



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

HANDBOOK ON

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

IN ALL UNIVERSITIES AND TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

2018



STATE DEPARTMENT FOR
POST TRAINING & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



HANDBOOK ON ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES IN ALL UNIVERSITIES AND TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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FOREWARD

Since attaining political independence 56 years ago, the Kenya Government has been pursuing policies geared towards social equality and inclusivity. In the education and training sector, considerable efforts have been made towards enhancing access, equity, quality and relevance. The Government of Kenya is also committed to many international conventions and agreements. These efforts are aimed at the realization of Kenya Big Four Agenda, Vision 2030, African Union Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is common knowledge that many graduates from the higher education institutions in Kenya either fail to find employment for far too long or are underemployed. This is partly attributed lack of skills critical for finding meaningful engagement for wealth creation and better livelihoods.

There is need for strategies towards seamless transition from learning to earning. An effective Office of Career Services (OCS) has a critical role to play in this regard. Strategies include counseling services, student/industry linkages, apprenticeships, career fairs, recruitments, venture capitals and graduate-tracker services.

This handbook provides a framework for planning and programming of the Office of Career Services at the Universities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions across the country. It is my hope that its implementation will bring to fruition the overall goal of the higher education sub-sector; that is, productive engagement for wealth creation and better living standards.

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CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION



PREFACE

Education for general knowledge and training in specific skills are critical elements for the overall human capacity; which is one of the greatest assets a country needs for economic growth and prosperity.

In the recent past, Kenya has carried out a wide range reforms with a view to improving service delivery in the education and training sector. However, challenges persist that need to be addressed. Majority of the young Kenyans who graduate from the universities and the tertiary institutions remain idle without useful engagement for far too long. This has led to questions on the quality and relevance of skills acquired towards preparedness for productive engagement and wealth creation for better livelihoods.

The Ministry of Education in collaboration with its partners has developed this Handbook on the Establishment of the Office of Career Services to address critical issues related to education & training and employment. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a roadmap for the Universities and TVET institutions towards achieving relevant education and training for the workplace readiness (formal and informal employment). It aims at ensuring that graduates from these institutions are skilled all round for wealth creation and better livelihoods.

The handbook provides a framework for the planning and implementation of Programmes in the Office of Career Services. It establishes the need for the office, the state of the Office of Career Services in Kenya and spells out the functions of the office and the expected deliverables. It also stipulates the role of the Ministry of Education, Roll out plan and M&E mechanisms. The handbook further provides specifications for the basic requirements for establishing the office and concludes with case studies.

The successful implementation of the Office of Career Services will rely on unrelenting and concerted efforts by the Vice Chancellors, Principals, Senior Staff In-Charge and Students in close collaboration with industry.

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OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The life of a student is an important and dynamic component of an active tertiary education experience. It provides the student with an opportunity to develop not only academically, but also socially. It is important to note that universities have a responsibility as part of the wholistic education of their graduates to prepare students for eventual entry into the work force or and entrepreneurship. This is a more complex activity than simply providing the student with greater levels of information and even more sophisticated general skills. In addition, it is also the responsibility of the tertiary institutions and universities to educate the student about the nature of the work force and the student's potential place in it, and how the course of study pursued by the student may eventually affect the student's place in the work force. Career services should provide the immediate assistance that the student may need to maximize his or her capacity to begin a career.

With that in mind, the proposal is to establish the Office of Career Services (OCS) in all universities and tertiary institutions that will look to empower the students to make right career choices. Career services and skills development must be an important part of an institution's overall "academic" program. Office of Career Services (OCS) has a critical role to play in a student's career education. Administrators need to recognize that changes in the economy will require a more prominent place for career education within their institutions and make it a priority to provide adequate levels of support for their career services offices. It is critical that the OCS partner with an array of organizations and especially those that understand the complexities of the jobs markets as well as life after graduation. It should be the commitment of the Office of Career Services to prepare students for the productive careers and lives of meaning and purpose during their academic life and post graduation. This proposal looks to have the OCS in all universities and tertiary institutions mirrored to other prominent OCS such as Harvard, Princeton, Oxford, University of Pennsylvania and so on that have attained prominence worldwide. The OCS will look to provide individual advising and campus wide networking events to expose the students to great opportunities.

Steve Jobs once said, "The secret of my success is that we have gone to exceptional lengths to hire the best people in the world" (Stroope, 2017), simply the employers are looking for individuals who are a fit and ready for the workforce. Beyond the academic degree, students therefore must be well prepared for the workforce thus ensuring they are updated on their current career, have a strong work ethic, positive attitude, be self-confident, act as a team player, have excellent communication skills, possess time management abilities, have better problem-solving skills, and generally show commitment towards the success of the organization he/she is expecting to work for (Mishra, 2014). Numerous case studies have shown that establishing and operating an office of career services in institutions of higher learning can significantly impact the students' career outcomes.

CHAPTER 2

2.0. ESTABLISHING THE NEED

It is clear that support for career services and established offices of career services in Kenyan universities and tertiary institutions is non-existent. Kenyan universities and tertiary institutions have inadequate partnerships with both the public and private institutions and thus making both preparation for the job market and job-hunting for students a daunting task. Whether internships, post-graduation, or even placements, securing a promising employment opportunity can be a devastating experience.

Globally, institutions of higher learning have recognized the value of having Offices of Career Services to help prepare students for the job sector. Noteworthy, the emergence of career services in the post-secondary education sector has endured the pass of time. This is considering that it was first documented as early as the 1940s and 50s, though its real significance was only realized in the 1970s and 80s as the rate of unemployment in many parts of the world became more significant (Usher, Kwong & Mentanko, 2014). In fact, it was during these times that the offices began making emphasis on skills development and training to prepare students for the ever competitive labor market. Since then, the services offered in these offices have broadened to keep up with the current labor market demands; student accessibility needs, and changes in technology and social media.

Today, most graduates if not all share similar goals: either to continue their learning to higher levels or to secure employment and start earning a living. However, most of them still face several challenges in these aspirations mainly because of lack of adequate skills, experience, or even knowledge on how to properly wade through the employment sector or their career missions. The lack of the aforementioned skills and qualities have made most graduates to shy away from venturing into entrepreneurship to curb the high rate of unemployment in the country.





CHAPTER 3

3.0. THE STATE OF OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES IN KENYA

Currently, Kenya has 31 public universities and hundreds of public tertiary institutions, which do not have functional Offices of Career Services. However, it is worth noting that Kenyatta University has embraced the importance of equipping their students with the required entrepreneurial skills through the Kenyatta University Manu Chandaria Incubation Centre located at the institution's main campus. Similarly, Strathmore University and United States International University (USIU) have applied some aspect of office of career services.

CHAPTER 4

4.0. OVERVIEW OF SERVICES TO BE OFFERED BY THE OFFICE OF CAREERS SERVICES

For Office of Career Services to be successful, apt and of added value to the students, it will have to be founded and consistently set on principles and values that take into consideration expressed needs and choices of the students and the institution at large. To achieve this, the Office of Career Service looks to cater to several stakeholders in the universities and tertiary institution sector namely, Students, Faculty, Administration, Employers/ staff and Alumni. In addition, OCS will have to adhere to the values and dreams of each university and tertiary institution keeping in mind the mission and vision of the institution. To achieve their mandate, Office of Career Services will offer the following services;

4.1. ACADEMIC ADVISING

Purpose and function

- 1) To assist students in developing educational plans consistent with their life goals
- 2) To provide students with accurate information about academic progression and degree requirement, thus allowing students to properly plan their progress
- 3) To assist students in understanding academic policies and procedures
- 4) Help students access campus resources that will enhance their ability to be academically successful
- 5) To identify systems and personal conditions that may impede students' academic achievements and developing appropriate interventions
- 6) To increase student retention by providing a personal contact that students often need and request, thereby connecting them to the institutions

To achieve the above purposes and functions, typical activities that would be provided for by the department would be to:

- Help students understand and comply with institutional requirements. This could be achieved through constant communication with students using student mail or lectures on the same
- Assist students with decision-making and career direction
- Provide clear and accurate information regarding institutional policies procedures and programs. Assist students in the selection of courses and other educational expanses e.g. internship
- Collect and distribute data regarding student's needs, preferences and performance for use in refining or revising institutional decisions

4.2. CAREER SERVICES

The OCS will be committed to providing the following services under this section:

- a) Career counseling and advising
- b) Career testing and assessment
- c) Class presentation workshops

- d) Individual career information
- e) Interview preparation
- f) Job fairs
- g) Creating an alumni association
- h) Create a database of jobs available. This data is to be obtained through partnerships with employers

Purpose and function:

- 1) To assist students to explore their careers
- 2) To provide career counseling services to students
- 3) Serve as a campus clearing house on occupation in the public, private and non-profit sector in both domestic and international settings
- 4) To provide placement of graduates into full-time and part-time employment
- 5) To help students explore possible business opportunities upon graduation
- 6) To match student (current and former) with potential employer for the recruitment of graduates
- 7) To assist alumni in their search for new jobs and provide support during their career transition
- 8) To provide access to information to students about alternative work experience
- 9) To educate students and the community at large about current career opportunities and employment trends
- 10) To develop relationships with local employers and other stakeholders where possible that will assist in co-curricular experiences for students
- 11) To effectively and efficiently promote and market the institution to prospective employers
- 12) To provide a network and channel of communication between students and the institution's alumni thus using the alumni as mentors to students as they make career choices

Typical activities:

- Offering credit or/and non-credit courses on career planning and job searching
- Administering vocational testing to assist students to assess their needs, interest, abilities, and skills in relation to their careers plans
- Organizing activities such as job fairs and recruitment sessions during which students and employers can meet for interviews or informational sessions
- Develop and maintain a career resources library that includes employers and candidate assessment
- Organizing recruitment conferences/ interest sessions with specific employers
- Organizing workshops and resume writing, employer recruiting techniques, interview skills and entrepreneurship
- Creating and updating a database with potential employer information
- Creating and updating a database with authorized student information for potential employer review

4.3. COUNSELING SERVICES

Purpose and function:

- 1) To provide counseling services to students experiencing psycho-sociological problems that could be potentially disruptive to their successful academic, interpersonal and campus adjustment
- 2) To assist students in learning new and more effective ways to cope with stress and disappointment, resolve conflict deal with specific problems or habits and manage their lives
- 3) To provide opportunities that enable students who may be experiencing personal, social or educational problems to work towards becoming more effective in their lives within and outside the institution

Typical activities

- Provide outreach services to traditional and underserved student population including efforts to assist them to cope with typical developmental and situational issues
- Operating confidential interactive services that students can store their issues with a professional
- Conducting group counseling programs on common themes
- Participating in student induction and welcoming programs
- Providing developmental and preventative workshops throughout the academic year in response to student needs including such examples as transition from high school to college, assertiveness training, stress management and time management
- Contributing to institutional faculty and departmental planning policy and developments through participation in the institutions
- Committees and work groups

4.4. GRADUATE TRACKER SERVICES

The OCS will put in place procedures for assessing students' achievement and their progression after graduation into work and further study. This will help the universities and tertiary institutions better understand the impact of student centered modularized of study programs, and their relevance for the labor market, and thus contributing important information to the systematic improvement of courses and support services at the institutional level. This process entails tracking records information of all students.

4.5. LINKAGE BETWEEN INDUSTRIES AND STUDENTS

Tertiary education is meant to prepare students and equip them with the required skills for the job market. Improving higher education results to a positive impact on gross domestic product. Furthermore, improved higher education can aid in the development of technology and innovations. To match the rest of the world in the advancement of technology, universities and tertiary institutions should build sustainable partnerships with industries to enable them to produce high quality, technically oriented students. The linkage will enable universities and students to know the pace, form, and direction of social-economic advancement in the country.

4.6. HIGH SCHOOL RECRUITMENT

1) Office of Career Service, will every year engage in the recruitment of prospective high school students to consider joining the institution. In so doing, the office will:

- a.) Provide details on various aspects of student's life at each institution that will include testimonials from current students, parents, alumni and staff
- b.) The office will use informative brochures at recruitment events including most attractive features at the institution and its programs already with name, phone number and email of a specific recruitment person for prospective students to contact directly
- c.) Plan recruitment events in conjunction with high school principals and teachers to allow us access to high schools
- d.) At the recruitment events, address obstacles to enrollment e.g. if students will need financial aid or specific courses (bridging courses) before attending universities and tertiary institutions

4.7. INTRA-INSTITUTIONAL EXCHANGES

The collaborations and exchange program between institutions of higher learning should be in the areas of research, students, and staff. The collaborations should not only be between local institutions but also foreign institutions of higher learning. The intra-institutional exchanges are vital because the students and the staff gain exposure and internalization of the institution and its programs.

4.8. APPRENTICESHIP SERVICES

The apprenticeship service enables the employers to identify prospective employees from the universities or tertiary institutions. Through mentorship, the employers are able to fulfil their future training needs. Furthermore, the process enables institutions to understand the employers' future workforce needs, identify skills gap, and provide and manage training programs through apprenticeships.

4.9. ESTABLISHING AN ALUMNI NETWORK

Alumni are among the best candidates for institutions leadership, philanthropy, and goodwill ambassadors and they are increasingly becoming mentors to current and prospective students. For these reasons, institutions of higher learning cannot afford to lose touch with their graduates. Alumni represent the past, but they provide the foundation of an institutions future. Too often, because the return on an institutions' investment in alumni takes time, schools are less apt to make effective alumni relations a top priority. It is therefore paramount that each university and tertiary institution makes it a priority to establish a network of all their graduates and keep in constant contact.

4.10. CREATE AN ENTREPRENEUR INCUBATOR

The entrepreneur incubator program will look to offer students who are willing to be entrepreneurs' laser-focused support to develop their ideas.

Therefore, the incubator will be looking to mentor student innovators and provide access to information and in some cases seed money that would allow them realize their dreams of establishing their own businesses.

The program will also provide seminars that are related to entrepreneurship. This will be a service provided for free to all students interested in starting up their own business.

4.11. STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Student ambassadors are very vital in most institutions of higher learning. They address the needs of all students. They serve as a lesson to student organizations and assist in the development and implementation of specific projects. Their participation provides an invaluable link to the student body and representatives for the office Career Service as well as selected academic departments. They also establish meaningful supportive relationship with student's faculty and staff. Student ambassadors create a sense of belonging and develop a sense of connection.

4.12. RECRUITMENT CAREER FAIRS

The career fairs are beneficial because they enable the employers to meet the potential employees. The career fairs are important because they provide the students with a chance to learn about career related issues such as choosing a career, networking skills and opportunities for securing internships or even jobs.

4.13. VENTURE CAPITAL FAIRS

Students are expected to be innovative and take part in venture capital fairs to provide them with an opportunity to pitch their business ideas/projects to potential investors who can finance or offer mentorship towards the success of the projects.



CHAPTER 5

5.0. ROLE OF MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Because of the advantages that come with the Office of Career Services and the state of the Kenyan universities and tertiary institutions regarding the same, the role of the Ministry of Education is key. With that in mind, the Ministry of Education will ensure:

1. Creation of policies that encourage the adoption and implementation of OCS: Ministry of Education will develop policies that encourage effective operations of OCS in all the universities and tertiary institutions. The said policy will include quality control measures and guidance in the running of the OCS
2. Institutional oversight program improvement
3. Encouraging private sector participation - Private sectors play a fundamental role in Kenya's economy. Given an appropriate environment, they can profoundly contribute towards the development of the OCS in the institutions. They should, therefore, be given room to take part in nurturing the youth for a better tomorrow. This objective can be achieved by having friendly policies that provide the private sectors with room to invest in learning
4. Coordination of internship and apprenticeship opportunities
5. Making career services priority - Making these services a priority can have several positive impacts not only on the students but also to the institution's performance. As such, they should embrace the Office of Career Services due to the associated benefits.

5.1. DELIVERABLES BY THE OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES:

1. Invite at least two CEOs per semester of respected companies for career forums to come and advise the students on career paths. By inviting respected CEOs in their field, the OCS would not only be giving the students an opportunity to interact and learn from leaders in the business world but would also be establishing working and networking relationships with the organizations that those individuals head. This in return creates new possibilities for students to secure employment opportunities from the said organizations
2. Once a semester, conduct a meet and greet opportunity for heads of Human Resource from at least 10 companies and the management of the respective university or tertiary institution. The event could be in form of a dinner that would allow the institutions top management to interact with Head of Human Resource of different companies. This allows the management to hear firsthand what the companies look for while recruiting for their organizations. It is important to note that the invited heads of Human Resource would reflect companies that may need to recruit from the various universities or tertiary institutions based on the programs offered at the institution
3. Organize monthly campus wide workshops that focus on career progression and how to tips on securing job opportunities. The workshops cover topics such as, how

to write a resume, how to dress for a job interview, interviewing skill tips and other career tips.

4. Organize at least two extensive career fairs per year. The purpose of the career fair is to provide an opportunity for students to network with representatives from entrepreneurial and start-up organizations. This allows the students to learn about jobs and internships and discover exciting opportunities available in their fields of study or interests

5. Establish an alumni database. The alumni database will comprise of all the graduates and will help the Office of Career Service constantly keep up with them as well as provide contacts between the alumni and current students

6. Establish a job opportunity site that will be accessible to potential employers and faculty, students and alumni network of each institution. The site will provide 24/7 access to job opportunities or internships posted by employers who are vested in recruiting from various universities and tertiary institutions. The site will also provide the ability to upload resumes, cover letters and other documents for direct application to organizations. The Office of Career Services will also be posting jobs advertised on other medium away from the vested employers

5.2. EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Increased career placement for students
- Increased entrepreneurship opportunities for the students
- Improved student performance
- Valuable feedback between students and administration
- Increased partnerships between universities, tertiary institutions and private sector
- Increased funding opportunities for student entrepreneurs

5.3. METRICS OF MEASUREMENT (QUATERLY REPORTS)

- ❖ Number of partnerships with employers and entrepreneurship hubs
- ❖ Number of trainings and workshops geared towards career development
- ❖ Physical and virtual foot print on the Office of Career Services
- ❖ Number of employers that participate in the recruitment events
- ❖ Other reports:
 - o Intake forms
 - o Audit of services provided
 - o Partnership engagements with potential employers

CHAPTER 6

6.0. ROLL OUT PLAN & PROPOSED ROLL OUT DATE

At present, there are 73 universities and constituent colleges (public 37 and private 36) and nearly 200 hundred public tertiary institutions. Based on these high number of institutions, a phased approach to the roll out of the Offices of Career Services would be the most viable approach. This proposal looks to group the institutions into tiers for roll out purposes, projected to start on 1st July 2018.

Full establishment and operationalization of OCS in the first-tier universities should take no longer than two months. Upon completion of tier one rollout, the next phase will consist of selecting another tier comprising of several institutions. This process will continue until all the institutions have fully established and operationalized the offices by **31st Dec 2018**.



CHAPTER 7

7.0. CASE STUDIES

When it comes to the Office of Career Services, Harvard, Princeton, Oxford, and the University of Pennsylvania are some of the examples where such programs have worked well, making the institutions attain prominence worldwide. In Harvard, the OCS is “dedicated to educating, advising, and connecting students to opportunities for summer and post-graduation for purposes of fostering their intellectual, social, and personal transformations” (Harvard University, 2018). This office serves a wide variety of students including those of Harvard College, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), and Harvard Extension School (HES) (Harvard University, 2018). According to its 2016-2017 OCS Annual Report, the OCS serves a total of 14,000 Faculty of Arts and Sciences students, about 6,600 Harvard College students, 4,400 GSAS Master’s and Ph.D. students, and 2,900 HES students (Harvard University, 2017). As per the report, Harvard students prefer drop in advising as opposed to waiting for an appointment, hence making the drop in the most prevalent and highly used services. However, the report shows that the busiest month for drop-ins is September, though the drop-in volume was slightly lower by 4% for the year (Harvard University, 2017). Furthermore, Harvard also offers scheduled appointments for its students. In this case, the OCS has about one adviser for every 1,000 undergraduate students and about one advisor for every 2,000 students for GSAS and HES (Harvard University, 2017). In 2016-2017 alone, the advisers carried out 4,105 total one-on-one half hour or hour-long advising appointments with the students, an increase of about 11% from that of the previous year. Besides, the university also offered several educational programs. In total, the institution, through the OCS office, provided about 300 programs, which more than 9,600 students and recent alumni were in attendance (Harvard University, 2017). Among them included workshops on resumes and interviewing, and other programs in “cluster areas” such as poverty alleviation, human rights, fashion and sports, entertainment and media, environment and energy, global public health, business, entrepreneurship, engineering, and law (Harvard University, 2017). According to the university, such programs are vital in as far as they ensure that the students explore diverse career pathways. On career fairs and events, the OCS also provided 20 career fairs in the past year; a good number specialized by the field and timed to the hiring practices of those sectors (Harvard University, 2017). Other activities included job and internship postings, treks and site visits, campus interviews, among others. Through all these, the institution has been able to impact its students in one-way or the other.

The University of Oxford is another institution with an established OCS aimed at providing its students with expert and personalized support with their career goals (University of Oxford, 2018). Besides, another objective of this office in the institution is to provide comprehensive skill-building programs as well as offer several internship opportunities for the students. Whatever career one is interested in, and whatever degree one is pursuing, the university’s career office provides expert advice and resources

including fifteen annual career fairs for the students to explore their options and meet potential employers as well as 520 yearly workshops run by career advisers and the visiting recruiters (University of Oxford, 2018). Also, the office offers almost 5,500 one-on-one careers advice appointments with expert advisors, more than 9,000 opportunities meant for its students advertised on its “Careers Connect” website, business, and consultancy programs, among others (University of Oxford, 2018). All these ensure that the Oxford graduates are adequately prepared for employment post-graduation in their various industrial sectors.

APPENDIX:

BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

Office Essential Checklist

Office Space

- Office
- Working Area

Employees

- Administrator/Office manager
- Career Counselor
- Two Internship opportunities (Clerical Duties)

Office Furniture

- Desks and comfortable Chairs
- Bookcase or filing cabinet
- Wall whiteboard and markers

Stationery

- Printer paper
- Envelopes
- Pens
- Notebook
- Filing Equipment
- Scissors
- Staplers and Staples
- Paper Clips
- Post-it Notes

Technology & Communications

- Computers, keyboards, mouse
- Cables
- Computer Software such as MS Office
- Printers & Ink
- Photocopier/Scanner/Fax Machine
- Phone & Internet Line (shop around for the best deal!)





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