



**Kepler College**

# Student Handbook

Academic Registrar Office  
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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AR: Academic Registrar

DAS: Director of Academic Support

DFD: Director of Faculty Development

DVC AR: Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic and Research Affairs

DOF: Department of Finance

ICT: Information Communication Technology

IT: Information Technology

KASP: Kepler College Academic Success Plan

KC: Kepler College

MAA: Manager of Academic Advising

MSA: Manager of Student Affairs

SG: Student Guild

VC: Vice Chancellor

## FOREWORD

This Kepler College Student Handbook is designed to promote student awareness and appreciation of the various aspects of campus life at Kepler College. It contains necessary and useful information which will help students understand their privileges, rights, and responsibilities.

Kepler College has a responsibility to maintain order within the Kepler College community and to discipline those who violate its standards, rules, values, and/or policies. Enrollment requires students to share this responsibility. Students agree to abide by the standards, rules, and/or policies set in this Student Handbook. Student organizations/associations also agree to follow these standards, rules, and/or policies.

The office of Student Affairs has the responsibility to enforce the implementation of the terms and conditions stated in this handbook to run the policies in accordance with the procedures and protocols set. *The Student Handbook* is reviewed and revised on (at least) an annual basis in a collaborative process involving representatives from all Kepler College departments taking into account ideas and suggestions from students, student organizations, faculty, staff, and Kepler College committees.

In the event of disagreement or misunderstanding of any item presented in this handbook, the official interpretation rests with the Vice-Chancellor, or if the item is included in the Kepler College Statute Document, with the Kepler College Governance Council. The Kepler College retains the right to revise or update any of the provisions in this policy at any time.

Prof. Baylie Damtie Yeshita  
Vice-Chancellor, Kepler College

## Section 0: Introduction

The Kepler College Student's Handbook is a summarized introduction to what a student expects when they enroll in the Kepler College program. The handbook covers a broad range of areas, including governance, student services, safety and security, admission, teaching and learning management, and the students' associations. It guides students on rules, regulations, and the expected general conduct of students at Kepler College. The handbook also highlights students' academic responsibilities and general examination regulations.

Kepler College provides all its students and faculty with an enabling environment to improve their academic and social well-being to lead productive and fulfilling lives. It is Kepler College's intention to ensure an interactive and stimulating environment that will enable all students to achieve the highest intellectual growth and prepare them for further education specializations. All Kepler College expects from students is mutual respect for regulations and respect for other students' and staff's personal rights and freedoms in order to live harmoniously to achieve personal academic aspirations.

All students at Kepler College are required to have and properly keep a copy of this Student Handbook. Kepler College further expects them to thoroughly read and internalize all the contents. Students must always use this handbook for reference on all matters pertaining to discipline and academic activities.

By enrolling at Kepler College, all students agree to the procedures and policies described in the Kepler College Student Handbook, as well as documents that are referenced within the Handbook. It is the responsibility of the student to understand and seek clarifications about the handbook as necessary.

## Kepler College Mission and Vision

Kepler College aim at reinventing higher education and creating pathways for marginalized African youth to access 21st-century opportunities. We do this through higher education and upskilling programs that combine in-person and online coursework with on-the-job learning and placement opportunities. Our work addresses barriers along the pipeline to help our students succeed at and after Kepler College.

## Kepler College Core Values

The following are our core values:

- We work with Purpose
- We drive Innovation
- We embrace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- We practice Transparency
- We seek Balance

### Section 1: Student Registration and Orientation Policy

This section informs the students the requirements for registration and orientation. In order to formally become a Kepler College student, there are steps to take and each step has to be completed successfully to be registered.

- a) Registration shall be done at least two weeks before the commencement of the academic year. Students failing to register before the deadline will forfeit their place of admission unless an exception is granted by the Registrar based on a well-motivated application. To register, new students must bring along the admission letter and National ID / Passport. Kepler College Academic Registrar's office will also demand a notarized copy of the student's High School Certificate prior to being registered and other important documents.
- b) Students are required to renew their registration at the beginning of each academic year to enable tracking of active students and those who have deferred studies, provided that students may be refused permission to renew their registration for any period of study if they fail to satisfy the prescribed minimum requirements of the study. Students who defer studies are required to fill in the requisite deferment forms. Note that deferment is not the same as flexibly-paced studies since the former involves temporary termination of studies or suspension of the studies.



- c) Registration fees of 50,000Frw (fifty thousand Rwandan Francs) for each academic year are payable in advance, that is, at the beginning of the first Trimester. No student will be allowed in class without having paid the registration fees.
- d) All payments must be done through a bank account using officially designated account names and numbers. The finance office shall publish details of such accounts at the beginning of each academic year and notify students of any changes thereof. An original copy of the bank slip must be presented to the accountant to obtain a receipt for proof of fee payment. The registration fee is non-refundable.
- e) All students who delay paying the registration fee within the allotted time will be entitled to a late penalty of 10,000Frw.
- f) During the period of registration, the Academic Registrar collects students' queries. After the deadline of the registration, the Academic Registrar compiles a report on how the registration process was conducted. The report is composed of 3 categories as follows:
  - i) The number of students in each cohort who were able to pay the registration fee on time.
  - ii) The number of students in each cohort who requested an extension of the registration deadline
  - iii) The number of students in each cohort who did not meet the deadline and did not communicate anything about their failure of meeting the deadline.
- g) All registered students will be issued student card Cards (IDs), valid for one academic year. No student shall be allowed on the campus without a valid ID card. No student is allowed to attend classes, do any practical work or sit for any examination or use any of the Kepler College facilities/property unless he/she is a registered student.
- h) Cases of falsification of documents or giving any false or incomplete information shall lead to the automatic cancellation of admission/registration. Legal actions may also be taken against the student. A student found to have presented falsified documents shall lose his/her place in Kepler College (shall be dismissed) any time it is discovered and shall automatically lose all achievements (awards) attained to the date of the discovery.

- i) The Academic Senate has the right and power to refuse students' permission in renewing registration in any department if they are deemed to be unable to profit from further study, or if they have failed to complete their studies within three years since registering for the program for the first time. Any exception will be subject to the Academic Senate decision.
- j) Kepler College dedicates significant resources to educating each student. Therefore, enrollment at Kepler College prohibits students from enrolling in other higher education programs. Failure to follow this policy to do so is considered a violation of Kepler College expectations and may lead to dismissal from the program.
- k) If a student decides to deregister from the Kepler College program, he/she will not be admitted back into the program. A student with extreme circumstances regarding enrollment should place his/her concerns in writing and submit them to the Manager of Student Affairs. These will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## Section 2: Teaching and Learning Management Policy

### 2.1 Policy Objectives

This teaching and learning management policy seeks to ensure efficient and effective management of academic processes at Kepler College Program to enhance students' learning and acquisition of industry-relevant competencies.

### 2.2 Classroom Norms

- a) Kepler College has a set of classroom norms posted in each classroom to ensure orderly delivery of teaching and learning. It is within the power of the instructor/lecturer to exclude a student from class for violating such norms in which case s/he should refer the student to the MSA. The following are Kepler College classroom norms:
  - a. Half Mast: When the instructor says half-mast, students must close computers halfway (or all the way) immediately and give attention to the instructor. All conversations should come to a close.

- b. Ago→ Ame: When the instructor says “Ago” the students (and other staff) should all reply “Ame” and give full attention to the instructor. This is generally used to get attention to reminders or short announcements mid-work.
- c. Snaps: Within the classroom, Snaps are used to positively recognize students (or staff). Thus, it is a good practice to close class with snaps.
- d. One speaker: Within the class (even within a class of 100 and more), during whole group instruction, there should be only one speaker. All other students and staff should track the speaker by looking at them and not speaking while he/she is speaking.
- e. Internet: Only websites being used for class should be open when deemed necessary.
- f. Open Files/Folders: The student should open the files and/or folders related to the current class.
- g. Cell Phones must remain off/on silent and away during class.

## 2.3 Class Attendance

It is a key consideration for the success of students at Kepler College. All students are required to abide by the terms and conditions as described in the [Kepler College Attendance Policy](#) in addition to the description below:

- a) Students must attend all the class sessions, meetings, group advising, check-in meeting, events, or occasions organized within or outside Kepler College they are invited to, perform the work and pass the assessments or projects and examinations which are prescribed for any module required by their program.
- b) Class lateness:
  - The student's tardiness cases will be increasing the number of absences anytime they are 3.
    - The tardiness for 10 more minutes after the class has started is recorded as an absence (A)
    - The tardiness for less than 10 minutes after the class has started is recorded as T
    - Three times of tardiness equal one absence (A):

- Tardiness starts 5 minutes before a session starts.
- Any reason for tardiness should be communicated ahead of time to teaching staff (at least one hour before class starts).

The tardiness/check-ins meeting cases will be handled as follows:

#Tardiness/Check-ins	Responsible	Consequences of not fulfilling the requirements
One	A Student	A student will be discussing with the instructor/teaching staff a good way of time management improvement.
Second	A Student	A student will be put on <b>Kepler College Academic Success Plan</b>
Third	A Student	A student will be put on 3-months probation.

- c) Students are expected to have 85% of attendance per course/module to be allowed to sit for the final assessment/exam/unit assessment or any other assessment counting for the final grade. If a student is not allowed to sit for the final assessment/exam or unit assessment due to failure to meet attendance requirements, he/she will automatically fail the module. The student may be required to retake the failed module when it will be offered again and will need to pay for that module. The decision about the fee to pay will be decided by the Academic Senate/Senior Management. If the module is a prerequisite for another module, the student will not be allowed to take the next module until the prerequisite is taken and passed. Subsequently, if the student fails to meet the 85% of attendance in two modules/courses or twice in the course/module, further measures will be taken including suspension and/or dismissal from the program. The Academic Senate will decide depending on the case.
- d) Students are expected to be on time. Being on time at Kepler College means that the student is physically present in class/event/session/meeting, etc five minutes before the class starts. Students arriving late any minute after that time will be reported as late unless there was prior approval by the respective staff member. A student will be reported as absent if they arrive after the first 10 minutes of the session. Any student

arriving 20 minutes after the session has started will not be allowed to enter the classroom.

Example: If a class/meeting/event starts at 8 am, a student who arrives after 7:55 am and before 8:10 am is late and will be recorded as such in the student portfolio. A student arriving after 8:10 am will be marked absent but arriving after 8:20 am means the student will not be allowed to enter the classroom.

- e) A student arriving late after an assessment/exam has started will not be allowed to take the assessment/exam and will automatically fail the assessment/exam.
- f) Being late for two consecutive days will turn into an absence and be reported as a violation of the code of conduct. Students who spend more than 10 minutes outside of class without permission from the lecturer are also recorded as absent. However, if students communicate their lateness to the instructor of the class with valid reasons, they can be excused. For remote sessions, we consider student timely submissions as attendance.
- g) All absences should be requested using the [Lecture Absence Form](#) and be pre-approved by the appropriate staff:
  - i) A student should never inform instructors about the absence, instead he/she requests the absence. No student is allowed to be absent before the request is approved.
  - ii) Absences related to an internship must be pre-approved by the Careers Department and Dean. All other absences related to professional development, conference attendance, etc. must be pre-approved by the Dean or DVC ARA. Requests of this nature must be made, with a makeup plan, in writing and be pre-approved at least 2 weeks before the scheduled absence.
  - iii) Students with health-related absences must be approved by the Kepler College Nurse and Dean. No health-related absences will be approved by the Teaching Staff without approval from the Nurse or other recognized hospitals confirming the cause and the duration of the absence.

- iv) A student who expects to be late at a class session, events, meetings, or any organized occasions, should communicate it to the right staff via email at least one hour before the session or meeting takes place. Neglecting to do so will result in being on the Kepler College Academic Success Plan. For a six-week module or longer, only one absence per course/module or two tardies will be tolerated.
- v) The above notwithstanding, the competency-based curriculum provides for students to fast track or slow down their studies based on individual circumstances such as availability of additional time, work, family, and health constraints. However, students are required to work with an academic advisor to come up with a plan, copied to the AR, Dean, and Finance department about any factor hindering their progress. Conversely, students may write and request in writing to undertake additional modules provided the requirements of prerequisites are respected.

The following are steps and sanctions for each violation in regard to the attendance at Kepler College.

Absence #	Sanctions
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student is recorded as absent and gets a warning</li> <li>• A student receives, a novice, zero, or incomplete due to failure to submit.</li> </ul>
Two	A student will be put on Kepler College Academic Success Plan
Three	A student will be put on 3-months probation.
Four and above	Suspension or Potential Dismissal

## 2.4 Feedback for Academic Staff by Students

- a) Kepler College Program values the feedback of students and faculty use them for professional improvement and teaching advancement.

- b) At the end of each module, students evaluate the academic staff by filling out the survey and providing their insights on the academic staff's strengths and areas of improvement in terms of teaching.
- c) The academic staff uses students' evaluation notes to plan for further professional development and to make improvements.

## 2.5 Academic Advising

- Advising is an integral part of Kepler College's curriculum delivery process and is embedded within competency-based learning. It is done to respond to the following objectives:
  - Support students get familiar with college life and help them relate academic/educational goals to life (personal/professional) goals.
  - Assist in developing plans of action - and hold students accountable to achieve substantial results.
  - Encourage students to achieve self-awareness, such as identifying strengths, growth areas, values, and interests.
  - Identify resources to enhance both academic success and personal development.
- Students are required to attend academic advising sessions according to the requirements that are approved and updated by the Academic Senate. However, the frequency of academic advising meetings (both group advising sessions and 1:1 check-ins) varies based on students' milestones and learning needs.
- Students start with receiving support offered by LAs through group advisories and then they shift to Academic advisors who continue to work with them for the rest of their academic journey at Kepler.
  - For the first 12 weeks ( or first semester) students attend regular group advisories sessions offered by LAs
  - From term 2 of year one, students continue to work with academic advisors through mainly group advising sessions, but also 1:1 check-ins are used based on students' learning needs and/or recommendations from the instructors.

- To support students and respond or advocate for their learning needs, academic advisors collaborate with different staff, teams, and departments including course instructors to ensure that students' support needs are addressed.

## Section 3: Academic Calendar and Workload Policy

### 3.1 Academic Calendar

- a) There shall be an annual academic calendar prepared by the Academic Registrar in collaboration with the Dean under the supervision of the DVC ARA and approved by the Academic Senate that defines the duration and major academic activities of Kepler College.
- b) An academic year at Kepler College Program comprises three trimesters, each consisting of 12 weeks of notional learning, and summative and formative assessments.

### 3.2 Timetables

- a) There shall be a timetable for both classes which shall be prepared by the Academic Registrar in close collaboration with the Dean. and this will be shared by students.
- b) In addition to the Dean and AR, students are responsible for ensuring that there are no timetable conflicts in their program and to inform the Dean of any conflicts.
- c) Timetabling shall take into consideration efficient utilization of available rooms

## Section 4: Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy

### 4.1 Grading at Kepler College Program in Competency-Based Education

#### 4.1.1 Grading Competencies.

- a) Kepler College Program uses a competency-based grading system to assess modules. A competency is a specific piece of knowledge or skill that measures a student's ability to apply this knowledge or skill in a variety of settings. Students are evaluated on professional and course-based competencies. Student abilities are evaluated through mastery of competencies.



b) To determine a student's course grade, instructors will use final assessments that are graded based on the competencies assigned to that module. All learning outcomes are measured on a 1-6 scale with a score of 4 demonstrating proficiency in the outcome.

I) A formative / Continuous assessment explains to what extent a student is learning a concept, skill, or knowledge set. Examples of formative assignments include class work, homework, and quizzes. Formative assessments are used by staff members to make instructional decisions that will best support a student and a class. In competency-based education, formative assessments are not used to calculate a student's final grade because the measure of mastery is determined by summative or final assessments.

II) A final assessment / Exam is a comprehensive measure of a student's ability to demonstrate the concepts, skills, and knowledge within a course competency. Examples of final assignments include research projects, presentations, writings, tests, and market pitches. Students at the end of benchmarks or modules are measured on what outcomes/competencies they have mastered by taking into account all grades they received on final assessments during the module.

#### 4.1.2 Grading Scale

All Kepler College Program competencies are graded on a scale of 1- 6. Students are expected to score a 4 or higher on each competency in order to pass their modules. By the time they graduate from Kepler College Program, students should be proficient in each competency required by their degree program. If at any time, students score below a proficient rating on any competency, they may be assigned remediation or additional work to help them improve. Students are responsible for their own learning and may be required to define strategies for improving their work as needed.

Numerical Rating	Name of Competency Level	Academic Performance Description	Grade Equivalency
6	Advanced	The student has mastered the competency at	100%

		a high level with very few or no errors and may exceed the requirements of the rubric	
5	Strong	The student has mastered the competency at a higher level and with fewer errors than Proficient Mastery level, although there are still some areas of improvement.	85%
4	Proficient	The student has mastered the competency, although there may still be a few errors in their work	70%
3	Developing	The student has nearly mastered the competency but needs remediation to be able to demonstrate consistent mastery	60%
2	Emerging	The student has begun to show limited understanding of the competency but needs significant remediation in order to reach mastery	50%
1	Beginner	The student has serious misunderstandings or gaps in knowledge that very beginner to the competency would be expected to demonstrate	40%
0	Not Graded	The student has not turned in work that allows the competency to be assessed. The work may be missing or incomplete.	0%

## Section 5: Examination/Assessment Management

The office of the Academic Registrar will liaise with the Office of the Dean to ensure effective preparation and delivery of the examinations or final assessments. Students are reminded to avoid any trace of plagiarism.

### 5.1 Submission of Assignments/Assessments/Examinations

All students at Kepler College are required to submit all pre-class assignments, continuous assignments, unit assessments, and final assessments/examinations. All students should submit by the deadline set by the lecturer.

- I. Students are mandated to have 90% of submission to be allowed to sit for the final assessment/exam/ unit assessment or any other assessment counting for a final grade

for each module/course. If a student is not allowed to sit for the final assessment/exam due to failure to meet submission requirements, he/she will automatically fail the module/course. The student will be required to retake the failed module when it will be offered again and will need to pay 4,000 RWF per credit. If the module is a prerequisite for another module, the student will not be allowed to take the next module until the prerequisite is taken and passed. Subsequently, if the student fails to meet the 90% of submission in two modules/courses or twice in the course/module, The Academic Senate will decide on further sanctions which may include program suspension or dismissal.

- II. If a student fails to submit the final assessment or final examinations without a valid-approved reason, he/she will automatically fail the module. The student may be required to retake the failed module when it will be offered again and will have to pay 4,000 RWF per credit. The decision about the fee to pay will be decided by the Academic Senate/Senior Management. If the module is a prerequisite for another module, the student will not be allowed to take the next module until the prerequisite is taken and passed.
- III. A student who fails to submit the pre-class assignment or a formative or continuous assignment may not be allowed to enter the class until the pre-class is completed or may be mandated to attend office hours with the assignment completed to get feedback. The instructor of the class will decide.

## 5. 2 Resubmission/Remediation

- I. All students at Kepler College are encouraged to re-submit revised work that did not initially meet the competency standards. This encourages students to accept and use feedback, learn from their mistakes and demonstrate perseverance. All students may resubmit a failed assignment once within 5 business days of the graded assignment being returned to them. Students who fail a resubmission and wish to resubmit a second time must meet with a faculty member to get feedback on their work and document this meeting before re-submitting a second time. This resubmission and meeting must be done within 10 business days. Any student who wants to resubmit a third time must submit a request in writing to the Dean of Faculty and the faculty

member who is teaching the module before resubmitting. The Dean may require a meeting with the student and any relevant faculty members before agreeing to the request.

- II. If a student fails to resubmit an assignment within the required timeframe, the student will fail the module. Additionally, the student may be dismissed from the program for failing to respond appropriately to a failing grade. Success in the Kepler College program requires active participation and thoughtful, timely responses to critical feedback. Without this, it is not likely the student will be able to successfully complete the program. In rare cases, if a student is compellingly strong in other areas and is working hard to improve their skills in problem areas, then the DVC ARA may override dismissal and choose other forms of remediation for the student.

### 5.3 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is among the major violations at Kepler College, and it is punishable. All students are required to protect their work to avoid the possibility of high similarity and plagiarism.

#### Consequences of Plagiarism

- a. If a student is detected, s/he will be called to the hearing meeting to understand the incident and collect information about the possibility of other students' involvement.
- b. Students who commit plagiarism due to poor citation or whose work shows a high level of flagged parts, will get feedback and resubmit the work with the proper citations and the list of sources. Students in this category may be requested by the instructors to write an improvement plan.
- c. Students who will copy or submit other students' work will get zero for the work and be placed on probation for the first plagiarism incident. Students in this category should write a reflection about what academic integrity says to demonstrate their understanding of the problem and reflect on the incident to show the commitment to never do that again. For the second plagiarism incident, the student will be dismissed from the program.

- d. Prior to taking the next steps, the hearing committee should be held to discuss the plagiarism detection case, and it consists of the instructor (who reported the case), the subject manager of the instructor above, and the Manager of Students Affairs. The MSA may invite other relevant staff members that he thinks can contribute to addressing the issue. The MSA will make a report that includes the letter signed by the student in question unless s/he makes an appeal, which should be in 3 days.
- e. Student work should be no more than 20% of similarity. At the discretion of the instructor, a student with more than 20% of work similarity will be required to rework of the assessments and submit following the resubmission policy or be considered as committed plagiarism. Note that the instructor reserves the right to check the student to identify any plagiarism in the work submitted even if it may be below 20%.

#### 5.4 Grades Appeal Period

Students will be given a two-week period to appeal for the grade. Any appeal that comes after this period will be denied.

### Section 6: Graduation Policy and Procedure

#### 6. 1 Graduation Requirements

In order to consider a student to graduate s/he should have met all the academic and Finance requirements. All students to graduate should complete the clearance form, which will be available in the Academic Registrar's office.

#### 6. 2 Graduation Dress

The design and materials for Kepler College's academic dress – comprising gowns, hoods, and caps – shall be determined by the Academic Senate. Graduands should adhere to the following:

- Communicate at least 1 week prior to the graduation event whether they are going to attend or not.
- Dress properly and professionally in a style that staff, graduates, and guests cannot question. In other words, graduands should be dressed in business casual attire that would be acceptable in a general workplace office setting. Graduates wearing questionable dressing styles will be denied to access the graduation venue.

Graduands are subject to the following fines if they lose, damage, or delay returning the graduation gown, scarf, degree holder, and cap:

#### 6.2.1 Fines

- **Gown and Scarf**
  - i. Lateness fee for gown drop-off: 2,000 RWF per day.
  - ii. Any parts of the gown you lose will have to be paid back according to its price.
  - iii. If your gown is damaged or lost, you will be responsible to pay the entire cost of the gown (80,000 RWF non-negotiable).
  - iv. If you ask someone to bring back the gown for you, you will be responsible for any damage to it.
- **Degree cases**
  - v. Lateness fee for case drop-off: 2,000 RWF per day.
  - vi. If your case is damaged or lost, you will be responsible to pay the entire cost of the case (30,000RWF non-negotiable).

#### 6.3 Graduation Ceremony

- a) All students will be required to follow the deadline to meet the graduation requirements that will be communicated to them by the Academic Registrar according to the academic calendar to participate in the graduation event.
- b) The Graduation ceremony for the conferment of exit awards shall be held at any such venue as may be determined by the Academic Senate.
- c) Rehearsals for all graduates are conducted at the graduation venue prior to the ceremony.
- d) Seating arrangements for graduations shall take into consideration the number of students, academic departments/faculties, and types of awards.
- e) On graduation day, all graduates are required to be seated by the specified time. No person shall be allowed into or out of the graduation square when the ceremony is in progress until the end of the ceremony. Each graduate must stand (or come forward) when the respective Dean reads his/her name.
- f) The Chancellor of Kepler College performs the conferment of degrees and awards of Diplomas.

## 6.4 Revocation of Degrees and Awards

- a. Kepler College may revoke any Degree, Diploma, or certificate awarded to a graduate who, while registered in a particular program, committed an academic offense that if it had been detected before graduation, would have resulted in expulsion.
- b. Notification of a Rescinded Degree or Diploma shall be published for all relevant parties.

Academic awards may be revoked for the following reasons:

- b. In instances where after a candidate was granted an academic award, the Senate, having obtained new information that was not available at the time of the conferment of the award, determines that the classification of the candidate was not correct and should be altered. In this case, the award is revoked but the student is given the chance to be conferred the correct award with the correct classification.
- c. Instances of administrative error in an award made under the appropriate quality assurance procedures, but that awarded a student that had not yet fully met the requirements for the conferment of the award. In this case, the student is given the time to meet all the requirements for the award and then graduate at a later date. In this case, the student is given the chance to complete and meet all the requirements before s/he is conferred the award.
- d. Instances where the candidates for the award fraudulently acted to manipulate, forge, or deceive the Kepler College officers into thinking they merited the award and yet they did not. Cases include forgery of entry documents and examination entries and plagiarism. In this case, the student loses the right to any award from Kepler College.

## 6.5 Graduation Attendance

All graduates are entitled to attend the graduation ceremony. Where possible, graduates will be allowed to come with at least one parent/guardian; however this is subject to change. A change of this number will be communicated by the graduation committee depending on graduation circumstances.

## Section 7: ICT Policy and Procedure

### 7.1 Use of Kepler College's Laptops Issued to Students

#### 7.1.1 Laptop Issuance

Kepler College issues a laptop for use to each student during their first week at Kepler College. The laptop belongs fully to the student once they finish making all the payments as detailed in the loan document that they sign with the finance department. If a student leaves Kepler College before finishing paying for the laptop, they must return it to the ICT department's office. The payments they will have made up to that moment will not be reimbursed, as the laptop is considered to be not new, and has less value.

#### 7.1.2 Maintenance of Student Laptops

The Kepler College ICT team provides both software and hardware-related maintenance. Software and Hardware related maintenance is provided every day (Monday - Friday) 9 am - 5 pm. Hardware-related maintenance at the Kigali campus follows a specific schedule shown below:

Time	Activities
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Computer Pick up for repaired computers
9:30AM – 10AM	Drop off for broken computers
10AM – 12AM	Diagnosis and Repairs by the vendor in partnership with the ICT team
12AM – 2PM	Drop off for broken computers
2PM – 4PM	Diagnosis and Repairs by Tech team
4PM – 5PM	Computer Pick up for repaired computers

#### 7.1.3 Hardware Maintenance Schedule

The ICT department works with different vendors to supply spare parts to repair students' laptops. If a student damages their laptop, they will be charged for repairs, based on the price



of the spare part that was used to repair it. The payment method is discussed and agreed upon between the finance department and the student.

If a student's laptop needs repairing while the damage is not their fault, and the laptop is still under warranty, the ICT team will have it fixed at no cost. The warranty covers defects resulting from defective parts from the manufacturer only when those defects are revealed during the period of 12 months from the date of the purchase. The decision of whether the student's actions caused the need for repair, or whether the manufacturer is at fault, will depend on the judgment of the ICT team and the manufacturer. Kepler College also works with a repair company to solve hardware issues that the ICT department cannot handle.

#### 7.1.4 Loaner Policy

The Kepler College ICT team issues a loaner laptop to a student when their assigned laptop is under maintenance or when it has been stolen. A student is allowed to use the loaner for not more than 29 days, after which a fee of 10 000 Rwf /month will be required in the event they want to keep using it. The loaner laptop is immediately issued to the student once the payment is done. While under their possession, the student is required to take full responsibility of the loaner laptop and use it in the manner intended also, be responsible for any damage that may occur. In case it is lost or damaged, the student will replace the damage or cover the loss at their own cost.

#### 7.1.5 Laptop Replacement Policy

Kepler College holds students accountable for the responsibility, care, management, and security of their laptops. As such: Kepler College will not issue a replacement of a lost or stolen laptop due to the negligence or irresponsibility of the student. In the event of a laptop loss or theft, the student should find means to buy another laptop to use for their studies. Kepler College will only grant a replacement laptop if a student's laptop stops functioning beyond the possibility of being repaired. In this situation, the Tech Team will be the only party to assess the severity of the laptop's fault and decide to provide a laptop replacement to the student.

### 7.2 Use of Personal Laptops and Devices

Although Kepler College issues a laptop to every student upon their arrival at Kepler College, students are also allowed to bring their own laptops to facilitate them throughout their studies. In those cases, the Kepler College ICT team checks the laptop brought by the student to see if it matches the minimum specifications required to successfully accomplish their academic goals. Kepler College reserves the right to revoke this privilege if the student does not abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this policy.

### 7.3 Appropriate and Acceptable Usage of ICT Services

#### 7.3.1 Obligations of Users

All users of Kepler College's ICT resources and services are required to adhere to the following principles and requirements:

- a) Use them for the purpose for which they are intended by Kepler College. Use of Kepler College ICT resources for illegal and commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.
- b) Observe the confidentiality of passwords, accounts, and the information products that they protect.
- c) Use only devices and services for which they are authorized
- d) Users are not permitted to add, delete, or modify any information on Kepler College's network without authorization or in an attempt to disrupt or mislead others.
- e) Use Kepler College email for only official purposes
- f) Respect privacy and rights (including intellectual property rights) of other users. The unauthorized use of copyrighted materials is prohibited.
- g) Avoid activities that may hinder or deny the use of ICT services by others, such as by hacking, introducing viruses, and usurping the rights of others by consuming time and other resources meant for other users
- h) Avoid the downloading and installation of programs onto Kepler College's computers without authorization of the Director of ICT
- i) Report any suspicious activity that may pose a threat to the ICT resources and Kepler College at large

### 7.3.2 Bandwidth Usage

- a) Bandwidth is a scarce resource that must be efficiently allocated and utilized to ensure an optimal level of Internet services for all stakeholders at Kepler College.
- b) The following requirements will guide bandwidth usage at Kepler College:
  - i) The Kepler College ICT department has the right to monitor and analyze bandwidth usage by all users and where required restrict or reallocate or redirect traffic and bandwidth for the purpose of Kepler College's achieving optimal level of performance
  - ii) The ICT department has the right to manage access to the internet by authenticating users via the use of accounts and maintaining access logs and audit trails.
  - iii) Users are prohibited from using bandwidth for any non-educational activities that consume bandwidth for a benefit of a few users. Apps like YouTube downloading software, bit and uTorrent software, and Internet Download Manager are not allowed to be used on the Kepler College network.
  - iv) Spamming and hacking are prohibited
  - v) Bandwidth quotas may be instituted if and when numbers and functional requirements dictate.

## Section 8: Library Policy and Procedure

### 8.1 Library Working Hours

Working Days	Hours of Opening <i>(Subject to change with due notice)</i>
<i>Monday – Friday</i>	8:00 am – 12:00 pm 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm
Public Holidays	Closed

### 8.2 Borrowing rules and guidelines

- a) The borrower remains responsible for the borrowed books as long as the borrowing status remains unchanged. Books borrowed by one reader must not be passed onto another reader but must in all cases be formally returned to the Library and re-issued at the issue counter.

- b) Students of Kepler College may borrow up to 2 (two) volumes at a time for a period of 14 days from the date of issue and only renewable once.
- c) The following categories of books may be borrowed with special permission from the Library staff. The Special Collections, Government Documents, Dissertations and Theses, Periodicals, Rare books/Reference books, Works bound in several volumes, Magazines and pamphlets.
- d) Books in circulation, which are required for any other special purpose, may be recalled at any time regardless of the date of issue.
- e) For the online library, students are allowed to borrow books and read them online and offline where applicable. However, it is strictly prohibited to share login credentials to anyone outside Kepler College. Failure to do so, will result in disciplinary action as per this handbook.

### 8.3 Notification / reminders to the Borrowers

- a) Reminders (*only two and one after each interval*) about overdue books will be sent to the borrower one day after the overdue date. A third reminder will be in the form of a final letter and a copy will be sent to the Dean of Faculty.
- b) No further borrowing of any kind will be made to the borrower who has books in his/her possession which he/she has failed to return in response to the recall Notice.

### 8.4 Library Fines and Penalties

- a) In case of students, a fine of 500 rwf is payable on overdue each day until the reader reports that the book is lost.
- b) Noncompliance to this will lead such a person to face the disciplinary committee.
- c) Borrowers and readers will be held responsible for any book in their charge and will be required to pay the current cost in replacement of the lost book, damaged or defaced book and a non refundable administrative charge of 5000 rwf to cover the cost of ordering, cataloging, classifying, and related processes.
- d) When the amount of fines levied under the Regulations (a) and (c) exceeds the costs of replacing the book, including the administrative charge, the borrower will pay all due charges including replacing the lost book.
- e) Fines and charges will be collected by the finance team and a copy of the receipt will be presented at the issue desk by the Library staff.
- f) Fines and charges will be regarded as debts to the University and in the case of non-payment; the defaulters will be liable to face the Disciplinary Committee.
- g) If the amount of a fine is in question, the Kepler College Librarian's decision shall be final.

## 8.5 Library Clearance

All students who are not returning to Kepler College must have Clearance forms signed by the Librarian.

## 8.6 Freedom of Access to Library Computers and Internet

It is Kepler College 's policy, however, to restrict access to any Internet content that may be prohibited by law such as pornography and those that may impede the efficiency of the library systems as a whole (*e.g. downloading of large videos that may completely slow down access for other users*).

### Supporting Patrons to access Library Internet & E-Resources

- Librarians have a responsibility to assist patrons with the use of the internet and library equipment to access e-resources.
- Assistance will include ease of operating library technologies and offering suggestions to patrons on effective alternatives for conducting internet searches.

## 8.7 Responsible use of Library Computers and Internet

- a) Patrons accessing the library's internet are expected to use it responsibly and courteously, consistent with the purposes for which it is provided and to follow all rules, regulations and procedures established for its use while respecting the rights of other users.
- b) Users of library internet services must observe the following user requirements:
  - i) Observe copyright and related laws
  - ii) Avoid damaging or altering configurations or setups of computers, software, routers, hubs and related equipments used to access library e-resources
  - iii) Avoid deliberate and reckless propagation of computer worms, malware or viruses.
  - iv) Not transmit any threatening, harassing, violent, obscene or abusive language or images using the library internet, applications or email.

## Section 9: Careers Education and Guidance Policy

### 9.1 Career Development Support

During the student learning journey at Kepler College, students take courses in professional development and receive career coaching to be prepared for the workplace upon graduation. The Career support focuses on three key points; career awareness, career exploration, and career preparations. At the early stage of their learning, students are engaged to:

- Discover their interests/passion, abilities, and explore the degree programs that align with their passion/interests.
- Learn about the jobs and careers connected to the degree programs of their interest
- Participate in practical training and activities to prepare for their aspired career and transition to the labor market.

Students go through a series of career support to aid their career preparations and transition to the labor market which include:

- **Career Choice Modules** – help students understand their interests, get deep understanding on their field of study, research about the labor market, and set goals and action plan to pursue their aspired career
- **Job Readiness Module** – introduce students to understand the labor market dynamics, equip them with job search skills to guide their transition from school to the workplace. For example, students receive training on building a professional network, writing resumes/CVs and cover letters, preparing for interviews, mock interviews etc.
- **Career Coaching** – students receive group or individual coaching to aid their career preparations and empower them to make their own decision. Coaching topics are diverse and vary from student to student but they range from:
  - Feeling the pressure/confusion to pick a degree to pursue or having second thoughts about their major
  - Struggling to find a clear direction for their aspired career
  - Job search support like seeking feedback on application files, conducting mock interviews, etc.
  - Work – academic balance, and job coaching for students doing internships

- Etc.

Through collaboration with employers, we create opportunities for students to have frequent interaction with employers, access internship opportunities to facilitate their career preparations. These opportunities include:

- Host employers as guest speakers to share real-world experience and more insights about the reality of the labor market
- Interaction between students and employers in the Career Fair to inform students about the job market and employer expectations.
- All students engage in doing at least two internships to practice what they learned through internships to gain foundational experience before graduation.

## 9.2 Industrial Attachment & Employment Placement Policy

As part of their preparation for the workplace, Kepler College students go through a series of career support and required to take two industrial attachment before graduation. Industrial attachment provide great benefits, including real-world experience, a stronger resume, learning new skills, networking with people in their field of interest, and familiarity with the workplace culture and etiquette. When students perform well during their industrial attachment, they may also gain a full-time jobs.

This policy applies to all Kepler College students, including refugees and international students who can benefit from internships as much as any other student. Many employers are willing to accept refugees and international students as interns.

## 9.3 Industrial Attachment Recommendation Requirements

To qualify for an Industrial attachment or employment recommendation, a student must fulfill the following criteria:

- Must have taken and passed Professional Foundations, Career Readiness and Certification Preparation and extracurricular workshops like a career choice.
- has had his/her reflection and a plan to manage industrial attachment responsibility and academic work approved by Academic Advisors and [Industrial Attachment Readiness spreadsheet](#) completed by the academic Advisor.
- has their resume approved by the Careers department
- is not currently on a Kepler College Academic Success Plan

The Kepler College careers team will keep in touch with students' employers to strengthen the relationship with the employers and collaborate on identifying ways to support the attachées. Students who have industrial attachment or a job have to keep in mind that:

- There is a continued billing of tuition, either through the deferred tuition program or direct payment, throughout their internship/job. This is because they are still Kepler College students and they still receive services from Kepler College.
- They should communicate the industrial attachment position to the Kepler College Careers department within the first week of the start date by [completing this form](#), for documentation and follow up support for students who might need it.
- Students doing industrial attachment two are required to maintain adequate progress on their academic work.
- They must also engage in any required academic and any other relevant students' meetings until they successfully complete their studies at Kepler College. There may be flexibility in how and when meetings are conducted. The student must make such an arrangement with the organizers beforehand.

**Note** - Kepler College's primary aim is to help all our graduates find good employment. Students will be required to complete two industrial attachments/internships to prepare for full-time employment. Students are required to maintain adequate progress throughout the program and engage in any required academic and financial communication or meetings until they successfully complete their studies at Kepler College.

#### 9.4 Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are students allowed to find their own internships/industrial attachment or jobs outside of Kepler College?

Yes! While we allow and encourage students to secure their own internships/industrial attachment and jobs, they will need to keep in mind that:

- There is a continued billing of tuition, either through the deferred tuition program or direct payment, throughout their internship/job
- They should communicate the internship/industrial attachment position to the Kepler College Careers department by completing this form within the first month of the start date so that the department can support them as well as possible and help future students get internships or jobs in that organization.



- They are required to maintain adequate academic progress while working on industrial attachment two.

**Note** - Students will have to fulfill the requirements of this policy for them to qualify for a recommendation for an internship or job.

2. What happens if students violate Kepler College policies during internships/industrial attachment and/or employment?
  - If students commit any type of policy violation (e.g: dishonesty, not showing up for meetings, unprofessional behavior) during their internship or employment, the existing Kepler College policies will be applied with no exception, whether or not recommended by Kepler College careers.
  - There are no academic exceptions made for any student whose employment interferes with Kepler College 's required coursework or curriculum. Hence, an Industrial attachment internship/job is not an excuse for a student to violate any academic requirements, including the job readiness curriculum and loan counseling sessions.
3. What happens when students leave internships/industrial attachment before the end of his/her contract because of choice or because of poor performance or behavior?

As part of graduation requirements, students who qualify and complete the internship/industrial attachment reflect on their learning to get a module credit. If a student leaves before the end of his/her contract or is dismissed, he/she will not get a module credit for that internship/industrial attachment. They will have to do another industrial attachment to earn the credit to allow them graduates. Additionally, the careers team will reach out to the employer for feedback.. In collaboration with the rest of the academic team, the careers team will support the student based on the feedback from the employer.

**Note** - In the case of severe illness causing withdrawal from an internship/job, an exception would need to be given if they do the following:

- The student has completed at least 3 months of the internship
- The student has reported to the Kepler College [Careers team](#) the withdrawal from an internship/job as soon as s/he discusses it with his/her employer.
- The student has reported the illness to the Kepler College [Health & Wellness Team](#) as soon as s/he falls sick.
- Students with this exception will be allowed to work on a reflection in order to get a module credit for the internship

4. If students face harassment and/or unsafe working conditions, are they required to complete their internships?

Students who are concerned about unsafe working conditions or harassment should inform a Kepler College staff member, preferably their internship advisor/job coach. The Kepler College Careers team will handle each case on a case-by-case basis. In case of severely unsafe situations that need to be handled by the police, students should report the case to the police and notify the [Kepler College Careers team](#).

5. What would happen when a student's internship period ends?

Upon completion of an internship/industrial attachment:

- After completion of industrial attachment one, students are required to return to Kepler to focus on their academics.
- Students may be offered a full-time job after a second industrial attachment which they can accept provided that they can still fulfill all academic requirements. If they are not offered a job, they will continue to focus on their studies full time while looking for job opportunities.
- Students continue to abide by any required academic communication (e.g. ongoing academic check-ins, attending meetings, etc) until they successfully complete their studies at Kepler College .

## Section 10: Student Support and Guidance Policy

This section highlights the support Kepler College students get throughout their learning journey in order to get quality education and get equipped with relevant market skills as needed.

### 10.1 Principle behind Guidance and Counseling at Kepler College

We believe that counseling is critical for the holistic development of students in the program. The counseling team helps in creating a safe and supportive environment for students with psychosocial, emotional and academic challenges so that they are able to obtain the required support they need to adapt to feel safe, self-directed and enjoy their lives and studies while at Kepler College .

#### 10.1.1 The Mental Health and Counseling Unit

- a) Headed by the Counselor, the counseling or mental health department provides support to new students joining Kepler College as well as older students to adjust to Kepler College life, face psychosocial, emotional and academic challenges affecting their lives.
- b) The Counselor shall work closely with all stakeholders that deal with students to identify recurring psychosocial problems affecting students and prepare plans of action to address them or advise management on common actions that may be taken to reduce incidences of their occurrence.

#### 10.1.2 Professional Standards

The practice of counseling at Kepler College will be guided by the code of ethics laid out by the best practices in Rwanda.

#### 10.1.3 Confidentiality Requirements

- a) The Counselor also keeps all counseling information as confidential information
- b) However, under the following exceptional circumstances the Counselor may use professional judgment to make the decision to break confidentiality, with or without a student consent, if silence poses or increases:
  - i) the risk of the student harming themselves or being harmed
  - ii) the risk of another person being harmed
  - iii) the risk of a serious crime being committed

#### 10.1.4 Referrals for Counseling

Counseling may be initiated through a number of referrals:

- a) **Self-Referrals or Drop-ins:** Students may drop into the Counselors' office at any time during working hours to seek counseling services. This is a one-off opportunity for students who may be in need to have support but do not want to commit to a regular session. However, depending on the issue introduced by the student additional or regular sessions may be mutually agreed upon between the student and the counselor.
- b) **Referrals by Peers:** students of Kepler College may in confidentiality refer fellow students to seek the services of the counselor. In this case the students referring their

peers for counseling services are bound by the same rules of confidentiality as all other actors involved in the provision of counseling services.

- c) **Referrals by Kepler College Officers:** Lecturers, coaches, directors of student affairs, heads of academic departments, deans, registrars and all officers of Kepler College that interacted with students may refer troubled students to the counselor by completing and submitting a Counseling Referral Form.
- d) Again, officers making referrals are bound by the same rules of confidentiality as all other actors involved in the provision of counseling services. Once a referral has been received the name of the student and the date of referral is logged and added to the Conducting Counseling
- e) **Contacting students referred for counseling:** The Counselor has at his/her disposal the following permitted approaches for contacting students: Email, mobile phone, text-to-mobile, home number, face-to-face, or via lecturer or coach or program leader. Whatever the methods used confidentiality must be respected at all times in relation to information that may be communicated to third parties. Counselors will make 3 attempts to contact the student by the preferred form of contact. If there is no response within 10 days, the case will be reported to the DVC ARA and the student will be removed from the waiting list and logged as unable to make contact.
- f) **Determining if counseling is the appropriate intervention:** All students referred and contacted will be assessed to determine if the issue at stake requires counseling or other interventions. If counseling is not required, the Counselor will refer the student to the relevant officers of Kepler College for an appropriate intervention.
- g) **Committing to counseling in a contract:** Students seeking or referred for counseling are required to commit themselves to the counseling by signing a contract to ensure confidentiality and related expected behavior while attending counseling sessions. The contract also protects Kepler College against potential legal action by the person receiving counseling.
- h) **Scheduling appointments for counseling sessions:** Once this has been agreed that counseling is the appropriate intervention, the Counselor will offer at least 4 sessions of 1 hour each once per week. It is here assumed that students have enough time outside classes to attend counseling at least once a week.

- i) **Actual Conduct of Counseling Session:** Counseling shall always begin with welcoming the student and creating a trust feeling and then discussing the problem with the client, exploring causes and alternative ways of dealing with the issue and allowing the counselee to make a free decision on the best way forward. Solutions must come from the counselee as a result of the exploratory discussion. Where the Counselor is not able to handle the case, it may be referred to a specialist. The Counselor is required to follow up the students and provide support as s/he struggles to cope or resolve underlying psychosocial problems.waiting list.
- j) Students who have psychological issues may want to have sessions from outside clinics, They should send their justification papers to the Kepler College counselor once they start seeing their own therapist for records

## 10.2 Planning for Games and Sports

- a) The Manager of Students Affairs shall work closely with Student Guild (SG) to prepare trimester and annual sports and games plans. The plan shall include a calendar of activities that Kepler College students intend to participate in.
- b) The President of the SG shall coordinate students' registration for various games and sports to allow Kepler College to plan accordingly for the various activities and submit copies of lists to the MSA.
- c) Sports and games will be organized into clubs and students will elect leaders in each game and sport to facilitate coordination.
- d) Students may be required to make financial contributions to support their clubs as a demonstration of their commitment.
- e) The Manager of Students Affairs shall prepare and execute collaboration agreements with owners of various sporting facilities so that students may access these venues for practice and competitions.
- f) Games and Sports plans and related budgets shall be submitted to and considered and approved by the DVC ARA and DOF in that order subject to the budgetary votes allocated for them. Plans must be submitted at least two weeks before the commencement of the academic year (for activities that are known about before) and at least two weeks earlier (for previously unknown national activities).

- g) Operational plans for games and sports shall be accompanied by the following:
  - i) List of participants
  - ii) Names of staff accompanying the students
  - iii) Participants allowances (where applicable, especially when students travel to remote places or outside the country for international events)
  - iv) Transportation requirements
  - v) Provisions for first aid

#### 10.2.1 Conduct during preparation for and actual participation in Sports and Games

- a) Students and staff participating in games and sports must conduct themselves professionally according to the rules and code of conduct required by the specific games or sports as well as by the students and staff code of conduct specified in the Students' Handbook and HR Policies and Procedures Manual respectively.
- b) Acts of violence, riots, protests and any other behavior that tarnishes the image and reputation of Kepler College must be avoided.

#### 10.2.2 Sports Equipment

Kepler College shall prepare budgets for and procure basic sports equipment. However, students are held liable for negligence leading to damage or loss of Kepler College equipment and may be required to pay the cost of the damage and loss accordingly.

#### 10.3 Formation of Clubs, Associations and Societies

- a) Clubs and associations can be initiated and formed by students but must be formally registered with the Manager of Student Affairs.
- b) To be registered each club or association must meet the following criteria:
  - i) Submit a constitution defining the purpose and objectives of the club or association, its leadership framework and details of activities it seeks to carry out.
  - ii) Ensure the purpose of the club or how it benefits the students of Kepler College .
  - iii) Submit a list of promoters and active members.

##### 10.3.1 Membership

- a) Membership to any club or association is open to all active students at Kepler College .

- b) All clubs approved to run on campus must not be discriminatory in name or nature. All students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender or otherwise are allowed to join and participate in club activities.

#### 10.3.2 Monitoring of Operations of Clubs and Associations

- a) The Manager of Students Affairs shall closely monitor the activities of clubs and associations in close collaboration with the president of the Student Guild.
- b) Monitoring shall involve the following:
  - i) Approval of the clubs' and associations' schedule of activities at the beginning of each trimester
  - ii) Ensuring compliance to the approved constitution
  - iii) Holding consultative meetings with the patrons and leaders of the clubs and associations as and when necessary.
  - iv) Acting on communication from and to the clubs and societies
  - v) Acting on reports of the clubs and societies activities

#### 10.3.3 Funding

- a) Clubs and associations shall be primarily financed by the members and the Student Guild
- b) Kepler College may occasionally contribute finance to the selected club activities. To be eligible for financial support such clubs must furnish the Director of Finance Office with its financial accountability statements to assure the finance department that financial resources are not misused for trivial purposes.

#### 10.3.4 Dissolution

The Academic Senate has the right to dissolve a club, association or society if

- a) It discovers that the club or association is operating contrary Kepler College policies and interests
- b) Its operations endanger the lives of students, the public and the good name of Kepler College .

## Section 11: Student Ethics and Disciplinary Regulations

Kepler College , with its students and any other affiliated associations, will not tolerate any form of cheating, lying, violations, and any misrepresentations. Anyone who willingly or unwillingly conceals such activities will be sanctioned against this handbook. Kepler College reserves the right to the Students Ethics and Disciplinary Committee to judge and decide on any other form of violation that is not directly stipulated in this handbook.

### 11.1 Applicability and Scope

The code of conduct shall apply to:

- a. Any student behavior occurring on or off campus. It also applies to cases when a student withdraws or takes a leave of absence from Kepler College after engaging in conduct that may violate any of Kepler College 's Code of Conduct, and the alleged violation has not been adjudicated through the discipline process. In this case a hold will be placed on the student's record and the student will be banned from campus. The hold will prevent a student from re-enrolling at Kepler College until the alleged violations have been resolved. Every effort is made to ensure that the information in the student handbook is accurate and up to date, but Kepler College cannot accept liability for errors or omissions.
- b. Types of behavior or actions that are in violation of the Code, local, or national laws. In this case, Kepler College will cooperate with the relevant law enforcement organ to ensure due process is followed.
- c. Behavior that has the potential to adversely affect the educational mission of Kepler College or its relationship with the community.
- d. Behavior of Individual students or groups of students: clubs, associations and societies.

### 11.2 Kepler College 's Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Kepler College exists to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to fulfill their intellectual potential through the pursuit of the highest standards of academic excellence.



Certain rights and obligations are inherent in membership in Kepler College 's academic community:

- a) Rights of personal and intellectual freedom
- b) Respect for the equal rights and dignity of others
- c) Dedication to the educational purposes of Kepler College and participation in promoting the academic quality of the institution
- d) Learning and abiding by Kepler College policies and other communications from Kepler College administrators.
- e) In addition, students must comply with any other legal regulations of Rwanda.

### 11.3 Students' Rights of Privacy of Records

- e. The policies concerning the privacy of student records maintained by Kepler College are aligned to international best practices. Except when requested by a student or required by Rwandan regulations, an educational record will not include information concerning race, religion, nationality, political or social views, or memberships in organizations.
- f. Educational agencies doing surveys and studies for Kepler College will typically have access to a student's record without the written consent of the student concerned. A student may waive the right of access to allow for Kepler College personnel to provide recommendations and/or verification of enrollment. Kepler College may not require a student to waive this right nor may the student's status at Kepler College depend upon his or her waiving this right.

### 11.4 Right to Procedural Fairness

- a) All Kepler College students have the right of due or procedural process.
- b) Pending action on any disciplinary allegations, the status of students shall not be altered, nor their rights to be present on campus and to attend classes suspended, except to protect the health or safety of students or staff, or to safeguard Kepler College property. Only the VC may make such a determination and direct provisional suspension.
- c) If the student is dismissed from the program and appeals against the decision, s/he is still entitled to any rights like any other students until a permanent decision is made.

## 11.5 Student Rights of Access and Participation

All Kepler College students have certain rights to equal access to facilities, campus resources and opportunities as well as involvement or participation in Kepler College activities.

### II. Students Responsibilities and Obligations

- a. Each student is also expected to understand his or her role as a member of the greater campus community.
- b. It is the responsibility of each student to know his or her responsibilities and act

## 11.6 Generally Prohibited Conduct

### 11.6.1 Criminal Misconduct

This categorization of violations of Kepler College Student Code of Conduct refers to all those misconducts that constitutes criminal acts as defined under Article 12 of the Organic Law N° 01/2012/OL of 02/05/2012 instituting the Rwanda Penal Code, contained in Official Gazette n° Special of 14 June 2012, namely, felonies, misdemeanor and petty offenses. Cases of criminal misconduct include the following:

- a) **Stage 3 Violence:** While **Stage 1** violence—such as name-calling, use of profanity, sexual comments, and obscene language or gestures—and **Stage 2** violence—which includes blatant disregard for Kepler College policies and procedures, ethnic or racial slurs, theft, and verbal or implied threats—are classified as major or gross acts of misconduct, **Stage 3** violence is treated with heightened severity. Stage 3 involves criminal misconduct, including but not limited to physical abuse or assault, inappropriate touching, destruction of property or vandalism, arson, sabotage, throwing objects, or possession of a weapon. Such cases will be referred to law enforcement authorities in addition to being classified as major or gross misconduct.
- b) ***Sexual Assault involving Rape:*** Any sexual misconduct involving physical assault resulting in rape is considered by law as a criminal offence in violation of Law No.59/2008 on Prevention of Gender-based violence of the Republic of Rwanda.
- c) ***Manufacture and distribution of drugs:*** on campus and in the hostels

- d) *Deliberate Acts of Arson*: Setting fire to Kepler College property with intention to burn down buildings, furniture, computers etc.
- e) *Unauthorized Possession and use of Firearms and Explosives*: and other dangerous Weapons and display of intentions to use it to injure or threaten other students or staff.
- f) Violent Strike and riots on campus or hostel.

### 11.7 Gross Misconduct (Major Violations)

In line with HEC (2007) Students Regulations and Disciplinary Procedures in Higher Education document 'Gross misconduct' refers to "misconduct serious enough to make any further working relationship with staff and or other students very difficult, if not impossible." A major violation of Kepler College Student Code of Conduct is defined as a single incident, or a pattern of misconduct which causes significant concern for the health of the community, the safety of its students or the impact on the community. Cases of Major violations or gross misconduct include the following:

- a) **Stage 2 Violence**: involving blatant disregard of Kepler College policies and procedures, ethnic or racial epithets, making verbal threats or conveying threats to other students and staff.
- b) **Sexual assault and harassments**: such as non-consensual kissing, touching, fondling, placement of a sexual organ upon another person, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, soliciting for sexual favors by creating environments that interferes with or limits another student's ability to participate in, or benefit from Kepler College's program or denying services to another student unless they offer sexual favors, indecent exposure, non-consensual recording or photographing of other's sexual parts, stalking, acts of sexual coercion or rape, sexual voyeurism (e.g. spying on nude students in bathrooms, etc), sexual exploitation and discrimination.

Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a member of the Kepler College community has violated regulations prohibiting sexual misconduct, Kepler College will pursue disciplinary action whether the conduct occurs on or off campus. Victims of sexual assault will be referred to confidential crisis intervention and counseling services. Kepler College may make reasonable accommodations to change the living and/or academic situation.

- a) *Use of Illegal drugs and Alcohol and Smoking on Campus or in Hostel:* This provision prohibits the following: the possession, use and intoxication from drugs and alcohol on Kepler College 's campus and hostels; possession of Drug Paraphernalia such as bongos, hookah pipes, dugouts, or any item typically associated with the use of controlled substances; hosting or participating in any activity that promotes consumption of alcohol on campus or while participating in Kepler College activities is prohibited. Kepler College is a smoke-free organization and those who violate this shall be subjected to disciplinary procedures.
- b) *Mutual Combat:* Fighting in which both parties have contributed to the situation by verbal and/or physical action. It differs from assault as there is no clear aggressor.
- c) *Bullying:* Repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, or electronically transmitted emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another is prohibited. Bullying may include actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling, ethnically-based or gender-based put-downs.
- d) *Disorderly Conduct:* Inappropriate, disorderly, or disruptive conduct is prohibited. Any behavior that disturbs individuals or groups without justification is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, disruptive behavior in the classroom, yelling, or boisterous conduct, which is unreasonable in the place or time of its occurrence.
- e) *Disruptive Parties:* Hosting a disruptive party, whether on or off campus, is prohibited. Examples include gatherings that result in a noise complaint, those that are disruptive to neighbors, excessive attendance beyond what is safe and/or reasonable. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- f) *Disrupting Community Relations:* Students are expected to abide by Kepler College regulations and local, state, and national laws. If a student is disrupting community relations, the student may also be subject to disciplinary action. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- g) *Misusing, tampering, or damaging fire safety equipment:* Anyone found discharging a fire extinguisher for other reasons other than a fire will face disciplinary action and will be held responsible for the costs related to damage of property, clean up and recharging the affected fire extinguisher(s).
- h) *Failure to evacuate buildings:* during a fire emergency.

- i) *Misuse of Kepler College Documents:* Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any Kepler College document is forbidden. Unauthorized access to, disclosure of, or use of any Kepler College document or identification including, but not limited to, electronic software, data and records.
- j) *Fraud or Lying:* Lying or fraudulent misrepresentation in, or with regard to any transaction with Kepler College, whether oral or written, is prohibited.
- k) *Gambling or Betting:* Students may not participate in gambling or betting on Kepler College property.
- l) *Hazing:* Hazing is defined as any action taken or situation created, whether on or off Kepler College premises, which recklessly or intentionally produces mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or harassment to another student. The willingness of another student to participate in such activities is not a consideration.
- m) *Indecent Exposure:* Inappropriate public exposure, including but not limited to inappropriate urination or defecation.
- n) *Theft or Misappropriation:* Any theft, including seizing, receiving, or concealing property with knowledge that it has been stolen, is forbidden. Sale, possession or misappropriation of any property without the owner's permission is prohibited (major).
- o) *Unauthorized Access or Forced Entry:* Unauthorized access or entry to, into, or onto any premises or property owned or operated by Kepler College is prohibited. To enter the residence room of another student, one must be granted access or invited by a resident of the room.
- p) *Threat:* Any intentional and unprivileged act that places the victim in fear of harm that would have been painful, injurious, insulting or offensive is prohibited.
- q) accordingly.

### 11.8 Minor Misconduct (Violations)

Minor misconducts are conduct that affects relationships between the student and other members of Kepler College and which slows down the operations of Kepler College and undermine the quality of outcomes, but that do not make it difficult or impossible for the institution to trust the offender or staff or students to work with him or her" (HEC, 2007). They include the following:

- a) **Stage 1 Violence:** including name calling, profanity, sexual comments, obscene language or gestures.
- b) **Damage to Property:** Students may never damage or destroy property owned or operated by Kepler College , other students, faculty, administration, staff or guests. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- c) **Driving Policy:** All Rwanda driving laws and rules must be followed while driving on Kepler College properties. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- d) **Endangering Acts or Behavior:** A student may not engage in conduct that creates or causes a situation that may result in threat or harm to a person, including himself/herself. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- e) **False Information:** Any student who offers false information during an investigation or Kepler College disciplinary process/hearing shall be considered to have violated Kepler College policy. Furnishing false information or using another person's name is prohibited. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- f) **Assisting in the Violation of Kepler College Policy:** Students may never encourage or assist anyone in violating any Kepler College policy (e.g., hosting someone who has been restricted from residence areas). This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- g) **Guest Violations:** Students may not create or allow a situation where his/her guest(s) violate Kepler College policy or guidelines. If a host is found responsible for failure to control his/her guests on campus, sanctioning for the host may correspond to the level of the violations the guest committed. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- h) **Misuse of Property Keys:** A student may not use or possess a Kepler College key without proper authorization. A student may never have a Kepler College key duplicated. Failure to return a key when leaving an assigned space will result in a core change and the corresponding charge will be applied to his/her account. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.

- i) **Misuse of Kepler College IDs:** Students may not lend a Kepler College ID card to anyone. Students must carry their ID card whenever they are on campus.
- j) **Online Course Etiquette:** Students must adhere to course etiquette policies when working online. Due to the open nature of discussion forums, students are expected to post professional and relevant responses. Since sensitive topics may be discussed, students must maintain an open mind while reading their peers' postings. Comments deemed disruptive to the learning environment may be deleted and may result in disciplinary action. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- k) **Implied Consent in participating in misconduct:** If a student is aware of, or is in the presence of a violation of Kepler College policy and he/she remains in the presence of and/or fails to take reasonable action to stop the violation, the student gives his/her consent to the violation and becomes a party in the violation. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- l) **Pattern of Misconduct:** If a student has been involved in multiple violations of community standards and his/her response to disciplinary measures indicates that he/she is unable or unwilling to adapt to Kepler College's expectations, he/she may be found responsible for a pattern of misconduct. This is a major violation of the code of conduct.
- m) **Failure to Comply:** Students must comply with Kepler College officials in the exercise of their duties. This includes participating in investigations, producing Kepler College identification when asked and abiding by any imposed sanction. This may be classified as a minor or major violation depending on the case.
- n) **Online Activity:** Students are responsible for their online profiles. Pictures "tagged by others" or messages posted on one's wall can be used in investigations by Kepler College, and by local government, district, provincial and national authorities.
- o) Poor dressing that exposes the student to other students and staff is disruptive. These include but are not limited to pocket down, revealing sexy parts, attire, dresses that expose the breasts out, etc.

### 11.9 Kepler College Student Code of Conduct

The Kepler College Student Code of Conduct is designed to clearly define and promote the professionalism aspect among students. Its intended objectives are:

- To build professionalism among students.
- To promote self and external awareness without affecting students' freedom and choice.
- To prepare students for future careers and workplace environments.
- For more details about Kepler College Student Code of Conduct, explore extra [here](#).

### 11.10 Examinations/Assessments Prohibited Conduct

In line with HEC (2013) Revised Academic Regulations document and different academic and student policies and procedures documents, examination malpractices or misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

#### a. Criminal Misconduct

Criminal misconduct during examinations will include any act of subterfuge that directly compromises the integrity of Kepler College examinations and results, including but not limited to the following: violence, impersonation, hacking into examination systems and coercing students not to undertake examinations.

#### b. Dishonesty and Cheating

This refers to any form of dishonesty or destruction or falsification of any evidence of irregularity in an attempt to have undue advantage over other candidates undertaking examination and may include the following:

- a) Possession of unauthorized material in the examination room, including, but not limited to, any written or printed material that is generally or specifically prohibited from being brought into the examination room, cellular or mobile phones, radios, radio cassette or other types of cassette players, computers, soft and alcoholic drinks and any other material as may be specified from time to time by the Chief Internal Examiner.
  - b) Copying answers from any person(s)
  - c) External assistance from any person(s)
  - d) Indicators of prior knowledge of the examination question
  - e) Collusion to exchange or substitute examination scripts.
- c. Disruptive Behavior During examinations and assessments



This refers to any act by a student to obstruct the administration of examinations such as inciting others to boycott examinations, noise making, disobeying supervisors / invigilators, tearing the answer booklet into loose sheets or folding scripts in any way or any other behavior that tantamount to disruption of peace in and around the examination room.

#### d. Unauthorized Absence from Examinations

Unauthorized absence from examination, such as going out of the exam room, temporarily or otherwise, or staying out of the examination room for an unduly long period, without authorization or permission of the invigilator or one of the invigilators for examination in question.

### 11.11 Sanctions against Violation

Sanctions are intended to promote the educational needs and growth of the individual student or group of students while protecting the larger Kepler College community. Many factors are taken into consideration when sanctioning such as the current violation, the past disciplinary record, previous sanctions, and the level of understanding the student demonstrates regarding the violation(s). The right and power to impose sanctions against violations are held by the Students Ethics and Disciplinary Committee. Parents/guardians may be contacted or informed on the student sanction depending on its gravity (a process to contact or communicate to them will be provided). The following range of disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on students, at a minimum, for violations of Kepler College Student Code of Conduct:

#### 11.11.1 Oral Warning

This will be imposed for all those cases where a student commits a minor violation of the code of conduct and admits and apologizes for the offense.

#### 11.11.2 Written Warning

A warning consists of formal notification that the student has violated Kepler College community standards and advises that repetition will result in a more severe sanction.

#### 11.11.3 Behavioral Agreement / Contract

In certain circumstances, a behavioral agreement is developed by a member of Kepler College staff. This agreement outlines specific behaviors acceptable among all parties involved. This

may come in Kepler College Academic Success Plan ([KASP](#)) form or other forms as viewed necessary and approved by the DVC ARA, Dean, Subject Managers and Manager Students Affairs (MSA).

#### 11.11.4 Community Service

This sanction may be imposed when, in the view of the hearing officer or board, the student's actions have infringed on the community and necessitates the student to provide positive service to the community. The amount of service and deadline for completion will be described in the written notification to the student.

#### 11.11.5 Educational Sanctioning

This is a non-punitive sanction which is usually imposed in conjunction with another sanction. The educational sanction must be completed within the manner and time stated as part of the sanction. Participation in certain programs may be withheld or restricted until educational sanctions are completed.

#### 11.11.6 Alcohol Restriction

In cases where students are found responsible for major alcohol violations, in any Kepler College residence, that residence may become "dry" for a minimum of 16 weeks exclusive of breaks. A dry residence is defined as a residence where alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Also, students found responsible will be sanctioned individually based on their previous history. This may be accompanied by counseling.

#### 11.11.7 Fines

The terms and timelines of fines are determined on a case-by-case basis.

#### 11.11.8 Computer Module

A student may be referred to online assignments or modules. Deadlines for completing these modules will be included in the written notification to the student.

#### 11.11.9 Removal from Class

Students may be removed from classes if their actions are deemed to be detrimental to the educational environment.

#### 11.11.10 Residence Probation

The hearing officer reserves the right to determine the length of residence probation based on the incident and the student's past history.

#### 11.11.11 Residence Restriction

Students who live in Kepler College residences and violate policies related to community living may be subject to residence restrictions. The following list is intended to be examples of restrictions that could be imposed by the hearing officer: occupancy restrictions, 24-hour quiet hours, relocation.

#### 11.11.12 Restitution

Students may be required to pay the full cost of damage(s), as determined by the hearing officer. This could include the cost of materials and labor for the repair. Restitution can also include the cost of replacing damaged, destroyed, or stolen property.

#### 11.11.13 Access Restriction

Students may be denied access to any campus building, room, activity, class or program, computer and network resources, or denied other student privileges.

#### 11.11.14 Interim Restriction

In cases where the DVC ARA, Dean, SM, AR or MSA believes based upon the information available, that a student has engaged in a serious violation of the Student Code of Conduct and/or federal, state or local law, the DVC ARA or a designee may impose an interim restriction. Interim restrictions become effective immediately without notice and remain in effect until after the hearing and appeal process is completed. Interim restrictions may include separation from Kepler College or residence area; relocation of residence, restriction to designated campus areas or other campus facilities by time or location, restriction of communication with named individuals or groups within the Kepler College community or the requirement to obtain advance authorization to engage in a specified activity. Violations of interim restrictions may result in dismissal from Kepler College .

#### 11.11.15 Suspension from Residence

Suspension from residence, whether for a period of time or indefinitely, carries with it the status of persona non grata in the residential areas. The student is barred from the residence areas and will only be allowed in the educational Kepler College building.

#### 11.11.16 Kepler College Probation

This sanction limits the student's good standing with Kepler College for a designated period of time. Students may be limited in their ability to attend the institution's programs. If the student is found responsible for violating any Kepler College policy during probation, suspension may become effective and the student may be subject to additional sanctions for the additional violation(s).

#### 11.11.17 Suspension from Kepler College College program

The student is dismissed from Kepler College College for a given period of time, with an opportunity for readmission. The student will be persona non grata on all Kepler College College facilities, online environments, and from all Kepler College College functions for the period of his/her suspension.

#### 11.11.18 Dismissal from Kepler College

If a student is dismissed from Kepler College College, he/she is permanently dismissed from the university without opportunity for readmission. The student will be persona non grata on all Kepler College facilities, online environments, and from all Kepler College functions. Students are also dismissed in the following circumstances:

- A student with drawn from Kepler College portal due to poor academic performance
- A student who was dismissed by Kepler College due to plagiarism and other cases
- A student who was found to have forged the admission documents during the application process
- Etc

Kepler College reserves the right to the Disciplinary Committee to collaborate with the Academic Senate to either suspend or dismiss a student based on the investigation outcome as a result of the student's behavior, code of conduct and any other general malpractices.

#### 11.11.19 Examinations Related Sanctions

Students involved in examinations related misconduct or malpractices may be sanctioned in a number of ways:

- a) The student may be required to undergo counseling
- b) The student may be given oral or verbal warning, depending on the severity of the case
- c) Student results for the concerned examinations may be canceled and the student required to repeat the examinations at a later date
- d) Student may be suspended from Kepler College for a designated period of time
- e) In severe cases involving impersonation, violence and persistent repetition of malpractices that they were previously sanctioned about, the student may be dismissed from the Kepler College .

#### 11.11.20 Factors influencing Type of Sanction to Impose

The following factors will determine the severity of the sanctions to be imposed for violation of Kepler College Student Code of Conduct:

- a) *Mitigating and aggravating factors*: such as the nature of the violation, the extent of damage caused by the student, the student's previous disciplinary record, the requirement of compensation to any aggrieved party and the individual participation in counseling.
- b) *Repetition of offense*: every instance of repetition of a previous offense may result in imposition of progressively more severe sanctions, while respecting the principle of a "punishment that fits the violation".

### 11.12 Enforcement of the Code of Conduct

#### 11.12.1 Organs for Enforcing the Code of Conduct

Kepler College Student Code of Conduct will be enforced by the DVC ARA and the Students' Ethics and Disciplinary Committee that s/he chairs. The committee comprises of the following members:

- a) DVC of Academic and Research Affairs (Chair)
- b) Manager of Student Affairs (Secretary)

- c) Dean of Faculty (Vice Chair)
- d) Academic Registrar
- e) Director of Academic Advising
- f) Director of QA and Enhancement
- g) Student Representatives
- h) Guild President

#### 11.13. Minimum Sanctions for Minor Misconduct after Disciplinary Hearing

At the minimum, the range of sanctions for minor misconduct (determined as so through a hearing) shall be as follows:

- e. *First Minor Violation:* the student will meet with the Manager of Students' Affairs and complete a community publication regarding his/her violation, the impact on the community, and the changes the student will need to make to positively impact the community in the future. Additionally, a fine of no more than 10,000 Rwf may be imposed.
- f. *Second Minor Violation:* the student will meet with the Manager of Students' Affairs and complete a community publication regarding his/her violation according to the same requirements as above. Additionally, he/she will be placed on a Kepler College Academic Success Plan following the disciplinary meeting. A monetary fine of no more than 20,000 Rwf may also be imposed.