



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CAREER
GUIDANCE AND MENTORSHIP POLICY**

JUNE 2025

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ABBREVIATIONS

ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
ILO	International Labour Organization
MUELE	Makerere University e-Learning Environment
NDP	National Development Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UOTIA	Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act

DEFINITION AND INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

- a) **Career Guidance** is the structured support extended to students to enable them identify a profession or occupation that matches their skills, interests and personality traits.
- b) **Career tools** refers to the various resources, strategies and techniques that individuals use to manage, advance and succeed in their chosen careers.
- c) **Employability** means possession of the qualities and competencies required to meet the changing needs of employers and customers in the work environment, thereby providing the individual a competitive advantage in pursuing aspirations and potential for work.
- d) **Industry** refers to external businesses or organizations that provide students with practical experience, internships and job opportunities.
- e) **Mentee** is a student who seeks technical guidance, support and advice from a more knowledgeable/experienced person.
- f) **Mentor** refers to a knowledgeable/ experienced individual who provides technical guidance, support and advice to a student.
- g) **Mentorship** is a relationship where a knowledgeable/experienced member (mentor) shares knowledge, skills, networks and experience with the student (mentee) to support the student map, nurture and grow in his or her respective career path. Mentorship roles include Career guidance, academic and psychosocial support.

1. PREAMBLE

Makerere University is committed to empowering students with the knowledge, skills and networks essential for professional success and lifelong learning. This Career Guidance and Mentorship Policy is designed to create a structured framework that supports students' career development and integrates mentorship into the academic experience, preparing graduates for a competitive and evolving job market.

2. POLICY RATIONALE

The transition from academic life to the workforce or further studies presents both opportunities and challenges for students. Given the evolving demands of the global job market, students need to be well-prepared with both technical knowledge and practical career skills. Currently, there is lack of a cohesive, University-wide approach to career guidance and mentorship, resulting in gaps and inconsistent support for students' career planning and employability.

Well-structured and institutionalized career guidance and mentorship programs can significantly contribute to professional skill development, identity development, networking and promotion of collegiality at the University. Further, effective mentoring programs have the potential to provide; career support, academic subject knowledge support, psychological and emotional support, and role modelling. All these aspects are critical in the quest for enhancing employability of students as they undertake their studies in a University. This Career Guidance and Mentorship policy aims to establish an equitable, structured and supportive system for career guidance and mentorship and bridging the students' academic journey to successful professional paths. More to the focus is:

- a) **Enhancing Graduate Employability.** Providing structured career guidance and mentorship prepares students for a competitive job market by equipping them with essential skills, insights and networks.
- b) **Supporting Holistic Student Development.** A focus on personal and professional growth enables students to build competencies and resilience, preparing them to thrive in diverse and changing career landscapes.

- c) **Aligning with Makerere University's Strategic Objectives.** This policy supports the University's mission to produce highly skilled graduates who provide a meaningful contribution to national and global development.

3. POLICY PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Makerere University provides consistent, high-quality career guidance and mentorship services that promote students' academic achievements, personal growth and professional readiness.

3.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of this policy are to:

- a) Establish a structured mechanism for the delivery of career guidance and mentorship services that are accessible, equitable and aligned with students' diverse career aspirations.
- b) Establish a well co-ordinated system that links every University Student to a Mentor
- c) Establish a mechanism for monitoring, evaluating and improve the career guidance and mentorship services extended to students
- d) Foster partnerships with Industry and Alumni to enhance students' career experiences and professional networks.

4. POLICY SCOPE

- a) This policy applies to all students and mentors attached to Makerere University. It covers career guidance and mentorship services offered across the University's Teaching and Learning Centers.
- b) The policy is intended to provide support to faculty, administrative staff, alumni and industry partners who participate in providing these services.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The policy is guided by the following principles:

- a) **Inclusivity.** Ensuring equal access to career guidance and mentorship for all students, regardless of background or academic discipline.
- b) **Professionalism.** Upholding ethical standards, confidentiality, and professionalism in all guidance and mentorship interactions.
- c) **Student-Centred Approach.** Focusing on students' unique needs, aspirations and personal development.
- d) **Collaborative Partnerships.** Engaging stakeholders within and outside the University, including industry experts, alumni and community partners.
- e) **Continuous Improvement.** Commitment to monitoring, evaluating and continuous enhancing of career guidance and mentorship programs.

6. RELEVANT LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy shall be implemented within the context of several key international, national and institutional legal frameworks that govern education, career guidance and mentorship.

6.1 International Frameworks

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDG 4: Quality Education. Supports equitable, inclusive quality education and promotes lifelong learning, aligning with Makerere University's strategic commitment to providing accessible career and mentorship services.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Promotes productive employment and decent work, essential to preparing students for the workforce.

UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET):

Emphasizes the role of education in equipping students with relevant skills for the workforce, encouraging career guidance and mentorship as vital elements of quality education

International Labour Organization (ILO) Recommendation No. 195 on Human Resources Development (2004): Recommends career guidance as an essential element of education, helping students understand labour market trends and develop skills for employability.

Agenda 2063: Focuses on developing human capital through quality education, skills development and capacity building to drive socio-economic transformation.

6.2 National Frameworks

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 (as amended): Articles 30 and 34(2) of the Constitution of Uganda guarantee the right to education while Article 40 guarantees the right to work. These Articles thus promote access to quality education and fair labour practices.

Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) 2025/26 – 2029/30: Prioritizes education and skills development, aiming to meet the demands of Uganda's labour market. NDP IV highlights career guidance and mentorship as integral to equipping graduates with employable skills.

Uganda Vision 2040: Aims to transform Uganda into a modern, prosperous society, focusing on creating a skilled workforce through improved education and training. Career guidance and mentorship contribute to developing skilled human capital aligned with Vision 2040 goals.

Employment Act, Cap 226: This is one of the Principal Legislations that Governs employment standards and the rights of workers in Uganda. It is important to prepare students with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as future employees.

The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, Cap 262: Section II 5(n) of the Act Provides standards for the management and quality assurance of higher education institutions in Uganda, emphasizing provision of adequate facilities and opportunities for career guidance and counselling to be provided by the Institutions of Higher education.

Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2021-2025: Focuses on enhancing tertiary education to produce graduates with skills aligned with market needs. It promotes the integration of employability skills and career guidance within the educational framework.

Gender in Education Sector Policy, 2009: Provides a guiding framework for the implementation and monitoring of a gender sensitive and responsive education system in Uganda. The Policy also indicates that achieving gender equality at all levels of education is regarded as a Human Rights issue.

6.3 Institutional Frameworks

Makerere University Strategic Plan 2025-2030: Emphasizes a student-centered approach to education, including providing comprehensive support services such as structured mentorship and career development to prepare graduates for the workforce.

Quality Assurance Policy Framework, 2007: Lays out the University commitment to create a conducive environment of reciprocal respect among members of the University community by combating sexual harassment and abuse and shall not limit academic freedom or the principles of free inquiry and expression.

Policy for Makerere University Student Work Scheme 2021: Strives to provide University students with the education that will enable them to explore career options, discover their strengths and weaknesses and experience how academic learning applies to the world of work.

Makerere University Guidelines for Field Attachment 2022: The purpose of the field attachment at Makerere University is to produce practically oriented graduates that meet the required job-related competences of their future employers. Additionally, it serves as a linkage between the University and various partners who consume services and/or products of the University.

Makerere University Safeguarding Policy 2024: This policy lays out the University's framework for embedding viable safeguarding measures into its ethos and all institutional activities and processes to identify, detect and act swiftly on safeguarding risks.

Makerere University Policy and Regulations against Sexual Harassment 2006 (as amended): The policy is intended to address acts and practices related to sexual harassment at all levels within the structures of Makerere University.

Makerere University Learning and Teaching Policy: The purpose of the Learning and Teaching policy is to provide guidance to all staff of Makerere University on the implementation of the learning and teaching processes that lie at the centre of the University's Vision and Mission.

7. POLICY STATEMENTS

7.1 Career Guidance

Makerere University shall provide structured career guidance services and skill development.

Career Guidance: Professional career counsellors will be available to guide students on career options, academic paths and personal development plans.

Skills Development: The University will organize workshops and training on essential career skills such as resume building, interview preparation, public speaking, networking and professional etiquette.

Career Information and Resources: An online career portal will be developed to provide access to resources, job boards, and industry insights. And annual Career fairs shall be conducted to provide more information about post-graduation transition opportunities and network with industry actors.

7.2 Mentorship Program

Mentor-Mentee Matching: The University will establish a mentorship matching process that pairs students with suitable mentors- Faculty, Alumni or Industry, based on academic fields and career interests, to ensure meaningful, growth-oriented relationships.

Mentorship Training: Training and orientation sessions will be conducted for mentors to equip them with appropriate skills for effective mentoring.

Mentorship Awareness: Awareness and Onboarding sessions will be conducted for Students to prepare them for the Mentorship engagements and make them aware of their responsibilities.

Structured Engagements: Mentors and mentees will engage in structured activities such as goal setting, professional development discussions and career planning.

7.3 PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY AND ALUMNI

The University will foster partnerships with industry stakeholders and Alumni to create career exposure and networking opportunities for the students.

Industry Collaborations: Makerere University will collaborate with industries and private sector to provide internship and experiential learning opportunities for the students, and also share experience and opportunities during career events.

Alumni Engagement: Alumni will be encouraged to participate as mentors, and also share experience and opportunities during career events.

7.4 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS

Makerere University shall ensure the quality and effectiveness of career guidance and mentorship services through regular assessments and feedback mechanisms from all relevant stakeholders. Career guidance and mentorship programs will be periodically evaluated through feedback from students, mentors and other stakeholders.

Continuous Improvement. Based on feedback and evaluations, the University will implement enhancements to the career guidance and mentorship programs.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(i) University Management. Provide oversight and resources for career guidance and mentorship initiatives, ensuring alignment with the University's mission and goals.

(ii) Dean of Students

- a) Serve as the liaison between Office of the Academic Registrar and the Quality Assurance Directorate to coordinate career guidance and mentorship activities
- b) Support initiatives that link career guidance and mentorship with student clubs, societies, and community engagement for holistic development.
- c) Ensure that students have access to counselling services for academic and personal challenges that may impact their career development.
- d) Collaborate with the Counselling and Guidance Centre to address students' psychosocial needs within the mentorship framework.

iii) Academic Registrar

Coordinate Policy Implementation in collaboration with Dean of Students

- a) Coordinate the implementation of the Career Guidance and Mentorship Policy across the University academic units.
- b) Ensure that mentors are trained and equipped to provide effective guidance and support
- c) Coordinate College/School/Departmental-based onboarding sessions for Students to prepare them for the Career Guidance and Mentorship engagements
- d) Ensure that all Academic Units (Colleges/Schools/Institutes) constitute and operationalise Career Guidance and Mentorship Committees/lead teams
- e) Lead the organisation of the Makerere University Annual Career Fairs

iv) Quality Assurance Directorate

- a) Enforce quality assurance measures in the provision of Career Guidance and Mentorship services
- b) Conduct formative evaluation of the implementation of Career Guidance and Mentorship services in the University

v) Counselling and Guidance Centre

- a) Deliver Psycho-social and mental wellness services to students and Staff to enhance the Mentorship Program
- b) Participate in organising the Makerere University Annual Career Fairs

vi) College Principals, Directors of Institutes and School Deans

Lead the integration of career guidance and mentorship activities at the college and Institute level through the following functions;

- a) Chairing Institute/College Career Guidance and Mentorship Committees: Lead committees/teams responsible for developing and implementing career guidance and mentorship strategies.
- b) Appointing Institute/College Mentors: Identify and appoint mentors who can provide guidance and support to students.
- c) Allocate Students (Mentees) to different Mentors matching subject knowledge expertise and considering an appropriate mentor-mentee ratio,
- d) Developing Institute/College-Level initiatives: Design and implement Institute/college-specific initiatives to enhance career guidance and mentorship.
- e) Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of students' mentorship activities
- f) Provide data and statistics on student mentorship engagements to inform policy decisions.
- g) Participate in organizing the the Makerere University Annual Career Fairs

vii) The Staff (Mentors)

- a) Support the students (mentees) prepare a Career Plan in early stages of their academic Journey and follow through during their academic journey
- b) Encourage and support the students (mentees) to utilize all University Academic resources to enrich their academic Journey at the University
- c) Provide first-level psychosocial support to the students (mentees) and make appropriate referrals to the Makerere University Counselling and Guidance centre for more in-depth psychosocial and mental wellness support
- d) Identify and share opportunities and professional networks for the mentees' career growth and development
- e) Engage in the Mentorship relationship in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations that relate to ethical code of conduct

viii) The Student (Mentee)

- a) Seek support from the Mentor in preparing a Career plan at the beginning of their Academic Journey at Makerere University
- b) Openly Share information about their strengths, career interests, challenges and extra-curricular/leadership interests with their mentor.
- c) Participate in Career Guidance and Mentorship trainings organized by the University
- d) Pro-actively solicit and participate in the mentorship engagements with the Mentor
- e) Engage in the Mentorship relations in accordance with the policies, rules and regulation that to relate to ethical code of conduct

ix) Alumni and Industry Partners

- a) Alumni will participate as mentors, and also share experience and opportunities during career events.
- b) Industry Actors will provide internship and experiential learning opportunities for the students, and also share experience and opportunities during career events
- c) Alumni and other Industry Actors/Professionals shall provide Career Counselling to the students to support them in career-related decisions

x) Makerere University Convocation

- a) Provide Alumni network: Leverage extensive Alumni Network to connect students with professionals in their desired fields, facilitating mentorship and career guidance.
- b) Industry Insights: Invite industry experts to share their experiences and insights with students, providing valuable knowledge and perspectives.
- c) Career events: Co-organize career fairs, workshops, and seminars to expose students to various career options and opportunities.
- d) Resource mobilization: Mobilize resources and funding to support career guidance and mentorship initiatives.

9. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Career Guidance and Mentorship Policy will be implemented through:

Integration with Curricula. Embedding career guidance elements into the delivery of academic programmes.

Resource Allocation. Ensuring necessary resources, including facilities, technology, and staff, are available.

Capacity Building. Offering regular training and professional development for staff involved in career guidance and mentorship.

Information and Awareness. Promoting career services through orientations, workshops and the University's communication channels.

10. COORDINATING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Dean of Students and Academic Registrar shall coordinate the implementation of the Policy.

The Directorate of Quality Assurance shall coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the policy. Annual assessments will be conducted to measure program effectiveness, and adjustments will be made based on stakeholder feedback and emerging trends in higher education and employment.

11. REVIEW AND REVISION

1. The University Council may review this policy in writing from time to time as deemed appropriate.
2. These guidelines shall be effective immediately upon approval by the University Council.

APPROVED by the University Council this 5TH day of JUNE 2025

Signed:



Lorna Magara

CHAIRPERSON OF UNIVERSITY COUNCIL



Yusuf Kiranda

UNIVERSITY SECRETARY