilities (ICT and other relevant facilities), Board approval, and Staffing

#### **(a) Thematic Objective**

To ensure an effective, transparent, and responsive administration system in VE

#### **(b) Policy Statement**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Determine and put in place appropriate infrastructure and facilities needed to support the VE programs;
- (ii) Devise an implementable quality assurance system in VE;
- (iii) Implement various measures under quality control systems in VE training programme;

- (iv) Recruit and retain competent resource persons in appropriate numbers to support VE training programme;
- (v) Create a conducive teaching and learning environment for VE training programme;
- (vi) Train and support all faculty engaged in the instruction of VE courses; and
- (vii) Provide adequate support to faculty for the development of each course required to be offered via VE.

### **3.2.3 Financial Issues**

The VE approaches are less expensive and appropriate due to the reduction of costs in such items as traveling (on the side of the learner), accommodation, number of classrooms, laboratories and workshops, catering services, and others. Under this approach, implementation will focus on the following key issues: tuition fees, technology acquisition fees, and financial regulations.

#### **(a) Thematic Objective**

To ensure cost-effectiveness in running VE programme

#### **(b) Policy statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Determine competitive and affordable fee rates for VE programme;
- (ii) Comply with University Financial regulations;
- (iii) Set aside funds to ensure the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate technology for VE; and
- (iv) Ensure that there are no additional fees associated with the enrolment of students into VE courses.

### **3.2.4 Learner Support Services**

Learners who study using VE face some challenges and need special support services as compared to full-time students. These support services are broadly categorized into five items namely: administrative, academic advice &

counseling, tutorial, peer-to-peer interaction, and access to resources & technologies. The Policy implementation will focus on centralized and decentralized learner support systems to address the above-mentioned categories of support services.

**(a) Thematic objective**

To establish and maintain support service systems that are responsive to changing needs of the learners.

**(b) Policy Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Provide academic advice in printed and/or electronic media during orientation workshops and other relevant forms;
- (ii) Introduce regional centers for live sessions and access to audio visual and computer technologies;
- (iii) Offer mentorship for career and employment opportunities to accommodate VE learners;
- (iv) Ensure adequate and appropriate learning materials are available to VE learners in hard or electronic forms like e-journals, full-text databases, whichever is appropriate;
- (v) Link all VE students with organizations that provide cheap and reliable wireless devices and/or modems; and
- (vi) Provide adequate support and services to students enrolled in VE courses comparable to those offered to traditional, on-campus learners.

**3.2.5 Legal Issues**

Virtual learning is a rapidly growing space in education policy, driven by state leaders seeking to maximize the potential for instructional innovation, prepare students for life in the digital age and meet their needs. Operating VE needs attention to various concerns that may arise from the law. This mainly includes varied considerations in the VE learning contents such as use and

reproduction by other facilitators involved in VE. The Policy implementation will focus on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Open Educational Resources (OERs).

**(a) Thematic Objective**

To provide a legal framework that will guide the operationalization of the VE programme

**(b) Policy Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Promote usage and acknowledgment of OERs that suit learners' needs and context;
- (ii) Regularly review the institution's policy on copyright/intellectual property rights;
- (iii) Establish systems that protect the IPRs for VE material developers, while ensuring that MUST retains appropriate rights for material developed by employees or contract workers;
- (iv) Ensure that faculty members teaching online courses have the same control and ownership of the substantive and intellectual content of their courses.
- (v) Sensitize all stakeholders of VE on issues related to Intellectual Property Rights; and
- (vi) Comply with the University Code of Ethics and Conduct.

**3.2.6 Technological Issues**

Operating VE needs modern technological applications and equipment. The Policy implementation will focus on providing the necessary technological applications to its faculty.

**(a) Thematic Objective**

To provide the necessary technological applications that will support the implementation of the VE programme in the University to meet the needs of students enrolled in VE.

**(b) Policy Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Avail appropriate technical expertise to its faculty to operationalize the policy;
- (ii) Provide technological infrastructure and support to its faculty to enable the operationalization of the Policy;
- (iii) Enable the protection of students' and staff identities using secure log-in platforms and passwords;
- (iv) Provide instructional design support for the development of quality, accessible online and hybrid courses to students; and
- (v) Routinely assess and monitor the performance of technology platforms and make necessary improvements.

**3.2.7 Cultural issues**

These are context-based practices. For a long time, learning in Tanzania has been achieved through conventional face-to-face. In so doing, this approach has been set by society as the norm of learning practice. A classroom without walls approach as provided by VE is the new mode of teaching and learning that is recently introduced. This new system is challenged and regarded by society to lack competence aspects of skills and knowledge deliverance. The Policy implementation will focus on: the adoption of innovations, acceptance of online/distance teaching, understanding of distance education (what works at a distance), and organizational values.

**(a) Thematic Objective**

To eradicate the belief in society that the conventional mode of teaching and learning is the only suitable mode.

**(b) Policy Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the university shall:

- (i) Instill VE culture among administrators and academic staff to meet the changing needs of their students and society at large;
- (ii) Establish a system of incentives that helps VE staff to accept and adapt to changes in their job descriptions and work practices;
- (iii) Design VE courses that are addressing specific community needs; and
- (iv) Sensitize the community on the benefits of the VE programme.

**3.2.8 Gender issues**

This is concerned with establishing equity in access to education among gender groups. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right. It is also a keystone of a prosperous, modern economy that provides sustainable inclusive growth. The VE Policy will aim at discouraging potential discrimination, bias or harassment based on sex, race-ethnicity, physical disability, and/or other characteristics.

**(a) Thematic Objective**

To promote gender mainstreaming in the VE programme

**(b) Policy Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Advocate for VE strategy for different gender groups in society;
- (ii) Identify and address weaknesses or cultural biases from University policies and regulations that could constrain the achievement of VE gender equity;

- (iii) Identify means that ensure there is broad participation of various gender groups as decision-makers in VE planning process strategies; and
- (iv) Develop qualitative and quantitative VE gender-responsive indicators to monitor gender-based success.

### **3.2.9 VE Organization and Management**

For the effective and sustainable implementation of the Policy, the University has key roles to play which calls for the establishment of a mechanism for the participation of different organs and to put in place an adequate and operational framework for development, management, control, and maintenance of VE at the University.

#### **(a) Thematic Objective**

To ensure well proper functioning and sustainability of VE programs at the University.

#### **(b) Statements**

To achieve the above thematic objective, the University shall:

- (i) Put in place VE coordination units within the directorate of the CVCE;
- (ii) Ensure allocation of funds for procurement, development, replacement, upgrading, and maintenance of VE facilities as will be recommended by the directorate;
- (iii) Ensure proper and enforceable VE procedural and technical documentation for effective VE organization and management;
- (iv) Establish functional VE committees at the University, college/school/institute levels;
- (v) Provide incentives to staff producing materials worth OER for VE;
- (vi) Promote production of OERs that suit learners' needs and context; and

- (vii) Sustain collaboration with COL/INVEST Africa institutions, non-governmental organizations, industry associations, employers, and other stakeholders to enhance capacitybuilding, field industrial training, and funding opportunities.

### **3.3 Policy Statements**

The University registers new and existing students following the Semester system, which is twice a year. The rigidity in the Semester system makes it difficult to admit many students. Likewise, the lack of reliable and stable ICT infrastructure and minimal technologically enhanced pedagogical skills to MUST staff pose other challenges to the implementation of VE and FaB techniques. Policy implementation will focus on the following key issues: Planning of all academic issues and calendar for the year is flexible to all the staff and learners; course integrity, transferability, transcripts, student/course evaluation, admission standards, curriculum/course approval, delivery methods (flexible and blended), accreditation, class cancellations, course/program availability, recruiting/marketing.

To achieve the above statements, the University shall:

- (i) Increase access to educational opportunities at MUST for unrepresented and under-represented groups by introducing more flexible entry procedures;
- (ii) Provide quality training to learners by making learning resources available in a variety of media;
- (iii) Introduce new courses and adapt existing courses that are directed at addressing the demands of society;
- (iv) Develop VE courseware at different levels that makes use of appropriate technologies that are accessible and affordable for students;
- (v) Consult and seek course accreditation and approval from the relevant competent authorities;



- (vi) Draw up a course outline that specifies the criteria for admission, registration procedures, provisions for orientation/continuity, course duration, and pedagogical methods using flexible and blended approaches;
- (vii) Identify and develop VE course curricula for identified programme; and
- (viii) Introduce assessment and evaluation methodologies compatible with VE approaches.

## **CHAPTER FOUR POLICY COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

MUST will ensure that the Policy is communicated to the key stakeholders and oversee the proper implementation of the Policy to support VE at the institution. This chapter outlines the communication and implementation strategies of the proposed Policy.

### **4.2 Communication**

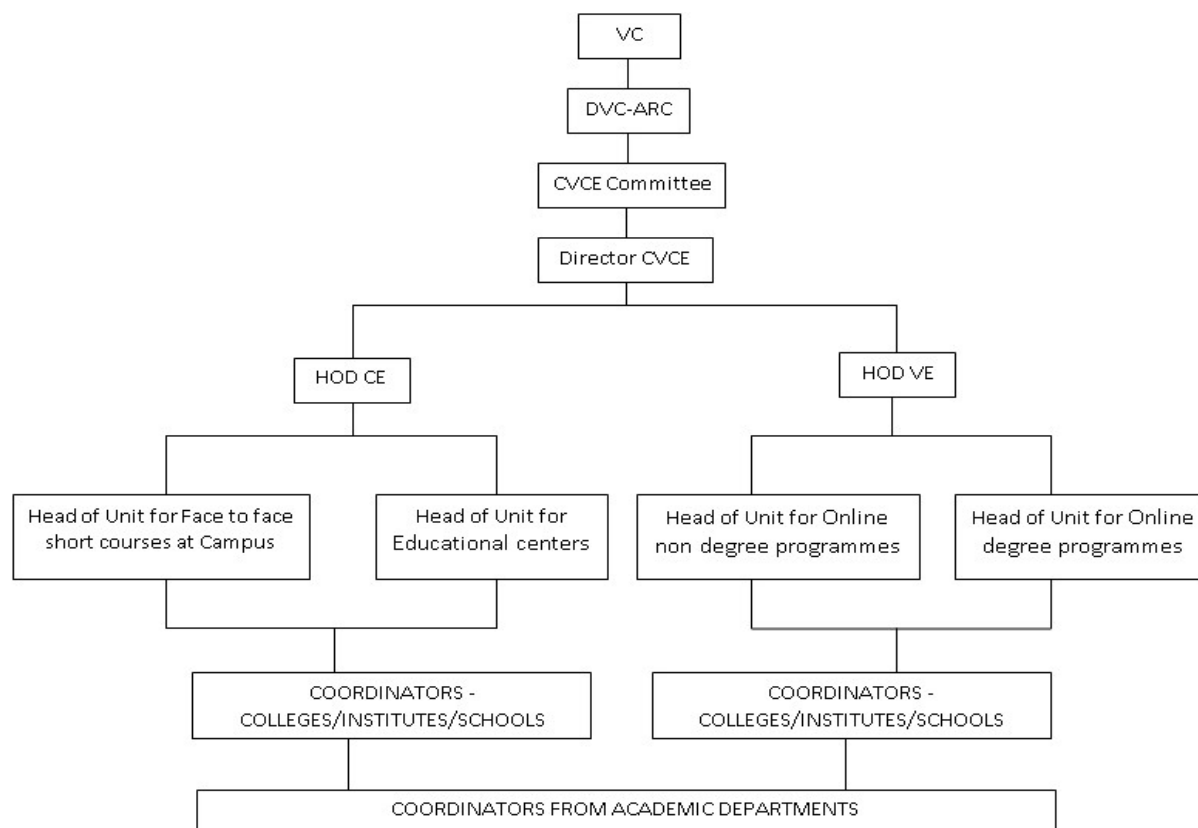
This Policy shall be communicated to all stakeholders and users in a broad array of communication media by MUST's Management Team through the CVCE.

### **4.2 Implementation**

The CVCE will be responsible for overseeing the process of MUST-VE Policy implementation in cooperation with VE departmental coordinators.

### **4.3 Organizational Structure**

The administrative structure is to define and delegate responsibilities, establish relationships to enable people to work, and ensure effective systems and mechanisms for communications. The CVCE Directorate is under the office of the Deputy ViceChancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy (DVC ARC) whose administrative structure is shown in Figure 1. The Directorate is composed of two departments namely; the Virtual Educational Department(VED) and Continuing Education Department (CED).



**Figure 1: Organizational Structure of CVCE**

#### 4.4 Composition of the Committee

There shall be a CVCE Management Committee appointed by the DVC-ARC. The CVCE Management Committee shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) Director of Centre for Virtual and Continuing Education(CVCE);
- (b) Head of Virtual Education Department(HVED);
- (c) Head of Continuing Education Department (HCED); and
- (d) VCE coordinators from colleges.

##### 4.4.1 Roles of the Deputy ViceChancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy

The Deputy Vice Chancellor shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation and performance of the VE Policy at the University.

#### **4.4.2 Roles of the Director of the Centre for Virtual and Continuing Education**

The Director of CVCE shall have the following functions:

- (a) Assist in identifying VE programme in different departments at MUST;
- (b) Market the VE services/programme to society which in turn shall strategically strengthen the University's community links;
- (c) Develop/encourage and suggest VE programme that are demand-driven outside MUST;
- (d) Initiate and facilitate the implementation of VE courses/programme;
- (e) Encourage collaboration and formation of teams on VE services among different MUST departments/units;
- (f) Document different taught courses and participants and their income contribution to the University;
- (g) Recommend to the University management a system for disbursement of participants' fees for different individuals, groups, departments, or units that participated in VE services;
- (h) Suggest and review the remuneration and other schemes that would motivate the University Community to participate in VE services;
- (i) Inculcate an entrepreneurial attitude among University staff in competitive thinking in initiating VE programme;
- (j) Evaluate all VE activities to all departments/units at MUST;
- (k) Register and disseminate information on VE activities from all departments/units at MUST;
- (l) Follow-up and prepare financial documents on resource mobilization activities;
- (m) Prepare, review, and recommend VE programs/courses;
- (n) Allocate requisitions from clients to responsible departments; and
- (o) Monitor and follow up on all existing VE courses.

#### **4.4.3 Roles of the Head of Virtual Education Department**

The main roles of the Head of the VED are to:

- (a) Support e-studies process in the University (development and broadcasting of video lectures, support, and administration of virtual learning environments);
- (b) Provide training in e-learning for MUST staff and students;
- (c) Coordinate the delivery of virtual academic programme;
- (d) Support software used for the e-learning process;
- (e) Organize video conferences, broadcast live events online, create other dissemination tools, video and photo shooting related to academic matters;
- (f) Assist course facilitatorsto adapt their course content for virtual learning; and
- (g) cooperate with industry and business sector, formal and non-formal educational institutions, and Governmental and non-Governmental organizations.

#### **4.4.4 Roles of the head of Continuing Education Department**

The the Head of CE shall have the following functions:

- (a) Offering, planning and coordinating courses, seminars, and training programmes for the University staff, students, public and private sector, NGOs, international and individuals in the fields they need,
- (b) Organizing courses and lectures open to participation both in and off campus,
- (c) Organizing special training programmes for state and private institutions,
- (d) Organizing the educational activities and providing the necessary equipment and materials for the courses to be offered by the relevant departments of the University,
- (e) Organizing programmes for saving free time and realizing active group work in and off campus that aims at forestation, gender, environment, health, drug abuse, sanitation, fighting bad habits and the likes,

- (f) Organizing the continuing education, public education, on job training, seminars, and workshops on demand and public conference activities on the basis of “education for everyone” and “lifelong learning” principles and making publications on and issuing certificates for such activities if necessary,
- (g) Running other activities in the scope of continuing education.

#### **4.4.5 Roles of College/Departmental Virtual Education Coordinators**

The following are the roles of College/Departmental VE Coordinators

- (a) Administer and coordinate an organized schedule of VE, and monitor programme quality consistent within the University;
- (b) Arrange for appropriate educational facilities, reference materials, instructional aides, and equipment consistent with the purpose, design, and intended learning outcomes of each learning experience;
- (c) Provide a system for identifying participants who meet the requirements for VE categories, as required, for satisfactory completion of the VE program;
- (d) Maintain a record of participation for each individual to whom VE will award a certificate;
- (e) Determine in advance the number of participants to be awarded a certificate. There should be clear administrative procedures and channels for this approval;
- (f) Maintain records of an individual’s involvement in VE activities; and
- (g) Make and certify reports of VE activities.
- (h) Make and certify reports of VE activities.

#### **4.4.6 Roles of Teaching Staff**

The roles of faculty and instructors of VE shall involve the following:

- (a) Design and deliver the course online;
- (b) Student engagement;
- (c) Student assessment and evaluation;

- (d) Choose materials or assignments for the online course;
- (e) Updating the courses and associated materials;
- (f) Provide regular monitoring of student effort and opportunities for communication about that effort;
- (g) Respond in a timely fashion to student questions and concerns, and take steps to identify and address individual academic problems as needed; and
- (h) Provide oversight of the content and quality of the instruction.

There shall be four meetings per year of the CVCE Management Committee

#### **4.4.7 Roles of the VCE Committee**

The Roles of the VCE committee will be to:

- (a) Safeguard policies, regulations, and procedures for which the CVCE was established;
- (b) Advise on implementation of policies and procedures;
- (c) Approve plans and activities of the CVCE;
- (d) Monitor all VCE activities at the University;
- (e) Receive reports from CVCE and approve them;
- (f) Advise on the course of action for various issues in CVCE; and
- (g) Ensure the implementation of the Policy, procedures, and objectives of the CVCE and the University as a whole regarding the VCE activities.

#### **4.4.8 Rights and obligations of stakeholders**

Successful implementation of VE is dependent on the extent to which the needs and concerns of the stakeholder groups involved are addressed. A stakeholder typically refers to one who is associated with the welfare and success of a University and its students. They may also be collective entities such as local businesses, organizations, committees, and media outlets.

**(a) University administrators**

University administrators, who monitor the implementation of the curriculum, play a vital role in structuring and developing the University and its students. Furthermore, they are responsible for the purchasing of learning materials that are essential for curriculum implementation. They are usually informed by teachers, students, and the community about the success of their curriculum. They can also employ the services of professionals for evaluating the performance of the curriculum.

**(b) Faculty**

The University recognizes that not all teaching staffs are prepared for the challenges and opportunities that teaching and learning in an online environment can present. They will be trained and offered technological support to adjust to VE. HoDs will ensure facilitators are qualified to teach virtually or in a blended environment. Teaching staffs new to the e-learning environment will receive training given by the e-Learning facilitators.

**(c) Students**

All students who participate in VE will have an appropriate orientation to train them in the use of the technology employed for the course. All students involved in VE will be expected to abide by the University's academic rules and conduct.

**(d) Parents**

Parents influence the implementation of the curriculum by playing a vital role in monitoring the courses taught at the university, filling the gap between their students and the University administration by providing various resources which are not available at the University.



**(e) Government and Professional regulators**

Government and professional regulation commission such as Tanzania camission for University (TCU)are other stakeholders providing a accreditation to Universities.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

##### **(a) Monitoring**

Monitoring and Evaluation is a continuous management function to assess the progress made in achieving expected results, spot the implementation bottlenecks, and highlight any unintended effects (positive or negative) of the programme. Types of monitoring include:

- (i) Compliance monitoring: Intended to ensure that educational institutions comply with standards and norms and focus on educational inputs such as teachers, textbooks, classrooms, and equipment.
- (ii) Diagnostic monitoring: Focusing on instructional processes and whether students are learning. It provides information on the quality of education provided by schools.
- (iii) Performance monitoring: Focusing on monitoring the academic achievement of students through testing. This provides information on the results of investments made in education.

##### **(b) Evaluation**

Evaluation is a process that critically examines a programme. It involves collecting and analyzing information about a programme activities, characteristics, and outcomes. Its purpose is to make judgments about a programme, to improve its effectiveness, and/or inform programming decisions. Whilst it is still important to carry out evaluations of individual courses, looking for more general principles derived from experiments can guide the design and development of VE. Evaluations fall into two broad categories:

- (i) Formative evaluations: Are conducted during programme development and implementation and are useful if you want direction on how to best achieve your goals or improve your programme.
- (ii) Summative evaluations: Should be completed once the programme are well established and will tell to what extent the programme is achieving its goals.

## **5.2 Periodical Evaluation of the Policy**

Monitoring and evaluation of VE activities help the organization generate and manage relevant information on maintenance of standards, improvement, and future planning. Without effective monitoring and evaluation, it would be impossible to judge if the VE programme are in the right direction, whether progress and success can be claimed, and how future efforts might be improved. This part describes a monitoring and evaluation framework for VE at MUST. The framework operates at three levels: University, College, and Department.

## **5.3 University Level**

The Deputy ViceChancellor responsible for academic, research, and consultancy has responsibility for the evaluation of the University's VE performance. Annually the Director of the CVCE will advise the DVC-ARC on the University's performance, its status regarding external VE funding sources available, opportunities for enrolments, and the impact and intensity of its VE.

## **5.4 Centre Level**

The Centre will do the following:

- (a) The Director shall monitor the performance of VE following the evaluation of MUST;
- (b) CVCE committee shall receive and discuss VE matters and make recommendations to the Senate for improvement;

- (c) Evaluate strategic support, management, and administration at the University level;
- (d) Promote good corporate governance and practices; and
- (e) Enhancing the implementation of the MUST Virtual Education Policy.

### **5.5 Departmental Level**

The Department will do the following:

- (a) Strengthen the linkages between the teaching staff and students;
- (b) Provide focused attention to the aspects of planning such as medium-term planning and planning of implementation programme;
- (c) Ensure synergy and improved use of resources for effectiveness and efficiency;
- (d) Practice more effective and efficient approaches to interacting with other departments;
- (e) Monitor the teaching conducted online;
- (f) Provide training for staff to enable them to deliver online lecturing easily; and;
- (g) Encourage staff to prepare digital content.

### **5.6 Evaluation Report**

The CVCE shall draw up its strategic and/or business plan to include targets and performance indicators. The evaluation of MUST's VE Policy will entail a comparison of planned targets and actual performance. The University's management team will adopt the VE Policy evaluation systems through an internal evaluation by the University Quality Assurance Committee after every six months and an evaluation from CVCE Board Committee on an annual basis.

### **5.7 Policy Review and Amendments**

The VE Policy shall be reviewed every three years, in conjunction with other institutional policies and plans, based on the internal and external evaluation reports. The VE Policy objectives and key performance criteria manifested in

the strategic or business plan will be reviewed every three years. The Policy shall be amended as necessary to align with institutional mission and external requirements. The challenges and opportunities associated with online education shall be viewed regularly to rethink the processes and structures that support the policy.

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