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HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

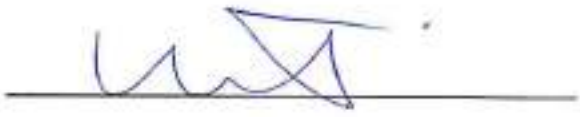
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1.0 Interpretation of Operational Terms of the Policy

(i) Hazard: is a danger or risk or any agent that can cause harm or damage to humans, property, or the environment.

(ii) Health: is the state of being free from illness or injury or a person's mental or physical condition or a state of complete emotional or physical well-being.

(iii) Occupational Stress: is stress related to one's job which often stems from unexpected responsibilities and pressures that do not align with a person's knowledge, skills, or expectations, inhibiting one's ability to cope.

(iv) Safety: is the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk or injury or the control of recognized hazards in order to achieve an acceptable level of risk.

1.1 Background of MRU

Muteesa I Royal University (MRU) was offered an operational license by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in 2005 and started its operations in 2007. The founding Chancellor of the University, who is also its Visitor, is His Majesty the Kabaka, Ronald MuwendaMutebi II.The genesis of modern education in Uganda is historically associated with the Kingdom of Buganda owing to the role that Sekabaka Muteesa I played in inviting the missionaries who introduced education in Uganda. Owing to this history, it is only befitting that the University was named after this visionary leader. Hence, the University was named after the 31st King of Buganda who was a monarch of great vision, Kabaka Muteesa I (1856-1884). MRU is a skills training, academic and research-oriented institution of higher learning that was established as a private institution. The initiative was promoted by the Executive Committee (EC) of the Buganda Kingdom, headed by the *Katikkiro* (i.e., Prime Minister).

1.2 Strategic Goals of MRU

The Strategic Goals of MRU are as follows:

i. To produce graduates with all-round competencies and skills to be able to initiate self-employment activities or compete for jobs in the global market;
ii. To promote research and encourage students and staff to publish;
iii. To build and expand collaboration and engagement with the community, the alumni, and industry and business, and to equip students with practical skills while empowering the community, industry &business to develop local solutions;
iv. To strengthen MRU's human resource capacity;
v. To achieve a sustainable financial resource base;
vi. To improve the administrative and organizational arrangements of MRU with a view to achieving efficiency and effectiveness in all sections of MRU; and
vii. To construct or acquire, rehabilitate and maintain buildings, equipment, implements, ICT facilities and land particularly for the growth and development of its niche.

1.3 Vision of MRU

The Vision of MRU is to be "a leading university responding to contemporary challenges through teaching and learning, research and technical guidance".

1.4 Mission of MRU

The Mission of MRU is "to provide training, research and technical guidance responsive to national socio–economic needs".

1.5 Core Values of MRU

The core values of MRU are as follows:

i. Professionalism; Professionalism is a trait that's highly valued in the human resource of any organization. It has many attributes, including: (a) Specialized knowledge, (b) Competency, (c) Honesty and integrity, (d) Respect, (e) Accountability, (f) Self-regulation, and (g) Image.
ii. Respect for Diversity;
iii. Cultural Sensitivity;
iv. Tenacity; and
v. Team Spirit.

2.0 Introduction of the Policy

MRU recognizes and is committed under Ugandan laws, to provide and maintain a safe, healthy and comfortable work environment for its staff, consumers and other visitors. MRU believes that a well-managed health and safety program is an integral part of good management practice. Thus, MRU shall have a comprehensive Occupational Health & Safety Policy. This policy covers staff, students, visitors and other users of its premises.

3.0 Objectives of the Policy

i. To ensure that MRU's Council and Management discharge their duties under the Health and Safety Policy at its workplaces; and
ii. Staff members have an obligation to ensure that they are thoroughly familiar with the content of this Policy.

4.0 Application of the Policy

This Policy shall be applicable to all persons charged with providing and maintaining a safe, healthy and comfortable work environment for staff, students, consumers and other visitors of MRU.

5.0 MRU's Commitment to Occupational Health and Safety

- In fulfilling its responsibilities, MRU will:

a) Comply with all statutory rules and accepted codes and practices relating to health and safety;

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b) Set short and long-term goals and specific responsibilities in the management of health and safety;
c) Develop Occupational Health & Safety Policy, procedures and guidelines;
d) Ensure all line managers understand and take responsibility for the Health and Safety process in each program area;
e) Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that staff members are aware of safe work practices, emergency procedures and any risks to Health and Safety in their work environment; and
f) Consult with staff and Occupational Health & Safety representatives on issues relating to health and safety.

- MRU will ensure that management or representatives have practical knowledge to take responsibility for:

i. Hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control;
ii. Health and Safety legislation, regulations and recognized standards;
iii. Specific Health and Safety issues within the workplace;
iv. Investigation of all diseases, injuries, near misses and accidents and formulate appropriate preventative action; and
v. Regularly monitor and review the implementation of and compliance with Occupational Health & Safety policies.

- MRU is Committed to Providing:

a) Safe equipment and working procedures including adequate ventilation, safe electrical connections, appropriate resources, clear passageways, etc.; and
b) Good facilities for the welfare of workers such as ergonomically sound furniture, kitchen and dining area, washrooms, and first aid kit.

- Staff Responsibilities and Involvement in Occupational Health & Safety:

a) The Occupational Health & Safety Act places obligations on employees to take care of their own health and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at the workplace;
b) It also provides for the involvement of employees in dealing with Health and Safety issues through the establishment of Designated Work Groups, the election of Health and Safety representatives and the establishment of Health and Safety Committees. Hence, MRU encourages and supports staff involvement through such mechanisms;
c) Staff will receive information, instruction and ongoing supervision on likely hazards and stresses of the job;
d) If a staff member is inexperienced in the use of a piece of equipment, training will be provided; and
e) All staff are expected to:

i. Practice safe working habits;
ii. Report unsafe working conditions or equipment;
iii. Keep their immediate work area in a safe and orderly condition;

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iv. Take care of others;
v. Cooperate with MRU in meeting the requirements of the Occupational Health & Safety Act;
vi. Accord the Health and Safety of non-employees, visitors, etc., a high priority; and
vii. Immediately report any hazards or faulty equipment to the Health and Safety Officer/Head of Department/Dean/Deputy Vice Chancellor (Finance and Administration).

- Managers responsible for MRU's Health and Safety have the overall responsibility for training in and implementation of this Policy;
- Staff should discuss any Occupational Health & Safety concerns with their line manager; and
- The observations and suggestions of all staff will be valued and every effort will be made to address all issues.

6.0 Occupational Health & Safety Representative

- MRU aims to support the functioning of the elected Occupational Health & Safety representatives;
- Staff members are encouraged to elect workplace Occupational Health & Safety representative; and
- MRU is obliged to and will:

a. Consult with the Health and Safety representatives on all proposed changes to the workplace and equipment and practices used in the workplace that may affect health and safety and welfare of staff;
b. Provide the health and safety representatives with access to any information on actual or potential hazards and the health, safety and welfare of staff;
c. Permit health and safety representatives to take such time off work with pay as is necessary for performing their functions or taking part in approved training courses; and
d. Provide such facilities and assistance as are necessary.

7.0 Training

- MRU has a commitment to providing training on a yearly basis for all staff in safe work practices.
- All team managers/Heads of Department/Units will be trained in the principles of Occupational Health & Safety management together with the appropriate hazard controls that are relevant to their area. Such training and information will include:

a. A legislative overview relevant to the workplace (including employer responsibility);
b. Consultative processes and issue resolution;
c. Hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control; and
d. Incident and accident investigation.

8.0 Occupational Stress

- MRU recognizes that hazards in the workplace are not just physical or chemical but can also exist in the way the organization functions and the way in which its work is organized. Occupational stress is a major concern and one that MRU aims to minimize through good practices in its management and operation; and
- Staff members are encouraged to do whatever is in their control to identify and manage potential stress risks.

9.0 Smoke Free Workplace

- MRU shall be smoke-free in all public and individual work areas. The following areas shall be smoke-free:

  a. Public areas, visitor reception areas;
  b. All work sites;
  c. All rooms in which meetings are regularly conducted, or in which a meeting is in progress; and
  d. Organizational vehicles.

10.0 Office Safety

- All work performed in MRU offices will be conducted using safe work practices; and
- Office and administrative areas will be maintained free of recognized hazards. Safe work practices mean:

a. Guarding the sharp edges of furniture to prevent personal injury;
b. Practicing good housekeeping, e.g., keeping floors free of items that might cause slipping, keeping waste cans out of the way, not overfilling containers, etc.;
c. Reporting all defects such as loose tiles, broken steps, railings and doors immediate to the offices of the Health and Safety Representative/Finance and Administration Manager, etc.;
d. Keeping sharp objects like razor blades in closed containers;
e. Using the proper tool for the job at hand (e.g., a staple remover to remove staples);
f. Not overloading electrical outlets, e.g., not plugging a multiple outlet strip such as an extension cord with multiple electrical receptacles, into a second multiple outlet strip;
g. Reporting promptly any damaged electrical cords, broken switches, loose connections, or bare wires to the Health and Safety Representative/Head of Department;
h. Unplugging any office machine that smokes, sparks, or delivers an electrical shock and having it inspected by the appropriate technical repair personnel;
i. Avoiding overloading the top drawers of filing cabinets to avoid its tipping when the drawers are opened – hence, drawers of file cabinets should be opened one at a time to prevent tipping;
j. Placing file cabinets where their use will not interfere with office traffic patterns;
k. Keeping file and desk drawers closed when not in use to help prevent tripping accidents;
l. Being sure to use proper lifting techniques and making arrangements with personnel skilled in shifting furniture and other heavy objects;
m. Using only safety step stools or ladders for climbing – swivel chairs should not be used as stepping stools;

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n. Being careful with flammable liquids i.e., only the quantity needed for use should be in the workplace. They should be kept and used in a ventilated area, away from excessive heat or ignition sources;
o. Ensuring that office doors are free of obstructions at all times to permit exits in case of an emergency;
p. Not covering air vents or obstructing airflow from registers – i.e., do not place furniture, equipment, or materials in locations that will interfere with air movement around thermostats;
q. Reporting any observed pest control problems to the Health and Safety Representatives and Finance and Administration Managers, hence:

i. The MRU offices and program environment will be as safe, non-institutional, accessible, comfortable and welcoming as possible;
ii. MRU will also be mindful of creating an environment that will be non-threatening: consumers and staff have the right to be free from physical, emotional and verbal abuse; and
iii. Staff should be sensitive to the needs and different behaviors of others without compromising the above.

r. Noise should be kept to a minimum in situations where the office is a shared environment;
s. Good facilities including a staff room and/or kitchen area and appropriate food stuffs (sugar, tea) will be provided for staff amenities for rest periods and meals breaks; and
t. Any foodstuffs above and beyond what is mentioned in this Policy will be purchased at staff member's expense.

11.0 Children in the Workplace

a. MRU shall have a flexible policy regarding children in the workplace;
b. In the event that a staff member is required to bring his/her children to work due to an emergency, he/she is encouraged to do so however approval needs to be sought from his/her supervisor/team manager;
c. The staff member is responsible for the children and must keep them occupied and not distract other staff members;
d. If the children will not be well looked after, they should not be brought to the office so as to minimize infection in the workplace. Staff can access careers leave for this purpose; and
e. In extraordinary circumstances where the children need to be brought in for an extended period prior approval needs to be sought from the Head of Department.

12.0 Workplace Violence

a. Violence in the workplace at MRU is totally unacceptable;
b. All clients and staff have the right to feel safe and to participate in programs and services in a non-threatening environment. A client who is violent will be asked to leave the workplace immediately. The incident may require making a report to the Police, if the act of violence amounts to a criminal offence;
c. A staff member who is violent or abusive will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in this Policy and other related MRU policies; and
d. Any behavior which constitutes a crime is subject to legal remedy and criminal or civil justice.

13.0 Procedures for Control of Infectious Diseases (Including Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS)

- Cases of infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis B in MRU could be very rare. However, it is important to re-emphasize basic hygiene and first aid procedures. These are relevant to many diseases and should be generally applied, not only to deal with the HIV or Hepatitis virus;
- Standard (universal) precautions should be applied to all staff regardless of their infection status. These precautions should be regarded as good hygiene practices and routinely adhered to as the basic level of infection control. They include:

    a. Routine washing of hands using soap and running water (including before and after use of gloves);
    b. Use of protective barriers such as latex gloves when dealing with body fluids, appropriate disposal of soiled material and needles/syringes; and
    c. Cleaning of surfaces that have been in contact with bodily fluids.

- There is need for MRU staff and members of the public to wash hands carefully using soap and water:

    a. Before eating, drinking and smoking;
    b. Before preparing food/beverages;
    c. After using nasal tissues/handkerchiefs;
    d. After using the toilet;
    e. After touching animals or their environment; and
    f. After contact with any bodily fluids.

- Staff members are encouraged to provide this information to their clients:

a. Team Managers should ensure that the workplace has its first aid cupboard stocked with a supply of 70% alcoholic chlorhexidine solution for disinfectant purposes;
b. First aid boxes should also include disposable plastic or latex gloves and one-way mouthpieces suitable for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation;
c. All staff should be reminded of the need for care in dealing with blood/body fluids and cases of external bleeding;
d. The following routine precautions should be observed when assisting any client or another staff member who has sustained a cut or similar injury involving a blood spill or when dealing with any other body fluid such as vomit, saliva, urine and feaces:

    i. Use disposable latex gloves when handling blood or other body fluids. Thoroughly wash lower arms and any other parts of the body in contact with or splashed by blood or fluids. After removing gloves, thoroughly wash hands. Use soap and running water when washing;
    ii. Wipe down benches or other items in contact with blood or body fluids with cold water and detergent and then with an approved disinfectant, for example, household bleach (sodium hypochlorite), freshly diluted to 0.5%;
    iii. Wash/sponge carpeted areas with soap and cold water - place disposable items and wastes after contact with blood or body fluids in a plastic bag and seal for disposal; and

iv. Thoroughly wash instruments (e.g., scissors) in cold tap water to remove any blood. Instruments can be effectively sterilized by soaking them for 30 minutes in household bleach.

- Client and Staff Confidentiality and Infectious Diseases

i. It is important that all employees understand what giving/receiving confidential information regarding a client or another staff member's medical condition or information of a personal nature means;
ii. There is no legal obligation for persons infected with a contagious/infectious disease, such as HIV or Hepatitis B, to inform the workplace. However, some staff may choose to inform Team Managers of their condition; and
iii. The Team Manager must respect the confidentiality of such advice.

- First Aid

i. MRU recognizes that in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Legislation it has a responsibility to provide first aid assistance to staff that sustain an injury while on MRU premises; and
ii. To achieve these responsibilities, MRU shall, as far as is reasonably practicable, provide services such as:

a. Trained and certificated first aiders;
b. First aid supplies; and
c. Emergency/evacuation procedures.

- All workers will be provided with practical instruction about the following:

i. First aid facilities in the workplace;
ii. The location of the first aid kit;
iii. The names and work locations of trained first aiders; and
iv. Procedures to be followed when first aid is required.

- First Aid Kit:

a. A First Aid Kit is kept in MRU's site;
b. The Corporate Services staff members are responsible for ensuring it remains stocked and up-to-date;
c. Kit contents must be replenished as soon as possible after use;
d. Monthly inventory checks should be made and recorded to determine if the contents are as listed and have not deteriorated; and
e. All first aid injuries and treatments must be recorded and reported immediately to the Occupational Health & Safety Representative.

14 Environmentally Sustainable Workplace

- Sustaining the environment means organizing ways of working to minimize environmental damage. This includes minimizing the use of non-renewable energy and resources;
- Staff members at MRU are encouraged to become actively involved in protecting their working environment and the health of the planet and to limit the use of resources such as paper, electricity and plastic in the workplace;
- Care should be taken that products used at MRU are, wherever possible, environmentally friendly. Chemical cleaners and insecticides should be avoided. Plastic containers and bags should be used sparingly;
- MRU will recycle all glass, plastic and paper waste where possible. Staff members are encouraged to re-use and recycle as many resources as possible;
- Staff members are encouraged to minimize paper use through recycling it in the workplace and using both sides of the paper before disposal; and
- MRU will, wherever possible, purchase products with high recycle content. MRU will conserve energy through:

i. Checking energy ratings before buying new equipment;
ii. Turning off lights, and office equipment when not in use (this also helps reduce greenhouse emissions);
iii. Reduce water use by installing dual flush cisterns; and
iv. In the kitchen staff members are encouraged to use ceramic mugs not plastic cups.

- Fire Emergency

Every employee must know the location of fire extinguishers and fire blankets and be familiar with the fire alarm system.

- The first person to observe a fire should:

a. Immediately sound the fire alarm by activating nearest fire alarm pull station;
b. Report fire to the Fire Brigade;
c. If possible, use available fire extinguishers to extinguish or contain the fire. If the fire is fuelled by a natural gas or LP gas leak, the gas supply should be shut off prior to extinguishing the fire; and
d. Immediately evacuate the area should the initial firefighting attempts fail. Shut off gas supplies, etc. Close door to area to contain the fire.

- General Emergency Guidelines: in the event of an emergency situation these two guidelines should be followed:

i. Assess Risk to Yourself and Others: i.e., think before acting;
ii. Protect Yourself and Others: if necessary, remove yourself and others from the area; and
iii. Immediately remove any contaminated clothing and wash any part of the body contaminated by chemicals or radioactive materials. do not spread the contamination to clean areas; attend to anyone injured; close off the area to personnel (e.g., close

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doors, post warnings); turn-off any potential ignition sources; cover spilled powders with suitable liquids to reduce dust; and notify the Radiation Safety Office.

- Staff Identification

All staff members are required to wear MRU identification badges, which displays the name of the staff member plus the MRU logo. Badges must be worn at all times when in contact with clients and agencies related to MRU business.

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