INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA (IUCEA)

STUDENTS MOBILITY POLICY IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

December 2015
INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA
(IUCEA)

STUDENTS MOBILITY POLICY
IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

December 2015

IUCEA Secretariat
Plot M833, Kigobe Road,
Kyambogo
P.O. Box 7110, Kampala
Uganda
Tel: +256-414-256251/2
E-mail: info@iueca.org
Website: www.iueca.org
Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

STUDENTS MOBILITY POLICY

IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

December 2015
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission from the copyright holders.

December 2015
Preface

The Treaty for the Establishment of EAC clearly stipulate the commitment of the Partner States to harmonize their education and training systems in order to provide for, among others, concerted efforts in the development of human resources, and mobility of people, labour, and services. In that regard, the coming into force of the Protocol for the Establishment of the EAC Common Market in July 2010, required IUCEA to develop systems that, among others, would enhance students mobility and labour across the Partner States, hence transform the EAC region into a common higher education area.

IUCEA embarked on the development of the students’ mobility policy to contribute to the implementation of the Common Market Protocol which provides for mobility of Human Resource and goods across the Community. An IUCEA led team of experts from the EAC Partner States developed a draft Students Mobility Policy which was presented to the 2nd Meeting of the Scholarship, Students and Staff Mobility Committee held on 18th March 2015 in Dar es Salaam. The team held a couple of meetings and developed a draft Policy which was considered by the Scholarship, Students and Staff Mobility Committee on 27th September 2015 and approved by the Executive Committee on 6th October 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda.

It is expected that this policy will provide a framework for the promotion of students’ mobility amongst the Partner States, as a way of facilitating regional integration as envisioned in the Common Market Protocol.

I wish to express appreciation to the; Technical Team from all EAC Partner States that developed the policy framework, the Scholarship, Students and Staff Mobility Committee and the Executive Committee for their contribution towards the completion of this Policy Framework.

Prof. Alexandre Lyambabaje
December 2015

Executive Secretary, IUCEA

Kampala,

Page 4

Students Mobility Policy

December 2015
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is a strategic institution of the East Africa Community (EAC) responsible for coordinating development of higher education and research in the region. After having been recognized as one of the surviving institutions of the former EAC (1967 – 1977), IUCEA has assumed a broader role as a building block for the achievement of sustainable socio-economic development and regional integration of the EAC through higher education. In that regard, the current mission of IUCEA focuses on development of strong higher education systems to transform the East Africa Community into a Common Higher Education Area. The goal of IUCEA is to respond to the expectations of the EAC Partner States in terms of the role of higher education institutions in producing high-level human resources as well as increased productivity through research and innovation.

The Treaty for the Establishment of EAC clearly stipulate the commitment of the Partner States to harmonize their education and training systems in order to provide for, among others, concerted efforts in the development of human resources, and mobility of people, labour, and services. In that regard, the coming into force of the Protocol for the Establishment of the EAC Common Market in July 2010, required IUCEA to develop systems that, among others, would enhance students mobility and labour across the partner states, and hence transform the EAC region into a common higher education area.

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON STUDENTS MOBILITY IN EAST AFRICA

Students Mobility in East Africa was first facilitated in the form of an exchange programme between Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda through the University of East Africa established in 1963 as a regional university for the three countries, each of which hosted a constituent college of the university, where students from any of the three countries could be enrolled. In 1970, the University of East Africa was dissolved after each of the three countries had established its own university: Makerere University in Uganda, University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and University of Nairobi in Kenya. In order to promote collaboration and networking of the three universities including coordination of exchange of students and staff, the Inter-University Committee (IUC) was established.
under the auspices of the former EAC established in 1967. The collapse of the former EAC in 1977 interrupted the student exchange programme. However, the programme was resumed in 1981 after the establishment of IUCEA in 1980.

All the three countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda participated in the student exchange programme until 1986, when Kenya opted out after adopting a secondary school education system different from the one in the other two countries. Tanzania and Uganda continued with the student exchange programme, which involved their public universities through reciprocal financing of the students by each government without transfer of funds. Instead, the Government of the host country paid tuition fees, vacation supplements, examination fees, caution money, students’ union fees and other financial provisions payable to national students. IUCEA was only involved in planning and convening meetings to select students, while the governments managed the program through the receiving universities.

In 2004 Tanzania introduced a higher education students’ loan scheme, which replaced the system of providing grants to students. This made it difficult to operationalize the student exchange programme, as the loan scheme could not be extended to students from other countries. Therefore, development the two Governments of Tanzania and Uganda decided to suspend the programme with effect from the academic year 2010/2011 until when appropriate arrangements to sustain the programme would be established.

When private universities started to operate in EAC Partner States, students from all the Partner States and beyond moved freely to join these universities. On the other hand, public universities that had introduced private sponsorship schemes did similarly admit students from other Partner States but in many cases, charged them higher fees than nationals. These developments have had a significant bearing on students mobility in the region in terms of access and affordability as well as its contribution to the Common Market Protocol in terms of free movement of people and labour. IUCEA embarked on the process to establish a regional policy framework that will guide students’ mobility among higher education institutions, thereby facilitating EAC to operate as a common higher education area.
3.0 RATIONALE FOR STUDENTS MOBILITY POLICY

According to Section 6(i) and (1) of the IUCEA Act 2009, IUCEA is mandated to encourage the exchange of students and staff between higher education institutions in EAC. This requires IUCEA to establish a mechanism that will promote students mobility amongst the Partner States, as a way of facilitating regional integration as envisioned in the Common Market Protocol. Therefore, this policy provides a framework for the establishment of such a mechanism.

4.0 SCOPE

The Students Mobility Policy is intended to guide operationalization of students’ mobility among the EAC Partner States targeting providers and students joining as well as those already pursuing their studies in both public and private higher education institutions for both undergraduates and post graduates.

5.0 DEFINITION

In the context of this Policy, Students Mobility shall refer to the movement of students across boarders among the EAC Partner States for the purpose of pursuing studies in higher education institutions.

5.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of this policy is to enhance students’ mobility among the EAC Partner States as a way of promoting inter-university cooperation and regional integration, thereby facilitating EAC to operate as a Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA).

5.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the policy are as follows:

(a) To enhance academic benefits among participating students and institutions through experiences from inter-institutional and inter-state exchange

(b) To enhance institutional cooperation in attracting students across EAC

(c) To build linkages and collaboration among students and graduates with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds
6.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

6.1 Selection Criteria for Students

Background
There are different criteria applicable in the selection of students from one Partner State to join higher education studies in other Partner States. Therefore, this policy shall take cognizance of the differences.

Objective
To ensure that the selection of students involved in students’ mobility in higher education studies in EAC is guided by agreed criteria and guidelines.

Policy Statements
For effective implementation of this policy:
(a) IUCEA shall coordinate the development of regional criteria and guidelines for selection of students to join higher education studies in the Partner States that shall indicate mechanisms to facilitate students’ mobility.
(b) IUCEA together with regulatory bodies/agencies, Higher Education Institutions and stakeholders in the Partner States shall promote harmonization of education systems, sharing of student data, and operationalization of national and the regional qualifications frameworks.

Strategy
Development of regional criteria and guidelines for the selection of students to join higher education studies in the Partner States that shall indicate mechanisms to facilitate students’ mobility.

6.2 Higher Education Funding Mechanisms

Background
The expansion of Higher Education in the EAC Partner States has led to the proliferation of the establishment of institutions, which has brought in disparity in funding modalities that impact on Higher Education access and students’ mobility.
Objective
To enhance access to Higher Education and students’ mobility among the EAC Partner States through a regionally agreed higher education funding mechanism developed by IUCEA.

Policy Statements
In enhancing access to Higher Education and students’ mobility among the EAC Partner States:

(a) IUCEA shall develop regional guidelines on Student Fees charged by higher education institutions in the Partner States for mobility.

(b) Higher Education institutions admitting students from other Partner States shall set up funding mechanisms as guided by the regional criteria to accommodate these students.

Strategies

(a) Development of regional guidelines on Students Fees relating to students’ mobility.

(b) Facilitation of students’ mobility among the EAC Partner States through interventions stated in policy statements (a) and (b)

6.3 Quality and Affordability of Cross-Border Higher Education (CBHE) provision in EAC

Background
The current trend indicates an increase in higher education institutions from within and outside EAC opening campuses and colleges in Partner States. This has raised concerns about the mechanisms for assurance of the quality of education and affordability of programmes offered under such arrangements. Therefore, it is important that this policy provides for appropriate measures to address these issues.

Objective
To ensure that the cross-border higher education providers in EAC enhance affordable opportunities that promotes students mobility in EAC without compromising the quality of education.
Policy Statements
(a) Cross-border Higher Education providers shall comply with regulatory requirements of the host countries as provided for by this policy and other regional higher education frameworks.
(b) The host Partner States shall provide an environment that supports cross-border higher education providers and students.

Strategy
(a) Develop guidelines for ensuring affordability and quality in higher education offered by cross-border providers
(b) IUCEA to develop guidelines that will be used by the Partner States in providing an environment that supports cross-border providers and students

6.4 Language of instruction and communication

Background
The languages of instruction and communication in Higher Education institutions in EAC are English, French, and Kiswahili. It is important that the policy takes cognizance of this, and promotes language learning, in order to enhance student mobility opportunities.

Objective
To utilize multi-lingual opportunities in promoting students mobility in the EAC.

Policy Statement
IUCEA shall promote language learning to enhance Student Mobility.

Strategy
IUCEA to develop initiatives that will support language learning in higher education institutions.

7.0 Policy Status
This Students Mobility Policy is new and is part of the tools for EAC to become a Common Higher Education Area.
8.0 **Key Stakeholders**

The following stakeholders from all EAC Partner States were consulted during development of the policy:
- Member higher education institutions in the Partner States
- National Councils/Commissions for Higher/University Education
- National Loans Boards/Higher Education funding bodies
- National Admission boards

9.0 **Approval Details**

Experts from higher education institutions in EAC were engaged in developing the Students Mobility Policy since December 2014. The draft policy was submitted to the 4th Meeting of the Scholarship, Students and Staff Mobility Committee, held on 28th September 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda. The Scholarship, Students and Staff Mobility Committee recommended the draft policy to the 20th Meeting of the Executive Committee for approval. The 20th Meeting of the Executive Committee held in Kigali, Rwanda on 6th October 2015 approved the policy in principle subject to incorporation of inputs from members and directed IUCEA to submit the refined policy to members for final approval by circulation by 15th October 2015.

10.0 **Endorsement Details**

The Scholarship, Students and Staff Committee adopted the Students Mobility Policy on 28th September 2015 and recommended it to the Executive Committee for approval.

At its 20th meeting held on 6th October 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda, the Executive Committee approved the Students Mobility Policy subject to incorporation of inputs from members of the Committee. The Students Mobility Policy was the agenda item No. 13.0 of the 20th Meeting of the Executive Committee.
11.0 Related Legislation
- IUCEA Protocol, 2002 establishing IUCEA
- IUCEA Act 2009, Section 6 (i) and (l) stipulating that IUCEA shall “encourage the exchange of students and staff between higher education institutions in EAC”.
- The EAC Common Market Protocol under Part D on Free Movement of Persons and Labour, especially under Article 7 on Free Movement of Persons and Article 11 on Harmonisation and Mutual Recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications

12.0 Related Policies
Related policies include the Staff Mobility Policy and Principles and Guidelines for Quality Assurance

13.0 Related Documents
The East African Qualifications Framework

14.0 Effective Date for the Policy
The effective date of the Students Mobility Policy is 1st December 2015

15.0 Next Review Date
Three years from the date of policy approval, unless a later or earlier date is otherwise approved by the Executive Committee.

16.0 Policy Owner
The Inter-University Council for East Africa

17.0 Policy Author
The Inter-University Council for East Africa

18.0 Contact Person
The Executive Secretary, Inter-University Council for East Africa
Plot M833, Kigobe Road, Kyambogo, Kampala, Uganda
IUCEA Secretariat
Plot M833, Kigobe Road,
Kyambogo
P.O. Box 7110, Kampala
Uganda
Tel: +256-414-256251/2
E-mail: info@iueea.org
Website: www.iueea.org