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## EMPLOYEE DISABILITY POLICY

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Signature by Chairman Council

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## 1.0 Interpretation of Operational Terms of the Policy

### (i) Person-With-Disability:

A disability is a condition or function judged to result in significant impairment relative to the usual standard of an individual. The term is used to refer to individual functioning including physical impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness and various chronic diseases. There may be effects on organs or body parts and there may be effects on a person's participation in areas of life. Three dimensions of disability are recognized:

- a) Body structure and function and the impairment thereof;
- b) Activity restrictions; and
- c) Participation restrictions.

A person with a disability is defined as an individual whose prospects of securing and retaining suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of physical or mental impairment. People are considered to be disabled once they have met all the criteria in the following definition:

- a) Having a physical or mental impairment;
- b) Which is long-term or recurring; and
- c) Which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in employment?

## 1.1 Background of MRU

Muteesa I Royal University (MRU) was offered an operational license by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHÉ) 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 Muwenda Mutebi 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 *Katikiro* (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 will try to impress upon funds to which employees contribute that they must maintain a non-discriminatory attitude towards persons with special needs and to treat such persons in a similar manner as non-disabled persons. No person should be denied access to Pension or Retirement funds on the grounds of disability alone provided that they fulfil initial criteria for admission.

### 3.0 Objectives of the Policy

- i) Integrate and mainstream disability across social development practices and into existing departmental policies, strategies and programmes that are aligned to departmental mandates;
- ii) Facilitate transformation shifts within the department and society as a whole regarding disability issues;
- iii) Define the role of social development in service provision to people with disabilities;

- iv) Facilitate development and implementation of an integrated and comprehensive social security system; and
- v) Serve as overarching policy framework on disability within the department

#### 4.0 Application of the Policy

This policy shall be applicable to all persons charged with mainstreaming disability issues at MRU.

#### 5.0 Information Programme: Disability in the Workplace and in the Community

##### a) Education and Information:

All employees of MRU must be informed and educated through on-going disability awareness and sensitization programmes. The objectives of the education and information programmes are to:

- i) Impart a basic knowledge about disability and related issues, e.g., reasonable accommodation;
- ii) Eliminate discrimination against Persons-With-Disabilities through dispelling any ignorance about different types of disabilities and the basic needs to accommodate persons with disabilities; and
- iii) Protection of Persons-With-Disabilities against discrimination through applicable legislation.

##### b) Employee Benefit Scheme

MRU will endeavor to ensure that employees with disabilities will not be discriminated against with regard to employee benefits.

##### c) Medical Aid Schemes:

MRU will try to impress upon medical aid funds to which employees contribute that a non-discriminatory attitude towards Persons-With-Disabilities must be maintained and to treat such persons in a similar manner as non-disabled persons. Normal benefits should be available to all who qualify as "disabled."

##### d) Pension/Retirement Funds

#### 6.0 Managing Persons-With-Disabilities

- i) Should an employee become disabled while in the employment of MRU, a work assessment and recommendation for reasonable accommodation in their current employment must be done. A re-assessment may be done for skills, competency and suggestions in order to reasonably accommodate the employee in another Department and/or Section for as long as is practicably possible; and
- ii) Employees with disabilities will be governed without distinction or discrimination to existing sick leave allocations (sick leave policy). Persons with special needs should be given appropriate training, support and development opportunities in various skills in

order to be able to reach his/her full potential. This is especially important in view of the lack of training opportunities for Persons-With-Disabilities have had in the past. It is also important that training be aimed not only at entry level posts but also for more senior positions because Persons-With-Disabilities have traditionally been employed in junior posts.

## 7.0 Emergency and Disaster Plan

The plan provides for an emergency plan to be implemented for employees working on the different floors of the main building and in different buildings of MRU. Evacuation of persons with special needs should not be a prevention or exclusion to access the workplace on any of MRU's buildings with more than one floor, nor would that be applicable to prevent employment of persons with special needs in any other MRU building. Appropriate equipment such as an evacuation chair for Persons-With-Disabilities to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency should be made available.

## 8.0 Process Implementation

- i) MRU's Human Resources Department is responsible for the monitoring of the implementation of a Policy for Persons-With-Disabilities;
- ii) Management is responsible for the implementation of this policy in terms of the necessary processes, systems and procedures;
- iii) Line managers are responsible for adhering to the policy as well as the processes and procedures. The Human Resources Department is responsible for the administration processes and the provision of management information;
- iv) Employees with disabilities have the right not to be dismissed unfairly on the basis of their disability;
- v) Should an employee become disabled while in the service of MRU, every effort should be made to accommodate that employee either in an alternative position or at an alternative work station. This is especially important for employees who are injured on duty; and
- vi) Should an employee have been ill or injured and it appears that the employee is not able to perform the inherent job requirements, the employee may then be required to agree to a FUNCTIONAL DETERMINATION OF DISABILITY. This shall be to assess whether the employee can safely perform the job requirements and to identify possible reasonable accommodation for the employee. If all efforts to provide reasonable accommodation for the employee are unsuccessful, the capability procedure must be followed. MRU must ensure that as far as possible, the employee's right to confidentiality is maintained during an incapacity proceeding.

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