

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



ADMISSIONS POLICY

Status

Approval Date

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| List of Abbreviations | iv |
| Definition of Terms | iv |
| 1.0 Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Background | 1 |
| 1.2 Policy Objectives | 1 |
| 1.3 Legal Framework..... | 1 |
| 1.4 Interpretation and Administration | 2 |
| 1.4.1 Interpretation..... | 2 |
| 1.4.2 Administration | 2 |
| 2.0 Policy Scope | 2 |
| 3.0 Admissions Principles | 2 |
| 3.1 Fair Admissions..... | 2 |
| 3.2 Application Cohort..... | 3 |
| 3.3 Application Fees..... | 3 |
| 3.4 Review..... | 3 |
| 3.5 Training..... | 3 |
| 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities..... | 3 |
| 4.1 The University Council | 3 |
| 4.2 The Senate | 3 |
| 4.3 The Admissions Committee..... | 4 |
| 4.4 The College/School/Faculty/ Institute..... | 4 |
| 4.5 The DRGT Board | 4 |
| 4.6 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs)..... | 4 |
| 4.7 The Academic Registrar will:..... | 4 |
| 4.7.1 Undergraduate Admissions Office will be responsible for: | 4 |
| 4.7.2 Postgraduate Admissions Office will be responsible for :..... | 4 |
| 4.8 The Applicant | 5 |
| 5.1 Avenues for Entry to the University | 5 |
| 5.2 Application..... | 5 |
| 5.3 International Applicants..... | 5 |
| 6.0 Selection for Admission | 6 |
| 6.1 Undergraduate Weighting Criteria..... | 6 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 6.2 Postgraduate Selection..... | 6 |
| 6.3 Applicants with Disability..... | 6 |
| 6.4 Equity and Inclusiveness..... | 7 |
| 7.0 Confirmation of Admission..... | 7 |
| 8.0 Appeals | 7 |
| 9.0 Retention and Disposal of application materials | 7 |
| 10.0 Data Protection..... | 7 |
| 11.0 Terms and conditions | 7 |
| Appendix I: Budget..... | 8 |

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|---|
| MUST | Mbarara University of Science and Technology |
| UOTIA | Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001 (as amended) |
| NCHE | Uganda National Council for Higher Education |
| DRGT | Directorate of Research and Graduate Training |
| QA | Quality Assurance |

Definition of Terms

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Admissions Committee | means MUST Admissions Committee |
| Senate | means MUST Senate |
| University Council | means MUST University Council |
| Admission Cycle | Admission Cycle starts at the time when the office of the Academic Registrar calls for applications for a given academic year until the closing date of applications within that academic year. It normally starts in January and ends in August. |
| Application Cohort | All applicants who submit applications within a given call for applications or within a given application deadline. |
| Disability | "A condition in which someone is not able to use part of their body or brain properly" (Macmillan English Dictionary). |
| Fraud | Cases of impersonation, falsification of documents or giving false/incomplete information pertaining to the application. |

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The admission of students is one of the most critical activities of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST). The task is carried out on behalf of the University Senate by the Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee has been dependent on the UOTIA (2001) amended, the NCHE quality Assurance Framework and the respective statutory instruments as specified by the UOTIA (2001).

The Policy spells out clear, consistent and structured principles and guidelines for admission of students to all the University programmes. The policy will apply to the admission of all categories of students to accredited programmes.

MUST is committed to ensuring that its admissions process is carried out in a fair, transparent, consistent and expeditious manner; that admissions is done in accordance with the relevant laws, taking into account equity and affirmative action for disadvantaged groups; and that applicant data is held with the highest level of confidentiality.

The University is committed to equality in education. Students are selected on the basis of their individual merits, abilities and aptitudes. The University may, on the basis of affirmative action, give preferential treatment to certain categories of applicants especially on the basis of gender, disability or district/country of origin.

Through this policy, the University aims to offer clear advice and guidance to prospective applicants to enable them make informed choices and to apply to programmes appropriate to their interests, academic qualifications and potential.

Admission is subject to the availability of places. Where there are limited places available, competition for places is often extremely high and as such the places are offered to the best performing candidates as per the specific entry requirements for the programme.

1.2 Policy Objectives

The objectives of the admissions policy are:

- i. To define the principles that the University will follow in selecting qualifying candidates for admission to all University programmes
- ii. To define the roles and responsibilities in the admissions process
- iii. To set out procedures for admission of students into the University that will ensure transparency and consistency in the admission process
- iv. To define the avenues of and eligibility criteria for entry into the University

1.3 Legal Framework

The Admissions Policy is in compliance with the following legislations:

- i. The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA), 2001 (as amended)
- ii. The Uganda National Council for Higher Education's Quality Assurance Framework

- iii. UOTIA, Statutory Instrument No. 62, 2007 (Equating Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates)
- iv. UOTIA, Statutory Instrument No. 63, 2007 (Minimum Entry Requirements for Admissions to Universities or Other Tertiary Institutions)
- v. UOTIA, Statutory Instrument No. 34, 2008 (the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Quality Assurance) Regulations)

1.4 Interpretation and Administration

1.4.1 Interpretation

- i. The University Council will be responsible for approval of the policy.
- ii. The University Senate will be the final authority in definition, interpretation, application of this policy.

1.4.2 Administration

- i. The Vice Chancellor will oversee the implementation of the policy.
- ii. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) will be responsible for implementing the policy as stipulated in Sec 34 (3) of the UOTIA (2001)
- iii. The Academic Registrar will be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the policy as stipulated in Sec 34 (3) of the UOTIA (2001).
- iv. The DRGT, Deans and HODs will ensure that they comply with the provisions of the policy as stipulated in Sec 48 and 49 of UOTIA (2001) amended
- v. The policy will be subject to review by the University Council.

2.0 Policy Scope

The policy will cover all aspects of admission that is from application through to approval of admission for undergraduate, postgraduate and post doc programmes of the University.

3.0 Admissions Principles

3.1 Fair Admissions

- i. The Policy aims to be fair, transparent and consistent.
- ii. The University seeks to admit the highest caliber of candidates with the merit, potential and motivation to benefit from and succeed at MUST and contribute to community development, regardless of age, disability, race, nationality, gender, religion, marital status, parental status or other personal circumstances.
- iii. Each applicant will be considered on his/her merit and in competition with the rest of the applicant cohort in a given admissions cycle.
- iv. Each application is to be viewed holistically; assessing the merit, potential, motivation, skills and qualities of applicants by considering all information presented on the application (i.e., academic achievements and qualifications, including O' level grades (or

equivalent), A' level grades (or equivalent), and/or other accepted qualifications, personal/motivation statement, where applicable and academic reference

- v. Applicants may, prior to being considered, be asked to provide additional information about themselves, the qualifications they have attained or course details (for example course content or their unit grade scale).

3.2 Application Cohort

- i. All applications received within an advertised deadline will be considered equally.
- ii. In order to give fair and equal consideration, applications may be held as part of a cohort and decision made on them as a group, selecting the most suitable candidates.

3.3 Application Fees

- i. The University may charge a non-refundable fee for application which will be set by the University Council on the advice of Senate.
- ii. The fees charged for application may be reviewed from time to time.

3.4 Review

- i. The University, through Council and Senate, monitors procedures and regularly reviews and updates admissions policies and procedures to keep them progressive.
- ii. Periodic reviews whenever done will be made public.

3.5 Training

- i. All academic and relevant administrative staff involved in admissions will receive either formal or informal training appropriate to their roles.
- ii. This training covers the relevant legislation and internal policies, procedures and guideline on admissions.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The University Council

- i. The University Council will, on the advice of Senate, set the eligibility and qualifications of persons for admission to all programmes of the University as prescribed by UOTIA section 45 2(c).
- ii. The fees charged for purposes of admission in to the University and tuition fees for all the University programmes will be as in the University Fees Policy.

4.2 The Senate

The Senate is responsible for advising the University Council on the eligibility and qualifications of persons for admission in to the University programmes. See UOTIA Section 45 (2).

4.3 The Admissions Committee

- i. The Admissions Committee is responsible, to the University Senate, for admission and ensuring that policies and procedures regarding student recruitment and admissions are operated fairly and consistently, and in line with the University's strategic aims and objectives and other relevant laws.
- ii. The Admissions Committee will, with the guidance of Senate, approve the number of students admitted per programme, taking into consideration the enrollment projections, staff, financial viability, infrastructure, and special national interest programmes.

4.4 The College/School/Faculty/ Institute

The College/School/Faculty/Institute will advise Senate on the qualification of persons to be admitted to the University programmes.

4.5 The DRGT Board

The DRGT Board will:

- i. advise the Admissions Committee on the Postgraduate admissions.
- ii. work with Colleges/Schools/Faculties/Institutes to ensure timely admission of postgraduate students
- iii. Bring to the attention of the Admissions Committee any issues pertinent to the admissions process

4.6 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs)

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) will be:

- i. the Chairperson of the Admissions Committee
- ii. responsible for the organization and administration of the admissions to the University.

4.7 The Academic Registrar will:

- i. assist the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) in the organization and administration of the University's admissions process.
- ii. be assisted in this process by the Undergraduate Admissions Office and the Postgraduate Admissions Office

4.7.1 Undergraduate Admissions Office will be responsible for:

- i. coordinating undergraduate admissions
- ii. bringing to the attention of the Admissions Committee any issues pertaining to the admissions process of undergraduate students

4.7.2 Postgraduate Admissions Office will be responsible for :

- i. coordinating postgraduate admissions

- ii. bringing to the attention of the Admissions Committee any issues pertaining to the admissions process of postgraduate students

4.8 The Applicant

The applicant will be responsible for providing accurate and consistent information to the University.

5.1 Avenues for Entry to the University

- i. Avenues for entry into the University will be based on the Admissions Guidelines, in line with the NCHE Statutory Instrument No. 63 and the QA Framework. This includes government and private admissions.
- ii. The University reserves the right of admission of applicants to its programmes

5.2 Application

- i. All undergraduate applications will be submitted to the Office of the Academic Registrar either in hard copy or through the online applications portal <https://applications.must.ac.ug>.
- ii. All postgraduate applications will be submitted to the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training either in hard copy or through the online applications portal <https://applications.must.ac.ug>.

5.3 International Applicants

All international applicants will be required to first obtain letter of equivalency for the qualifications they hold from Uganda National Examinations Board for Advanced level and Ordinary level equivalence and Uganda National Council for Higher Education for certificate, diploma and degree equivalence.

5.4 Government Admissions

- i. The University admits students on sponsorships awarded by the Government of Uganda under national merit, district quota, sports and disability schemes.
- ii. The selection of applicants is done jointly through the Public Universities' Joint Admissions Committee (PUJAC).
- iii. The Academic Registrar shall represent the University at PUJAC
- iv. Applications to the University on Government sponsorship under the national merit, district quota, sports and disability schemes shall be submitted to the Secretariat of the PUJAC.
- v. The representative of the University at PUJAC shall select eligible candidates to the different programmes as per approved capacities.
- vi. The Admissions Committee shall consider and admit the selected candidates into the University's programmes on government sponsorship

6.0 Selection for Admission

For Undergraduate programmes, the selection process will take into account the following:

- i. The intake capacity and budget projections of the programme
- ii. Achieved academic qualifications of the applicant
- iii. The academic institution where the previous qualifications were obtained
- iv. The applicant's performance at interview, where required
- v. An applicant's English language proficiency, where required ADDED
- vi. Calculated weight as per entry requirements of the programme applied to

For Postgraduate programmes, the selection process will take into account the following:

- i. The intake capacity and budget projections of the programme
- ii. Achieved academic qualifications of the applicant
- iii. The academic institution where the previous qualifications were obtained
- iv. The applicant's stated interest, commitment and motivation for study, where required
- v. Work or other non-academic experience, where required
- vi. Academic and/or professional references, where required
- vii. The applicant's performance at interview, where required
- viii. The applicant's portfolio or sample of written work, where required
- ix. The applicant's research concept/synopsis, where required
- x. An applicant's English language proficiency.

6.1 Undergraduate Weighting Criteria

The weighting criteria for selection of applicants will be as described in the Admissions Guidelines approved by Senate.

6.2 Postgraduate Selection

The specific selection criteria of postgraduate applicants for admissions will be based on the defined admission criteria approved by Senate.

6.3 Applicants with Disability

- i. The University is committed to promoting equal opportunities in line with existing policies and laws on persons with disabilities and actively encourages applications from students with disabilities.
- ii. Although there is no obligation for an applicant to disclose a disability, the University encourages applicants to disclose at an early stage in order that the Admissions Committee can decide on the applicants eligibility based on full facts of the disability
- vii. The Admissions Committee does not include the applicant's disability within the consideration of their potential to successfully undertake a programme of study, and the University makes every reasonable effort to accommodate an individual's support needs.
- iv. In exceptional circumstances, if the Admissions Committee has strong concerns about the applicant's ability to undertake the programme due to a disability or on the basis of Health and Safety Legislation, further discussion with the applicant and the Faculty/Institute and Dean of Students may be required prior to an offer being made.

6.4 Equity and Inclusiveness

The University will make special consideration while making admissions decision on applicants that will be considered disadvantaged in line with existing laws.

7.0 Confirmation of Admission

- i. The University will gazette the list of, communicate and issue admission letters to successful applicants, where possible, at least one month before the commencement of the new academic year which is usually in August every year.
- ii. There will be fees payable as approved by the University Council for purposes of picking admission letter

8.0 Appeals

- i. Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the decision made regarding their application, the applicant will express their dissatisfaction in writing, addressed to the Academic Registrar.
- ii. The appeal will be considered by an adhoc committee set up by the University Senate.
- iii. The Adhoc Committee will have Senate members who are not part of the University Senate.

9.0 Retention and Disposal of application materials

- i. Application material belongs to the University.
- ii. However the University will retain or dispose application materials as follows:
 - a. If applicant does not qualify for admission, the application form will be disposed following the university disposal policy at the end of the admission cycle.
 - b. If the applicant is admitted but does not register for the programme, the application material will be disposed one year from the time of admission.
 - c. If the applicant is admitted and becomes a student, the application material will not be destroyed but will be kept for as part of the student's records.

10.0 Data Protection

The University shall be responsible for data protection of applicants' data according to the laws of Uganda.

11.0 Terms and conditions

- i. The Policy will apply to all applications for undergraduate and postgraduate study.
- ii. The University will draw the policy to the attention of anyone who intends to apply.
- iii. The policy will be binding on all applicants.

- iv. Whereas the University will issue admission letters to successful applicants, the programme will only run if the number of students enrolled meets an approved threshold which threshold is determined by Senate.
- v. The University reserves the right to cancel an admission if there exist reasons it deems adequate for the cancellation.

Appendix I: Budget

| SN | Item | Unit Cost | Persons | Days | Total Cost |
|--------------|---|-----------|---------|------|-------------------|
| 1 | Printing and Publication of Policy | 1000 | 5,000 | | 5,000,000 |
| 2 | Facilitation for Trainers | 250,000 | 2 | 6 | 3,000,000 |
| 3 | Facilitation for Training of Admissions Committee Members | 50,000 | 20 | 2 | 2,000,000 |
| 4 | Facilitation for Training of Deans and Directors | 50,000 | 19 | 2 | 1,900,000 |
| 5 | Facilitation for Training of Heads of Departments | 50,000 | 25 | 2 | 2,500,000 |
| 6 | Notebooks | 5,000 | 200 | 1 | 1,000,000 |
| 7 | Pens | 2,000 | 200 | 1 | 400,000 |
| 8 | Refreshments | 2,000 | 100 | 1 | 200,000 |
| 9 | Venue | 1,000,000 | 1 | 4 | 4,000,000 |
| Total | | | | | 20,000,000 |

Appendix II: Acknowledgements

1. Solomon Agum – Assistant Registrar
2. Ms. Martha Kyoshaba Twinamasiko – Academic Registrar
3. Assoc. Prof. Nixon Kamukama – Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs)
4. The Admissions Committee
5. The Ad Hoc Committee on Policies
6. The University Senate
7. The University Council

Signed

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 Professor Celestino Obua
 Vice Chancellor



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 Mr. Melchoir K. Byaruhanga
 University Secretary

