

**CHUKA**



**UNIVERSITY**

**CHUKA UNIVERSITY  
STAFF EDUCATION SUPPORT FUND POLICY**

## OVERVIEW OF CHUKA UNIVERSITY

In 1956, the Chuka community built a Craft Centre to train school leavers to acquire skills that could be useful in nation building. The Centre was upgraded to a Youth Polytechnic in 1969. In 2003, the community felt that they needed an institution that could provide higher education and training access to the people of eastern Kenya and Kenya at large. At that time no institution in the eastern part of Kenya had the capability of educating and training students at diploma and degree levels and as a result education and training opportunities were limited. During the same time, Egerton University was planning to open a Campus in eastern Kenya. The community then approached Egerton University who found Chuka to be centrally placed and, therefore, suitable for the establishment of a university campus.

In an effort to get land for the Campus, the Chuka community donated the Ndagani Youth Polytechnic and Sports Stadium. In addition, the Presbyterian Church donated more land on institutions forming the Ndagani Education Complex, which included the Secondary and Primary Schools. The Chuka community also added a further 500 acres at Kairini in Meru South District to make the total land area 550 acres.

On 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2004, when H. E. President Mwai Kibaki visited Chuka and held a meeting at Ndagani (the present location of Chuka University), the community through their leaders informed him of their desire to establish a university in the area. Among the dignitaries who attended the meeting were members of parliament from the Greater Meru and senior Government officials. The President supported the aspirations of the people of Meru and pledged Government's support to establish a university at the site. Due to the goodwill of the Government, Egerton University Council approved the establishment of a Campus, named Egerton University Eastern Campus. The Campus was then launched on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2004. The Youth Polytechnic was then relocated to another site.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2007, H.E. President Mwai Kibaki elevated the Egerton University Eastern Campus to Chuka University College through Legal Notice Number 161 of 2007. On 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2007, H.E. President Mwai Kibaki visited and inaugurated the Chuka University College. After about five years, H.E. President Mwai Kibaki visited again and inaugurated the Chuka University on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2013, making it the 2<sup>nd</sup> public university to be chartered and the 9<sup>th</sup> full-fledged public university in Kenya.

The University is located within the Chuka Municipality in Meru South District, Tharaka-Nithi County. It is situated approximately 186 km from Nairobi along the Nairobi-Meru Highway on the slopes of the snow-capped Mt. Kenya at an altitude of approximately 2,000 m above sea level. The area provides a cool climatic environment, with 16°C to 24°C temperatures and an annual average rainfall of about 1,000 mm, excellent for learning and working.

The University is designated as a centre of excellence in Environmental and Renewable Energy Studies and offers university education, training and research at certificate, diploma, bachelors, masters and doctorate degree levels in Education and Resources

Development, Business Studies, Agriculture and Environmental Studies, Arts and Humanities, and Science and Technology.

### **Philosophy**

Chuka University believes that sustainable national and global development can be achieved through nurturing an intellectual culture that integrates theory with practice to produce graduates with relevant knowledge, skills and responsible citizenry. The Institution also believes that education and training leads to social cohesion, human and economic development. This can be realized through passion for excellence, devotion to duty, accountability, prudent utilisation of resources, corporate citizenship, and teamwork.

To actualise these beliefs, the University is committed to generation, preservation and sharing of knowledge for effective leadership in education, training, research and extension. The ultimate goal of Chuka University is to be a Premier University for the provision of quality education, training, research and extension in both basic and applied environmental and related studies.

### **Vision**

To be a Premier University for the provision of quality education, training and research for sustainable national and global development

### **Mission**

To generate, preserve and share knowledge for effective leadership in higher education, training, research and outreach through nurturing an intellectual culture that integrates theory with practice and innovation

### **Core Values**

- (1) Passion for excellence and devotion to duty
- (2) Integrity, transparency and accountability
- (3) Social fairness
- (4) Professionalism
- (5) Timeliness
- (6) Prudent use of resources
- (7) Corporate citizenship
- (8) Customer focus
- (9) Teamwork
- (10) Confidentiality

### **Mandates**

The Mandates of Chuka University are enshrined in its **objects** and **functions**.

The **objects** of the University shall be to–

- (a) Provide directly, or in collaboration with other institutions of higher learning, facilities for quality university education, including technological, scientific and professional education, and the integration of teaching, research, outreach and

effective application of knowledge and skills to the life, work and welfare of the citizens of Kenya;

- (b) Provide and advance university education and training to appropriately qualified candidates, leading to the conferment of degrees and award of diplomas and certificates and such other qualifications as the Council and the Senate shall from time-to-time determine and in so doing, contribute to realisation of sustainable national economic and social development;
- (c) Provide programmes, products, and services in ways that reflect the principles of equity and social justice.

The **functions** of the University shall be to–

- (a) Participate in technological innovation as well as discovery, transmission, preservation and enhancement of knowledge, and stimulate the intellectual participation of students in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and technological development of Kenya;
- (b) Inculcate a culture of lifelong learning, responsible citizenry and innovation in technology, engineering and mathematics within the institution and society;
- (c) Engage in teaching, training, scholarship, entrepreneurship, research, consultancy, community service, among other educational services and products, with emphasis on technology and its development, impact and application to society;
- (d) Conduct examinations for and grant such academic awards as may be provided for in the Statutes, and syndicate examinations for award at other institutions as may be approved by Senate; and
- (e) Facilitate the development and provision of appropriate academic programmes, and community services.

## 1.0 Preamble

The need for higher education in Kenya has been increasing in **the** last decade, especially with the introduction of academic programmes for self-sponsored students in public **universities** where students directly bear the cost of their education and training.

**Self-Sponsored Programmes (SSP)** are taught mostly outside the official working hours for staff. That is in the evening and during the holidays. At times self-sponsored students are integrated with regular students and are taught together during the official working hours.

Self-Sponsored Programmes are, however, expensive to finance for staff in public universities and their families. Consequently, staff **members**, particularly through the trade unions that negotiate their terms of service, have made cases to the University Managements for financial support during their studies, by way of waiver of tuition fees. In some cases, the matter has been addressed through the respective Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA'S) signed with respective **university councils**. Some **universities** have used the education support fund as a form of motivation to their staff.

### 1.1. Procedures followed by selected Public universities

A sample survey of the current state of financial support to staff and/or their dependants for these programmes shows public universities handle the issue of staff education support fund differently as indicated in the following summary.

#### a) Egerton University

- The University allocates funds every financial year to support members of staff, who have children pursuing Diplomas or Bachelors degree programmes in local or overseas Universities.
- The amount payable will be as approved by the University management and **varies** from time-to-time and is distributed equally to Egerton University **staff members** who apply for help.
- Members of Staff, their spouses and children studying at Egerton University are also given tuition fees waiver as follows:

#### (i). Staff Members

- Staff who are in regular programmes get **100%** fee waiver
- Staff pursuing SSP Programmes get **fee waiver of 65%** for males & **75%** for females.

#### (ii) Spouse & Children

- A spouse or a child belonging to a member of staff and who is in University records and is studying at Egerton University is granted **50%** on self sponsored and regular programmes.
- **Paid study leave? See UoN**

**b) University of Nairobi**

- University of Nairobi (UoN) grants financial support only to students studying in its own programmes to a max of two children at any given time and at rates that are determined by the financial status of the University.
- Application for and award of the support is done annually. The support remains in force even when the staff member exits University service through retirement or death.
- UoN may also grant paid study leave to its staff, upon mutual agreement and, provided the area of study is relevant to the employee's job area. Under the circumstance the employee receives only 80% of basic pay as per Government policy on studies for public officers. Such staffs are then bonded to work for the University for at least three yrs upon completion of their studies.
- For the teaching staff, the University at times receives **donor-funded** scholarships which depend on the donor **eligibility** criteria.

**c) Kenyatta University**

- Kenyatta University (KU) offers education support to children of staff, one child at a time and only those studying in KU.
- KU grants annual fees waiver at the following rates:
  - Joint Admission Board (JAB) students Kshs. 20,000/=
  - SSP students Kshs. 40,000/=
- The University does not extend this facility to its staff or their spouses.

**d) Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)**

- The University has a scholarship support **scheme** for children of staff (biological and/or legally adopted) only for undergraduate students studying at JKUAT.
- The support covers tuition, examination, computer, internet, library, field/academic trip, and attachment fees at the following rates:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> child 80% of payable fees;
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> child 60% of payable fees;
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> child 40% of payable fees.
- Continued support depends on examination success in the previous year and on condition the member remains an employee of the University.
- JKUAT may also grant study leave to its staff, upon mutual agreement and, provided the area of study is relevant to the employee's job area. Under the circumstance the employee receives only 80% of the basic pay as per Government policy on studies for public officers.

**e) Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)**

- The University extends cover for tuition fees to staff dependants for undergraduate programmes of MMUST at the rate of 50% of the **annual** tuition fees.

- The above facility is, however, not extended to staff who are taking undergraduate studies Nonetheless, staff are entitled to the following annual support rates for the specified MMUST programmes as follows:
  - Ph.D./ Masters – Kshs. 50,000/=
  - Diploma – Kshs. 30,000/=
  - Certificate courses – Kshs. 20,000/=

*The rates and extent of cover are under review.*

## **2.0. Case for Chuka University College**

- Chuka University College does not have an existing policy on how to assist staff or their dependants in financing education.
- The University College Council has in the last two years allocated Education Funds to assist members of staff who have children in CUC and various universities to partially pay their fees
- Available records show that:
  - In 2009/2010 financial year the University College allocated Ksh 1.2 Million for “Staff Education Fund”. The money was not utilized because there was no policy in place for distribution of the funds to deserving applicants.
  - In 2010/2011 financial year, the University College further allocated Kshs. 600,000 for “Staff Education Fund”. This budgetary allocation is yet to be spent.

### **Noted that:**

- Failure to utilize Staff Education Fund for two consecutive years calls for the need to have a clear policy on the distribution of Education Fund to deserving Chuka University College staff members who apply for assistance.
- The office of the Deputy Principal (A,F&P) has developed a policy paper on how Staff Education Fund should be distributed among Chuka University staff who apply for assistance.
- The policy paper should be discussed and adopted by Chuka University Management Board.
- For the time being, CUC has been borrowing its operating policies from Egerton University, **Njoro**.
- **If** CUC adopts the policy used by Egerton University to distribute Staff Education Fund:
  - The fund has to be shared equally among eligible staff to cover their children’s tuition fees. Only **one member per what?** of CUC staff is eligible for assistance in any given **financial year**
  - Members of staff should apply for reimbursement on production of original receipts showing that fees had been paid.

- Egerton University approach does not take into account such factors as the differentials in the fees structures for various programmes e.g. Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate, Masters, PhD etc. This method allows only one child per family to benefit. Staff members are not covered by the fund.
- Based on the practice in other public universities and the policy in place at Egerton University, the following issues require further discussion and/or determination:

### **Which programme/s will be covered by the Education fund at Chuka University?**

There is need to specify the programmes that can enjoy assistance from the staff education fund: i.e. Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate, Masters or Ph.D.

- a) There is need to specify the location of the programmes to be supported from the funds. For instance should the fund assist children taking Chuka University College programmes only Or even those offered in CUC, Overseas Universities and other public universities. If the later is acceptable in what ratio should the funds be distributed?
- b) Who should benefit from the staff education funds? Should the members of staff; spouse; or children all benefit? How many children should benefit from the funds?
- c) To what extent should the education fund cover? Should the fund cover a certain percentage of total fees charged for a programme or should the funds be distributed equally among eligible staff members at an agreed fixed rate; or should the assistance be based on availability of finances.

### **2.1 PROPOSED SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are suggestions/recommendations for consideration by Chuka University Management:

- (a) That disbursement of Staff Education fund allocation should be based on percentage of fees charged by each programme to ensure equity due to fees differentials for different programmes. The rates should be as follows:
  - (i) A child studying a **diploma** or **undergraduate** programme at Chuka University College = 80% of payable fees.
  - (ii) A child studying **diploma** or **undergraduate** programme in any other public or private university/university college = 60% of payable fees.
- (b) A **biological** child or legally adopted child studying a diploma or undergraduate programme should benefit from staff education funds.
- (c) **Only one child at a given time should benefit.**
- (d) That support should cover Tuition Fees only.



- (e) That a member of staff or his/her spouse is not eligible to benefit from the staff education fund. This cadre can pay for education by themselves and are also well covered by the current CBA.
- (f) That the approved allocation of Ksh 1.2 M and Ksh 600,000 for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, respectively, should be disbursed before the end of the current financial year on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2011. **Are those funds still available?**
- (g) These recommendations should be reviewed from time to time to accommodate future increase of beneficiaries and availability of funds.

The Management of Chuka University College is requested to **adopt, consider and** approve the above recommendations.