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INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGERI
(INES RUHENGERI)

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

INES Ruhengeri, December 2023



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1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Historical Background

INES-Ruhengeri officially opened its doors on November, 17th 2003, under the name of “Université Internationale au Rwanda (UNIR)”; but the idea of its creation came in September 2000 under the initiative of Ruhengeri Catholic Diocese.

His Excellency Paul KAGAME, President of the Republic of Rwanda laid the foundation stone for the launch of the construction of the Campus, on June 30th, 2003. INES obtained its degree awarding powers by the Ministerial order number 005/2010/MINEDUC of June 16th, 2010. Its first graduation ceremony was organized on June 30th 2010.

1.2. Philosophy of INES Ruhengeri

Three core complementary pillars constitute the philosophical backbone of INES endeavour: (1) building signs of hope, (2) contributing to unity and reconciliation and (3) contributing to the country’s sustainable development. These pillars are anchored with Christian ethical values and constructive critical thinking.

1.3. Vision of the University

The vision of INES is reflected in the following statement:

“Universality in each individual,

Knowing in order to Unite and better serve the world”.

INES is a private Institute for Higher Education orients its academic services towards applied sciences. In the vision of INES this means that all taught sciences are applied to the population daily problems, seeking to propose and answer to them.

1.4. Mission of INES Ruhengeri

According to the statutes of INES, the mission is expressed as follows:

“To contribute through the interactive conjunction between civil society, private sector and public sector to the national and regional development, by providing specialized university education enhanced by research, in order to create competitive enterprises and well paid employment”



1.5. Motto: Scientia et lux

Scientia et lux (Knowledge and light).

Beside its general motto, *Scientia et Lux*, from the Academic year 2013/2014 until now, INES Ruhengeri has chosen a secondary motto, serving not only as a galvanizer but also as a marketing and communication tool to the external public: “*Shifting from Paper to product*”. This additional precept denotes INES-Ruhengeri’s renewed commitment and strong will to bridge the gap between theories generally taught in the classroom and the reality on the field of practice. In other words, in its educational activities, the emphasis has shifted from the degrees to the competences to be learnt to students in order for them to become true professionals. It mostly has its roots in the findings of a research organized in 2008 about the way higher learning institutions respond to the labour market’s needs. The result was the existence of a big mismatch between academic graduates and the labour market’s needs. From then, the founders of INES-Ruhengeri decided to look for the best university concept that could match with their ambitions. It is in that context that, from 2010, INES-Ruhengeri was embarked on the new orientation of university of applied sciences with the aim of fostering a practical university.

1.6. INES-RUHENGERI’s target as an Institute of Applied Sciences

As an Institute of Applied Sciences INES teaching approach is expected to be profession oriented. This implies that:

- The teaching and learning strategies and methodologies are based on the concept of competence based learning;
- The approach is student centered; students learn to develop professional behavior, which includes taking professional responsibility and initiatives as well as working independently.
- All programs have a labor market orientation; programs are reviewed from the perspective of professional graduate profiles, developed by INES and representatives of the labor market. The curricula include interactions with the reality of the professional field, such as Industrial attachments, field trips and projects. Through these students learn to find appropriate solutions for problems in the professional field.



2. OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

INES-Ruhengeri is a Higher Learning Institution that aims to become a leading institution by offering its staff, apprentices and interns a safe environment as recommended by national policies and regulations.

INES-Ruhengeri is committed to the health and safety of all its staff, apprentices and interns. The purpose of the Occupational Safety and Health Policy is to guide and direct all staff, apprentices and interns to work safely and prevent injury, to themselves and others. All people associated to INES-Ruhengeri in one or another way, permanently or temporarily including the clients and students, are encouraged to participate in developing, implementing, and enforcing INES-Ruhengeri Occupational Safety and Health Policy. They must take all reasonable steps to prevent accidents and never sacrifice safety for self-interest.

This policy gives the vision of INES-Ruhengeri on the safety and health on work place, it also underlines globally the duties of the employer, the duties of staff, apprentices and interns, and all users on the Campus while the more practical measures and details are delegated to specific services for practice and implementation.

3. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy is set to serve two purposes. First, to be in compliance with national policies and regulations on labour, especially the Ministerial Order n° 02/MIFOTRA/23 of 01/08/2023 on occupational health and safety among others.

Second, constantly improve the role of the employer and all staff and users on the campus to create and keep updating a physical and psychological, and an excellent environment of work. The beneficiaries of this policy are both individuals themselves and the INES-Ruhengeri entirely.

This requires that INES-Ruhengeri strategically think about the work conditions but also to induction and constant dialogue with staff, especially through the Occupational Safety and Health Committee for conducive environment.



4. GOALS, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The main goal of this policy is to eliminate or minimize hazards that can cause accidents. It is institutional policy that will be always communicated to staff, interns, students, and clients especially during induction sessions and through particular services such as laboratories. It will be reviewed at any time to be in compliance with the law but also to include new challenges and realities.

Through this policy, INES-Ruhengeri is committed to the provision of a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, guest researchers, interns, apprentices, volunteers, students, contractors and visitors by:

1. Promoting the physical and psychological health in the workplace.
2. By ensuring its actions are in line with INES-Ruhengeri core values, the Code of Conduct of staff, students regulations and disciplinary regulations, laboratories protocols, standards and rules of safety, asset disposal policy and waste management policy, among others.
3. Continuously improving the safety management framework, systems and processes thereby ensuring safety practices are maintained and enhanced;
4. Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained and educated in the area of health and safety on workplace in line with position accountability and responsibilities including individual obligations to personal safety;
5. Reporting on safety and health performance targets at the organizational, divisional, and departmental levels;
6. Providing facilities, equipment, resources and services to enable employees to perform their role safely;
7. Regularly communicating with staff in relation to safety and health initiatives and programs that support a "zero harm" culture.



5. DUTIES OF INES RUHENGERI IN LINE WITH SAFETY AND HEALTH

Through the Executive Organ, the duties of INES-Ruhengeri will include the following:

1. Ensure health, safety and welfare of an employee, an intern or an apprentice at workplace;
2. Provide an employee, an intern or apprentice with suitable premises and tools for protecting him or her from hazards;
3. Ensure that an employee, an intern or apprentice wears necessary occupational health and safety protective equipment and that the equipment is used appropriately;
4. Identify and analyse risks that may result from the nature of the work;
5. Have a first aid kit with sufficient materials and train an employee, an intern or apprentice on how to use it;
6. To appoint members representing the Management in the Committee of Occupational Safety and Health;
7. Train employees on occupational health and safety matters at work at least once a year;
8. Train new employees, an intern or apprentice on occupational health and safety matters at work within one month following the starting of work;
9. Inform an employee about risks that may result from the use of new technologies;
10. Inform a new employee, an intern or apprentice about risks that may result from the use of existing and new technologies;
11. To ensure inclusion, accessibility and usability for all staff, especially for staff with disability;
12. Record occupational hazards, diseases and deaths;
13. Report occupational hazards, diseases and deaths to the labour inspector of the area of the workplace and to social security organ;
14. Ensure confidentiality of personal and medical data of an employee, an intern or apprentice;
15. Ensure that the workplace is not overcrowded to the extent of causing a risk to the health of an employee, an intern or apprentice;
16. Ensure that the workplace is clean and that waste is put in an appropriate place;



17. Ensure sufficient and permanent lighting, free and clean drinking water and where possible, based on arduous working conditions, provide another soft drink in addition to water and the prevention of noise or vibration;
18. In collaboration with staff to see how to find a place where to take lunch and coffee on the campus on the charge of the interested person.
19. Provide an employee, an intern or apprentice with appropriate easily accessible sanitary facilities separate for both men and women;
20. Hire a staff in charge of occupational safety and health or designate another employee among its employees who assumes the duties and responsibilities of occupational safety and health.
21. If necessary to take disciplinary action where individuals fail to work in a healthy and safe manner, or do not comply with applicable national regulations or institutional policies and procedures in line with safety and health.
22. Embed a culture of health and safety, and "zero harm" culture among employees.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADS OF UNITS AND SUPERVISORS

Heads of Units and supervisors at INES-Ruhengeri shall:

1. Ensure the effective implementation of Safety and Health on Work place practices in line with INES-Ruhengeri framework, systems and processes;
2. Ensure that in their respective units procedures are in place for the systematic identification of workplace hazards and assessment of their level of risk as well as implementation of controls to manage risks;
3. Lead departmental safety inspections and audits
4. Investigate and report on all incidents;
5. Be actively involved in following up any actions after an incident occurs;
6. Prioritise Workplace Health and Safety requirements within the department/unit/ to ensure a "zero harm" culture is being promoted at all times;
7. Encourage staff to take accountability for personal health and safety;
8. Participate in WHS training and education and ensure WHS representatives are also enabled to participate in training obligations as required;
9. To ensure the induction session on safety and health for new staff, interns, apprentices, guest researchers, and clients where necessary
10. Especially for laboratories, to ensure that the first aid kit is in place.



8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

The composition of the Occupational Safety and Health Committee will follow the provisions of the national regulations and laws. It will be composed of the representatives of the Employer and the representatives of employees.

The occupational health and safety committee has the responsibilities to:

1. Analyse occupational hazards to which an employee, an intern or apprentice assigned to work at INES-Ruhengeri may be exposed;
2. Conduct investigations in case of an occupational hazard or disease and propose preventive and protection measures for that accident or disease;
3. Conduct investigations on an occupational accident resulting in death or causing permanent incapacity or having revealed the existence of a serious danger to the occupational health and safety of the employee, intern or apprentice and to draw conclusions;
4. Submit regularly to the INES Executive Organ updated statistics on occupational hazards, diseases and deaths and to make quarterly reports indicating how INES-Ruhengeri or a concerned Department/unit is progressing in taking measures to prevent them;
5. Ensure the implementation of occupational health and safety laws and regulations;
6. Advise on an initiatives relating to most reliable methods of work through the choice of materials necessary for the work and to match them with workplace;
7. Explain, through effective means, the meaning of an occupational risk;
8. Provide advice on occupational health and safety training programmes and how they may be revised;
9. Examine, in appropriate time, documents concerning occupational health and safety training activities, duration and forecast budget to ensure effective implementation of activities;
10. Ensure that appropriate measures are taken to provide training to employees and upgrade their skills in the field of occupational health and safety;
11. Ensure the organisation and training of first-aid team at workplace within enterprise or organ and ensure that the team is provided with equipment necessary for discharging its duties and to work in the manner that an employee, an intern or apprentice gets first aid in case of an occupational hazard;
12. Sensitise an employee, an intern or apprentice on occupational health and safety related issues, and develop a culture of prevention of occupational hazards and diseases and fight against transmissible diseases or any other public health danger.



9. THE DUTY OF INCLUSION, ACCESSIBILITY AND USABILITY

In line with this policy, INES-Ruhengeri will constantly make all efforts to become inclusive with regards to gender, disability, age, domain or category of work (for example the administrative staff and teaching staff, permanent staff and part-time staff, senior staff and junior staff, etc)

Under this policy, accessibility shall include physical accessibility, cultural accessibility, communication accessibility, administration accessibility, etc

While usability is a measure of how well a specific employee/user in a specific context can use an equipment/product/design to achieve a defined goal effectively, efficiently and satisfactorily. By this, INES-Ruhengeri will make sure that the availability of materials or equipment is not enough if the usability is not ensured respectively to the concerned staff.

The responsibilities of INES-Ruhengeri under this section shall include the following:

1. To indicate and keep the passages and parking for persons with disability;
2. To indicate and keep maintained the toilet for the users of wheelchair;
3. To assign persons with physical disability or with visual impairment in the offices of ground floor or accessible areas.

10. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF, INTERNS, APPRENTICES, GUEST RESEARCHERS, AND CONTRACTORS

All staff of INES-Ruhengeri, interns and apprentices, guest researchers, and contractors shall comply with this policy and national regulations when dealing with INES-Ruhengeri on its campus. Their responsibilities shall respectively include the following:

10.1. Staff and guest researchers

Staff and guest researchers' responsibilities in line with this policy shall be but not limited to:

1. Assume individual accountability for personal health and safety including psychological wellbeing;
2. Undertake tasks in accordance with relevant standard operating procedures and/or work instructions;



3. Participate in health and safety consultative meeting/forums and contribute ideas to improving the health and safety of the department/unit/ward/team;
4. Where appropriate, participate in Workplace Health and Safety training, programs and initiatives;
5. Report all Workplace Health and Safety breaches, hazards and incidents, and assist with actions to reduce and eliminate risks.
6. Observe rules and regulations issued by the employer based on the nature of his or her work;
7. Inform the employer of occupational hazard, disease or any other event likely to cause hazard at workplace;
8. Protect and inform his or her colleagues and third parties of any event that may endanger safety and health at workplace; and
9. Avoid damaging, dirtying or improper use of occupational health and safety protective equipment availed to him or her.
10. When conducting practical works or field visit activities, to take all measures to protect themselves and to protect the students under their supervision.

10.2. Interns and apprentices

Under this policy, an internship is usually regarded as a short work experience stint where an intern will put existing skills into use and gain experience. An Apprentice however is a long term qualification where the candidate is taught new skills and knowledge to ensure they are of most value to the company long term.

Both interns and apprentices when working at INES-Ruhengeri Campus under supervision of INES-Ruhengeri employee or under external supervision shall comply with the general conditions of safety and health and the specific procedures of the Department/Unit where they are assigned to protect themselves and to prevent accidents to others.

Interns and apprentices shall comply with the same responsibilities in this policy assigned to the INES-Ruhengeri employee with whom they are working.

If the above is not observed, the Management of INES-Ruhengeri shall take disciplinary action including suspension, temporary exclusion, or definitive exclusion depending on the gravity of the fault and following the Code of Conduct of INES staff.

10.3. Contractors

Contractors supplying or installing materials and equipment at INES-Ruhengeri shall comply with the general conditions of safety and health and the specific procedures of the Department/Unit where they are assigned to protect themselves and to prevent accidents to others.

Contractors or subcontractors running works on behalf and for INES-Ruhengeri, or working on their businesses using INES-Ruhengeri premises, shall comply with the general conditions



of safety and health and the specific procedures of the Department/Unit where they are working or supplying to protect themselves and to prevent accidents to others.

If the above is not observed, the Management of INES-Ruhengeri shall take disciplinary action including suspension, temporary exclusion, definitive exclusion, or report to the public order organs depending on the gravity of the fault/offence.

11.TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL DISPOSITIONS

1. All previous dispositions contrary to the stipulations of the present policy related to occupational safety and health have been repealed.
2. Other relevant provisions scatted in different policies in force at INES-Ruhengeri and which not in contradiction with this policy are deemed to be part of it.
3. The Office of the Human Resources Management is assigned to monitor the implementation of this policy.
4. This occupational safety and health policy has been adopted by INES-Ruhengeri Senior Management Committee in its meeting of 23 November 2023, and approved by INES-Ruhengeri Governing Body in its meeting of 16 December 2023.

Done at Musanze, 20th December, 2023



Dr. MAZARATI Jean Baptiste

Chairperson/INES-Ruhengeri Council

For Approval