ULK POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE UPI

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REVISED VIRTUAL LEARNING POLICY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI: Artificial Intelligence

HEC: Higher Education Council

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

LMS: Learning Management System

QA: Quality Assurance

UPI: ULK Polytechnic Institute

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CREATION, VISION, MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, MOTTO, VALUES, OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS

Article 1: Creation

ULK Polytechnic Institute (UPI) a high private technical learning institution founded on 2nd October, 2014 and now governed by the law N° 010/2021 of 16/2/2021 determining the organization of Education and the Ministerial order N° 001/MINEDUC/2021 of 20/10/2021 determining standards in Education, and the Ministerial order N° 003/MINEDUC/2021 of 20/10/2021 determining Rwanda Qualification Framework, law N°27/2023 of 18/05/2023 amending the law N° 66/2018 regulating labour in Rwanda, UPI statutes, its internal Regulations and other academic regulations.

Article 2: Vision

In line with the vision of the Government of Rwanda to promote practical skills, ULK Polytechnic Institute aims to stand out as a remarkable Institute for excellence with hands on skills and highly motivated students endowed with elevated ethical values.

Article 3: Mission

The Mission of ULK Polytechnic Institute is: to educate, teach, conduct technical projects and serve the community. The fundamental mission of ULK Polytechnic Institute is to provide the students with competitive, creative, innovative skills which will contribute to find solutions on the labor market.

Article 4: Philosophy

The philosophy of ULK Polytechnic Institute is based on four fundamental principles:

- To have faith in God;
- To know one's mission on earth;
- To live ethical values;
- To have positive thoughts.

Article 5: Motto

The motto of ULK Polytechnic Institute is "**Science, Conscience and Skills**".

Article 6: Objectives

ULK Polytechnic Institute has the following objectives:

- To contribute to capacity building hands on skills based;
- To promote projects innovation for serving the community;
- To provide middle technicians with technical trainings to meet the community needs;
- To provide service to the community; and
- Self-employers; etc. ….

Article 7: Responsibilities of ULK Polytechnic Institute

The main responsibilities of ULK Polytechnic Institute are the following:

1. To carry out and promote technological disciplines according to labor market demand at the national and regional level;
2. To collaborate with other institutions to ensure their dissemination in order to contribute to the promotion of development at the national, regional level and worldwide;
3. To provide the student with knowledge, hands on skills, technology and education for innovation and self-employment;
4. To promote the national culture with end-purpose of promoting technical education that meets Rwandan needs; and
5. To contribute to resolution of issues related to national development

Article 8: Powers of ULK Polytechnic Institute

ULK Polytechnic Institute has the following powers:

1. To award Advanced Diplomas, BTech degrees offered in accordance with the law;
2. To award Diploma and Certificates to candidates who successfully complete training courses;
3. To conclude cooperation agreements with different organs in charge of education, either national or foreign institutions of higher learning;
4. To organize trainings for lecturers in order to be competitive at the international level; and
5. To promote lecturers to academic ranks

Article 9: Attributions

The attributions of the Founder and President are:

i To represent legally the Institution;

ii To designate the Chancellor to be approved by the Governing Body;

iii To appoint and cancel the appointment of any member of the Governing Body;

iv To designate members of Executive Organ to be approved by the Governing Body;

v To appoint and dismiss ULK Polytechnic Institute authorities;

vi To appoint and dismiss members of the auditors committee;

vii To ratify activities, programmes and the ULK Polytechnic Institute budget;

viii To decide about the ULK Polytechnic Institute investments and extension;

ix To decide about the strategic plan of the UPI.

Article 10: Type of Institution

UPI is a private education institution which complies with education standards in Rwanda and is subject to regular inspection by the Higher Education Council (HEC).

Article 11: Cycles in each category of education

UPI comprises two cycles which are the Advanced Diploma, BTech degrees awards

Article 12: Establishment

UPI is an established private education institution undertaking the education development with a focus on courses (Construction Technology, Land surveying, Electrical Technology, Electronics & Telecommunication Technology). These courses are needed in the country and on the labour market in Rwanda.

Article 13: Management Organs

UPI management organs are the following:

1. The Governing Body,
2. Executive organ,
3. Academic Senate, and
4. Senior management committee.

The chancellor of UPI is designated by the founder and the president of ULK Ltd and approved by the Governing Body.
The chancellor of UPI is responsible for presiding over the academic year opening ceremonies, graduation ceremonies and awarding of other merit titles and may also attend other events or meetings if necessary.

Article 14: Years, Sessions, Semesters and Terms

In these regulations, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- **Academic Year:** the length of time during which UPI offers studies of full-time Advanced Diploma, BTech degrees equivalent to a minimum of 120 credits. One credit is equated to 10 hours of notional student learning effort; thus, a minimum period of 1200 hours for an academic year;
- **Session:** The part of the academic year during which the UPI holds classes;
- **Semester**: An academic period of a half of the academic year;
- **Term**: A definite continuous period during which instruction is regularly given to students; presently a period of 1/3 of the academic year.
- **Credits**: One of the primary methods used to determine and document that students meet academic requirements
- **Module**: Any unit offered in a programme that has a unique identification code and title.

Article 15: Policy Statement

The integration of digital technologies in higher education has become essential for improving the quality, accessibility, and relevance of teaching, learning, assessment, and research. In Rwanda, the Higher Education Council (HEC) requires higher learning institutions to adopt technology-enhanced learning environments that support modern pedagogical practices and ensure quality education aligned with national development priorities.

The adoption of virtual learning is guided by national frameworks such as the Education Sector Strategic Plan, the National Strategy for Transformation, the ICT in Education Policy, and the National Artificial Intelligence Policy. These frameworks encourage higher learning institutions to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into teaching and learning processes to improve educational outcomes and promote innovation.

This policy covers face-to-face programmes with ICT integration, and blended learning programmes delivery modes. Each mode requires appropriate infrastructure, digital learning materials, trained academic staff, prepared students, reliable assessment systems, and effective institutional management structures.

This policy establishes guidelines for the effective implementation and management of virtual learning systems within UPI.

Article 16: Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to:

i. Provide a coherent institutional framework for virtual learning implementation at UPI;
ii. Guide academic units in integrating ICT into teaching, learning, assessment, and research;
iii. Ensure quality, inclusiveness, integrity, and sustainability of face-to-face and blended learning programmes;
iv. Define roles, responsibilities, and minimum standards for infrastructure, staff, students, and management;
v. Support innovation in pedagogy while ensuring compliance with regulatory and accreditation requirements.

Article 17: Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to:

i. All academic programmes offered at UPI using face-to-face with ICT integration and blended learning modes;
ii. All academic and administrative staff involved in programme design, delivery, assessment, and support;
iii. All students enrolled in UPI programmes.

Article 18: Guiding Principles

The implementation of virtual learning at UPI shall be guided by the following principles:

i. **Quality and Relevance:** Digital tools must enhance learning outcomes and graduate competencies.
ii. **Equity and Inclusiveness:** Learning design shall follow Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to accommodate diverse learners.

iii. **Pedagogical Alignment:** Technology use must align with curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessment methods.

iv. **Academic Integrity:** Robust mechanisms shall be used to ensure authenticity, fairness, and credibility of assessment.

v. **Accessibility and Reliability:** ICT systems must be reliable, secure, and accessible to all authorised users.

vi. **Continuous Improvement:** Virtual learning practices shall be regularly reviewed based on data and feedback.

Article 19: Definition Key Terms

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them unless the context otherwise requires:

Virtual Learning refers to a mode of education delivery in which teaching, learning, and assessment are facilitated through digital technologies and online platforms, either fully or partially, without the need for continuous physical presence of lecturers and learners in the same location.

Face-to-Face Learning with ICT Integration refers to traditional classroom-based instruction enhanced through the use of digital tools, learning management systems, multimedia resources, and technology-supported assessments.

Blended Learning refers to an instructional approach that combines face-to-face learning activities with online learning components in a structured and complementary manner.

Learning Management System (LMS) refers to an institutional digital platform used for the administration, delivery, tracking, assessment, and reporting of academic programmes and learning activities.

Academic Integrity refers to the commitment to honesty, fairness, responsibility, and ethical conduct in all academic activities, including learning, assessment, research, and the use of digital and artificial intelligence tools.

Online Assessment refers to any form of evaluation conducted through digital platforms, including quizzes, assignments, tests, and examinations.

Online Proctoring refers to the use of technological tools and procedures to authenticate and invigilate online assessments to safeguard academic integrity.

Article 20: Modes of Delivery

1. Face-to-Face with ICT Integration

Face-to-face programmes at UPI shall integrate ICT to enhance teaching, learning, assessment, and research. Physical classroom interaction remains central, supported by digital tools and platforms.

2. Blended Learning

Blended learning programmes shall combine structured face-to-face activities with online learning components in a pedagogically coherent manner. The proportion of online and face-to-face activities shall be clearly defined at programme and module levels.

CHAPTER I: FACE-TO-FACE WITH ICT INTEGRATION LEARNING

SECTION I: INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Article 21: Personal Computers and Computer Laboratories

The institution shall provide adequate computers and well-equipped computer laboratories to support teaching and learning activities that require digital tools. In learning activities where computers are necessary, an appropriate computer-to-student ratio shall be ensured. Computer laboratories must be properly maintained and managed.

Article 22: Internet Connectivity

The institution shall provide reliable internet connectivity across the campus to enable students and lecturers to access learning platforms, academic resources, and digital communication tools.

Article 23: Projectors or Digital Smart Displays

Classrooms shall be equipped with projectors or digital smart displays to support multimedia presentations and interactive teaching.

Article 24: Sound System

Large classrooms and lecture halls shall be equipped with sound systems to facilitate effective communication during lectures and presentations.

Article 25: Programme-Specific Software

The institution shall provide licensed software relevant to academic programmes in order to support practical learning, simulations, and professional training.

Article 26: Plagiarism Checker Software

The institution shall use plagiarism detection software to ensure academic integrity in assignments, research reports, and student assessments.

Article 27: Learning Management System (LMS)

A functional Learning Management System shall be maintained to support course management, communication between lecturers and students, assignment submission, assessment management, and monitoring of learning activities.

Article 28: Digital Library

The institution shall provide access to digital libraries and electronic academic databases to support learning and research.

SECTION II: LEARNING MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT

Teaching and learning materials shall be developed to integrate both physical classroom instruction and digital learning support. This shall be implemented through the following steps:

Article 29: Module Content Preparation

Lecturers shall prepare course materials aligned with programme learning outcomes and module learning outcomes. Materials shall include lecture notes, slides, reading lists, case studies, and practical exercises.

Article 30: Digital Format Development

All course materials shall be converted into digital formats such as PDFs, presentations, video lectures, or interactive learning modules.

Article 31: Uploading Materials on LMS

Lecturers shall upload course outlines, lecture notes, reading materials, and additional resources on the Learning Management System before the start of teaching.

Article 32: Alignment with Learning Outcomes

All materials shall clearly indicate learning objectives and expected competencies.

Article 33: Review and Quality Assurance

Programme coordinators and quality assurance officers shall review materials to ensure they meet academic standards.

SECTION III: STAFF READINESS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Academic staff shall be adequately prepared to use ICT tools in teaching and learning. This shall be achieved through:

Article 34: ICT Skills Training

Lecturers shall receive training in the use of ICT tools such as presentation software, online communication tools, and LMS platforms.

Article 35: Digital Pedagogy Development

The institution shall organize workshops on innovative teaching strategies that integrate technology into classroom teaching.

Article 36: Continuous Professional Development

Regular training sessions shall be organized to enhance lecturers' digital teaching skills.

Article 37: Technical Support

The ICT and eLearning units shall provide technical support to lecturers during teaching and assessment processes.

SECTION IV: STUDENT READINESS AND SUPPORT

Students shall be prepared to participate in ICT-supported learning environments. This shall be ensured through:

Article 38: Orientation Programmes

Students shall receive training on how to access and use the LMS and other digital learning tools.

Article 39: Digital Literacy Training

Workshops shall be organized to strengthen students' digital literacy skills.

Article 40: Access to ICT Facilities

Students shall be informed about available computer laboratories, internet services, and digital academic resources.

Article 41: Technical Support Services

Students shall have access to help desks and ICT support teams.

SECTION IV: MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The implementation of ICT-integrated learning shall be coordinated through institutional structures.

Article 42: UPI Management

UPI leadership shall provide policy guidance and allocate financial resources for ICT integration.

Article 43: ICT Unit

The ICT Unit shall maintain digital infrastructure, computer laboratories, and internet connectivity.

Article 44: eLearning Unit

The eLearning Unit shall manage the Learning Management System and provide training for staff and students.

Article 45: Academic Departments

Departments shall ensure that lecturers integrate ICT tools into teaching.

Article 46: Quality Assurance Unit

The Quality Assurance Unit shall monitor the effectiveness of ICT integration in teaching and learning.

SECTION V: ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Assessment shall combine traditional methods with digital tools. Implementation shall include:

Article 47: Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment shall include assignments, quizzes, class participation, and practical exercises.

Article 48: Online Assessment Tools

Online quizzes and assignment submissions shall be conducted through the LMS.

Article 49: Academic Integrity Measures

To uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the digital era, the institution shall adopt comprehensive measures that integrate both traditional and Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enhanced approaches to ensure the originality and authenticity of student work. Plagiarism detection software shall be systematically used to verify the originality of all student submissions. In addition to conventional text-matching systems, the institution shall deploy advanced AI-powered tools capable of:

i. Identifying paraphrased or restructured content that may evade basic plagiarism detection
ii. Detecting patterns indicative of AI-generated text, including stylistic inconsistencies or unnatural language structures
iii. Comparing submissions against extensive and continuously updated academic databases, online sources, and previously submitted student work

AI technologies may be used to support the verification of authorship by analyzing writing style, linguistic patterns, and consistency across a student's body of work. Where significant deviations are identified, further review may be initiated to confirm authenticity.

Students shall be informed that their work may be subject to both plagiarism detection and AI-assisted analysis. They are required to:

i. Submit only original work that reflects their own understanding
ii. Properly cite all sources, including content generated or supported by AI tools
iii. Disclose any permitted use of AI in accordance with institutional guidelines

While AI tools provide valuable support in detecting potential academic misconduct, all findings shall be subject to human review. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of automated detection without appropriate academic judgment and verification.

The use of plagiarism detection and AI systems shall comply with data protection regulations and ethical standards. Student submissions shall be handled securely, and AI tools shall be used responsibly, ensuring fairness, non-discrimination, and respect for student rights.

The institution shall regularly update its AI and plagiarism detection systems to reflect evolving technologies and emerging forms of academic misconduct. Training and guidance shall be provided to both staff and students on the ethical use of AI and best practices in academic writing.

Article 50: Moderation of Results

Academic departments shall moderate assessment results to ensure fairness and consistency.

Article 51: Feedback Mechanisms

Lecturers shall provide timely feedback through classroom discussion or LMS platforms.

CHAPTER II: BLENDED LEARNING

SECTION I: INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Blended learning programmes shall meet all ICT infrastructure requirements applicable to face-to-face programmes with ICT integration. These facilities ensure that lecturers and students can effectively participate in both classroom-based and online learning activities.

Article 52: Personal Computers and Computer Laboratories

The institution shall establish and maintain adequately equipped computer laboratories accessible to both students and lecturers. These laboratories shall contain modern computers with updated operating systems and essential academic software.

Students who do not own personal computers shall be allowed to access these laboratories for learning activities, research, and online course participation. The ICT unit shall ensure regular maintenance, software updates, and technical support for all computer systems.

Article 53: Reliable Internet Connectivity

The institution shall provide high-speed and stable internet connectivity across the campus. Wireless internet access shall be installed in lecture rooms, computer laboratories, libraries, and student common areas.

The ICT unit shall monitor internet performance and ensure sufficient bandwidth to support online learning activities such as virtual discussions, assignment submissions, and access to digital academic resources.

Article 54: Projectors or Digital Smart Displays

Lecture rooms shall be equipped with multimedia projectors or digital smart displays to support interactive teaching and learning. Lecturers shall use these devices to present slides, videos, simulations, and other digital learning materials during face-to-face sessions. Technical staff shall regularly inspect and maintain these devices to ensure they function properly.

Article 55: Sound Systems in Lecture Rooms

Large lecture halls and classrooms shall be equipped with audio systems including microphones and speakers. These systems shall be managed by technical staff to ensure proper functioning during lectures, presentations, and hybrid learning sessions.

Article 56: Programme-Specific Licensed Software

The institution shall procure and install licensed software relevant to specific academic programmes. Examples include statistical software for research programmes, accounting software for business programmes, or design software for engineering and architecture programmes.

These software tools shall be available in computer laboratories and, where possible, through institutional licenses that allow students to install them on personal devices.

Article 57: Plagiarism Detection Software

The institution shall subscribe to recognized plagiarism detection systems and integrate them into the Learning Management System. Lecturers shall require students to submit assignments through the LMS, where they will automatically be checked for originality.

Academic staff shall review plagiarism reports before grading assignments.

Article 58: Learning Management System (LMS)

The institution shall establish a centralized Learning Management System that serves as the primary digital platform for blended learning. The LMS shall support functions such as:

i. Uploading course materials
ii. Managing online discussions
iii. Submitting assignments
iv. Conducting online assessments
v. Tracking student participation and progress.

The eLearning unit shall manage the LMS and provide training for lecturers and students on how to use the system effectively.

Article 59: Access to Digital Libraries

The institution shall subscribe to electronic academic databases, e-books, and online journals**.** Students and lecturers shall access these resources through the institutional digital library system. Library staff shall train users on how to search for and retrieve digital academic materials.

SECTION II: LEARNING MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT

Learning materials shall be designed specifically for blended learning environments. Implementation shall include:

Article 60: Instructional Design

Courses shall be structured to include both classroom sessions and online learning activities.

Article 61: Interactive Learning Materials

Lecturers shall develop multimedia resources such as recorded lectures, discussion forums, and interactive assignments.

Article 62: Learning Activity Design

Learning materials shall include synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

Article 63: Accessibility Standards

Materials shall be designed to ensure accessibility for all students, including those with disabilities.

SECTION III: STAFF READINESS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Lecturers delivering blended learning shall receive specialized training. This shall include:

Article 64: Blended Learning Pedagogy

Training on combining online and face-to-face teaching methods.

Article 65: LMS Course Management

Lecturers shall learn how to create and manage courses on the LMS.

Article 66: Use of Online Learning Tools

Staff shall be trained to use online collaboration tools such as discussion forums and virtual classrooms.

Article 67: Assessment in Blended Environments

Training shall cover both online and face-to-face assessment techniques.

SECTION IV: STUDENT READINESS AND SUPPORT

Students shall be prepared to effectively participate in blended learning. Implementation shall include:

Article 68: Orientation on Blended Learning

Students shall be informed about how courses combine online and classroom components.

Article 69: Training on LMS Usage

Students shall learn how to access learning materials, participate in discussions, and submit assignments online.

Article 70: Time Management Guidance

Students shall be trained on managing independent learning schedules.

SECTION V: MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Blended learning programmes shall be supported by institutional management structures.

Article 71: eLearning Coordination Unit

This unit shall be responsible for supporting online learning components.

Article 72: ICT Unit

This unit shall be responsible for maintaining digital infrastructure.

Article 73: Academic Departments

The departments shall be responsible for course delivery and curriculum management.

Article 74: Quality Assurance Unit

This unit shall be responsible for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of blended learning programmes.

SECTION VI: ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Article 75: Assessment Framework

Blended learning programmes shall use a balanced mix of face-to-face and online assessments. The weighting of each mode shall be determined based on programme requirements and institutional readiness.

Article 76: Online Assessment Standards

i. Online assessments shall comply with institutional assessment regulations and moderation processes;
ii. Secure authentication and invigilation mechanisms shall be used where assessments are conducted online;
iii. Assessment design shall align with learning outcomes and cognitive levels;
iv. Anti-plagiarism tools shall be mandatory for assignments, projects, and research work.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND POLICY REVIEW

Article 77: Quality Assurance

UPI shall ensure continuous quality enhancement of blended learning through:

i. Analysis of LMS data and learning analytics;
ii. Regular feedback from students and staff;
iii. Review of completion rates, engagement, and assessment performance;
iv. Use of student portfolios and evidence for programme review and accreditation;
v. Periodic internal and external quality audits.

Article 78: Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with national regulations, technological developments, and UPI strategic objectives. Any amendments shall be approved by the relevant UPI governance organs.

Done at Kigali, May 27, 2026.

Prof. Dr MBEREYAHO Leopold
Chairperson of UPI Governing Body

APPENDIX 1: MODULE DEVELOPMENT FORMAT/TEMPLATE

STORYBOARD

I. General Information		
1. Course Information		
a.	Faculty:	
b.	Department:	
c.	Module Code:	
d.	Module Name:	
e.	Number of credits:	
f.	Prerequisite:	
g.	Academic Year	
h.	Semester:	
2. Instructors Information		
a.	Name:	
b.	Contact:	

d.	Email:	
e	Lecturer Profile:	

II. Module Description

III. Module Delivery Plan

Unit 1:

Lesson	Learning Outcomes	Content	Learning Activities	Assessment	Learning Resources
1					
2					

Unit2:

Lesson	Learning Outcomes	Content	Learning Activities	Assessment	Learning Resources
1					
2					