



# CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH AND ALLIED SCIENCES - BUGANDO

---

## **CUHAS POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON SUPPORT FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**2026**

Approved by the 58<sup>th</sup> Council on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026

## Table of Contents

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	iii
CHAPTER ONE .....	4
OVERVIEW, POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND RATIONALE.....	4
1.1 Special needs: An Overview .....	4
1.1.1 Special Needs Prevalence.....	5
1.1.2 Categories of special needs.....	5
1.2 Policy Environment .....	6
1.2.1 Staff with Special needs.....	6
1.2.2 Students with special needs .....	7
1.2.3 CUHAS' Stance on Special Needs .....	8
1.3 Rationale for the CUHAS' Special needs Policy .....	8
1.4 Principles of the CUHAS' Special Needs Policy.....	10
1.5 Goal .....	11
1.6 Objectives .....	11
1.6.1 Staff with special needs. ....	12
1.6.2 Students with special needs. ....	12
1.7 Scope .....	12
1.8 Definition of terms.....	13
CHAPTER TWO.....	14
SWOT ANALYSIS.....	14
2.1 Strengths .....	14
2.2 Weaknesses.....	14
2.3 Opportunities .....	14
2.4 Threats .....	15
CHAPTER THREE.....	16
3.1 Institutional Coordination on Special Needs Services .....	16
3.1.1 Policy issues .....	16
3.1.2 Policy Statement.....	16
3.1.3 Strategies .....	16
3.2 Infrastructures and Facilities .....	16
3.2.1 Policy Issues .....	16
3.2.2 Policy statement.....	16
3.2.3 Strategies .....	17
3.3 Recruitment .....	17
3.3.1 Policy Issues .....	17
3.3.2 Policy Statement.....	17
3.4 Personal Safety and Security .....	17
3.4.1 Policy issues .....	17
3.4.2 Policy Statement.....	17
3.4.3 Strategies .....	17
3.5 Health Care Services .....	18
3.5.1 Policy issues .....	18
3.5.2 Policy Statement.....	18
3.5.3 Strategies .....	18
3.6 Counselling services.....	18
3.6.1 Policy issues .....	18
3.6.2 Policy Statement.....	18
3.6.3 Strategies .....	18

3.7. Admission of Students with special needs.....	19
3.7.1. Policy issues .....	19
3.7.2. Policy Statement.....	19
CHAPTER FIVE .....	23
GOVERNANCE OF THE POLICY.....	23
5.0 Organization and Mandate .....	23
5.1 The roles of different stakeholders .....	23
5.1.1 The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST).....	23
5.1.2. Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning, Finance and Administration).....	23
5.1.3. Non state agencies (CBOs, FBOs, NGOs and international organizations) 24	
5.1.4. Schools, Institutes, Directorate, Dean of Students Office and Gender Desk Unit 24	
5.1.5. CUHAS Administrative Organs .....	24
CHAPTER SIX.....	25
MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....	25
6.1. Purpose of Monitoring and Evaluation.....	25
6.2. Implementation.....	25
6.3. Policy Review.....	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	26

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BMC	· Bugando Medical Centre
CUHAS	- Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences
CBOs	· Community Based Organizations
CCTV	· Closed Circuit Television
CRPD	· Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities
DVC	· Deputy Vice Chancellor
FBOs	· Faith-Based Organisations
HESLB	· Higher Education Students Loan Board
ICT	· Information and Communication Technology
MoEST	· Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NGO	· Non-Governmental Organisation
SWOT	- Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TCU	- Tanzania Commission for Universities
TEC	Tanzania Episcopal Conference
UDHR	- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCRPD	- United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities
UNDRDP	- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons

## CHAPTER ONE

### OVERVIEW, POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND RATIONALE

#### 1.1 Special needs: An Overview

Special needs refer to conditions - physical, mental, intellectual, sensory, or health-related - that require additional support, services, or accommodations to enable an individual to participate fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with others. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) on the other hand, defines special needs as a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This is in line with the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 9 of 2010 and National Policy on Disability 2004 that conceptualizes special needs as a loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical, mental or social factors. Such a loss or limitation could be aggravated by the community's perception of persons with special needs.

Over the years, two models have been used to conceptualize the term special needs: medical and social model of special needs. The medical model perceives special needs as originating within the person with impairment. Consequently, persons with special needs are viewed as objects to be treated, changed or improved and made more normal to fit into the society/education system. This is contrary to basic human rights as all human beings are equal and are entitled to equal rights irrespective of their differences in color, tribe, gender and religion. The social model attributes to special needs environmental factors, which may act as a barrier to education access, participation and productivity to persons with special needs due to societal limitations in response to their needs.

Regarding the causes of special needs in Tanzania, there is no comprehensive and reliable data and statistics. However, the following factors are associated with the rising numbers of people with special needs:

- i. Limited access to health care
- ii. Poor health conditions

- iii. Poverty and malnutrition among people with special needs
- iv. Inadequate care of expectant mothers and birth complications
- v. Misinformation on possible sources of disabilities.
- vi. Illness
- vii. Medicines and injections
- viii. Dangerous working conditions
- ix. Accidents
- x. Lack of immunization against disabling diseases
- xi. Violence against women and children

### **1.1.1 Special Needs Prevalence**

According to the 2022 Tanzania National Population and Housing Census, approximately 11% of the Tanzanian population have special needs issues. This marks an increase from the 9.3% reported in the 2012 census. Regarding the types of special needs

- Visual impairments remain the most prevalent.
- Physical impairments follow closely.
- Intellectual disabilities are also significant.

Special needs prevalence is generally higher in Tanzania Mainland compared to Zanzibar, likely due to the larger population size on the Mainland.

At CUHAS, as of 2025, there are 15 students and 1 staff member with various special needs, continuing the institution's commitment to inclusivity and support for persons with special needs

### **1.1.2 Categories of special needs**

Literature categorizes special needs into six major groups: sensory impairment (visual, hearing and deaf-blind), physical impairment, intellectual disability, emotional and behavioral disorders, communication disorders, autism spectrum disorders (Hallahan, Kauffman and Pullen 2012; Heward, 2013). In Tanzania, special needs is

categorized into six groups: physical, visual, hearing, intellectual, multiple impairment and others (National disability policy, 2004).

However, categories of special needs which can be found in most higher learning Institutions in Tanzania include:

- i. Sensory impairment (Visual, Hearing and Deaf-blind especially moderate cases)
- ii. Physical impairment
- iii. Health challenges
- iv. Communication disorders

## **1.2 Policy Environment**

### **1.2.1 Staff with Special needs**

#### ***International Instruments***

The principles that inform this policy are consistent with underlying international labour standards, particularly the landmark Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159). Tanzania has localized most of its provisions especially through its National Policy on Disability of 2004 and the Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 9 of 2010.

#### ***National Instruments***

The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, Article 11 (1) states that, the state authority shall make appropriate provisions for the realization of a person's right to work, and it also states that the state authority shall make provisions to ensure that every person earns his or her livelihood.

Furthermore, the Constitution, Article 22 and 23 protects the right to work without prejudice: 22.-(1) every person has the right to work.

(2) Every citizen is entitled to equal opportunity and right to equal terms to hold any office or discharge any function under the state authority.

23.-(1) every person, without discrimination of any kind, is entitled to remuneration commensurate with his work, and all persons working according to their ability shall

be remunerated according to the measure and qualification for the work.

(2) Every person who works is entitled to just remuneration.

Employment and Labour Relations Act No.8 of 2006 Cap. 366

Section 7 (4) (l) prohibits direct or indirect discrimination of employees because of special needs and Sec. 37 (3) (b) (ii) consider termination of employees because of special needs unfair.

The Persons with Disabilities Act No. 9 of 2010, section 34 (1) obligates employers to provide a supportive working environment for persons with special needs. It is stipulated that the employer has an obligation to ensure safe and healthy working conditions for all employees with Special needs; protect employees with Special needs from harassment; permit employees with Special needs to exercise their labour and trade union rights in accordance with any relevant law and enable employed persons with special needs to have effective access to general, technical and vocational guidance and continuing training for their career and advancement

### **1.2.2 Students with special needs**

#### **International Instruments**

The Salamanca Statement, which the Government of Tanzania ratified in 1994, is an international instrument that pioneers universal inclusive education approach.

It espouses the spirit that educational facilities should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, or linguistic conditions. The key principle of this statement is that all learners should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties of difference they may have. In that respect, educational facilities should respond to the diverse needs of their learners, accommodating all differences, styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities.

The statement calls for a continuum of support and services to match the range of special needs encountered in every educational facility.

## **National Instruments**

The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania Article 11(3) (3) states, the Government shall make efforts to ensure that all persons are afforded equal and sufficient opportunity to pursue education and vocational training in all levels of schools and other institutions of learning.

The spirit of the Salamanca Statement is localized in the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 9 of 2010, section 27 (1) which provides that persons with special needs in all ages and gender shall have same rights to education, training in inclusive settings and the benefits of research as other citizens.

Furthermore, the TCU (2019) Guideline 6.1.2 compels every University to ensure that various physical facilities available for use: teaching, learning and other functions comply with the applicable laws in the construction industry as well as national public health laws that among others take care of issues of safety and convenient use by all categories of people including those with physical disabilities.

### **1.2.3 CUHAS' Stance on Special Needs**

The current Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences Rolling Strategic Plan 2021/2022-2025/2026 mentions the intention to enhance a culture of inclusion through Equity and Access for staff and students with special needs

While over the years, the University has made substantial investments towards the inclusion of students and staff with special needs, these efforts have not been guided by a specific policy or strategy, necessitating the need to develop the Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences policy and procedures on support for staff and students with special needs.

### **1.3 Rationale for the CUHAS' Special needs Policy**

Efforts to improve access to education and other public services is a major concern to persons with special needs worldwide and Tanzania in particular. This has been emphasized in various international and national instruments on special needs including United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disability [UNCRPD, 2006], Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), and the United Nations Declaration on the right of Disabled persons (UNDRDP, 1975). Others include the Salamanca Statement and Framework of Action on Special Needs Education, National Disability Policy of 2004, Persons with Disabilities Act of 2010

and the National strategy on inclusive Education (2018- 2021).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disability [UNCRPD9, 2006], article 24 emphasizes the right to education for persons with special needs. The article recognizes equal opportunity to education for persons with special needs without discrimination. It calls for governments to provide reasonable accommodation of the individuals' requirements and support required within the general education system. Article 9 of the declaration requires state parties to ensure equal accessibility to persons with special needs in different services provided to the public including: accessibility to physical environment, transportation, information and communications. This calls for education system including higher education systems to take appropriate measures to eliminate barriers to the accessibility of infrastructures, educational materials, information and examinations. Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) recognizes the right to access public services. The article requires governments to improve access to all services provided in the society including access to education, infrastructures, transportation as well as information to all people including those with special needs. Tanzania, like other African countries, has taken various measures to improve access to education and other public services to persons with special needs. The measures include signing the international and local policies/guidelines that address disability issues such as United Nations Declaration on the right of Disabled persons 1975 (DRDP) which emphasizes that all persons with special needs have the same rights as other persons. Other measures involve provision of education at all levels, proper medical care, job training and placement as well as vocational and social guidance. At the local level, Tanzania has taken measures to address special needs issues by formulating various policy guidelines/strategies such as National disability policy of 2004, Persons with Disabilities Act of 2010 and the National strategy on Inclusive education-2018-2021. The National disability policy of 2004 supports article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disability (UNCRPD, 2006] on accessibility issues to persons with special needs. It reinforces Tanzania government to ensure access to education to students with special needs as well as accessibility to public buildings and other facilities.

The Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences has been supporting students

with special needs since 2003. To date, the University provides support to 15 students and 1 staff with three different categories of disabilities; albinism, physical challenges and hearing impairment

The increase in the enrolment poses challenges in responding to individual unique learning needs and management issues due to lack of special needs policy to guide the provision of services to the staff and students with special needs.

In this regard, the proposed policy will guide the provision of services and enabling environment to allow persons with special needs thrive as equal members of the University community. It will also guarantee inclusive environment, empowerment and integration of students and staff with special needs at CUHAS. The policy will further ensure that students and staff with special needs are entitled to all rights and freedoms set forth without discrimination.

Additionally, the policy will serve as a guiding document in promoting and protecting the fundamental human rights of students and staff with special needs.

Lastly, the policy will provide opportunity for students and staff with special needs at CUHAS to be actively involved in decision making processes. It is now high time for the University to develop and implement policy on special needs to support National, Regional and international measures towards addressing discriminations and promoting equal access to education and other public services to persons with special needs

#### **1.4 Principles of the CUHAS' Special Needs Policy**

- i. **Respect of diversity and non-discrimination:**
  - a) CUHAS community shall accept and respect the inherent differences of students and staff with special needs
  - b) CUHAS community shall respect for inherent dignity and individual autonomy.
- ii. **Accessibility:**
  - a) Students and staff with special needs will be guaranteed a conducive atmosphere to access different services provided by CUHAS.
  - b) CUHAS shall ensure access to education that is responsive to

- student's unique needs.
- c) CUHAS shall ensure provision of accessible and usable learning/working resources and environment to students and staff with special needs.
- iii. **Equal Participation:**
  - a) Students and staff with special needs will be given an avenue with a good environment to participate in various CUHAS activities and decision making
  - b) Provision of appropriate support services for every student and staff with special needs to ensure that their unique needs are met.
- iv. Social justice: Ensuring fairness when engaging with students and staff with special needs.

### **1.5 Goal**

The aim of this policy is to outline the principles and provisions that would guide the Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences towards becoming a universally accessible and supportive university for staff and students with special needs.

The policy offers an overarching framework for promoting universal access for people with special needs. It does this by designating appropriate structures, guidelines and processes that guide the inclusion of staff and students with special needs on campus.

### **1.6 Objectives**

The objective of this policy is to provide practical guidance on the management of special needs issues at the Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences and more specifically to:

- i. Ensure prospective and current staff and students with special needs are not discriminated during provision of its services.
- ii. Ensure that anticipatory action is taken as far as is reasonably practicable to provide inclusive working, learning and teaching and access to University facilities and services.
- iii. Ensure that wherever possible, reasonable adjustments are put in place for staff and students with special needs to enhance their productivity.
- iv. Provide equality of opportunity for students and staff with special needs to

promote their recruitment, retention, development and progression.

- v. Promote a positive working and learning environment for students and staff with special needs.

In that respect, the specific objectives of the policy to staff and students with special needs are:

#### **1.6.1 Staff with special needs.**

- a) Ensuring that staff with special needs have equal opportunities at the University.
- b) Maximizing the contributions/potentials, which staff with special needs can make to the University.
- c) Facilitating recruitment, return to work, job retention and opportunities for advancement to improve persons with special needs' employment prospects at the University.
- d) Promoting a safe, accessible and healthy workplace for staff with special needs.

#### **1.6.2 Students with special needs.**

- a) Identification of students with special needs at CUHAS
- b) Providing equal access to academic and social opportunities through reasonable adjustments.
- c) Creating an atmosphere where students with special needs acquire the needed skills and confidence to self-disclose and self-advocate in an academic, social, or work environment.
- d) Supporting the work of Students Welfare and Estate Departments by ensuring that reasonable accommodations are properly and effectively administered without compromising the academic integrity of CUHAS
- e) Providing programmes and information to students that increase awareness on special needs issues.
- f) Providing special guidance and counselling services to students with special needs

#### **1.7 Scope**

This policy applies to all students and staff (academic and administrative/technical

staff), as well as individuals who have a contractual work relationship with the CUHAS, including service providers. Each member of the CUHAS community has a responsibility of familiarizing herself/himself with this policy to ensure that her/his conduct does not violate the principles and the spirit of this policy.

In this respect, this policy applies to CUHAS as a whole that is the physical and non-physical environment of living, learning and teaching, which includes the academic, co-curricular and community spaces

### **1.8 Definition of terms**

The following definitions are taken on board in accordance with medical and social model of special needs, special needs -related policies and guidelines and other national and international instruments on special needs

#### **Person with Special needs:**

An individual with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, sensory or psychosocial impairments which, in interaction with barriers, may hinder full participation.

#### **Student with a Special Needs:**

A student who has a diagnosed or recognized disability requiring reasonable accommodation.

#### **Discrimination:**

Any distinction or exclusion based solely on disability.

#### **Universal Access:**

Removal of physical, social, cultural and procedural barriers.

#### **Impairment**

A loss or limitation of physical, mental or sensory function on a long term or permanent basis.

#### **Hidden disability**

A disability that is not readily apparent upon casual interaction with a person. These include diagnosed chronic illnesses that significantly impede a person's ability to live a normal life.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SWOT ANALYSIS**

In an attempt to address special needs issues, CUHAS had to analyze its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats as presented below;

#### **2.1 Strengths**

According to the objectives of CUHAS Policy and Procedures on support staff and students with special needs, there is a distinct consideration for the students with special needs in terms of the following:

- i. Incremental experience over the years on admitting students and recruiting staff with special needs, which is a necessary foundation for sustainable and effective interventions beneficial to people with special needs.
- ii. CUHAS also has special accommodation arrangement for students with special needs (they all get accommodation accordingly on campus).
- iii. The students with special needs have opportunity to participate in CUHAS Students politics and acquire leadership positions.

#### **2.2 Weaknesses**

There are however certain areas that can be termed as setbacks for students and staff with special needs at CUHAS:

- i. There is no proper mechanism in place for identifying student's special needs before they physically arrive to customize preparation for them.
  - ii. There is no specialized Education Support and Resource Assessment Unit for identification and assessment of staff and students with special needs; to determine the specific reasonable support they need to thrive at the University.

#### **2.3. Opportunities**

- i. HELSB 100% provides loan assistance to CUHAS students with special needs so that they live with less inconvenience while studying.
- ii. The staff with special needs have opportunity to get the available and convenient accommodation at CUHAS Mwatex- house
- iii. Possibility of formally organizing students with special needs in an association to allow for their active involvement in issues of their concern.

- iv. Availability of technical expertise internally and externally capable of providing technical support on special needs inclusion at the University and possibility of increasing internal capacity.
- v. Increasingly available technological and innovative approaches to improving inclusion in educational settings.
- vi. Availability of non-state actors and networks supporting inclusive education, which offers opportunity for building and expanding partnerships.

#### **2.4.Threats**

- 2.4.1. Students with special needs over-expectation of support they can get from the University.
- 2.4.2. The risk of overlooking hidden disabilities due to lack of capacity for special needs assessment and exclusive focus on perceivable disabilities.
- 2.4.3. Special needs inclusion is still relatively weak in the national investments' frameworks/agendas/structures in general, hence limited partnerships and continuity of support.
- 2.4.4. Special needs specialization is being offered in the context of education training instead of being a standalone-crosscutting programme such as gender studies.
- 2.4.5. Limited knowledge and understanding of special needs -inclusive education and inclusive workplace.
- 2.4.6. A serious need for the CUHAS to revisit its budget to suit the needs of staff and students with special needs that is, materials, infrastructures and human capital.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **MAJOR INTERVENTION AREAS, POLICY ISSUES, POLICY STATEMENTS AND STRATEGIES**

#### **3.1. Institutional Coordination on Special Needs Services**

##### **3.1.1. Policy issues**

The notable challenges respective to coordination of special needs services at CUHAS include:

The Dean of Students' office has focused its services to students with special needs, but it has overlooked staff with special needs who lack a formal identified organ at CUHAS responsible to cater for their unique needs.

##### **3.1.2. Policy Statement**

The University will endeavor to strengthen the Dean of Students office and the Directorate of Human Resources and Administration

##### **3.1.3. Strategies**

The University shall:

3.1.3.1. Provide capacity building to its staff on special needs issues.

3.1.3.2. Coordinate all special needs issues at CUHAS.

More specifically, they shall:

3.1.3.2.1. Receive and respond to all special needs -related queries from within and beyond the University.

3.1.3.2.2. Oversee the delivery of specific special needs support and services for staff and students with special needs at the University

#### **3.2. Infrastructures and Facilities**

##### **3.2.1. Policy Issues**

Most of the University's infrastructures and facilities; including offices, administrative blocks, seminar and classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, student halls of residence, libraries, hostels, cafeterias, and other learning and training facilities are partially aligned with universal design standards

##### **3.2.2. Policy statement**

The University shall implement a constellation of measures to ensure people with

diverse abilities are able to use University's facilities and infrastructures comfortably and safely, as far as possible without special assistance.

### **3.2.3. Strategies**

The University shall:

- 3.2.3.1. Adapt a universal design and construction guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Trainings to ensure all university buildings are accessible to all university community members.

## **3.3. Recruitment**

### **3.3.1. Policy Issues**

- 3.3.1.1. Lack of a clear University guideline on the recruitment of staff with special needs

### **3.3.2. Policy Statement**

The University shall ensure a conducive policy environment for hiring, training, equipping and supporting staff with special needs

### **Strategies**

The University shall:

- 3.3.2.1. Develop a guideline for hiring, training, equipping and supporting staff with special needs
- 3.3.2.2. Provide preferential employment opportunities for qualified academic and administrative staff with special needs

## **3.4. Personal Safety and Security**

### **3.4.1. Policy issues**

Staff and students with special needs may have a comparatively higher risk of experiencing theft, rape or sexual harassment, especially from people who are familiar with their patterns of life.

### **3.4.2. Policy Statement**

The University will continue to take strategic measures to sustain and increase personal safety and security for all its members, and particularly staff and students with special needs

### **3.4.3. Strategies**

The University shall:

3.4.3.1. Priority shall be given to staff and students with special needs when allocating accommodation within the University campuses. This is intended to enhance safety, accessibility, and convenience for individuals with special needs

3.4.3.2. Undertake measures to redress personal safety and security threats to staff and students with special needs

The measures will include but not limited to:

3.4.3.2.1. To develop and orient staff and students with special needs with the security protocols to ensure their personal safety and security.

3.4.3.2.2. To allocate security guards to all halls of residence for students

3.4.3.2.3. To install CCTV cameras to all halls of residence for students

### **3.5. Health Care Services**

#### **3.5.1. Policy issues**

Staff and students with special needs at the University face significant barriers in accessing timely, appropriate, and equitable healthcare services on campus

#### **3.5.2. Policy Statement**

The University in collaboration with Bugando Medical Centre will ensure optimal, timely and equitable health care services is provided to staff and students with special needs at the campus

#### **3.5.3. Strategies**

The University shall:

3.5.3.1. Ensure students and staff with special needs access specialized health care services on time at Bugando Medical Centre

### **3.6. Counselling services**

#### **3.6.1. Policy issues**

Counselling for students and staff with special needs is often reactive instead of proactive, which may delay addressing their specific needs

#### **3.6.2. Policy Statement**

Dean of Students and the Directorate of Human Resources and Administration offices will endeavor to build their capacity to identify and provide appropriate services to students and staff with special needs

#### **3.6.3. Strategies**

The University shall:

3.6.3.1. Adopt a proactive guidance and counselling model where it will not only be responsive to students and staff seeking counselling on their own, but also establish an effective early warning identification system and reaching out to all students and staff who may manifest indicators of needing such services, especially those with special needs

3.6.3.2. Build capacities of their counsellors to enable them competently provide services to individuals with special needs

### **3.7. Admission of Students with special needs**

#### **3.7.1. Policy issues**

There is currently no clear University regulation or guideline governing the admission of applicants with special needs

#### **3.7.2. Policy Statement**

CUHAS shall strive to ensure that the admission process is reasonably inclusive to all applicants, particularly those with special needs

#### **Strategies**

The University shall:

3.7.2.1. Pioneer the development of a regulation to guide the admission of applicants with special needs

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SPECIAL NEEDS CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO UNDERTAKE DEGREE AND DIPLOMA PROGRAM

#### 4.1. Purpose

This policy establishes criteria for admitting students with special needs into degree and diploma programmes at the Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences (CUHAS), effective from the 2025/2026 academic year. The objective is to uphold inclusivity while maintaining professional, ethical, and safety standards in health and allied health training

#### 4.2. Scope

This policy applies to all diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate programmes offered by CUHAS

##### **Diploma Programmes:**

- Diploma in Pharmaceutical Sciences (DPS)
- Diploma in Medical Laboratory Sciences (DMLS)
- Diploma in Diagnostic Radiography (DDR)

##### **Undergraduate/Degree Programmes:**

- Doctor of Medicine (MD)
- Bachelor of Pharmacy (BPHARM)
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing Education (BSNE)
- Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences (BMLS)
- Bachelor of Science in Medical Imaging and Radiotherapy (BSc MIR)

**Postgraduate Programmes:** Master of Public Health, Master of Medicine, MSc Nursing, MSc Microbiology, MSc Epidemiology & Biostatistics and PhD

### 4.3. Guiding Principles

4.3.1. Admission shall be merit-based while considering the applicant’s ability to acquire essential competencies and perform safely in clinical or professional settings.

4.3.2. Reasonable accommodations shall be provided to eligible students.

4.3.3. Special needs listed as Not Acceptable are those which, even with accommodations, compromise competence, patient safety, or professional standards.

4.3.4. Decisions will be guided by medical fitness assessments and professional requirements of respective programmes.

#### 4.3.5 Admission criteria by Special needs category

SN	TYPE	ACCEPTABLE	NOT ACCEPTABLE
1	Physical	Amputations; Arthritis; Albinism	Paralysis; Severe cerebral palsy; Severe spinal cord injuries
2	Sensory	Low vision; Partial hearing loss	Blindness; Deafness
3	Intellectual	None	Down syndrome; Fragile X syndrome; Severe developmental delays
4	Learning	None	Dyslexia; Dysgraphia; Dyscalculia; Dyspraxia
5	Neurodevelopmental & Autism Spectrum	Tourette syndrome (mild)	Severe Autism Spectrum Disorder; Severe/unmanaged ADHD
6	Psychosocial / Mental Health	OCD; PTSD; Depression; Anxiety (stable)	Bipolar disorder (severe); Schizophrenia
7	Chronic Illnesses	Diabetes; Controlled epilepsy; HIV/AIDS; Cancer (in remission); Fibromyalgia; Chronic fatigue	Uncontrolled epilepsy; Advanced progressive conditions
8	Communication	Stuttering (mild)	Aphasia; Severe dysarthria; Severe apraxia
9	Invisible / Hidden	Chronic pain; Lupus (stable); Migraines; Autoimmune disorders	Multiple sclerosis (advanced)

#### **4.4. Policy Implementation**

4.4.1. The Admissions Committee shall enforce this policy during selection.

4.4.2. Dean of Students office shall coordinate assessments, accommodations, and follow-up.

4.4.3. The Filled Medical forms of selected students during registration will be reviewed by CUHAS Medical Officer.

#### **4.5. Legal and Regulatory Framework**

- The Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 9 of 2010 of Tanzania
- The Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB) and Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) Guidelines on student admission and support.
- The Medical Council of Tanganyika and professional councils' requirements for medical and allied health practice.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2006), ratified by Tanzania.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **GOVERNANCE OF THE POLICY**

#### **5.0 Organization and Mandate**

The office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning, Finance and Administration) shall be an overseer of the implementation of all activities stipulated in the policy. Thus, the office of the DVC-PFA shall have the mandate to ensure that Dean of Students office, Directorate of Human Resources and Administration, Schools and Institute comply with the policy and procedures on support for staff and students with special needs

#### **5.1 The roles of different stakeholders**

The implementation of this Policy shall be held by various stakeholders outside and inside CUHAS who provide services directly or indirectly to staff and students with special needs including Government agencies and Non-Government Organizations.

Stakeholders within CUHAS include the following: The office of DVC (Planning, Finance and Administration), Dean of Students, Director of Human Resources and Administration, Schools, Institute, Gender Desk Unit and Bugando Medical Centre. The stakeholders shall implement the policy according to strategies stipulated in the policy document.

##### **5.1.1 The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST)**

The MoEST Shall:

- Collaborate with CUHAS on various projects and activities on disabilities

##### **5.1.2. Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning, Finance and Administration)**

The office shall:

- i. Oversee and monitor the implementation of the policy objectives.

- ii. Allocate special budget to address unique needs of staff and students with special needs
- iii. Ensure employment of staff with special needs adheres to the requirement stipulated by People with Disability Act of 2010.
- iv. Enhance reasonable adjustment to its infrastructures and environment to respond to the unique needs of students and staff with special needs
- v. Ensure that Schools, Units, Institutes, Directorate and Bugando Medical Centre provide services that respond to the needs of students and staff with special needs

**5.1.3. Non state agencies (CBOs, FBOs, NGOs and international organizations)**

They shall:

- i. Fund/collaborate with CUHAS on various projects and activities on special needs.

**5.1.4. Schools, Institutes, Directorate, Dean of Students Office and Gender Desk Unit**

They shall:

- i. Implement directives concerning students and staff with special needs the University top management.
- ii. Provide appropriate services to students and staff with special needs according to their specified needs.
- iii. Encourage its academic and administrative staff to provide services/support to students and staff with special needs according to this policy

**5.1.5. CUHAS Administrative Organs**

Shall:

- i. Ensure the provision of their services respond to this Policy

**5.1.6. Bugando Medical Centre**

- i. Provides optimal equitable health care services to meet essential health care needs to staff and students with special needs consistent with types of their special needs on time

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

#### **6.1.Purpose of Monitoring and Evaluation**

The aim of monitoring and evaluation of this policy is to obtain feedback on the progress of the implementation of the policy and assess the outcomes against its original objectives and expectations. Similarly, evaluation is also vital in appraising the overall CUHAS policy on special needs provisions in relation to its objectives. Specifically, evaluation will focus on the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the agreed strategies. Monitoring and evaluation shall be carried out at all levels of the University. The DVC (Planning, Finance and Administration office) shall coordinate and facilitate the support needed for organization, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

#### **6.2.Implementation**

The implementation of this Policy on special needs requires collective commitment of all stakeholders. In that regard, the implementation will be participatory, involving all stakeholders.

#### **6.3.Policy Review**

The CUHAS Policy and Procedures on support for staff and students with special needs shall be reviewed after every five years to appraise its effectiveness and incorporate new developments, amendments and strategic plans within the University.

The DVC (Planning, Finance and Administration) shall constitute a review team and mandate it to undertake the review exercise.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- African Union. (2003). *The African charter on human and people's rights on the rights of women in Africa- Maputo Protocol*. Maputo, Mozambique: African Union.
- Burgstahler, S. (2012). *Universal Design in Education: Principles and Applications: An approach to ensure that educational programmes serve all students*. USA: University of Washington
- Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences (2021). CUHAS 2021/22-2025/26 Rolling Strategic Plan. Mwanza, Tanzania
- Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences (2018). Human Resources Manual. Mwanza, Tanzania.
- International Labour Organization. (1983). *Vocational rehabilitation and employment (Disabled persons) convention (159)*. Geneva: International Labour Organization
- Kenyatta University. (2014). *Disability policy and procedures*. Nairobi, Kenya: Kenyatta University.
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). (2016). *National strategy on inclusive education (2018- 2021)*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: MoEST.
- Ministry of Health and Social Work. (2010). *The Persons with Disabilities Act*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: MHSW.
- Ministry of Labour, Youth Development and Sports. (2004). *National policy on disability*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: MLYDS.
- Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. (2014). *Education and training policy*: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: MoEVT.
- Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU). (2019). *TCU handbook for standard and guidelines for University Education in Tanzania, (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania:
- TCU.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The UNESCO Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
- United Nations. (1948). *United Nations universal declaration of human rights*. New

York, NY: United Nations.

United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities*. New York, NY: United Nations.

United Nations. (1975). *Declaration on the right of Disabled persons 1975 (DRDP)*. New York, NY: United Nations.

United Nations (2015). *Sustainable development goals*. New York, NY: United

Nations. United Republic of Tanzania (URT). (1977). *the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: National Legislative Bodies.

University of Dar es salaam (2022) Policy on Disability and Special Education needs. Dar es salaam, Tanzania; Dar es Salaam University Press.