



UNIVERSITY of
RWANDA

UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA SOLIDARITY SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME: PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University of Rwanda is the only public University in Rwanda with a population of around 27,000 students, who are drawn from some of the very poor families of Rwanda. Some of these students find themselves in financial crisis and unable to pursue their studies, though talented and capable of achieving their academic dreams. These students may find themselves in financial hardship as a result of unanticipated circumstances such as the death or loss of employment of their sponsors, sudden change of tuition fee...Therefore, there is a need for the University to find ways and means of supporting these students to enable them to pursue their studies where possible. In order to achieve the above, the management of the University of Rwanda put in place means and ways of helping such needy students by establishing the '**Students Solidarity Scholarship Scheme**'.
- 1.2. Though the Students Solidarity Scholarship Scheme Policy was **initially** targeting self-sponsored STEM Students who were facing increasing tuition fees, the guidelines are elaborated to apply to **any needy student** whether or not s/he is pursuing a STEM-related program.
- 1.3. The operating principle for the UR Students' Solidarity Scholarship Scheme is that a needy student who is unable to pay her/his tuition may be offered employment by the University, remuneration is used to offset her/his tuition debt, i.e. the student will not receive **any cash compensation** for the job done but rather this cash compensation will be deducted from tuition debt.
- 1.4. These student jobs are expected to be hourly paid and performed during the students' free time and for few hours per day to avoid disrupting class schedule. This

approach can be one way of mobilizing resources for such students to pay their debts to the University.

- 1.5. This document establishes the procedures to be followed in determining and allowing eligible students who are financially disadvantaged to be granted hourly paid jobs at the University.
- 1.6. **College and Campus Management are committed to identify** jobs the students can undertake as a way for them to raise money to pay for their tuition fees and to put in place efficient **supervision mechanisms** to ensure that these students do work and deliver quality services for which they are going to be compensated.
They can have **contracts and performance evaluation**, which is good for their CVs.

2. Scope

- 2.1. These procedures shall apply to financially needy students with priority given to those who are self-sponsored and registered in STEM-related programs. The students should be **healthy and** physically capable to perform the tasks required.
- 2.2. In order for students to be eligible for the jobs, they must meet the established criteria.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this document is:

- 3.1. To explain the procedures to select and support students under Students Solidarity Scholarship Scheme.
- 3.2. To clarify the important role played by the Campus and/or College management in trying to help financially needy students to pay tuition fees.
- 3.3. To help financially needy students who are self-sponsored by allowing them to perform short hourly paid jobs within the University so that the equivalent of the money worked for is **deducted** from what they owe the University in terms of tuition fees and other fees such as registration.
- 3.4. Priority shall be given to self-sponsored STEM students because of the relatively high tuition fees but access to UR Students' Solidarity Scholarship Scheme is **not exclusive to self-sponsored STEM Students**.

4. Establishment of Campus Students' Solidarity Scholarship Committee

There shall be established on every campus, a Students' Solidarity Scholarship Scheme Committee appointed by the **Campus Resident Principal or the Campus Academic Leader** and composed of the following members:

- Campus Administrator (Chair/Member)
- Director of Students' Welfare (**Secretary**/ Member)
- Campus Registrar (Member)
- Finance Director/Officer (Member)
- Career and Employability Services Officer/Specialist/Director (Member)
- Guild President (Member)
- Student Minister for Social Affairs (Member)
- Dean of School Representative (Member)

5. Roles and responsibilities of Campus Students' Solidarity Scholarship Committee

5.1. These are as follows:

- i. Identifying possible jobs that can be offered to needy students on the campus (Annex I gives a non-exhaustive list of possible jobs to be considered);
- ii. Publicizing in a timely and appropriate manner the Students' Solidarity Scholarship opportunities;
- iii. Selecting students to be given a Students' Solidarity Scholarship in an objective, transparent and fair application of the selection criteria;
- iv. Coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the hourly student jobs and ensuring that the students are justifiably compensated.
- v. Providing quarterly and annual reports of activities to UR management, through Principals.
- vi. Proposing amendments of selection criteria, and type of documentation to be submitted by the financially needy students when applying for financial support through performing hourly jobs;

6. Eligibility

- 6.1. To be **eligible** for a Student Solidarity Scholarship in the form of an hourly paid job at the University of Rwanda, a student must demonstrate that she/he is facing financial difficulties to pay for the tuition fees and other basic needs.
- 6.2. **Priority** shall be given to a student who:
- i. Is not beneficiary of any other type of scholarship
 - ii. Does not have sufficient sponsorship from relatives or benefactors
 - iii. Has track record of good academic performance
 - iv. Abides by UR Student Code of Conduct and discipline policies
 - v. Is faced with unexpected financial difficulties such as the death or the loss of employment of her/his sponsor.
 - vi. Is from disadvantaged families (Ubudehe categorization may be referred to but not exclusively)
 - vii. Has time and ability to do the hourly paid work
 - viii. Is willing and capable of performing the tasks available
 - ix. Is registered in a STEM-related program and/or is self-sponsored.

7. Application procedures and requirements

- 7.1. Students shall fill in an application form requesting to be considered for the UR Students Scholarship Scheme. The application form shall be accessible from UR Website. The form shall also be obtained from the Students' Welfare Offices at all UR Campuses (draft form is given in Annex II). The period for applying will be at the beginning of the **new academic year**.
- 7.2. Students shall submit their applications to the Office of the Principal who shall send it to the committee for scrutiny.
- 7.3. The following supporting documents are mandatory:
- i. Recommendation letter from Campus Guild Council endorsed by the Director of Students' Welfare describing the social and financial hardship faced by the student.
 - ii. Recommendation letter from the Executive Secretary of the Sector of origin providing the student's family status and its Ubudehe category;
 - iii. Recommendation from the Head of the department commenting on the student's performance and commitment to study.

8. Assessment of the Applications and communication of decisions

- 8.1. The Committee meeting shall be convened by its Chairperson to assess and prioritize the applications for the Students Scholarship Scheme.
- 8.2. The Committee decisions shall be communicated to individual applicants by the **Secretary** through email, inviting them to come and sign a contract and/or letter of award specifying the type of student job s/he has been awarded and the number of hours per week s/he will be working and the UR staff who shall be supervising her/him.

9. Maximum number of hours to be worked per week and hourly pay

- 9.1. A student offered a Solidarity Scholarship in the form of a student job shall not work more than 15 hours per week. The 15 hrs were arrived at through peoples' perceptions and suggestions from different UR campuses.
- 9.2. The hourly pay shall be 2,000 Rwandan Francs **taxes inclusive**. This figure was reached at after preliminary inquiries made from all UR campuses that had earlier engaged students in one way or another in such activities. However, there is no available labor law in place nor any other formal UR document that confirms that pay (2,000Rwf). It was through different campuses' opinions and perceptions
- 9.3. Any amount worked for shall be equated in money value and that value in monetary terms will be **deducted** from the amount of tuition fees that a given student owes to the University. No cash payment shall be paid to an individual.

10. The number of Beneficiaries per College/Campus

- 10.1. The number of beneficiaries will depend on identified jobs available in each UR College/Campus and the approved annual budget for the UR Solidarity Scholarship Scheme.

11. Application of the money value earned by the student against her/his tuition debt.

- 11.1. A student who is performing a student job assigned to her/him as a Solidarity Scholarship shall ensure that s/he fills a logbook describing what s/he has done and signed by supervisor who is UR employee.
- 11.2. These logbooks shall be submitted monthly to the Secretary of the Solidarity Scholarship Committee who shall submit them to the Campus Finance Director.

- 11.3. The Campus Finance Director shall deduct the monetary value earned by the student through the work performed from the student's tuition debt. These logbooks shall be kept by the Campus Finance Office for accounting and audit purposes.
- 11.4. Staff members supervising the students benefiting from Students Solidarity Scholarship are required to ensure that those students do seriously work and justifiably earn the money.

12. Administration of UR Student Scholarship Scheme.

- 12.1. The Secretary to the Campus Students' Solidarity Scholarship Committee shall ensure that the whole process of advertising and selecting students to be awarded Solidarity Scholarship is professionally done. In addition, she/he shall ensure that the work done by these students is transformed into a scholarship against their tuition debt, well documented and securely kept.
- 12.2. The money worked for through solidarity scholarship and student jobs shall comply with all internal and external audit requirements and reporting cycles.
- 12.3. Campus Students' Solidarity Scholarship Committee shall submit a report on the execution of the decisions of the committee on financial assistance given to the needy students on quarterly basis to the UR Management through the Principals.

These procedures shall come into effect on the date of their signature by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Rwanda.

Prof. Alexandre Lyambabaje
Vice Chancellor
University of Rwanda



ANNEX I: Non-exhaustive list proposed hourly jobs that financially needy students may be offered

1. Library support services, especially evenings and weekends.
2. University laboratory services for recipients of scholarships
3. Tutorials and mentorship services or the career and employability services for recipients of scholarships
4. Field activities and pilot farm services
5. Consultancy and research: data collection and data entry management
6. Workshop and maintenance services
7. IT support and digital literacy services
8. Services to the students and academic staff community (helping students with disabilities and doing messenger work for staff)
9. Support services to events and conferences including protocol
10. Cleaning services (after negotiating with the cleaning companies that are meant to provide the services)
11. Security support services (after negotiating with the security companies that are providing such services)
12. Hostel services, especially at night and weekends (working under the supervision of Wardens)
14. Reception services

VI. Proposed hourly rate

With regard to the hourly rate, it is proposed as follows:

1. Maximum hours per week should be 15 hours
2. Rate per hour should be (2,000 Rwf)
3. Total hours per week (15hrs x 2,000 =30,000Rwf) maximum per week
4. Performance of the hourly jobs should be continuous throughout entire academic year
5. Supervisors should not allow students to work during the night before an exam.
6. Supervisors should allow students to rotate to give opportunity to several of them
7. Supervisors should take care not to allow the same students continue to work alone every time.
8. Supervisors should ensure that hourly jobs do not interfere with time for classes.

ANNEX II: Application form for Students' Solidarity Scholarship Scheme

Student names:.....
Gender:.....
Registration number:.....
Campus:.....
College:.....
School:.....
Department:.....
Course registered for.....

I. Reason for applying for the scholarship:

- I am registered under STEM-related programs
- I am unable to cover my tuition fees
- I face unexpected financial difficulties following unfortunate incidence such a death or loss of sponsor (the person who was taking care of your educational needs)
- I am from a disadvantaged family (Ubudehe category).

II. Type of support needed:

- Tuition fee

III. What difference will getting scholarship support make to you?

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I do hereby declare that the above information is factual and honest.

Date:.....

Signature:.....



III. Supporting documents

- Recommendation letter from Campus Guild Council endorsed by the Director of Student Welfare describing the social and financial hardship faced by the student as well as her/his conduct.
- Recommendation letter from the Executive Secretary of the Sector of origin providing the student's family status and its Ubudehe category.
- Proof of death or loss of employment of the student's sponsor if such is the motivating cause for application.
- Recommendation letter from department on student's performance and commitment to study.