

Dear students,

### **Radicalization and Extremism – PREVENTION**

Prevention of radicalization and violent extremism has become an important issue and topic of debate in an increasingly globalised Higher Education sector. It is apparent that some students are at risk of radicalisation and thus the international Higher Education sector considers universities and colleges as important partners in preventing and combating the radicalization of students.

Radicalisation has its origins in the complexities of our political, economic and social environment. “Radicalisation can be understood as a phased and complex process in which an individual or a group embraces a radical ideology or belief that accepts, uses or condones violence, including acts of terrorism, to reach a specific political or ideological purpose.”

Unicaf University’s mission, vision and core values strive to provide an ethically sound teaching and learning environment that is inclusive and respects multi-cultural awareness and tolerance. At the same time, it is the University’s obligation to protect students and vulnerable individuals from being radicalised and to take all reasonable actions to prevent our organisation from being used as a platform for radicalization.

Our prevention strategy is focused on supporting and protecting vulnerable students who might be radicalised and drawn into acts of violence, including acts of terrorism, as well as raising awareness of the issue. Vulnerability involves individuals who, due to their experiences, circumstances, and state of mind may be directed towards a radical ideology that supports violence, including acts of terrorism. We aim to disallow the development of any individuals or groups who might abuse our teaching and learning environment to radicalize any students.

This approach applies to all forms of radicalization and extremism, including political and religious activities across a wide spectrum. Experimenting with political ideas and exploring faiths will be part of the university experience for many students. However, if an individual begins to express extremist views which can be used to legitimise acts of violence, including terrorism, then we must intervene; maintaining our environment as inclusive, tolerant, welcoming and safe.

If any of us – students and staff alike – notice any of the following, it is our personal responsibility to take action: unusual signs of isolation or withdrawal; changes in peer group; changes in personal appearance; a fall-off in normal patterns of engagement; signs of aggression or threatening behaviour; accessing violent and hate rhetoric via websites, social media or printed literature; sudden changes in social behaviour and practices; and advocacy or promotion of extremist views. This last activity of advocacy and promotion may be the most obvious sign for our online university and as such, all communications and student profiles are continually monitored by the teaching faculty and administration staff.

What should you do? If you have any concerns about a fellow student or staff member, please contact us immediately: University’s Compliance and Data Protection Officer at [dpo@unicaf.org](mailto:dpo@unicaf.org).

We offer this link for you to explore how the United Nations is approaching extremism and to provide the background for Unicaf University’s prevention measures: [Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism; A Teacher’s Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism](#).

Thank you.

Dr. Kevin Andrews, Vice-Chancellor (Federal) Unicaf University

Dr. Robert Ridley, Vice-Chancellor Unicaf University in Malawi

Dr. Christine Phiri Mushibwe, Vice-Chancellor Unicaf University in Zambia