



STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EAST AFRICA

Kampala, May 2018



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BPS	Board of Postgraduate Studies
DPhil	Doctor of Philosophy
EAC	East African Community
EAQFHE	East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
IPR	Intellectual Property Right
IQAS	Internal Quality Assurance System
IUCEA	Inter-University Council for East Africa
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PSC	Postgraduate Studies Committee

FOREWORD

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is an institution of the East African Community (EAC) responsible for coordinating the development of higher education and research. One of the key functions of IUCEA is to maintain high and comparable academic standards in higher education regionally and internationally with special emphasis on the promotion of quality assurance and enhancement.

In the recent past, universities in the East African region have witnessed unprecedented growth in graduate student enrollment and unharmonised modalities of offering postgraduate training. The preparation of these graduate students has been hampered, among other things, by shortage of experienced supervisors and structured mentorship programmes. As a result, the region is experiencing an acute shortage of PhD graduates and low research productivity which consequently affects the contribution of higher education and research to socio-economic transformation of the region. It is against this background that higher education stakeholders in the region deemed it necessary to develop standards and guidelines for postgraduate programmes in order to address the aforementioned challenges. Furthermore, the standards and guidelines are expected to enhance quality of postgraduate training programmes, increase transparency in the recruitment processes, administration and management of postgraduate studies. It is also expected that the standards and guidelines will enhance and facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications and programmes as well as student and staff mobility. These standards and guidelines are generic and may guide higher education institutions in developing/improving theirs. The standards and guidelines have taken into consideration ideas, comments, and recommendations from key stakeholders.

The standards and guidelines for postgraduate studies in the region are presented into thirteen clusters. Each cluster highlights principles and that within each principle, standards and guidelines are provided. Cluster One focuses on student admission into postgraduate studies whereby Higher Education Institutions shall have clear and transparent procedures for admission into the programmes that are consistently applied and demonstrate equality of opportunity. Cluster Two addresses the duration of the postgraduate studies, the minimum and maximum periods of study for postgraduate programmes proposed. Cluster Three describes the researcher development and skills training where Higher Education Institution shall provide postgraduate students with generic research skills, professional and transferable skills and career development opportunities. Cluster Four focuses on policies governing the conduct and management of postgraduate studies. Higher Education Institutions shall have regulations for postgraduate degree programmes that are clear and readily available to students and staff. Cluster Five relates to institutional capacity building. Higher Education Institutions shall have regulations for postgraduate degree programmes that are clear and readily available to students and staff.

Cluster six shows how quality assurance and quality enhancement is paramount in postgraduate training. Higher education institution shall support an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) formally established and in force, effectively guaranteeing continuous improvement to the programmes. Cluster Seven deals with intellectual property rights, research ethics and integrity. Higher Education Institutions shall ensure that all research activity conducted by staff and students adhere to published guidelines on good practice including ethical issues, confidentiality and plagiarism, in accordance with established national guidelines. Cluster Eight emphasises the role of higher education institutions to ensure quality supervision of postgraduate students and the shared responsibilities of the supervisor, supervisee and the institution.

The assessment and postgraduate degree awards are provided in Cluster Nine where higher education institutions shall put in place criteria and procedures for assessing postgraduate degrees that enable it to define its academic standards and the achievements of its graduates. The relevance of internationalisation is provided in Cluster Ten. Higher education institutions shall develop strategies and policies to guide the process of internationalization of postgraduate studies in the EAC. Cluster Eleven deals with research findings dissemination and thesis/ dissertation repository. Complaints and appeals are dealt with in Cluster Twelve and it requires that procedures for complaints and appeals to be fair, clear to all, robust and consistently applied. Finally withholding or revocation of a degree is presented in Cluster Thirteen and highlights the authority of a higher education institution to withhold or revoke a degree in accordance to clearly stipulated policies, rules and regulations that are publicly disseminated.

It is expected that higher education institutions in the EAC Partner States will use these standards and guidelines as a yardstick for assuring quality of postgraduate studies at Masters' and PhD levels. Ultimately the human resource for the region will be globally competitive and serve the Community effectively and that the contribution of higher education and research to socio-economic transformation will be enhanced in line with the regional and respective national economic agendas.

The standards and guidelines for postgraduate studies in the region are presented into thirteen clusters. Each cluster highlights principles and that within each principle, standards and guidelines are provided.

Prof. Alexandre Lyambabaje
IUCEA, Executive Secretary

Kampala, May 2018

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I wish to also extend my sincere appreciations to Dr. Cosam Chawanga Joseph (Chief Principal, Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework), Ms. Juru Marie Eglantine (Senior Quality Assurance and Standards Officer), and Mr. Aviku Patrick (Records Management Assistant) of IUCEA for their invaluable technical contribution and support to this process.

The various Higher Learning Institutions in the region are highly acknowledged for sharing and availing their policy documents related to postgraduate training that informed the development of this regional document. Last but not least, I wish to extend my appreciations to the institutions of the technical team of experts for granting their staff permission to participate in this process.

It is my sincere hope that these Standards and Guidelines will be useful to the Higher education fraternity and will be used in order to improve the quality of supervision and graduates, enhance mentorship programme and academic leadership in the region. Finally, once again, I wish to thank all people and institutions for the continued support and cooperation rendered to IUCEA in the dispensation of its mandate and functions.

Prof. Alexandre Lyambabaje

IUCEA, Executive Secretary

Kampala, May 2018

Background

Higher education in East Africa has expanded tremendously over the last two decades. Student enrollment has increased necessitating an increase in the number of higher education institutions. The mode of delivery has also diversified and the quality of education given at any institution may be at variance with that given in others. Massification of higher education has brought about various challenges such as inadequate staff for teaching and research, and inadequate infrastructure for quality delivery of the education offered. Yet the higher education institutions are the backbone for the production of human resource with the requisite skills for the development of the nations. To mitigate the challenge of the inadequate human resource for academic training and research, there is need to increase the number of postgraduates being churned out of the higher education institutions. Such graduates should be comparable irrespective of the institutions they graduated from, and also have the ability to move and work within the region. This calls for a regionally acceptable framework for postgraduate training. To ensure that the post graduate training is done under comparable standards, the Inter University Council of East Africa, through her mandate, has developed principles, standards and guidelines for use in delivery of postgraduate studies. The different postgraduate programmes are outlined and the standards and guidelines are prescribed thereafter.

Types of Postgraduate Degrees

Three types of postgraduate programmes have been provided by the East African Qualifications Framework. These are: Postgraduate Diploma, Masters' degree and Doctoral degree. Postgraduate Diplomas are offered for the purpose of upgrading the technical skills of Bachelors' Degree holders after attaining some years of experience in the job market. Such diplomas may also be used for upgrading one's status for entry into Masters' programmes. The standards and guidelines prescribed herein, therefore, focus on the Masters' and Doctoral degrees.

A Masters' degree programme is designed to provide advanced education or training in the student's specialized discipline of knowledge. It demonstrates mastery in a specific field of study or area of professional practice. Masters' programmes contribute to advanced knowledge and skills in the field of study and enhance critical awareness of knowledge issues. They promote specialized problem solving skills required in research and/or innovation; entail originality and creativity in the application of knowledge, skills, and practice in the field of study; and prepare the individual to take a significant responsibility in society. Research forms an integral part of a Masters' degree programme. The structure of the programme, therefore, demonstrates the weighting of coursework and thesis/dissertation/research project. The programme structure, length and format of the thesis/dissertation/research project are determined by the higher education institution and the information is publicly disseminated.

The Master's degrees are subdivided into academic and Professional/Specialized Master's degrees. An academic Master's degree focuses on a specific field of study and is often more research-oriented than professional programs, and students are typically required to plan, organize, and conduct research to complete their coursework. The program often requires a thesis in order to graduate. Specialized Master's degree focuses on a specific professional area. It is also known as "tagged master's degree" because it is tagged to a certain field or professional master's degree because it focuses on career development on a particular profession. These are hands on degree with a heavy practical component giving students skills and knowledge needed to work professionally in their chosen field hence emphasizing on honing experience rather than on conducting research.

A Doctoral Degree is the highest degree awarded to individuals who have demonstrated high level of competence in undertaking independent research that results in a significant contribution to the advancement of basic or applied knowledge. Doctoral programmes, therefore, are designed to train researchers, professionals, and future university lecturers. The programmes should enhance knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the discipline or field of study, provide the learner with the most advanced and specialized skills, techniques and competencies required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation, and extend and redefine existing knowledge. Research forms an integral part of Doctoral programmes. The structure of Doctoral degree programmes demonstrates the weighting of courses and thesis/dissertation. The programmes' structure, length and format of the thesis/dissertation are determined by the higher education institutions and the information is publicly disseminated.

Doctoral degrees are subdivided into Doctor of Philosophy and Professional doctoral degrees at the same level of classification. The Doctor of Philosophy degree programme focuses on producing practitioners who are mainly engaged in generating knowledge through research and teaching, while the professional and practice-oriented doctoral degree programmes normally focus on producing practitioners who are engaged mainly in consuming knowledge, practice and active research. Four types of Doctoral degrees exist in East Africa. These are: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD or DPhil) by research thesis/dissertation; Integrated Doctor of Philosophy by coursework and thesis/dissertation; Doctor of Philosophy by publication or published work; and Professional and Practice-based Doctorates.

Mode of Delivery

There are various modes of delivery postgraduate studies. These include jointly between institutions, or singularly by an individual institution. Where the training is offered in collaboration, there are possibilities of the higher education institutions awarding the degree jointly or one of the institutions offering the degree as one of her own. A joint degree shall be understood to be a degree programme offered in collaboration between at least two autonomous degree granting institutions whereby the duration of the programme is jointly supervised and time apportioned between

the collaborating institutions. At the completion of the programme the candidate is awarded a single degree certificate issued by all the offering institutions. The joint degree shall fulfill the following:

1. A joint programme shall be jointly developed and offered under collaborative arrangements; There shall be a written and legally binding memorandum of understanding, agreement or contract setting out the rights and obligations of the parties and signed by the authorized representatives of the awarding institution and partner organization or agent;
2. Collaborative arrangements shall be fully costed and accounted for accurately and fully, according to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Memorandum of Agreement (MoA);
3. Each awarding institution shall be responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted its name as well as ensuring the quality of learning opportunities;
4. The degree certificate awarded to a joint degree candidate shall bear the (content, style, logos) agreed upon by all participating universities and shall be duly signed by the statutory organs of all participating institutions/ universities; and
5. Joint degree programmes shall be accredited and recognised by the statutory bodies in the respective countries.



STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

CLUSTER 1: STUDENT ADMISSION INTO POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Principle: Postgraduate studies are rigorous with a strong bias to research. The admission process therefore needs to be transparent, competitive and complex to identify talented individuals with the capacity to undertake and complete the study programmes successfully.

1.1 Criteria and Procedures for Admission

Standards:

1. Higher Education Institutions shall have clear and transparent procedures for admission into the programmes that are consistently applied and demonstrate equality of opportunity.
2. Higher Education Institutions shall have in place a clearly articulated criteria and procedures for students' mobility, which is documented and readily accessible. The criteria should include full financial responsibilities and benefits to the students.

Guidelines:

(A) Masters Degrees

- i. A candidate shall hold a Bachelor's degree with honours or a Postgraduate Diploma in a relevant field or equivalent from a recognized institution/university; OR
- ii. Candidates with Bachelor's degree with a pass may be considered if they have two years research experience with at least one publication in the relevant field; OR
- iii. For professional Master's Degree, candidates with Bachelor's degree with a pass may be considered if they have significant work experience relevant to the proposed area of study.

(B) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

- i. The admission qualification shall be a relevant Master's degree obtained through thesis/dissertation, and a preliminary research proposal or concept note; OR
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- ii. Masters equivalent with evidence of prior professional practice or learning that meets the higher education institution's criteria and guidelines for recognition of prior learning, for the purpose of meeting entry requirements such as the required amount of prior publications or other output specified for applicants for the award of PhD by published work.

1.2 Selection Process

Standards:

1. The selection for admission into a higher education institution's postgraduate programmes shall take into consideration:
 - (a) The Senate regulations and the institution's general entrance requirements;
 - (b) Legal requirements and the institution's policies and guidelines that relate to these requirements; and
 - (c) Faculty/School and/or Programme-specific entry requirements.
 2. With regard to research project proposals/concept note, the Faculty/School shall consider the:
 - (a) Degree of fit between the intended field of study and the Faculty/School's research activities;
 - (b) Likelihood that the proposed programme of research can be completed within the planned period and submitted for examination within the expected programme duration;
 - (d) Capacity of the Faculty/School to offer supervision for the proposed research project, with due regard to experience, track record and workload of the proposed main supervisor and the potential supervisory team;
 - (e) Availability of adequate physical and library resources to support the proposed project, and the availability of any specialised training that would be required;
 - (g) Demands of any sponsoring or collaborating body as regards the terms of the proposed project, including the funding available, any deadline for submission, or time-limited restrictions on the publication of results; and
 - (h) Ethics implications of the project and ethics approval status where applicable.
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Guidelines:

- i. The formal offer of admission may include:
 - (a) The commencement and end dates of the programme, and mode of study;
 - (c) The name(s) of the main supervisor and where identified, co-supervisors;
 - (d) The title of the research project, or expected area of research;
 - (e) Whether the offer is unconditional or conditional, and where conditional, the conditions of offer are stated; and
 - (f) Fee status, tuition-fee level, and any additional costs such as bench fees.
- ii. The responsibilities and entitlements of postgraduate students and the requirements of academic monitoring and progression, should be communicated to the students at the beginning of the study programme.

1.3 Research Proposal Development and Relevance

Standards:

1. The institution shall have guidelines and procedures for research proposal development, submission and criteria for approval of the same.
2. The student research proposal shall be developed in consultation with the supervisors in accordance with the institution's regulations in line with the national and regional research agenda.

Guidelines:

- i. Each postgraduate candidate shall be required to submit a research proposal or concept note to the Postgraduate Faculty/School Committee for interrogation, guidance and approval prior to undertaking the research work.
 - ii. The research proposal/concept note development shall be guided by the appointed supervisor(s) of the candidate in accordance with the regulations governing postgraduate training.
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CLUSTER 2: DURATION OF POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Principle: The duration of postgraduate studies varies with discipline and level and hence needs to be reasonable and appropriate.

Standards:

1. The minimum and maximum periods of study for postgraduate programmes for institutions of higher learning shall be stipulated in the Policy and Regulations governing Postgraduate training.
2. Students shall be expected to complete their postgraduate studies within their period of registered mode of study.

Guidelines:

- i. Students must register at the beginning of their studies and again at the beginning of every academic year.
- ii. A Higher Education Institution shall have criteria and procedures for withdrawal and extension of the study duration, where the circumstances for such withdrawal or extension are explicitly given.
- iii. Duration of candidature must be within the timeframe given in Table 1.0.

Table 1.0: Duration of Study for Postgraduate Programmes

Degree	Study Mode	Minimum Duration	Maximum Duration
Master's Degree By:			
Coursework and Research	Full-time	2 years	3 years
Coursework and Research	Part-time	3 years	4 years
Coursework and Project Report	Full-time	1 year	2 years
Coursework and Project Report	Part-time	1.5 years	3 years
Research only	Full-time	2 years	3 years
Research only	Part-time	3 years	4 years
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)			
PhD	Full-time	3 years	4 years
PhD	Part-time	4 years	5 years

CLUSTER 3: RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS TRAINING

Principle: Postgraduate studies entail acquisition of specialised skills for research and data analysis. This calls for skills and research capacity development for the trainees.

3.1 Postgraduate Students' Induction

Standard:

The postgraduate students shall be inducted on:

- (a) Institutional policies, rules and regulations concerning postgraduate training; and
- (b) Their roles and responsibilities during the study period.

Guidelines:

The postgraduate students' induction programme shall include:

- i. An introduction to the Faculty/School's portfolio research activities, infrastructure and facilities;
- ii. Relevant health and safety requirements;
- iii. Information on supervision and the monitoring of academic progress;
- iv. The Institutional arrangements for communication and feedback with students;
- vi. Institutional, Faculty/School's policy for researcher development and skills training, and opportunities available including research seminars and support for workshops and conferences.

3.2 Development of the Research Student

Standards:

1. A Higher Education Institution shall provide postgraduate students with generic research skills, professional and transferable skills and career development opportunities.
 2. Institutions shall also provide the necessary facilities and equipment, and e-learning resources and platform.
 3. Schools/Faculties shall be responsible, through the supervision process, for delivering and procuring the research skills, methods and techniques
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that are specific to their disciplines and research context, and for the identification of the development needs of students under their postgraduate programmes.

Guidelines:

- i. Institutions shall provide courses for research development and training skills which shall include:
 - (a) Epistemology which is study of knowledge and how it relates to justification, belief and truth;
 - (b) Research Methodology involving techniques of research proposal development and implementation, and data analysis;
 - (c) Research ethics involving issues that may affect safety of research subjects with regard to physical, social, political and legal aspects;
 - (d) Scholarly writing and publications involving manuscript and article preparation and publication requirements including authorship; and
 - (e) Use of e-resources and e-platforms in scholarly work.
 - iii. Schools/Faculties shall make the training and development requirements clear at the beginning of the postgraduate programme as part of their School/Faculty-based induction. The information shall be publicly disseminated to the students and supervisors.
 - v. As part of the skills training, students shall be required to participate in specified workshops, seminars, conferences and other activities, and/or engagement with training at a specified level.
 - vii. As part of their overall development, postgraduate students may seek teaching opportunities to work as tutors or demonstrators, to co-supervise undergraduate projects, and assess students' work.
 - ix. A higher Education Institution shall outline its principles in relation to the recruitment, selection, training, monitoring and remuneration of postgraduate students engaged in teaching activities.
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3.3 Mentorship

Standard:

A higher education institution shall put in place guidelines for mentorship and a clearly designed mentorship programme to be undertaken by all postgraduate students. The mentorship programme shall include a series of career development (non-academic) resources designed to:

- (a) Strengthen research skills;
- (b) Strengthen leadership skills; and
- (c) Enhance visibility and networking.

Guidelines:

- i. Postgraduate students shall be required to attend specific elements of the researcher development programme appropriate to their specific postgraduate programme in consultation with their supervisor(s).
- iii. Faculties/Schools shall identify suitable mentors at the level of Senior Lecturers and above holding PhDs, who shall induct postgraduate research students in their jurisdiction in the mentorship programme.



CLUSTER 4: POLICIES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT AND MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Principle: Postgraduate studies are multidisciplinary and more often than not students belong to departments. For effective management of the postgraduate studies it is necessary to put in place well coordinated structures, rules, regulations and code of conduct for postgraduate training.

4.1 Rules, Regulations and Code of Conduct for Postgraduate Training

Standards:

1. Higher Education Institutions shall have regulations for postgraduate degree programmes that are clear and readily available to students and staff. Where appropriate, the regulations will be supplemented by similarly accessible, subject-specific guidelines at the level of the Faculty, School or Department.
2. Higher Education Institutions shall develop, implement and keep under review a code or codes of practice applicable across the institution. The code(s) shall be readily available to all students and staff involved in postgraduate programmes.
3. Higher Education Institutions shall have in place effective arrangements to maintain appropriate academic standards and enhance the quality of postgraduate programmes.
4. Higher Education Institutions shall monitor the success of their postgraduate programmes against appropriate institutional, national, regional and international indicators and targets.

Guidelines:

- i. Higher Education Institutional regulations will cover:
 - (a) Requirements for admission to the programmes;
 - (b) Procedures for considering claims for research experience and publications that is prior experiential learning, for admission;
 - (c) The academic and procedural requirements for particular postgraduate degree awards;
 - (d) The requirements for progression, including monitoring and review arrangements for the award and the minimum and maximum periods within which the programme may be completed;
 - (e) Assessment methods, requirements and procedures, including the criteria for achieving the award;
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- (f) The institution's procedures for dealing with research misconduct, including plagiarism; and
- (g) Complaints and appeals process.
- ii. The regulations will be reviewed regularly and updated from time to time, taking into account new developments and innovations.
- iii. The code(s) of practice for postgraduate programmes shall be part of the institutional quality assurance mechanisms for assuring the quality and maintaining academic standards of the programmes. Students shall be informed as early as possible, and not later than the induction period, about the code of practice in place.
- iv. Higher Education Institutions shall annually undertake a monitoring process on their postgraduate programmes. The process may include:
 - (a) Submission and completion times and rates;
 - (b) Pass, referral and fail rates;
 - (c) Withdrawal rates;
 - (d) The number of appeals and complaints, the reasons for them, and how many are upheld;
 - (e) Analysis of comments from examiners;
 - (f) Academic staff recruitment profiles;
 - (g) Feedback from research students, employers, sponsors and other external funders; and
 - (h) Information on employment destinations and career paths of former students.

4.2 Management of Postgraduate Studies

Standards:

1. A higher education institution shall have a Board of Postgraduate Studies (BPS) that oversees the work of Faculties/Schools, Departments/Institutes, and institutional committees with responsibilities for postgraduate training.
2. Each higher education institution shall appoint a Dean/Director of postgraduate studies who shall be the Chairperson of BPS, and be responsible for coordinating and supporting the development and implementation of strategies and policies on postgraduate training.
3. Each Faculty/School shall have a Postgraduate Studies Committee (PSC) whose chairperson shall be the Dean of the Faculty/School. The Committee shall manage and support all postgraduate students registered in the Faculty/School in accordance with the higher education institution's regulations for postgraduate training.

Guidelines:

- i. The BPS shall be responsible for postgraduate student development within the institution as a whole, and also have a coordinating role on:
 - (a) Development and implementation of policies, and regulations on postgraduate matters;
 - (b) The admission process and award of scholarships that come through the institution;
 - (c) Provision of facilities for postgraduates;
 - (d) Monitoring of academic progress of postgraduate students;
 - (e) Appointment of supervisors and examiners;
 - (f) Facilitating Viva Voce workshops on regular basis; and
 - (g) Overseeing the administrative arrangements for viva voce examinations.
- ii. The BPS Dean/Director works in consultation with the PSCs.



CLUSTER 5: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Principle: Competent and adequate human resource and appropriate infrastructural facilities are a pre-requisit for the provision of high quality postgraduate studies.

5.1 Institutional Infrastructural Capacity

Standards:

1. The institution shall only accept postgraduate students into an environment that provides support for doing and learning about research, and where high quality research is occurring.
2. The institution provides appropriate and adequate facilities, equipment and resources required to support an advanced level of creative and independent scholarship including appropriate training in the process of research undertaking.
3. The institution has in place policies, rules and regulations for using research facilities or limiting access in any way, that are clearly indicated to students on admission to specific postgraduate programme.

Guidelines:

- i. The available facilities and equipment shall be up-to-date, relevant and adequate for the support of a given programme.
 - ii. The type of facilities and equipment required for any given programme shall be dictated by the nature of the programme.
 - iii. Memoranda of Agreements shall be put in place for facilities and equipment sourced from other institutions for the support of the programme.
 - iv. The institution shall provide adequate and accessible library resources relevant to the specific programme, including appropriate approved use of inter-library loans system, and relevant information technology resources including e-resources, intra and internet, and where appropriate an E-learning platform for supporting communication, research and skills training.
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5.2 Human Resource

Standard:

The academic staff in the teaching-learning role are adequate and qualified, compliant with the nature of the programme and the number of students.

Guidelines:

- i. The academic staff for the programme possess the academic qualifications required for the degree programme and accredit sufficient experience and teaching, and research skills. The academic staff for teaching and supervision for:
 - (a) Masters programmes: shall have relevant doctoral degree, with at least three years teaching experience and evidence of research inclination through individual research, supervision and involvement in peer reviewed publications; and
 - (b) Doctorate programmes: shall have relevant doctorate degree with at least five years teaching experience and evidence of research inclination through individual research, supervision and involvement in peer reviewed publications.
 - ii. The academic staff are sufficient and have the necessary dedication to attend to their functions and satisfy students' needs.
 - iii. The academic staff keep abreast to current issues and development in their field of expertise to enhance their competencies and ensure an adequate teaching-learning process.
 - iv. The Higher Education Institution implements her policies on recruitment, monitoring and staff development for the improvement of the teaching and research qualifications of the academic staff.
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CLUSTER 6: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Principle: Quality assurance and quality enhancement systems in postgraduate studies improve quality of research and promote transparency and accountability in recruitment, supervision, assessment, awarding the degree and career development.

Standard:

The institution supports an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) formally established and in force, effectively guaranteeing continuous improvement to the programmes.

Guidelines:

- i. The IQAS implemented and revised periodically guarantees the continuous gathering and analysis of relevant information and results to ensure efficient programme management, with respect to the intended learning outcomes and level of satisfaction among stakeholders.
 - ii. The IQAS facilitates the processes of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the programmes, and guarantees continuous improvement on the basis of analyses of objectives and verifiable data.
 - iii. The implementation of IQAS enables procedures that facilitate the evaluation and quality enhancement in the teaching-learning process.
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CLUSTER 7: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Principle: Research in higher education institutions shall be governed and managed through best practices, in line with national and international legal requirements pertaining to intellectual property rights, ethics and integrity.

Standards:

1. Higher Education Institutions have in place policies, practices and requirements with respect to intellectual property rights (IPR) and confidentiality of information that are made clear to applicants and to any third party. The policies, practices and requirements are aligned to the National IPR policies and requirements of National Research Councils, other funding and professional bodies.
2. Higher Education Institutions are committed to ensuring that all research activity conducted by staff and students adheres to published guidelines on good practice including ethical issues, confidentiality and plagiarism, in accordance with established national guidelines.

Guidelines:

- i. The institution shall have written rules and agreements for the assumption of responsibility for protecting, developing and/or exploiting IPR generated from research work by its staff and students, including patenting, licensing and marketing of the research results.
 - ii. At the beginning of each academic session introductory training on research ethics will be provided to all new postgraduate students, where attendance is compulsory to ensure all students are familiar with the generic issues involved.
 - iii. Departments/Institutes will assess the ethical implications of student research projects at the beginning of the programme of study and review them regularly as part of their monitoring procedures, in accordance with the national requirements.
 - iv. Written work, papers and the thesis/dissertation submitted by students shall be subjected to a plagiarism test.
 - v. Patent registrations shall be guided by university policy and the laws of the host country through the relevant institute(s).
 - vi. Innovations shall be propelled by the university by providing thematic areas aligned to the country's research policy, ensuring equal, fair and appropriate graduate funding, and facilitating dissemination of research outcomes both locally and internationally.
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CLUSTER 8: SUPERVISION

Principle: Supervision is crucial for mentorship and timely completion of postgraduate studies. Arrangement for supervision therefore requires transparency and shared responsibility between the candidate, supervisors and the institution.

8.1 Appointment of Supervisors

Standards:

1. Higher education institution shall have criteria for the appointment of supervisors which should be made public.
 2. Institutions shall appoint supervisors who have appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support, encourage and monitor postgraduate students effectively.
 3. Each student shall have a minimum of one main supervisor, who shall normally be part of a supervisory team and one clearly identified point of contact for the student.
 4. The institution shall monitor the performance of supervisors
 5. Normally the main supervisor shall have:
 - (a) A PhD or appropriate professional expertise and be a full-time permanent member of the academic staff at the institution, with at least four publications in the relevant area of research study;
 - (b) Already been part of a supervisory team that has seen the successful completion of at least one relevant postgraduate degree; and
 - (c) Relevant and recent research expertise in the proposed topic area of the study.
 6. The co-supervisor(s) shall normally:
 - (a) Have a PhD or appropriate professional expertise and be active in research/development in the broadly defined discipline or field of study; and
 - (b) Be a full-time permanent member of the academic staff at the institution, or from a collaborating institution or organization.
 7. Higher Education Institutions shall ensure that the responsibilities of all postgraduate student supervisors are clearly communicated, through written guidance, to supervisors and students.
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8. Institutions shall ensure that the quality of supervision is not put at risk as a result of an excessive workload assigned to individual supervisors.

Guidelines:

- i. The institution ensures that students are easily able to contact their supervisors for advice and guidance throughout their study programme to facilitate the students' success.
- ii. The supervisory team may include: other supervisors and research staff in the subject, a departmental adviser to postgraduate students, a faculty postgraduate tutor, and / or other individuals in similar roles.
- iii. At least one member of a student's advisory team shall be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s), ensuring that the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up-to-date subject knowledge and research developments.
- iv. Institutions develop their own staff guidance on the minimum frequency of contact advisable between postgraduate students and their supervisors, as well as procedures for dealing with extensions and suspensions of study.
- v. Institutions in appointing supervisors shall take cognizance and be guided by the overall workload of the individual, including teaching, research, administration and other responsibilities such as external examining duties and other professional commitments.

8.2 Supervisor Training

Standards:

1. Supervisors shall be trained and inducted on
 - (a) Supervisory skills; and
 - (b) Regulatory, Quality systems and Ethics
2. Higher education institutions shall put in place an induction programme to be undertaken by all supervisors at the beginning of each academic year.

Guidelines:

Supervisor training may specifically focus on key areas including:

- i. Feasibility, planning, execution and progress of the student's programme of research;
 - ii. Probity and conduct of postgraduate research;
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- iii. Periodically retraining or retooling the technical mastery of soft skills;
- iv. Institutional policies, rules and regulations Regulatory and quality assurance requirements for postgraduate research programme undertaking;
- v. Generic learning outcomes for Masters and PhD postgraduate programmes;
- vi. Effective monitoring and evaluation of research projects;
- vii. Research ethics and intellectual property rights in research;
- viii. Supervisor – supervisee relationship and bonding; and
- ix. Conflict resolution at the workplace.

8.3 Responsibilities of Supervisors

Standards:

Before agreeing to supervise a postgraduate student, supervisors shall satisfy themselves that:

1. They have the necessary knowledge and expertise to supervise the project which the student wishes to undertake.
2. The project is appropriate for the level of degree and can reasonably be undertaken with the resources available and within the required time-scale.
3. They are confident, as far as is possible, that the student is capable of undertaking the project successfully.
4. The number of students supervised at any one given time shall be dictated by the teaching load, research, administrative duties and extension services to the community, and collaborative/joint research ventures, in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations of the institution and Regulatory Agency

Guidelines:

- i. All supervisors shall provide appropriate technical advice and guidance, to enable their students to choose and embark on appropriate research theme, develop an appropriate, coherent and relevant research proposal.
 - ii. Supervisors shall be sensitive to the diverse needs of individual students and the support required in different circumstances.
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- iii. Supervisors shall support and monitor the student's progress through a research plan, a planned schedule of meetings and formal contacts, avoiding wastage of time and resources to ensure timely reporting of student progress till completion with acceptable standards for the degree to be awarded.
- iv. Supervisors shall propose a temporary supervisor to the Head of Department in case of his/her unavailability for a period of two consecutive months or more.
- v. Supervisors shall ensure student work is free from plagiarism. Students and supervisors are encouraged to use anti-plagiarism software to check their work.
- vi. Supervisors shall ensure that staff -student relations remain professional and should there arise complaints of any form of corrupt deals, harassment including sexual, ethnic discrimination, bullying or any other, the supervision shall be terminated.
- vii. Supervisors shall recommend potential external examiners for thesis/ dissertation to the Head of Department;
- viii. Supervisors shall help in the revision of the thesis/dissertation as recommended by the examiners committee and *viva voce* panel and finally certify the error free version for submission.

8.4 Responsibilities of Postgraduate Student (Supervisee)

Standard:

The successful completion in postgraduate studies remains the onus of the candidate.

Guidelines:

The responsibilities of postgraduate students shall include to:

- i. Act as a responsible member of the institution's academic community in a professional, mature manner.
 - ii. Adhere to the university's rules and regulation in terms of health and safety, intellectual property rights, unfair practice and ethical research guidelines.
 - iii. Attend coursework, lectures, examinations and develop concept note, or research proposal
 - iv. Prepare research reports, thesis/dissertation, manuscripts and publications and provide progress reports regularly to the supervisor and graduate school
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- v. Develop, in consultation with the supervisor, an agreed work schedule.
- vi. Identify own training and developmental needs, and communicate these to the supervisor, and ensuring they meet the institution's requirements for training and skills development.
- vii. Communicate research findings as appropriate to others in the academic community, as appropriate both orally and in writing in accordance with the rules and expectations of the programme.
- viii. Present the ultimate research findings before panel of examiners to qualify for degree award

8.5. Monitoring and Feedback Mechanisms

Standards:

1. A higher education institution shall have documented mechanisms that are clearly spelt out for monitoring and supporting student progress, and where appropriate, respond to feedback from all concerned with postgraduate programmes.
2. A higher education institution shall provide guidance to students, supervisors and others involved in progress monitoring and review process about the importance of keeping appropriate records of the outcomes of meetings and related activities.
3. The institution shall make arrangements for feedback to be considered openly and constructively and for the results to be communicated appropriately.

Guidelines:

- i. Both student and supervisor(s) at the beginning of the programme, shall agree in writing on:
 - (a) The minimum frequency of scheduled meetings between student and supervisor or supervisory team, and the purpose of such meetings.
 - (b) Guidance on the nature and style of the student/supervisor interaction, including discussions about academic and personal progress.
- ii. Both student and supervisor(s) shall keep copies of records of supervisory meetings.
- iii. A periodic progress report shall be completed and signed by the

student and submitted to the Chairman of the PSC through the main Supervisor with an appropriate informed recommendation for decision on the student's performance.

- iv. The BPS shall have the mandate of reviewing the recommendations of the supervisors in consultation with the PSCs, based on Faculty/School's progression criteria and agreed targets of the student.
 - v. A higher education institution will establish and operate feedback procedures that are as representative as possible of the views of all stakeholders.
 - vi. Feedback mechanisms shall include those for:
 - (a) Current postgraduate students;
 - (b) Supervisors, review panels and internal examiners;
 - (c) Research administrators; and
 - (d) External parties, including external examiners, sponsors, collaborating organizations, employers and alumni.
 - vii. Feedback mechanisms shall enable students to provide confidential views when they deem it necessary.
 - viii. Information on action taken in response to feedback shall be made easily and availed promptly to the parties concerned.
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CLUSTER 9: ASSESSMENT AND POSTGRADUATE DEGREE AWARDS

Principle: Assessment of postgraduate studies entails monitoring the progress made towards an achievement of the requisite skills and competencies and award of the degree. The process therefore has to be transparent, progressive and interactive.

9.1 Examination Rules and Regulations

Standards:

1. A higher education institution shall put in place criteria and procedures for assessing postgraduate degrees that enable it to define its academic standards and the achievements of its graduates.
2. The criteria and assessment used procedures to assess postgraduate degrees shall be communicated clearly to postgraduate students, supervisors and examiners.
3. Postgraduate degrees final assessment procedures shall be clear and operated rigorously, fairly, and consistently. They shall include input from an external examiner and be carried out within three months upon submission of the final thesis/ dissertation.

Guidelines:

- i. A candidate shall be examined on the basis of an appropriate body of work and an oral examination (*Viva Voce*).
 - ii. At least two examiners shall be appointed for purpose of assessment, one of whom is external to the higher education institution.
 - iii. None of the supervisors of the candidate shall be appointed as an examiner.
 - iv. Examiners shall be required to submit separate independent written reports before the viva and a joint report after it.
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9.2 Assessment of Thesis/Dissertation/Research Report

Standard:

A thesis, dissertation, or research project report shall be an original research document submitted in support of candidature for a given postgraduate degree or professional qualification presenting the author's research and findings.

Guidelines:

- i. A higher Education Institution shall clearly define the terms thesis, dissertation and research project report as is applicable to it.
- ii. A student's thesis/dissertation/research project report shall be supervised by at least one supervisor for masters students and at least two supervisors for doctorate students who shall have appropriate qualifications in the subject area in focus and its methodology.
- iii. The requirements of the thesis dissertation research project report of a postgraduate programme shall be stipulated and include, but not limited to, the language, word length and format.
- iv. The thesis/dissertation/research project report shall be presented in sections that represent various components that include but are not limited to; the abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussions, conclusions, references and appendices.
- v. The thesis/dissertation shall be internally and externally examined. Masters by research report may be externally examined. The final thesis/dissertation/research project report shall be submitted in line with the Postgraduate regulations of the institution.
- vi. Each Institution shall institute mechanisms to curb plagiarism in all scholarly writings, which shall include publications, thesis dissertation research project report.
- vii. An oral presentation (*Viva Voce*) of the thesis and dissertation shall be made to a panel of examiners as per the institution's regulations on Postgraduate training.

9.3 Appointment of Examiners

Standards:

1. Higher Education Institutions shall have explicit policy and regulations governing the nomination, appointment and termination of external examiners for assessment of theses and dissertations.
 2. Each candidate undertaking research shall be examined by at least two examiners, of whom at least one must be an external examiner.
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Guidelines:

- i. All examiners shall normally hold a PhD and have been engaged in appropriate research or equivalent scholarly activity for a number of years as evidenced by their submitted Curriculum Vitae.
- ii. An external examiner shall not be from an industry or other organization that has an involvement, whether direct or indirect, with the student's research.
- iii. The recommendation for the appointment of examiners shall be initiated by the Postgraduate Committee of the Department/Faculty/School and approved by the Director of the Institutional Board of Postgraduate Studies.

9.4 Departmental Postgraduate Committee**Standard:**

Higher Education Institutions shall have explicit policy and regulations governing the nomination, appointment of Postgraduate Committee.

Guidelines:

- i. The Chairman/Head of the Department shall appoint a Postgraduate Committee composed of minimum of four faculty members.
- ii. The Postgraduate committee shall and not be limited to:
 - (a) Scrutinize applications for admission in consultation with the national accreditation bodies and recommend accordingly;
 - (b) Approve the topic and title of the students' research projects;
 - (c) Receive reports from the supervisor and advise the Director of the Postgraduate School;
 - (d) Evaluate the thesis and determine if the candidate is ready to take an oral examination (*viva voce*); and
 - (e) Recommend students for graduation.

9.5 Oral Examinations (Viva Voce)**Standards:**

1. The institution shall have regulations, guidelines and procedures that shall be publicised, governing the administration of oral examinations.
 2. The members of the examining board shall consist of:
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- (a) The Chairperson, who is the Dean of the Faculty/School or his/her appointee where the Dean is a supervisor;
 - (b) The internal and external examiners; and
 - (c) The supervisor(s), who shall be in attendance.
3. The written thesis/dissertation shall be examined orally, and also based on the submitted independent written reports of the examiners, forming an integral part of the examination for postgraduate degree award.
4. The examiners' reports are confidential to the Postgraduate Studies Committee and shall not normally be disclosed to the candidate or supervisor (s) prior to the defense.
5. The examining board shall produce a joint report and determine whether the thesis/dissertation meets the institution's criteria for the award of the degree. The decision is relayed to the candidate informally immediately after the viva, and an interim report on the results provided.
6. The institution shall put in place appropriate procedures for complaints and appeals.

Guidelines:

The joint examiners' recommendations may be as follows, that:

- i. The candidate be awarded the degree;
 - ii. The candidate be awarded the degree, subject to the specified minor (typographical) corrections being completed to the satisfaction of the internal examiner. A report demonstrating that the particular changes were satisfactory, must be submitted to the Director Postgraduate Studies by the internal examiner;
 - iii. The candidate be awarded the degree, subject to corrections being completed to the satisfaction of the internal examiner, and submission done within three months of the viva. A report demonstrating that the particular changes were satisfactory, must be submitted to the Director Postgraduate Studies by the internal examiner;
 - iv. The candidate be requested to re-submit specifying the areas requiring attention and suggested time limit. Submission done within 9 months for a PhD and 6 months for a Master's degree;
 - v. The re-submitted thesis/dissertation be re-examined and the candidate be subjected to further oral examination; and
 - vi. No degree award be granted, the candidate automatically fails.
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CLUSTER 10: INTERNATIONALISATION

Principle: The East African Region was declared a Common Higher Education Area¹ to facilitate student, staff mobility within the region. In addition postgraduate studies require international experience through collaboration, international programmes, linkages and partnerships and joint research ventures. Higher education institutions shall develop strategies and policies to guide the process.

10.1 Student Workload

Standard:

In estimating students' workload, institutions must consider the total time needed by students in order to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

Guideline:

The learning activities may vary from institution to institution and subject areas. An institution of higher learning shall therefore define its credit in accordance with the activities aligned to achieve the programme's learning outcomes and thereafter determine the student workload guided by the EAQFHE (2015)². This is given as:

- (a) Modules with lectures only shall have one credit equivalent to fifteen contact hours;
- (b) Modules with laboratory work only shall have one credit equivalent to forty five hours of laboratory work; and
- (c) Modules combining lectures and laboratory work shall have one credit being equivalent to ten hours of lectures and fifteen hours of laboratory work.

10.2 Validity of Credits

Standards:

1. Credits to be transferred from one institution to another shall be time bound in accordance with the existing qualifications framework.
2. The institution granting an award shall own at least 60% of the total core credits required for graduation.

Guidelines:

- i. Credit transfer shall apply to formal study for a given programme completed within the last five years.
- ii. Longer validity period of credits for transfer may be considered for specific qualifications on a case by case basis upon application.

1 EAC, 2017. Declaration by Heads of State of the East African Community Partner States on the Transformation of the East African Community into a Common Higher Education Area

2 IUCEA, 2015. East African Qualifications Framework For Higher Education, pp88

10.3 Credit Accumulation and Transfer

Standard:

Accumulation and transfer shall be accepted for purposes of student mobility and recognition of prior learning.

Guidelines:

- i. Credit transfers shall only be accepted from accredited Higher Education Institutions and programmes in line with existing qualifications frameworks.
- ii. Credit transfer of a maximum of 40% of the total credit hours of the core courses for similar programmes at the same level may be permitted.

10.4 Minimum Credits for Degree Award

Standards:

1. Each Higher Education Institution shall define and align the programme credits with the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE), given as 10 notional hours of learning time for the achievement of the programme's specific learning outcomes.
2. The minimum number of credits required for award of postgraduate programmes in each institution shall be aligned to the EAQFHE.
3. A higher education institution shall determine its position on the principles which it will accept credit transfer, including the proportion and inclusion in the awarding of the degree.
4. The awarding of credits for study programmes are entirely the responsibility of the higher education institutions.

Guidelines:

- i. A higher education institution should demonstrate that each of its qualification is allocated to the appropriate level in the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE, 2015).
- ii. Based on the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, the minimum credits for award of:
 - (a) Master's degree shall be 180 credit hours; and
 - (b) Doctorate (PhD) shall be 540 credit hours.

CLUSTER 11: RESEARCH FINDINGS' DISSEMINATION AND THESIS/DISSERTATION REPOSITORY

Principle: Higher education institutions shall facilitate postgraduate students to participate in fora for research findings dissemination with stakeholders and scientific community, such as workshops, conferences, and colloquia. The students shall be required to publish their findings in peer review journals, and the final product of their postgraduate studies shall be deposited for public consumption in repositories.

11.1 Research Findings' Dissemination

Standards:

1. Higher Education institutions shall put in place regulations governing dissemination of research findings
2. The institutions shall have guidelines and time frames for the postgraduate students' participation in public colloquium and seminars
3. Institutions shall facilitate the participation of postgraduate students in national, regional and international conferences related to their areas of study or research development skills.
4. The institutions are obliged to share relevant research outcomes with the stakeholders and the scientific community.
5. Institutions shall ensure that her postgraduate researchers engage the code of good practice when publishing their research findings.
6. To fulfill the requirements for the award of a postgraduate degree, in addition to preparing a thesis/dissertation, a candidate shall publish peer reviewed papers in refereed journals that are internationally recognized.

Guidelines:

- i. Supervisors shall assist students to identify and plan for conferences, workshops, scientific colloquia and seminars at least once per year to share their research findings.
- ii. Institutions of higher learning shall facilitate postgraduate students in participation and presentation of their research findings in conferences, workshops and scientific colloquium.
- iii. Postgraduate students shall be required to publish in internationally recognized journals in consultation with their supervisors in the course of their studies, where:

- (a) Masters students shall publish at least one paper; and
 - (b) Doctorate students shall publish at least two papers.
- iv. Institutions shall organise community forums, meetings to share the research findings where appropriate and according to the proposal agreement, with outside stakeholders.

11.2 Thesis/Dissertation Repository

Standards:

1. Institutions of higher learning shall develop rules and regulations for access of its repository materials in line with national research, innovation, property rights and ethic policies.
2. Institutions of higher learning shall have a thesis/dissertation repository centre either a section library for hard copy or e-theses/dissertation repository where soft copy can be available to the public in accordance to the institutions rules and regulations.
3. Upon successful completion by a postgraduate student, the department/institute responsible shall ensure that the fully corrected thesis/dissertation presented in accordance with the institution's rules and regulations, either an electronic copy or hard copy, whichever is deemed appropriate shall be sent for repository to the:
 - (a) Institutional library; and
 - (b) Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

Guidelines:

- i. Postgraduate students are expected to deposit their dissertation and thesis in the repository upon completion of their studies, subject to the institutional guidelines and national policies on innovations, patents and property rights.
- ii. IUCEA shall develop guidelines for the management and utilisation of the repository in line with Partner States' policies on innovation, patent and property rights.

CLUSTER 12: COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Principle: Higher Education Institutions shall have in place conflict resolution procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals.

Standards:

1. The procedures for complaints and appeals shall be fair, clear to all, robust and consistently applied. The acceptable grounds for complaints and appeals are clearly defined, and easily accessible.
2. Academic appeals and complaints procedures are conducted in a timely and fair manner in accordance to the institution's rules and regulations.
3. The institution ensures that appropriate action is taken following an appeal or complaint.
4. The institution monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of their appeals and complaints procedures, and reflects on the outcomes of those procedures for enhancement purposes.

Guidelines:

- i. Higher Education Institutions have separate procedures for investigating and considering complaints, appeals and disciplinary action.
 - ii. Institutions ensure that suitable briefing and support is provided for all staff and students involved in handling or supporting complaints and appeals.
 - iii. Complaints and appeals are settled through School/Faculty/College and Board of Postgraduate Studies procedures.
 - iv. In exceptional circumstances, appeals may proceed to the University Senate, Council and further to the National Commission/Council for Higher Education in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations handling higher education.
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CLUSTER 13: WITHHOLDING OR REVOCATION OF A DEGREE

Principle: Higher education institutions shall put in place clear, fair and transparent rules, regulations and procedures governing of the withholding/revocation of a degree

Standard:

A Higher Education Institution has the authority to withhold or revoke a degree in accordance to clearly stipulated policies, rules and regulations that are publicly disseminated.

Guidelines:

An institution may withhold a degree for:

- (a) Academic reasons such as failing grades or academic dishonesty;
 - (b) Non-academic reasons such as failure to pay tuition or other stipulated fees; and
 - (c) Social misconduct that the institution disapproves.
- i. An institution may revoke a degree in the event that a case is brought after graduation and there is substantial evidence, for actions that occurred before graduation but were unknown at the time that:
- (a) The holder of the degree plagiarized his/her thesis or dissertation; and
 - (b) The holder of the degree was convicted of grievous criminal acts such as fraud or murder.







Inter-University Council for East Africa

Plot 4 Nile Avenue, EADB Building, 3rd Floor

P.O.Box 7110, Kampala, Uganda,

Tel: +256 414 256 251/2 Fax: +256 414 342 007,

Email: info@iucea.org Website: www.iucea.org