



KAMUZU UNIVERSITY
OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Students Welfare Policy

JUNE 2023

Policy Name	Students Welfare Policy
Policy No.	PL/C.1A.1
Effective Date	
Last Review	
Next Review	Every five years, with an initial one-year review
Council Approval Date	31 August, 2023
Stakeholders Subjected to this Policy	Staff, Postgraduate and Undergraduate Students, Students Representative Council, KUHeS Management and Parents.
Responsible Officer(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Registrar, • Executive Deans of Schools, • Quality Assurance Officer, • Teaching and Learning Development Centre • Director of Student Affairs, • University Librarian • Director of Finance and Investments
Responsible Office(s):	Vice Chancellor
Relevant policies and documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Rules and Regulations • Accommodation Policy • Sports Policy

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Foreword

Education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge; it is also a transformative journey that shapes individuals, communities, and societies. Universities play a pivotal role in this journey, not only as centers of learning, but also as nurturing grounds for personal growth, social development, and the pursuit of dreams. At the heart of this academic endeavour are the students, future leaders, innovators, and problem solvers of our world.

This policy is not merely a set of rules and regulations; it is a statement of our values and priorities. This embodies our belief that every student should have equal opportunities and access to a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. We recognise that students come from diverse backgrounds and have unique challenges and aspirations. Therefore, our policy is designed to be comprehensive, addressing a wide range of issues that can impact students' lives.

In this policy, you will find provisions for academic support, mental health services, financial aid, housing, safety, etc. We aim to ensure that no student is left behind or faces insurmountable obstacles during their educational journey. It is our duty to provide the necessary resources and support systems to empower students to overcome challenges, pursue their passion, and achieve their academic goals.

We understand that our students are not just leaders of tomorrow; they are today's leaders. They are change makers, activists, and advocates who shape the world in profound ways. By investing in welfare, we are investing in a brighter and more promising future for all.

Chairman of Council

Preface

Kamuzu University of Health Sciences embarked on a journey to become a new University on 4th May 2021 with a provision by its Act to use University of Malawi legal instruments until replaced. Hence, there was need to develop KUHeS own policies that could operationalise its functions. Furthermore, KUHeS noted the gaps that existed in some policies as some of the policies were non-existent in University of Malawi and the student's welfare policy was one of them.

The student's welfare policy is therefore an important governance instrument which will guide the institution as well as student on student welfare issues. The policy functions in the context of other policies which have been pointed to in the policy to avoid duplication ad conflict. The need for the policy cannot be over emphasised. Students are navigating a complex and ever-changing landscape of higher education, where they face the diverse challenges and pressures. From academic pursuits to mental and emotional well-being and from financial concerns to housing needs, our students encounter a multitude of issues that can impact their educational journey. It is our moral obligation to comprehensively and proactively address these challenges.

This policy encompasses a wide range of provisions, from academic support services to mental health resources, and from financial aid programs to safety measures. We aim to provide students with the tools they need to excel academically, stay physically and mentally healthy, and feel safe and supported within our university community. We encourage feedback, engagement, and active participation from students to shape and refine operations of the University.

Vice Chancellor

Acknowledgements

This policy is an outcome of the hard work and dedication team which comprised staff members and student representatives. The staff were drawn from various departments such as: security, transport, academic services, international students services, scholarships, transport, accommodation health and more. Students included leaders of Students Representative Council leaders, postgraduate and undergraduate students. The policy was reviewed by KUHeS Executive Management as well as the Student and Staff Affairs Committee of Council before the Councils approval.

Finally, the University would like to acknowledge the valuable input of Management and Council for their contribution to the policy.

Abbreviations

KUHeS	:	Kamuzu University of Health Sciences
COM	:	College of Medicine
KCN	:	Kamuzu College of Nursing
SRC	:	Student Representative Council
UNIMA	:	University of Malawi
ICT	:	Information Communication Technology
M&E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
DSA	:	Director of Students Affairs

1. Background and Scope

The Student Welfare Policy serves as a crucial set of guidelines for all students enrolled at Kamuzu University of Health Sciences. It delineates the roles, conditions, and advantages that students can expect while pursuing their academic journey at the institution. This policy has been meticulously crafted to prioritize the well-being and contentment of students, aligning with the University's overarching Vision and Mission.

In order to foster a peaceful and favorable learning environment, the Student Welfare Policy draws inspiration from the experiences and traditions of the University's student body, the cultural context in which the University operates, and similar policies adopted by other academic institutions. It's important to acknowledge that new issues may emerge over time, and the University, in collaboration with the Director of Student Affairs and the Student Representative Council (SRC), may issue specific instructions and operational guidelines as needed.

Upon joining the University, all students receive a copy of this policy, along with other relevant policies, rules, and regulations. This is intended to help students become familiar with the University's governing policies and practices. If students require further clarification, they are encouraged to seek guidance from either their SRC representatives or the Director of Student Affairs.

It's crucial to understand that this policy does not constitute a binding contract for students' academic tenure at the university, and it may not cover every possible issue that could arise. Nonetheless, the University remains steadfast in its commitment to enhance the well-being of its students, and this policy serves as a framework to ensure that students are treated equitably, with dignity, and with respect.

2. Rationale for the Policy

The University Student Welfare Policy is driven by a profound commitment to ensure the well-being and success of all students. This is grounded in several compelling reasons and rationales. The policy takes a student-centric

approach, facilitate holistic development, provide equal access and opportunities. Issues of mental health and well-being are paramount in the policy to ensure academic excellence, financial support, safety and inclusiveness. The policy aims at engaging students in community building and continuous improvement of our students' global competitiveness driven by ethical responsibility.

The rationale for the Student Welfare Policy is rooted in the belief that the well-being and success of students are essential to the University's Vision and Mission. This reflects a commitment to creating an environment where students can thrive academically, personally, and socially, ensuring that they are prepared to contribute positively to society and lead fulfilling lives beyond their academic years.

3. KUHeS Vision

A world-class university and centre of excellence in health education, research, and innovation.

4. KUHeS Mission

To advance knowledge, professional competencies, skills, and innovations in health sciences through high-quality student-centred and innovative education and research that responds to and influences global/national policy, health, and development needs in an efficient, sustainable, and result-oriented manner.

5. Aim of the Policy

The aim of the University Students Welfare Policy is to create a University environment that places students at the centre of its mission. It aims to ensure that students excel academically and grow socially, preparing them to contribute positively to society.

6. Objectives of the Policy

Objectives of University Student Welfare Policy are to:

- a. prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of all students, creating an environment where they feel safe, supported, and empowered through counselling and providing support services to address the psychological needs of students;
- b. provide support services that enable students to excel academically, reach their full potential, and graduate with a strong educational foundation;
- c. create an inclusive and diverse campus culture that values and respects individual differences, promotes equity, and ensures that every student feels a sense of belonging;
- d. establish and maintain a safe campus environment where students are protected from harassment, violence, discrimination, and other safety concerns;
- e. encourage active student participation in University affairs, decision-making processes, and feedback mechanisms to ensure that their voices are heard, taken into account and acted upon;
- f. offer healthcare services, wellness programs, and access to fitness facilities to promote physical health and well-being among students;
- g. provide safe, affordable, and inclusive housing options for both local and international students;
- h. promote a learning environment that encourages critical thinking, creativity, and intellectual growth, fostering a love for learning among students;
- i. encourage sustainable practices and environmental awareness among students, fostering a sense of responsibility towards the planet;
- j. utilize technology and innovation to improve the delivery of student services and enhance the overall university experience;
- k. facilitate financial aid, scholarships, and guidance on managing educational expenses to ensure that financial constraints do not hinder students' educational pursuits.

7. Policy Issues, Statements and Strategies

7.1 Orientation for New Students

Policy Issue

A student at the Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHES) is expected to abide by the rules and regulations of the University to conduct herself/himself in a manner expected by the University. It governs students interaction with fellow students University Schools, staff and the use of University facilities in acceptable manner. Orientation is therefore needed to inform the student about the University rules and regulations, facilities within and outside, health and safety as well as security. A student who does not receive proper orientation is more likely to break rules which could affect their welfare.

Policy Statement

The University shall conduct an orientation programme for all new students in their first week on campus before they start academic classes. The orientation programme shall feature, among others, academic, security and social issues related to student welfare.

Strategies

The University will organize orientation program which will cover the following:

- a. Student rules and regulations as well as relevant policies;
- b. Conduct registration of students;
- c. Issue identity cards to registered students;
- d. Brief students on programmes and activities in various departments and schools.

Students will:

- a. Fully and actively participate in the orientation programme;
- b. Read and sign the University rules and regulations as well as the Code of Conduct;
- c. Ensure that they pay fees and register;
- d. Acquire a University identity card.

7.2 International Students

Policy Issue

While international students may find it exciting to study in a new environment. They face challenges which stress them as they try to cope with the new environment, being away from home, the change in culture and financial challenges.

The University system must be responsive enough in ensuring that international students enjoy their academic and social lives while at the University. International students need to enjoy the same opportunities and rights just like local student while at the University. However, given the fact they come from another country they might, in some situations, need special assistance and privileges in order to ensure that they cope with the new social and academic environment.

Policy Statement

Kamuzu University of Health Sciences shall endeavor to provide quality social and academic welfare services to facilitate smooth settling and academic progression of all international students.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. Assist international students in finding appropriate accommodation.
- b. Provide support, information or advice on matters that affect their study and life at the University.
- c. Provide general advice and guidance on various social, academic or financial matters.
- d. Provide necessary assistance and advice on immigration matters;
- e. Support international students' events approved by the University.
- f. Enforce its rules and regulations on international students.
- g. Ensure that international students have health insurance/medical cover approved by the University.

International students will:

- a. Adhere to student rules and regulations as well as relevant policies. strive to understand the general culture of the University and its people as an assimilation/acculturation strategy.
- b. Seek advice/guidance from the University.
- c. Report incidents of discrimination or harassment to the University.
- d. Seek academic advice from academic advisors and course instructors.
- e. Adhere to students rules and regulations.
- f. Have a valid passport and student visa.
- g. Have a valid health insurance approved by the University.

7.3 Organisations and clubs

Policy Issue

The student organisation serves as a crucial bridge between the University and its students, providing a platform for addressing shared concerns. It also plays a strategic role in grooming individuals who can assume leadership responsibilities in society across different levels. To achieve this, student organisations must operate within a framework that prioritizes accountability, transparency, and the delivery of tangible outcomes. To prevent chaos that comes in with uncontrolled registration and operations of clubs and organisation this policy has been developed to fill in this gap to regulate the registration and operations of clubs and organisations in the University.

Policy Statement

The University acknowledges the student organisation's role in advancing the overall welfare of students and assisting the University in various student-related endeavors. The University therefore, shall ensure that there is smooth and transparent operation of the students' organisation through provision of the necessary support and enforcing rules pertaining to its functioning.

Strategies

- a. The University shall ensure that all societies, clubs and organisations in the University are registered with the Directorate of Student Affairs through the

Student Representative Council (SRC). Such registration application shall be supported by the following:

- i. The constitution of the club;
 - ii. Names and signatures of at least 10 interested registered students;
 - iii. Evidence of SRC affiliation and fee;
 - iv. A name and signature of a patron who shall be a member of staff;
 - v. within three weeks from the date of registration of the society or club, the secretary shall submit names of persons holding office in the society or club to the Directorate of Student Affairs;
- b. Ensure that, where an academic department has initiated the club, the Head of Department concerned shall submit the application to the Directorate of Student Affairs;
- c. Ensure that, the Directorate of Student Affairs reserves the power to deny or cancel the registration of any club whose activities are not in the best interest of the University;
- d. Ensure that the students' organisation performs functions in accordance with the organisation/club's constitution, the student rules and regulations, and laws of the country.

The Leaders of Student Organisation leaders shall:

develop a constitution for their club;

understand all operational policies/rules under their organisation and those of the University;

- i. Lead objectively, guided by their constitution, rules and regulations as well as policies;
- ii. Avoid conflict of interest at all times;
- iii. Adopt a participatory and inclusive leadership approach; and
- iv. Manage students' organisation funds appropriately and in line with existing regulations;
- v. Pay SRC due affiliation fee periodically as required;
- vi. Submit names as required for registration within the stipulated time period.

Students shall:

- a. Abide by their organisational constitution, rules and regulations;

- b. Observe election rules and procedures;
- c. Participate in the clubs' activities;
- d. Elect competent leaders; and
- e. Hold their leaders accountable through appropriate channels and procedures.

7.4 Students Engagement and Participation

Policy issue

Kamuzu University of Health Sciences acknowledges that students need to be represented equitably and fairly at various institutional levels and; structures so that every student can contribute to the enhancement of their programme and learning experience. The primary aim of student representation in the University is to provide students with an opportunity to promote and contribute towards development of the University through a proper and efficient process. However, there is need of a policy to govern how this representation should be done to avoid challenges that may arise without proper guidance.

Policy statement

The University ensure that students are well represented and involved at all levels of decision making through student representatives both from postgraduate as well as undergraduate. The representatives shall be elected/appointed by the Student Representative Council who shall take gender balance into account.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. provide a platform for students representation at various institutional decision making levels or structures including Council and Senate;
- b. encourage active student participation in university affairs, decision-making processes, and feedback mechanisms to ensure their voices are heard and acted upon;
- c. Allow SRC, committees, or conduct surveys to gather student input on policy decisions.

The students will:

- a. nominate/elect representatives for various organisations/clubs yearly;
- b. through the representatives assist the University leadership in their relations to maintain the tone and discipline of the University;
- c. give the representatives the respect and obedience due to them and strive to help in fulfilling their duties.

7.5 Community engagement and outreach

Policy issue

The purpose of the Policy on Community Engagement is to address the challenge that exist in managing community engagement and outreach. Furthermore, it is there to provide principles and a governance framework for integrated community engagement at KUHeS that is aligned to the strategic priorities of the University; promotes quality assurance, risk management and financial sustainability; creates new knowledge; ensures ethical conduct, and can serve as a basis for more operational procedures and decisions to be made.

Policy statement

The University will work with the students to interact with the surrounding communities and other stakeholders for mutual benefits aimed at community development and empowerment.

Strategy

The University through Schools, Departments, Units, Centres, Research Projects, student structures and other stakeholders under whose auspices community engagement activities take place, will strive to:

- a. Manage community engagement activities based on good governance principles and KUHeS policies;
- b. Include sustainable and relevant community engagement in their strategic and operational plans and take responsibility for implementation, risk management and quality assurance;

- c. Implement community engagement activities in their areas of proven competency only, subject to the self-identified problems of the communities concerned;
- d. Support with transport and other resources that are necessary to assist in community engagement where possible.

The students shall:

- a. participate in all community engagement and outreach activities that are due and assigned to them;
- b. abide by the guiding rules and regulation and other policies provided by KUHeS in running community engagement activities;
- c. submit all report in time relating to community outreach activities;
- d. identify outreach activities with support from the schools that are necessary for his or her personal growth and development.

7.6 Entertainment and Interaction

Policy issue

KUHeS recognizes that edutainment, both inside and outside the classroom setting make learning fun ad enjoyable. Furthermore, edutainment interactions assist students to relax after exhaustive academic work and pressure. This is an important aspect in the University learning environment. A well-coordinated edutainment is vital in assisting students in attaining their good mental health status and again preventing and protecting them from immoral conducts. This policy seeks to guide the way edutainment should be approached in order to achieve a good balance between entertainment and academic life which are all vital.

Policy Statement

The University shall support and provide a conducive environment for entertainment of its students as well as interaction that shall be in line with the student's rules and regulations.

Strategy

The University shall:

- a. Approve students entertainment activities in good time;
- b. Reserves the right to make temporary changes to the requirements of this policy based on an assessment of the University's resources. These will be published and communicated to members of the Students Representative Council;
- a. Make provision for students to have some form of entertainment each semester depending on the availability of resources;
- b. Provide for space for social interaction (common rooms) in its campuses;
- c. Support entertaining activities that are in line with the students' rules and regulations and other governing tools;
- d. Properly service and maintained entertainment facilities to meet the University standards.

Students shall:

- a. Attend and participate in all entertainment activities organized at the institution;
- b. Abide by the rules and regulation during entertainment activities;
- c. Present a yearly entertainment budget for approval by the University through the SRC;
- d. Allow only registered students of KUHeS benefit from such arrangement;
- e. Ensure good security, first aid equipment and teams on standby during entertainment;
- f. Report any student who misbehaves during entertainment activities to the relevant authorities.

7.7 Students Transportation and International Travel

Policy Issue

Students are required to travel to conduct University business, fulfil their academic duties but also conduct outreach activities through organisations, clubs as well as discharging duties under the Student Representative Council (SRC). The University has limited number of vehicles that are designated for University business, social and recreational activities and official duties which cannot match students transport demands.

Policy Statement

Where possible, the University shall provide appropriate transport to facilitate student's learning, academic, outreach, recreational activities, SRC duties as well as students sports and social activities.

Strategy

Subject to the availability of transport, the University shall provide transport:

- a. from the nearest University campus to and from clinical placement location to conduct clinical practice;
- b. on approved trips, international travels and activities;
- c. to facilitate students travel to sports and outreach activities;
- d. to facilitate discharge of SRC duties;
- e. to attend to University duties and meetings;
- f. ground transport to and from the airport when travelling on University business;
- g. for economy air fare return ticket when a student travels on University business;
- h. for student's remains after death when they have died on campus during academic activities;
- i. to the hospital for students on and off campus during emergencies during academic sessions;
- j. for duly registered religious and non-religious clubs through SRC and organisations for approved activities;
- k. intercampus transport.

The students shall:

- a. duly register their clubs and organisations;
- b. book transport 48 hours in advance using appropriate forms and obtain appropriate authorisation offices;
- c. contact responsible officers for transport during emergencies such as sudden sicknesses, natural disasters or accidents;
- d. ensure that the booked transport clearly indicates departure and return times, dates and number of passengers;

- e. not drive University vehicles;
- f. not overload Universities vehicles and observe safety requirements for University transportation;
- g. keep the university vehicles in good condition;
- h. observe rules and regulations when using University transport facilities.

7.8 Physical Health and Wellness

Policy Issue

Students' academic performance is directly linked to their physical health and wellness. Students may enroll into University with medical conditions which if not supported may negatively affect their education. Even when students get admitted with good health, falling sick and developing medical conditions is inevitable. Due to many competing requirements for student wellness, there is a danger for University lose focus on promotion of students wellness which requires a balanced and health lifestyle.

Policy Statement

The University shall provide sports and gaming facilities in order to promote health life, spiritual and mental well-being.

Policy Strategy

The University shall:

- a. provide facilities for prayer and religious gatherings;
- b. provide religious freedom for all kinds of religions as long as they do not cause harm to others;
- c. have a chaplain who shall be responsible for spiritual wellbeing of students;
- d. provide sporting facilities and personnel for different games for students;
- e. subject to availability of funds, support approved sporting activities and games;
- f. conduct baseline assessment for students health well-being to identify chronic sicknesses, disease and allergies for medical support;

- g. provide for a clinic to support students' health and wellness;
- h. conduct sensitisation of health services including mental, sexual and reproductive health;
- i. vaccinate students engaged in clinical practice or placement.

Students shall:

- a. be responsible to disclose their health conditions and allergies to the University to facilitate medical support;
- b. take necessary vaccines required for clinical practice and participation;
- c. participate in sporting activities for their own well-being;
- d. observe religious rights without infringing on others freedom;
- e. participate in religious or spiritual activities to achieve spiritual well-being;
- f. participate in health, mental, sexual and reproductive health activities for their wellbeing.

7.9 Personal Growth and Development

Policy Issue

A student's academic success and social growth depends on the facilities and systems put in place by the University to facilitate students' personal growth. Without self-responsibility, self-discipline and hard work, a student will not benefit from such systems and facilities. The University encourages every student to pursue personal development initiatives with a view to becoming a better person in different aspects of life.

Policy Statement

The University shall support activities which aim at developing or enhancing their personal development skills.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. provide training on personal development skills through the classroom and others;

- b. support activities organized for enhancing students' personal development skills.

Students will:

- a. pursue personal development skills through formal and informal settings;
- b. seek guidance from lecturers or any other relevant University office on personal development skills;
- c. through their groups, organize inter- and intra-University personal development activities e.g. debates, writing competitions;
- d. embrace principles that foster personal growth such as self-responsibility, self-discipline, hard work and caring for others.

Faculty (academics) will:

- a. provide pastoral support to students during seminars, lectures and other academic forums;
- b. identify students with challenges (academic or social) and provide necessary advice or encourage them to get support from relevant places;
- c. embrace a calm temperament in terms of being approachable and empathetic to students' challenges.

7.10 Career Guidance

Policy Issue

One of the core functions of any University is to impart knowledge that is applicable in the real world but also contribute to personal, community and national development. However, specific training on career related issues is not usually reflected in University curricula. This gap in the learning structure, necessitates the need for career guidance.

Policy Statement

The University shall provide career guidance to students through various forums. It shall encourage and support students endeavors to grasp knowledge geared towards career development.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. facilitate interaction between students and potential employers;
- b. facilitate guest speakers on different key topics from different organisations;
- c. encourage and where necessary support students to undertake study visits in different organisations where they can learn practical aspects of their studies;
- d. encourage and support the establishment of students' academic clubs;
- e. assist students to assess and understand their abilities, interests, values and other personal characteristics that are relevant to career choice and work performance;
- f. provide educational and occupational information to aid students' educational and career planning.

Students will:

- a. observe University rules and regulations in establishing and running academic clubs;
- b. organize career events through their SRC leadership or academic clubs;
- c. seek guidance from academic advisors and lecturers on career issues.

7.11 Teaching and Learning Environment

Policy Issue

The nature of the learning environment can either hinder or facilitate learning and teaching. For students to achieve their academic goals, there is need for a conducive learning environment (teaching and learning facilities). Although the University has been continually improving the learning environment in terms of staff recruitment, expansion of classrooms, installation of teaching aids and others, the growing number of student enrolment, changing nature of learning and teaching, technological advancements in the learning process and the

changing nature of student learning needs are factors call for more improvements and innovations.

Policy Statement

The University shall continue to maintain and improve standards of the teaching and learning environment in order to meet the learning needs of students to ensure that it is comfortable, convenient, friendly and accessible by all students.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. recruit competent academic staff;
- b. ensure presence of sufficient library space and resources;
- c. ensure availability of teaching and learning aids such as projectors, laptops and white boards;
- d. install and maintain air conditioning facilities in classrooms;
- e. ensure availability of wireless network at designated places;
- f. ensure that offices and learning places are accessible by people with disabilities;
- g. ensure that big classrooms are equipped with public address systems;
- h. ensure classes are well lit and ventilated;
- i. ensure availability of functional electrical outlets in classrooms, library and reading areas.

Students will:

- a. use teaching and learning facilities wisely and avoid damage;
- b. report malicious or negligent damage of teaching or learning facilities;
- c. observe the provisions of the Student Rules and Regulations related to handling of University premises and properties;
- d. avoid conducts that are likely to cause disturbances or disruptions to the learning or teaching process.

7.12 Water and Electricity

Policy Issue

Water and electricity supply are important services in ensuring the welfare of students. Such services are necessary in maintaining cleanliness, healthy living, facilitating smooth running of academic activities etc. Without adequate supply of water and electricity, social and academic aspects of student life will be largely affected.

Policy Statement

The University shall continue to meet its obligation to pay bills to relevant authorities in order to ensure constant supply of water and electricity. Whenever there is shortage of supply, the University shall use its internal resources to ensure uninterrupted supply of water and electricity on campus.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. ensure that the water and electricity infrastructure is regularly maintained;
- b. ensure that internal water sources are maintained and improved;
- c. ensure that the standby generator is functioning to cater for emergency situations;
- d. hold accountable all those who will negligently or maliciously damage water or electricity facilities;
- e. work towards maintaining hot water facilities for students' use.

Students will:

- a. carefully use water and electricity facilities on campus (in classrooms and residences);
- b. consume water and electricity wisely and reasonably;
- c. abide by the student rules regulations relating to water and electricity use;
- d. report any malicious or negligent use of water or electricity facilities to relevant offices.

7.13 Clinical Rotations and Placements

Policy Issue

Each student who meets the academic criteria and professional standards for advancement to clinical rotations is assured placement at an affiliate site. Every effort is made to assign students to clinical/rotation placements according to geographic area while taking into account student's interests. However, due to the inadequacy of rotation commitments as well as affiliate specific criteria, special arrangements may be required for student placement at designated clinical affiliate sites.

Policy Statement

The University shall commit to continue negotiating with relevant clinical sites affiliates to ensure that its students have adequate sites where they can gain practical experience.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. ensure that MoU are signed with all clinical placement affiliates;
- b. ensure that students are transported to and from clinical placement sites in agreed time frames;
- c. in collaboration with clinical placement affiliates, ensure that students maintain professional conduct within their placement as stipulated in the relevant clinical placement policies;
- d. ensure that adequate and proper supervision and assessment are accorded to all students on clinical placement.

Students will:

- a. ensure that they follow stipulated rules and regulations governing their clinical placement;
- b. ensure that they report to their clinical placement in stipulated times and schedules;
- c. complete and sign for all assigned assignments and assessments within the clinical placement site;

- d. report to relevant authority when they are unable to avail themselves at their allocated clinical placement site.

7.14 Internship and exchange

The University is committed to providing opportunities for exchange and internship programs with its collaborators and affiliates for its students' body. This is commitment to provide short-term supervised work experience usually related to a student's specific field of study or career aspirations. The exchange or internship combines practical work experience with a structured learning experience through specific briefs aimed at achieving identified objectives of the University. The exchange and internship programmes disrupts students normal academic progression. In some cases students may need guidance in the right exchange programmes to take that would add value to their career progression. This requires deliberate effort and policy by the University to govern, regulate exchange and internship programmes.

7.15 Security

Policy Issue

KUHeS is an open and dynamic environment where thousands of students congregate daily for educational, research, and social purposes. For them to undertake such academic and social activities successfully, they need to be secure and safe. Ensuring the security and safety of students and their properties on campus is therefore a matter that calls for a shared responsibility and commitment between students and the University.

Policy statement

The University is committed to creating an environment where all students can learn, and thrive without concerns about their personal safety and security.

Strategies

The University will employ a variety of strategies to enhance student security on its campuses. These strategies aim to create a safe, secure and supportive environment for students to thrive academically and individually.

The University will:

- a. engage a reputable security service provider for the purposes of campus security in 24-hour basis;
- b. collaborate with law enforcement agencies and student representatives, and safety committees to gather input and feedback on security policies and initiatives;
- c. ensure that all security policies and practices comply with relevant state laws and regulations;
- d. uphold ethical standards and student rights while addressing security concerns;
- e. establish procedures for reporting and responding to crimes and provide comprehensive support services for victims of crimes;
- f. address any structural or environmental concerns promptly to minimize safety hazards ensuring proper campus lighting;
- g. implement cybersecurity measures to protect students and university data;
- h. install appropriate safety equipment's and security signs in all its premises and make sure that they are all up to date;
- i. orient, sensitize and educate students about online safety, cybersecurity, responsible use of technology and personal security matters;
- j. secure and monitor all access points so that only authorized individual are allowed and there are no intrusions

Students will:

- a. act responsibly and reasonably in handling University properties;
- b. report security incidents, crimes, or suspicious activities, promptly to University security officer;
- c. respect the boundaries and personal space of others;
- d. not keep any offensive weapons at the halls of residents;

- e. practice good personal safety habits;
- f. avoid behavior or conduct likely to cause breach of security;
- g. familiarize themselves with the use of security measures and systems in place on campus;
- h. put on IDs whenever they are on campus at all times;
- i. not leave the keys unattended;
- j. park their vehicles in designated places.

By taking an active role in their own safety and contributing to the overall security of the campus community, students can help create a safer and more supportive learning environment. Additionally, they can promote a culture of shared responsibility and well-being among others.

7.16 Housing and Accommodation

Policy Issue

Students are admitted to the University on nonresidential basis however the University has limited accommodation space. Due to limited spaces available, not all students applied are offered accommodation. As such there is need for a policy to govern the sharing and use of accommodation space.

Policy Statement

The University shall provide accommodation to students subject to availability of space as guided by the accommodation policy.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. reserve the right to admission into the accommodation facilities;
- b. charge a reasonable accommodation fee for its accommodation facilities;
- c. expand accommodation space subject to availability of resources;
- d. enforce accommodation rule and regulations the students as well as the accommodation policy;
- e. maintain existing hostels on a regular basis;

- f. advise students on the suitability of private hostels outside the University;
- g. identify all students with special needs for special considering for accommodation;
- h. provide security in the on campus hostels guided by security policy;
- i. ensure cleanliness of the accommodation facilities.

Students shall:

- a. sign and adhere to the tenancy agreements, the students rules and regulations as well as the accommodation policy;
- b. pay accommodation fee as per University structure;
- c. report problems/dangers in the hostels to relevant offices;
- d. keep their accommodation rooms and surrounding environment clean and safe at all times;
- e. avoid unnecessary disturbances such as loud music and noise.

7.17 Funeral Support for a Deceased Student

Policy Issue

Lack of clear guidelines on how to handle students' bereavement and related matters when they are on or off session.

Policy Statements

The University shall extend moral and material support to the family of a deceased student who passes away during studies. The University shall liaise with the family of the deceased student in order to facilitate the necessary logistics pertaining to the burial service as provided in Students Rules and regulations, as read together with administrative manual. The provisions in this section confer privileges and not entitlements.

Policy Strategies

The University shall:

- a. set aside funds in the annual budget for supporting students' funerals in accordance with the University Administrative Manual;

- b. transport the body of the deceased to his/her domicile place or wherever decided by his/her family for local students;
- c. assist in repatriation of the remains of the deceased to the point of domicile (as per students registration) in liaison with the spouse, next of kin, family or relatives of the deceased students;
- d. provide transport for University staff and a student representatives to attend burial service;
- e. inform students and staff accordingly;
- f. consult with the deceased member's family on burial arrangements;
- g. communicate the level of assistance provided by the University.

The student shall:

- a. ensure that the repatriation fees were paid in case of international students;
- b. communicate the domicile place where burial will take place for the deceased student;
- c. pay excess cost for any accessories required to support funeral arrangements.

7.18 Discipline

Policy Issue

Discipline is an important factor in ensuring student welfare at the University. A sound student disciplinary system and a sense of self-discipline on the part of students are important components in ensuring the existence of an environment favourable for students' academic and social pursuits. Given the diversity of students in terms of culture, belief and thought, their daily interaction in academic and social activities may turn chaotic if disciplinary measures are not properly defined and enforced.

Policy Statement

The University shall enforce discipline among its students in accordance to its policies as well as rules and regulations.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. Establish disciplinary committees to handle students cases of indiscipline at different levels;
- b. Conduct disciplinary hearings and enforce discipline among students;
- c. Ensure that students rules and regulations and policies are enforced and adhered to;
- d. Provide information and guidance on disciplinary matters and procedures to students;
- e. Track and identify student disciplinary issues.

Students will:

- a. study and understand University rules and regulations as well as policies;
- b. abide by the Student Rules and Regulations and other relevant governance instruments;
- c. develop self-discipline strategies and pursue them for their personal growth and standing;
- d. seek guidance on disciplinary issues from relevant offices;
- e. report disciplinary issues to relevant authorities/offices; and
- f. participate in various seminars/events on disciplinary issues organized by the University.

7.19 Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Policy Issue

The abuse alcohol and drug have far-reaching consequences on students' academic progress and performance as well as discipline. A student affected by these problems is more likely to perform poorly in academics, deteriorate in physical and mental ability, and can result into many other possible negative effects. Both alcohol and drug abuse are habit forming and transferrable to other students as they copy from each other which could result in moral decay and lawlessness in the University. Alcohol and drug abuse are problems facing not only students in the Universities but the nation as a whole.

Policy Statement

The University has the responsibility to protect its students from getting involved in alcohol and drug abuse as they pursue their academic work. The University is therefore challenged to ensure that its systems addresses issues of alcohol and drug abuse.

Strategies

The University shall:

- a. regulate the selling or serving of any alcoholic drinks on campus;
- b. prohibit sell of alcohol to students under the age of 18 years;
- c. prohibit the use or circulation of any habit-forming drugs within its campuses;
- d. provide assistance to those students already affected by alcohol and drug abuse;
- e. ensure that sale of alcohol on campus is done by authorized individuals and is sold at a prescribed time and to adults only.

Students will:

- a. report any cases of alcohol and drug abuse to the Director of Students Affairs;
- b. abstain from alcohol and drug abuse;
- c. obtain counselling from the responsible officers (for those already affected);
- d. obtain medical services or medical advice from KUHeS clinic or other medical services facilities (for those already affected);
- e. understand and abide by the provisions of the Student Disciplinary Rules, Regulations and Procedures on alcohol and drug abuse;
- f. report sale of drugs and alcohol by unauthorised individuals.

7.20 Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment

Policy Issue

Lack of understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment and gender based violence as well as the harmful effects on the victims and the community

as a whole, can lead to a culture of acceptance and normalisation of such behavior. Gender based violence and sexual harassment could negatively affect a student from conducting their studies freely.

Policy Statement

Kamuzu University of Health Sciences does not condone any form of gender based violence and sexual harassment.

Policy strategies

On matters of gender based violence and sexual harassment, the University shall be guided by the gender policy and the anti-sexual harassment policy. In general, the University shall:

- a. adhere to the gender and anti-sexual harassment policy;
- b. promote gender equality among students in relation to student welfare services and;
- c. provide support to students including students with special needs in their effort to access services or use facilities.

Students shall:

- a. avoid discrimination of any form of harassment against students with special needs; and
- b. report all cases of discrimination or harassment to relevant offices; and
- c. clearly, openly and honestly communicate their needs to relevant offices (during or after admission to the University).

7.21 Code of Conduct

Policy Issue

The University recognises that students as individuals come from diverse environment and so do conduct themselves differently. In order to ensure harmony in their interaction with fellow students, University staff, University residents and use of facilities, there is need to create an environment in which all can live, work, and learn together in peace and harmony.

Policy Statement

The University in supporting student academic and welfare, promotes high standard of discipline and academic behaviour of students by ensuring that they follow a code of conduct that fosters and maintains a positive image of the University.

Policy strategies

The University shall

- a. Ensure that students are provided with code of conduct;
- b. Provide students with rules and regulations and other policy documents related to conduct and behaviour;
- c. Enforce discipline among the students.

The students shall

- a. Sign the code of conduct form during registration annually;
- b. Abide by the student's rules and regulations and other relevant guidelines of the university.

8. Guiding Principles and Implementation

Guiding Principles for the Implementation of University Students' Welfare Policy.

a. Student-Centric Approach

Place students at the centre of all decision-making processes, policies, and initiatives, ensuring that their welfare and success are the primary focus.

b. Equity and Inclusivity

Foster an inclusive and equitable environment where diversity is celebrated, and every student has equal access to opportunities and support, regardless of their ethnic background.

c. Proactive support

Provision and timely support that anticipates and addresses the evolving needs and challenges of students throughout their academic journey.

d. Transparency and Communication

Maintain transparent communication channels with students, faculty, staff, and relevant stakeholders, ensuring that information about welfare services and policies is readily accessible.

e. Continuous Improvement

Continuously assess, evaluate, and adapt policies and programs to enhance their effectiveness and relevance to the evolving needs of the student body.

- f. Empowerment and Engagement:** Empower students to actively participate in shaping the implementation of relevant welfare policies and encouraging their involvement in decision-making processes.

g. Collaboration and Partnerships

Collaborate with internal and external partners, including community organisations, to expand resources and financial support available to students.

h. Accessibility

- i. Ensure that all support services, information, and facilities related to student welfare are easily accessible, including students with physical challenges.

j. Cultural Sensitivity

Be culturally sensitive and responsive to the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of students, and recognise and respect individual cultural differences.

k. Privacy and Confidentiality

Uphold the highest standards of privacy and confidentiality in providing student support services and respecting students' right to privacy.

l. Prevention and intervention

Implementing both preventive and intervention strategies to address issues related to mental health, academic challenges, financial difficulties, sexual harassment, gender based violence and safety concerns.

m. Accountability

Hold all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, service providers and students, accountable for their roles in promoting and upholding the university community's welfare.

n. Ethical responsibility

Operates in alignment with ethical principles, ensuring fairness, integrity, and ethical conduct in all aspects of students' welfare.

o. Sustainability

Promote sustainable practices in the implementation of students' welfare policy and other initiatives, considering their long-term impact on both students and the environment.

p. Flexibility and Adaptability

Be flexible and adaptable in responding to unforeseen challenges or crises, ensuring that welfare policy remains effective under all circumstances.

q. Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Base decisions on social studies, available data and evidence, utilising research and feedback from students to inform the development and adjustment of welfare programs.

r. Student empowerment empowers students to take ownership of their own well-being, providing them with tools, information, and resources to make informed decisions.

s. Safety First

Prioritise the physical and emotional safety of students and address safety concerns promptly and proactively, and adhere to safety guidelines for the university

These guiding principles serve as a compass for the implementation of the University Students' Welfare Policy, reinforcing the commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive educational environment in which every student can thrive and succeed. They guide the actions and decisions of the university community, as they work together to ensure the holistic well-being of students.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating a student welfare policy at a university is crucial to ensure that the policy is effective in promoting the well-being and success of students. Here is a general framework for monitoring and evaluating a student welfare policy:

Implementing a comprehensive university student welfare policy requires a robust system for monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness, relevance, and well-being of students.

9.1 Establish a Monitoring Committee

Create a committee responsible for overseeing policy implementation. This committee should consist of representatives from various university departments, including student affairs directorate, counselling services, academic services, and student representatives.

9.2 Establish Clear Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Define specific objectives and KPIs that are aligned with the goals of the student welfare policy. For example, objectives might include improving mental health support and reducing dropout rates.

9.3 Data Collection

Collect relevant data to assess the impact of the policy. This data can come from various sources, such as surveys, focus groups, academic records, and student feedback.

9.4 Regular Reporting

Develop a reporting mechanism to regularly collect and analyze data related to student welfare. This can be done on a quarterly, biannual, or annual basis.

9.5 Stakeholder Engagement

Involve students, faculty, staff, and relevant university departments in the monitoring and evaluation process. Their feedback and input can provide valuable insights.

9.6 Data Analysis

Analyze the collected data to measure the policy's impact on student welfare. Look for trends, patterns, and areas where the policy has been successful or needs improvement.

9.7 Review and Assess Programs and Services

Evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs and services offered as part of the student welfare policy, such as counseling services, academic support, or health programs.

9.8 Identify Challenges and Successes

Identify any challenges or barriers that hinder the policy's effectiveness. Also, highlight successful initiatives or interventions that have positively impacted student welfare.

9.9 Feedback and Adjustment

Use the evaluation findings to make necessary adjustments to the policy, programs, and services. Address any identified shortcomings and build on successful elements.

9.10 Cost-Benefit Analysis: Budget allocation

Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the policy. Determine if the resources allocated to the student welfare policy are delivering a good return on investment in terms of student success and well-being.

9.11 Legal and Ethical Compliance

Ensure that the student welfare policy complies with legal requirements and ethical standards, including privacy and confidentiality.

9.12 Continuous Improvement

Use the evaluation process as a basis for continuous improvement. Incorporate lessons learned into future iterations of the policy.

9.13 Communication

Communicate the results of the monitoring and evaluation process to the University community, including students, staff, and faculty.

9.14 Accountability

Assign responsibility for implementing changes and monitoring progress to specific individuals or teams within the university.

9.15 Timely Action

Take timely action based on the evaluation results to address identified issues and make improvements.

The key to a successful student welfare policy is a continuous improvement cycle based on data-driven decision-making. Regular monitoring and evaluation ensure that the policy remains effective in meeting the evolving needs of students and the university community. It also reflects the university's commitment to the well-being and success of its students.

10. Financial Implications

The implementation of a comprehensive university student welfare policy has several financial implications that need to be carefully considered and planned.

- a) **Student Orientation:** Allocate sufficient financial resources to support the various activities during the time of students orientation. This may include provision of transport, daily subsistence allowances or meals to the staff that facilitate the program.
- b) **International Student Services:** Allocate financial resources to fund the approved international student's activities. This may include a welcoming functions, familiarisation tours and employment of a native language teacher.
- c) **Infrastructure and Facilities:** Ensure that the university's physical infrastructure, ICT infrastructure, including buildings, classrooms, residential halls, and healthcare facilities, can adequately accommodate the needs of students, to promote academic excellence as outlined in the policy. Also ensure to allocate adequate funds to facilitate the short term trainings and fund the academic clubs.
- d) **Technology and Information Systems:** Invest in technology and information systems that facilitate the delivery of student services, data

collection, and communication. This could include the development of online platforms, student information systems, and data analytics tools.

- e) **Career Services:** Invest in career development services, job placement programs, internships, and employer partnerships to enhance students' employability and career prospects.
- f) **Student Engagement and Activities:** Provide funding for student clubs, organisations, and extracurricular activities that promote personal growth, leadership, and community engagement.
- g) **Outreach and Community Initiatives:** Allocate resources for community outreach programs, partnerships with local organisations, and social responsibility initiatives that extend support to the wider community.
- h) **Financial Aid and Scholarships:** Budget for financial aid programs and scholarships to provide assistance to students with financial needs. This may involve increasing the financial aid pool or creating new opportunities for scholarships. This may also include allocating funds for student's emergency financial needs.
- i) **Wellness and Health Services:** Allocate funds for healthcare services, wellness programs, counselling centres, and mental health resources to promote the physical and mental well-being of students. Also allocate funding of the approved sporting activities such as transport, meal and sporting facilities.
- j) **Housing and Accommodation:** Budget for the construction, maintenance, and improvement of student housing facilities to ensure safe and affordable housing options for students.
- k) **Safety and Security:** Invest campus safety measures, security personnel, emergency response systems, and safety infrastructure to ensure the physical safety of students. Also allocate funding for safety and security awareness campaigns.
- l) **Environmental Sustainability Initiatives:** Budget for sustainability programs and environmental awareness campaigns as part of the policy's commitment to sustainable practices.

- m) **Feedback Mechanisms:** Set aside funds for the implementation of feedback mechanisms, surveys, and assessment tools to gather input from students and stakeholders and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy.
- n) **Research and Evaluation:** Allocate resources for research efforts and external assessments to evaluate the impact of the policy, gather data, and inform future policy enhancements.
- o) **Training and Professional Development:** Invest in training and professional development programs for university staff and faculty to ensure they are equipped to support the policy's objectives effectively.
- p) **Administrative Costs:** Consider funding the administrative costs associated with policy implementation, such as policy development, monitoring, reporting, and compliance efforts.
- q) **Long-Term Planning:** Develop a long-term financial plan that outlines how the university intends to sustain the financial commitments associated with the policy over the years.
- r) **Revenue Generation:** Explore opportunities for revenue generation, such as philanthropic donations, grants, partnerships, and fundraising campaigns to support policy initiatives.

It is crucial for the university to conduct a thorough financial assessment and create a budget that aligns with the objectives of the university students' welfare policy. The allocation of financial resources should prioritise the well-being and success of students while ensuring the institution's long-term financial sustainability. Additionally, financial transparency and accountability should be maintained to demonstrate responsible stewardship of resources to stakeholders.