



*Inspiring Innovation and Leadership*

**KARATINA UNIVERSITY**

**KARATINA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MENTORSHIP  
POLICY**

**NOVEMBER, 2013**

## **CONTACTS**

Karatina University  
P. O. Box 1957 - 10101 Karatina, Kenya  
Telephone: 020-2176713/ +254729721200  
Email: [vc@karu.ac.ke](mailto:vc@karu.ac.ke)  
Website: <http://www.karu.ac.ke>

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**SIGNATURE PAGE**

This Students Mentorship Policy was approved by Karatina University Council on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several vertical strokes followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

.....  
**Prof. Mucai Muchiri**  
**Vice Chancellor**

*Approved by Karatina University Council on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013*

## **VISION**

To be a university of global excellence  
meeting the dynamic needs and development of the society.

## **MISSION**

To create, conserve and disseminate knowledge through training, research, innovation  
and community outreach

## **CORE VALUES**

Equity  
Team Work  
Meritocracy  
Academic Freedom  
Accountability  
Excellence  
Probity

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# STUDENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAM KARATINA UNIVERSITY

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1.1 The Concept

The concept of mentoring has a long history, one that comes to us from Greek mythology. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Mentor was the teacher of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. However, a Mentor was more than a teacher. Mentor was half-male and half-female and was wisdom personified.

Mentoring is the art of helping and empowering others to shape their learning behaviors. Good mentoring practice empowers students by encouraging and supporting each student in successful achievement of goals, and adapting to the academic, social, political and cultural values of the institution.

Youths worldwide are today facing a number of challenges including peer pressure, drug abuse and other social pressures. Although the University shapes students in terms of academic life, most institutions have ignored the holistic training of students. Karatina University is determined to train holistic graduates capable of family challenges in the job market and the society. This will be done through the establishment of mentoring programme where senior members of the academic staff will mentor students as soon as they join Karatina University.

Mentorship of students is one of the key areas that Karatina University wishes to excel in, to prepare students both academically and socially for the competitive job market. In this regard the need for the mentorship policy cannot be overstated.

Karatina University Student mentoring program links first year students (Mentorees) with a Mentor who is a Lecturer willing to coach, share knowledge and experience. Transition to University is a challenging experience hence, new students benefit from the assistance of more experienced individuals and Mentors who have the gratification of helping students in acquiring multiple skills for themselves.

### 1.2 Definition of Mentoring

Mentoring is the art of helping and empowering others to shape their learning behaviours. Good mentoring practice empowers students by encouraging and supporting each student in successful achievement of goals, and adapting to the

academic, social, political and cultural morals of the institution. In Karatina University, Mentoring integrates the student into the organisation/and or department and fosters:

- a. Self-esteem;
- b. Affirmation of potential;
- c. Orientation to the culture of the institution and/or department;
- d. Professionalism;
- e. Access to information and resources;
- f. Empowerment.

### **1.3 Justification for the Mentoring Policy**

The Karatina university Student Mentorship program links first year students (Mentees) with a Mentor who is a Lecturer willing to coach, share knowledge and experience. Transition to University is a challenging experience hence, new students benefit from the assistance of more experienced individuals and Mentors who have the gratification of helping students and acquiring multiple skills for themselves.

Although the University staff interact informally with the students on issues affecting them on daily basis, there's need to formalize their consultations. This policy provides a framework and requirements within which the student mentoring programme operates. Mentors model the qualities necessary for successful completion of a graduate program. Mentors and Mentorees will be matched according to discipline and interests each Academic year and will continue the mentoring process to the end of the end of their stay at the University. Mentorees will be encouraged to form a study group using the Mentor as a resource person. Core to the policy therefore is the provision of a benchmark for the monitoring and evaluation towards the programme achievement, particularly for the university management.

All new students need and have a right to be part of an inclusive, responsive and friendly academic community. Lecturers can contribute positively to this transition process. The practice of the Student Mentor program enhances the achievement of vision 2030 and strategic objectives as stipulated in the Karatina University Strategic Plan.

### **1.4 Scope of Policy**

The mentorship programme aims at facilitating Karatina University commitment to its vision of being a University of Global Excellence, meeting the dynamic needs and the development of the society through inspiring innovation and leadership among its students. The policy will apply to both mentorees and mentors and will provide direction towards the implementation of the mentorship programme.



### **1.5 Mission Statement**

The mission of the Student Mentoring Program is to provide a welcoming and supportive environment at the Karatina University by linking new students with successful role models to produce holistic graduates. The mentoring program is also devised to encourage minority and disadvantaged students.

### **1.6 The Goal of the Mentoring Program**

The goal of the program is to give new students a supportive environment that will motivate and assist them to improve academic performance while promoting a cohesive university culture. The programme also aims to instill discipline in students for a successful University life.

### **1.7 Objectives of the Mentorship Program**

The objectives of the mentoring programme are to:

- a. Promote respect and dignity;
- b. Provide positive role models;
- c. Provide a framework for positive interaction between new students, Student Mentors and staff;
- d. Orientate new students to the University culture, together with the services and programs available to them;
- e. Enable new students to understand the challenges and opportunities of University and enhance opportunities for academic success;
- f. Impact positively on the attrition rates of first year students and ultimately all students of Karatina University;
- g. Have continual evaluation integrated into the program thereby continually improving the Mentorship program;
- h. Provide a sense of belonging within the University culture;
- i. Develop a stronger sense of academic community;
- j. Counter any initial feelings of isolation and/or anxiety; and
- k. Help develop interpersonal communication skills for Mentors.

### **1.8 Strategies**

In implementation of this mentorship programme, the following strategies will be used;

- a. Establish an organizational base within the University structure for the Student Mentorship program;
- b. Provide Mentors who will assist new students with tactical daily skills leading towards academic success;
- c. For all new students to have a mentor as a role model to help them adjust to and better understand the demands and environment of university study;
- d. Recruit new Mentors to perpetuate the ideals and practice of the program;
- e. Train Mentors in information and interpersonal skills to empower them to play their role effectively;

- f. Support Mentors and acknowledge their contribution to the University Community;
- g. Maintain a Mentor Directorate within the Learning Centre;
- h. Establish, support and maintain relevant Information Technology to assist the mentoring process.

### **1.9 Performance Indicators**

Regular evaluation and assessment of the Mentorship program will collect information on the following performance indicators:

- a. Influence of Mentors: the degree to which the needs of the first year students are met;
- b. Skills gained by Mentors: the degree to which relevant generic skills are included in Student Mentorship training programs;
- c. Effectiveness of the Student Mentorship program: the degree to which the University as a whole benefits from the program.

## **SECTION TWO: THE MENTORSHIP SERVICE**

### **2.1 The Nature of the Mentor Relationship**

Establishing a positive mentoring relationship is very much like establishing other valued human relationships in a number of respects. Both parties have a genuine desire to understand the values and expectations of the other, and to respect and become sensitive to one another's feelings and needs. At the same time, mentoring relationships differ in an important way from other personal relationships because they are professional in nature.

### **2.2 The Benefits of Being a Mentor**

Mentoring is a two-way street, and the mentoree is not the only one who benefits from a mentoring relationship. The act of mentoring provides significant interpersonal and leadership skills development. Mentoring at University is linked to the Alumni network of working professionals. As a Mentor one becomes a member of the Mentorship Program, which is planned, and developed. It continues to be managed, evaluated and assessed, evolving as the University grows.

### **2.3 Mentor Qualities**

Mentors are expected to possess certain qualities which include but not limited to the following:

- a. Demonstrate an ability to share knowledge, skills and experience with the Mentoree;
- b. A good Listener;
- c. Recognize and encourages excellence in others;
- d. Be sensitive to the needs of others;
- e. Offer support, patience, and enthusiasm;
- f. Expose the Mentoree to new ideas, perspectives, and standards;
- g. Apply social justice principles in all facets of mentoring;
- h. Demonstrate tolerance and an understanding of cultural diversity;
- i. Serve as role models to students by providing support and information;
- j. Possess a positive attitude;
- k. Must be mature, responsible, and trustworthy;
- l. Display a genuine interest in the success of students;
- m. Be of High Integrity; and
- n. Be Uncanny

### **2.4 Skills of Mentors**

Karatina University Mentors are expected to have the following positive skills but not limited to;

**a. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**

Mentors work with a variety of students and their study needs, learning problem-solving skills to pass on to others to overcome study problems, settle in and maintain momentum in learning. Mentors learn their skills while working in small teams with other Mentors. They are expected to have the ability to:

- i. Adapt knowledge to new situations;
- ii. Solve problems in at least one discipline area;
- iii. Develop interpersonal understanding; and
- iv. Lead, manage and contribute effectively to teams.

**b. Communication**

Mentors will be expected to have the ability to speak and write logically, clearly and creatively.

**c. Information Technology**

In supporting the IT needs of students, mentors are expected to develop their own skills.

**d. Learning Achievement**

Mentors gain skills in helping students acquire the knowledge essential to their chosen subject of study. This may entail acquiring:

- i. A coherent and disciplined body of skills, knowledge, values and professional ethics in at least one discipline area;
- ii. The ability to use a variety of media and methods to retrieve, analyze evaluate, organize and present information;
- iii. The ability to reflect on and evaluate learning processes and products;
- iv. The ability to learn independently and in a self-directed manner; and
- v. A commitment to lifelong learning and intellectual development.

**e. Qualities desired as outcome of mentorship**

In working with students, Mentors will gain a flexible, responsive ability to work in diverse environments. The University and the mentorship program also aim to foster the following qualities in its Mentors.

- i. The ability to operate in an environment that is linguistically, culturally and socially diverse;
- ii. The ability to adapt to an unfamiliar culture;

- iii. An awareness of Indigenous Kenyan cultures;
- iv. An awareness of regional issues;
- v. Professional, community and environmental responsibility;
- vi. The ability and willingness to contribute to the intellectual, cultural and social life of the regional, national and international communities.

## **2.5 Roles and functions of mentors**

These shall include but not limited to the following:

- a. Meet new students during the orientation week;
- b. Contact the Mentoree on a regular basis, in person, by telephone or and help the Mentorees understand the University process;
- c. Provide support and encouragement for the Mentoree;
- d. Recognize and recruit new Mentors for the program;
- e. Positively promote the Mentorship Program;
- f. Attend training and professional development seminars;
- g. Clarify, where necessary, University policy/procedures to students;
- h. Encourage students in attaining computer skills needed for academic progress;
- i. Assist students in acquiring lecture/tutorial/workshop practical and research skills;
- j. Network and liaise with new students and faculty staff when necessary;
- k. Participate, and encourage participation, of Mentorees in various semester events such as Talent shows, games and sports, academic and training workshops.

### **3.0 SECTION THREE: POLICY FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Establishment of mentoring programme office;**

There shall be an establishment of the mentoring programme office headed by a Coordinator under the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Research and Students' Affairs.

#### **3.2 Relationship between Mentors and Mentees**

**Objective:** To ensure a cordial relationship between mentors and mentorees.

Mentors and mentees shall enter into the mentoring on a willingness basis, the code of conduct for the mentoring programme will be upheld.

#### **3.3 Mentoring Hours**

**Objective:** To promote mentoring activities during the day.

Mentoring activities shall be carried out during the day between 8.00 am to 5.00pm including weekends, however in special circumstances; the mentoring may extend beyond these hours as long as safety measures and the conduciveness of the mentoring environment are observed.

#### **3.4 Venues for Mentoring**

**Objective:** To provide venues for mentoring within the University.

Mentoring shall be done in a safe and open place within the university as provided for in the code of conduct given in section five of this policy. However, in special circumstances; the mentoring may extend beyond the University as long as safety measures and the conduciveness of the mentoring environment are observed.

#### **3.5 Eligibility of Mentors**

**Objective:** To ensure that those selected as mentors are of high integrity.

Mentor shall be of sound moral integrity, and shall be available, patient, self motivated and self-disciplined. Mentors shall be willing to serve without becoming exploitative and without expecting personal gain from mentorship process.

### **3.6 Identification of Mentors**

**Objective:** To recruit members on voluntary basis.

The mentors shall be identified and recruited on voluntary basis. Students peer mentors shall also be involved in this programme.

### **3.7 Registration of Mentorees**

All new students shall be assigned mentors.

### **3.8 Research**

**Objective:** To ensure that pertinent issues related to mentoring are identified for purposes of research.

Subject to the availability of resources, pertinent issues related to the mentoring process shall be identified from time to time, for the purpose of research. The research outcome shall be disseminated to further enrich and guide the programme and also inform this policy. However, any research undertaking will have to be sanctioned in consultation with the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and must be approved by the Vice Chancellor.

### **3.9 Confidentiality**

**Objectives:** To ensure that there is utmost confidentiality.

All persons involved in this programme shall be willing to keep in confidence all that is discussed during the entire Mentoring period.

### **3.10 Legal Issues**

**Objectives:** To ensure that all parties act responsibly.

Professionalism, integrity and Code of Conduct and Ethics shall be strictly observed. All person involved in the mentoring programme shall be willing participants and the University holds no legal responsibility for any unexpected, negative outcome.

### **3.11 Capacity Building for Mentors**

**Objective:** To ensure that mentors are facilitated for training in areas of need.

Capacity building for mentors shall be continuous and will depend on the identified needs, from time to time and the availability of resources.

### **3.12 Duties and Responsibilities for Mentors and Mentees**

**Objectives:** To ensure that all parties act within the Karatina University codes of conduct.

The mentoring programme will enforce existing mentoring and the Karatina University Codes of Conduct, institution rules, professional ethics, regulations and disciplinary measures that will respect and protect the mentors and mentees.

### **3.13 Reporting Offences**

**Objective:** To ensure that there is a proper channel of reporting irregularities.

Issues related to offences committed during mentoring process shall be reported to the mentoring office. However, mentors and mentees will be expected to follow the Karatina University code of Conduct and which operates within the University statutes.

### **3.14 Rights and Responsibilities of mentorees**

**Objective:** To ensure that the rights of mentees are safeguarded.

In the event of any violation of the rights of the mentorees, the mentoring programme office shall be informed in confidence. However, the mentors shall be expected to adhere to the principles eschewed in this policy during the mentoring process.

### **3.15 Accountability**

**Objective:** To ensure that all parties are accountable to the policy guidelines.

The mentors and mentorees will be held personally accountable and are expected to strictly comply with these policy guidelines. They will be required to attend, lend support and participate actively during the mentoring process activities.



### **3.16 Obligations**

**Objective:** To ensure that quarterly reports are submitted to the mentorship programme coordinator.

The mentors shall provide regular reports to the mentoring Programme coordinator who shall be in-charge of over-seeing the mentoring process. As much as possible, the mentoring office shall endeavor to provide necessary support to the mentors and mentorees.

### **3.17 Procedures for Discontinuation or Termination of Mentor Status**

**Objective:** To ensure that parties which contravene Code of Conduct are discontinued from the programme.

Mentors and Mentorees will be excluded from the program based on unacceptable, violent, abusive behavior or harassment. The Mentor Program Coordinator and the Program's Facilitators will assess the validity of the complaint and if the consensus is that the complaint is justified, then the student will be informed of the decision. Any appeal process is to be directed to the Program Facilitator in writing.

#### **4.0 SECTIONFOUR: IMPLEMENTATION OF MENTORING POLICY**

##### **4.1 Role of Mentoring Office**

Effective implementation of the Mentoring Policy will be through the co-ordination of the mentoring programme at Karatina University. The role of the mentoring office will be to:

- i. Provide the physical presence and be the secretariat for the coordination and implementation of the mentoring policy.
- ii. Co-ordinate all the mentorees and mentors at Karatina University.
- iii. Recruit all mentors according to the set criterion.
- iv. Initiate and provide capacity building and strengthening of the mentors to enable them to effectively implement the policy.
- v. Initiate research and manage information on mentoring at Karatina University.
- vi. Promote partnerships with likeminded stakeholders on issues relating to mentoring.
- vii. Develop monitoring and evaluation systems.
- viii. Undertake monitoring and evaluation of the mentoring programme.

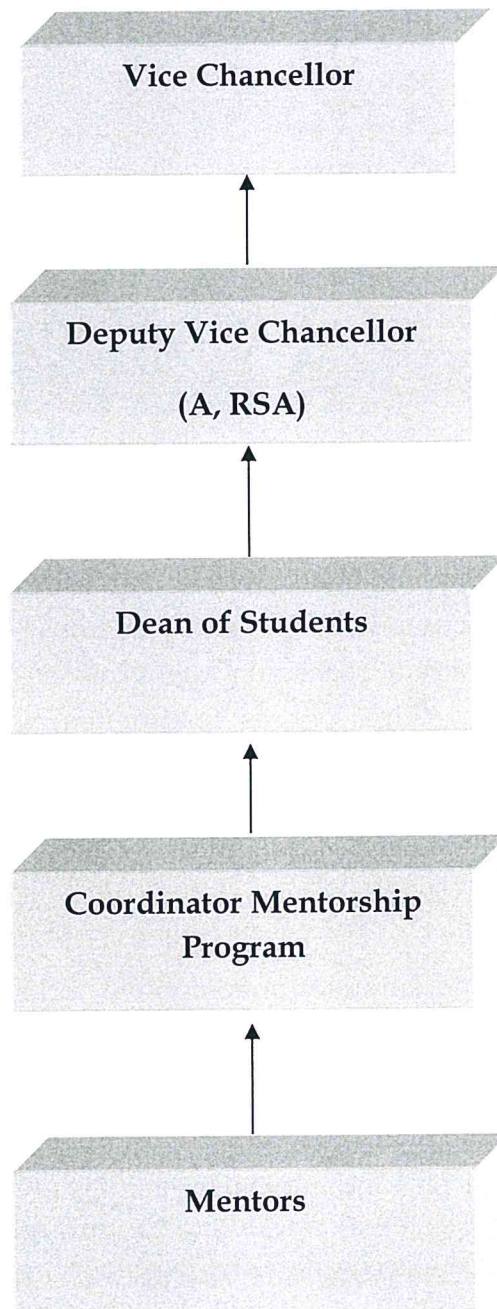
##### **4.2 The role of Karatina University Management**

The University Management shall support the implementation of this policy through the provision of the required personnel and financial resources. Critical areas for support include mobilization and provision of resources for regular capacity building for mentors, monitoring and evaluation, research, documentation and policy review.

##### **4.3 Mentor Awards**

The Mentor will be awarded a 'Certificate of Appreciation' from the University to complement their resumes.

#### 4.4 Administrative Structure



## **5.0 SECTION FIVE: CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **5.1 Confidentiality**

The Mentorship Program seeks to ensure that all students are able to work and study in an environment free from violence, abusive or disruptive behaviours. In recognising, that such behaviours may take place at the University, Mentors are committed to the proper recognition and the sensitive handling of such complaints.

### **5.2 Grievance Procedures**

It is of critical importance that the Mentor Coordinator be notified of any incident or pattern of events involving disruptive, abusive or violent behaviour. Confidentiality of principal parties will be maintained at all times and access to information regarding any incidents and subsequent action will be limited to those directly involved in such processes. However, information regarding the processes followed will be shared without compromising the principal parties' confidentiality. The Coordinator may on consent organise a mediation meeting between the students involved, along with one or two other students or external mediators, whose presence is acceptable to all parties.

### **5.3 Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment of any kind is totally unacceptable and shall not be tolerated. This type of behaviour shall be reported to the Mentorship Program Coordinator or seek advice from the Dean of Students Office.

### **5.4 Anti-Discrimination Procedures**

The Mentor Program is built on fundamental principles of human rights. The Mentor Program encourages cultural diversity and tolerance through inclusiveness, teamwork, meritocracy, academic freedom, accountability, excellence, probity, equity and actively works towards affirmative action. Problems, which arise in this area, should be reported to the Dean of Students Office or Mentor Program Coordinator.

### **5.5 Complaint Resolution Procedures**

Assistance may be sought under the complaint resolution procedures for cases of discrimination or harassment based on any other attributes included in University complaint procedures, anti-discrimination legislation, such as disability, age or gender. Any enquiries concerning harassment or discrimination based on sex, race or disability may be directed to the office of the dean of students.

## **6.0 SECTION SIX: MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

- 6.1 Effective and efficient implementation of the mentoring Policy must integrate monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring entails the collection, analysis and use of the data and information on the mentoring process in order to determine the progress and efficiency of implementation process. In addition, periodic evaluation will provide information aimed at improving the programme.
- 6.2 An impact assessment will be carried out from time to time with a view of identifying the success of the programme as well as new challenges for the purpose of improving the coordination and implementation measures.
- 6.3 Additionally, monitoring and evaluation outcome will be used to inform this policy in as far as further development and reviews are concerned.
- 6.4 Review will be done as need arises.

