



For an Open Mind

UNIVERSAL TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

UTAMU

**UTAMU COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND
INTERNSHIP POLICY, 2026.**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Universal Technology and Management University (UTAMU) was granted a provisional license by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) on 11th March 2013 (License No. UIPL022), and its name and particulars were published in the Uganda Gazette Vol. CVI No. 14 of 22nd March 2013 under Legal Notice No. 4 of 2013.

The University was established to make a difference in the training of Technology and Management Professionals across the globe. Thus, the University has positioned itself as a high-quality education and research global institution. Furthermore, the University has positioned itself to undertake consultancy, knowledge and technology transfer partnerships and business incubation.

Universal Technology and Management University (UTAMU) is committed to the provision of quality, relevant, inclusive, and innovative teaching and learning that responds to the needs of learners, industry, society, and national development priorities. This Teaching and Learning Policy establish a coherent institutional framework to guide teaching and learning practices across all academic programmes and modes of delivery at UTAMU.

This Policy is aligned with the requirements of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and UTAMU's strategic direction.

1.2 Vision

The Vision of UTAMU is A global educational institution of excellence in management, science, technology and innovation.

1.3 Mission

The mission of UTAMU is to provide global quality education, research and innovation critical to economic and human development.

1.4 Core Values

The Core values of UTAMU are:

- a) **Professionalism:** making sure that staff and students conduct themselves with the highest ethical standards and taking responsibility for all their actions
- b) **Creativity:** committing to stimulating the culture of scientific and technological advancement, innovation and practical enrichment to UTAMU's stakeholders through a rich and flexible educational experience
- c) **Integrity:** adhering to ethical and moral principles in all the educational, research and innovation processes
- d) **Transparency:** seeking to provide accountability and value for money to UTAMU's stakeholders
- e) **Empowerment:** offering unsurpassed practical opportunities to UTAMU's stakeholders through industry-oriented collaborations, research engagements and incubation clusters in order to transform the educational environment
- f) **Community Engagement:** working with the community to solve the real-world problems as a focal point towards economic development

2.0 PREAMBLE

Universal Technology and Management University (UTAMU) recognizes Community Engagement (CE) as a core institutional mandate and a primary pathway through which student engagement and internship are conceptualized, delivered, and assessed.

At UTAMU, student engagement extends beyond classroom participation to include active involvement in communities through structured internships, service learning, outreach, applied research, and civic responsibility initiatives. Internship is therefore not treated as an isolated industrial requirement, but as a formal, credit-bearing mechanism of community engagement that connects academic learning, professional practice, and societal impact.

This Policy establishes a student-centered, community-driven framework where community engagement provides the context, purpose, and learning environment for internships and other experiential learning activities.

3. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- a) Position community engagement as the primary framework for student engagement and internship at UTAMU;
- b) Integrate internship and experiential learning within real community and societal contexts;
- c) Enhance student learning, employability, civic responsibility, and professional identity;
- d) Promote mutually beneficial partnerships between UTAMU, communities, and host organisations;
- e) Ensure quality assurance, ethical practice, and academic relevance in all student engagement activities.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this Policy are to:

- a) Embed community engagement within all internship and student experiential learning activities;
- b) Strengthen student engagement through hands-on participation in addressing real community challenges;
- c) Align internship tasks with community needs and programme learning outcomes;
- d) Promote service learning, civic engagement, and social responsibility among students;
- e) Enhance graduate employability through community-based professional exposure;
- f) Establish structured supervision, assessment, and feedback mechanisms involving communities and host organisations.

5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This Policy applies to:

- a) All undergraduate and postgraduate students;
- b) All academic programmes requiring internship, industrial training, practicum, or community-based learning;
- c) All academic and administrative staff involved in supervision and coordination;
- d) All host communities, organisations, industries, NGOs, government agencies, and private sector partners.

6. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

- i. **Community Engagement:** A structured collaboration between UTAMU and external communities to address societal needs through teaching, learning, research, and service.
- ii. **Internship/Industrial Training:** A supervised, credit-bearing experiential learning placement in a professional or community setting related to a student's field of study.
- iii. **Host Organisation:** Any approved community, institution, industry, NGO, or organisation that receives and supervises UTAMU students.
- iv. **Service Learning:** A pedagogical approach combining academic learning with meaningful community service.

7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Implementation of this Policy shall be guided by the following principles:

a) **Student-centred engagement**

Community engagement and internship shall prioritise active student participation as a core pedagogical approach. Students shall be treated as active learners and contributors who take responsibility for their learning, reflection, and professional development through meaningful engagement with communities and host organisations.

b) **Community relevance**

All community engagement and internship activities shall be informed by

identified community needs and priorities. Programme design, internship tasks, and service-learning activities shall respond to real societal challenges to ensure relevance, impact, and contextual learning.

c) **Experiential learning**

Learning shall be achieved through direct experience, practice, and reflection in real-life community and professional settings. Students shall apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, fostering problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and professional competence.

d) **Mutual benefit and reciprocity**

Community engagement and internship shall be founded on partnerships that create shared value. Communities and host organisations shall benefit from student contributions, while students gain learning, skills, and professional exposure. Engagement shall avoid extractive or one-sided practices.

e) **Ethical and professional conduct**

All students and staff shall observe high standards of ethics, integrity, and professionalism. Engagement activities shall respect community values, confidentiality, institutional policies, and applicable laws, while upholding UTAMU's academic and professional standards.

f) **Inclusivity, equity, and respect for diversity**

Community engagement and internship activities shall promote inclusive participation, gender sensitivity, and respect for cultural, social, and individual diversity. Reasonable accommodation shall be provided to ensure equitable access for all eligible students.

g) **Sustainability and community ownership**

Engagement initiatives shall be designed to promote long-term community benefit and ownership. Activities shall aim to strengthen community capacity, encourage continuity beyond student placements, and avoid dependency or short-term interventions with no lasting impact.

h) **Accountability and quality assurance**

All community engagement and internship activities shall be subject to clear accountability, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms. Continuous quality assurance processes shall be applied to ensure academic rigor, compliance with regulations, and continuous improvement.

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND INTERNSHIP

UTAMU adopts a student-centred and community-driven model in which community engagement forms the foundational framework for student engagement and internship across all relevant academic programmes.

Under this model:

a) Internship as structured community engagement

Internship placements shall be formally recognised as structured, supervised, and credit-bearing forms of community engagement. All internship activities shall be designed to connect academic learning with real-world community and organisational contexts, ensuring relevance and applied learning.

b) Communities as learning partners

Students shall engage communities and host organisations as active learning partners rather than passive recipients of service. Engagement shall be based on mutual respect, collaboration, and shared problem-solving, recognising community knowledge, experience, and context as integral to student learning.

c) Community-informed learning objectives

Community-identified needs and priorities shall inform the formulation of internship objectives, assigned tasks, and learning outcomes. Academic units and supervisors shall ensure that student activities respond meaningfully to societal and organisational challenges while remaining aligned with programme learning outcomes.

d) Integration of service learning and civic engagement

Service learning, civic engagement, and outreach activities may form part of assessed internship requirements where appropriate. Such activities shall be structured, supervised, and assessed to ensure academic rigor, ethical practice, and measurable learning outcomes.

e) Holistic student engagement outcomes

Student engagement through community-based internships shall promote the development of technical and professional skills, ethical awareness,

teamwork, leadership, communication, and civic responsibility. Reflective learning shall be encouraged to support personal and professional growth.

f) Tangible community and organisational outcomes

Internship deliverables—including reports, innovations, interventions, and services—shall contribute to tangible and verifiable outcomes for host communities and organisations. Feedback from communities and host institutions shall inform student assessment and continuous improvement of engagement practices.

This integrated approach ensures that internships are academically grounded, socially responsive, ethically conducted, and aligned with UTAMU’s mission of community transformation and graduate employability.

9. STRUCTURE AND MODES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Student engagement through community engagement and internship shall be implemented through the following modes:

- **Community-Based Internships:** placements in industries and private sector institutions, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), local governments, NGOs, community enterprises, health centres, schools, and civil society organisations;
- **Service Learning Modules:** credit-bearing community projects embedded within academic courses;
- **Field Attachment and Practicum:** discipline-specific engagement in community and professional settings;
- **Outreach and Extension Activities:** supervised student participation in UTAMU-led community programmes;
- **Applied Community Research and Innovation:** student-led initiatives addressing community challenges.

All modes shall prioritise active student engagement and community relevance.

10. ELIGIBILITY, TIMING, AND ACADEMIC CALENDAR ALIGNMENT

10.1 Eligibility

Community Engagement shall be **compulsory for undergraduate students only** and shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with this Policy and the approved UTAMU Academic Calendar.

Eligible undergraduate students are those who have successfully completed:

- a. Year One – Semester Two, or
- b. Year Two – Semester Two, or
- c. Year Three – Semester Two.

10.2 Timing and Duration

- a) Community Engagement shall be conducted **only during the designated recess semester** and shall not be undertaken during a teaching semester.
- b) The duration of Community Engagement shall be determined by the approved Academic Calendar and relevant programme requirements.

10.3 Academic Calendar Alignment

- a) Community Engagement shall not conflict with scheduled teaching, examinations, or continuous assessment activities;
- b) The Office of the Academic Registrar shall annually gazette eligible cohorts, timelines, and reporting requirements;
- c) Students who are not in their designated recess semester shall **not be permitted** to undertake Community Engagement.

10.4 Postgraduate Students

Postgraduate students shall participate in community engagement activities only where such engagement is explicitly embedded within programme curricula, internship requirements, practicum, or research-based community interventions.

11. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students undertaking community engagement and internship shall:

- a) Register for internship/community engagement as prescribed;
- b) Adhere to UTAMU regulations and host organisation policies;
- c) Demonstrate professionalism, ethical conduct, and respect for communities;
- d) Complete assigned tasks and learning objectives;
- e) Submit required reports, logbooks, and assessments within stipulated timelines.

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1 University

The University shall:

- a) Establish and maintain partnerships with communities and host organisations.
- b) Provide policy oversight, coordination, and quality assurance;
- c) Mobilise resources for supervision, monitoring and evaluation, and capacity building.

12.2 Academic Units/ Schools

Academic units/schools shall:

- a) Embed community engagement and internship within curricula.
- b) Provide placement letters
- c) Approve placements and community projects;
- d) Appoint qualified academic supervisors and assess student performance.

12.3 Supervisors

Supervisors shall:

- a) Guide students on learning objectives, ethics, and professionalism;
- b) Conduct monitoring visits (physical or virtual) in line University practices;
- c) Provide formative and summative feedback.

12.4 Host Organisations and Communities

Host organisations and communities shall:

- a) Provide structured and meaningful learning opportunities;

- b) Designate on-site supervisors;
- c) Participate in student evaluation and feedback.

13. SUPERVISION, MONITORING, AND ASSESSMENT

- a) Community engagement and internship shall be credit-bearing.
- b) Assessment shall include logbooks, reflective journals, reports, presentations, and supervisor evaluations.
- c) Monitoring shall involve scheduled site visits, virtual supervision, and progress reporting;
- d) Feedback from host organisations and communities shall form part of the final assessment.

14. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- a) Student safety and wellbeing shall be prioritised;
- b) Ethical approval shall be required where community research is involved;
- c) Students shall comply with occupational health and safety standards.

15. INCLUSIVITY AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

UTAMU shall ensure:

- a) Reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities;
- b) Gender-sensitive and culturally respectful engagement;
- c) Equitable access to internship and community engagement opportunities.

16. RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

All records relating to community engagement and internship shall be maintained in accordance with UTAMU records management and data protection policies.

17. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- a) Periodic reviews shall be conducted to assess impact and effectiveness;

- b) Feedback from students, communities, and host organisations shall inform improvements;
- c) Best practices shall be documented and disseminated.

18.0 POLICY REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed every five (5) years or earlier as may be required by the University Council on the recommendation of the University Senate or relevant regulatory bodies.

Signed on this 27th day of March 2026

By:



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Chairperson, University Council



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Vice Chancellor