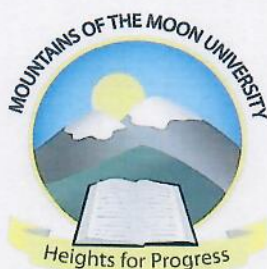
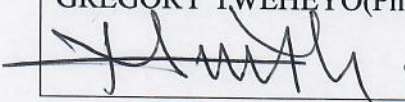
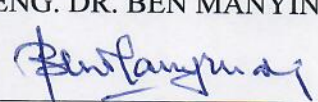


	MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON UNIVERSITY	Min. 175/11 th /MMU UC/ Nov 24
Document Title	HIV/AIDS POLICY	Effective Date: 8/11/2024
Responsible Unit	Students Affairs Department	Issue Number: 01

MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON UNIVERSITY



HIV/AIDS POLICY

Checked by: GREGORY TWEHEYO(PhD) 	Approved by: ENG. DR. BEN MANYINDO 	Date: 27 MARCH 2025
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CITATION

This Policy shall be cited as the “*Mountains of the Moon University HIV/AIDS Policy, 2024*”

Date of Approval by Council: 8th November 2024

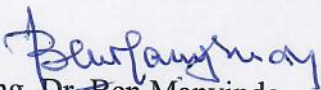
FOREWARD

I take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the HIV/AIDS Policy at Mountains of the Moon University. This policy is vital to our mission to promote health, inclusivity, and support for all students and staff.

The HIV/AIDS Policy outlines our approach to prevention, support, education, and treatment and aims to eliminate the stigma and discrimination associated with the virus. We must create an environment where individuals feel safe to seek help and support.

I urge everyone to participate in awareness programs and actively utilize the available resources. Together, we can foster a culture of understanding and solidarity, ensuring that no one faces this challenge alone.

Thank you for your dedication to making Mountains of the Moon University a supportive and healthy community.


Eng. Dr. Ben Manyindo

CHAIRPERSON, MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

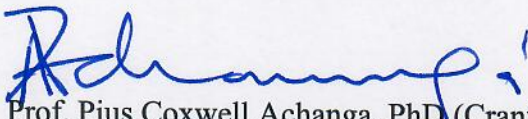
At Mountains of Moon University, we are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all members of our community. The health and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff are of utmost importance, and addressing HIV/AIDS is a crucial aspect of this commitment.

Our HIV policy reflects our dedication to promoting awareness, reducing stigma, and providing essential support services. We believe in the power of education and open dialogue to combat misconceptions and create a culture of empathy and respect. This policy not only outlines our approach to managing HIV-related issues but also emphasizes our role in ensuring that all individuals affected by HIV/AIDS receive the care and support they need.

As we implement this policy, I encourage everyone to actively participate in our efforts to create a more informed and compassionate community. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected by HIV and contribute to a healthier and more inclusive university environment.

Thank you for your commitment to this important cause.

Sincerely,



Prof. Pius Coxwell Achanga, PhD (Cranfield)

VICE CHANCELLOR

Definition of the key terms

Anti- Retroviral; Are drugs used to prevent a retrovirus, such as HIV, from replicating.

Gender mainstreaming; means integrating a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes, and projects.

Post-exposure prophylaxis; means taking HIV medicines within 72 hours (3 days) after a possible exposure to HIV to prevent HIV.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS

AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	-	Antiretroviral Therapy
CSOs	-	Civic Society Organizations
HIV	-	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
MMU	-	Mountains of the Moon University
MOH	-	Ministry of Health
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organizations
PEP	-	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PEPFAR	-	The US Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PLHIV	-	People Living with HIV
PEP	-	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
UAC	-	Uganda Aids Commission
UNAIDS	-	The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/Aid
VCT	-	Voluntary Counseling and Testing



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CURRENT STATUS OF THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC AT MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON UNIVERSITY

Mountains of the Moon University has a combined full-time staff population of 278 in six faculties (Human Resource data, 2024). Given the National HIV/AIDS prevalence of 5.1% among adults 15 – 49 years (2014, Uganda HIV and AIDS Country Progress Report), accordingly, this means approximately 30 staff are living with HIV/AIDS. Each staff member could have an average of 4 dependents (2,372 altogether), giving an additional 120 PLHAs using the same formula. Similarly, for the full-time students amounting to 2040, the estimate is 239 students living with HIV/AIDS within the student body. This means the wider University community has 269 PLHAs (the majority of whom are unaware of their status). However, as prevention is the most important strategy, the University's efforts have to go beyond the 269 PLHAs and embrace the wider community of 4412 (2040 students + 2372 staff and dependants), bearing in mind the host community.

These numbers, by and large, speak volumes, and the University needs to rise to the HIV/AIDS challenge in tandem with national and international aspirations for an HIV/AIDS-free world by 2030. Having a policy on this matter would be a clear commitment in this direction. To be effective, such a policy requires wide consultations and a consensus by all stakeholders within the University community. Equally significant is the involvement of neighboring communities as the University is not an island in social terms.

Handwritten signature/initials

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.1 The Policy Context

This policy will operate within the context of, and in line with, the national laws and development agenda and, specifically, the National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2020/2021-2024/2025 and its successors. The National Response to the HIV/AIDS challenge has the following as the designated pillars;

- i. Political commitment and support
- ii. Openness about the epidemic
- iii. Multi-sectoral coordination through the UAC
- iv. Decentralization of the HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities.
- v. Participation of NGOs and CBOs in HIV/AIDS Prevention and control.
- vi. Excellent partnerships: GFATM, PEPFAR UN, Bilateral and Multilateral partners.



CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Overall Goal of the Policy

To prevent new HIV infections alongside providing for the needs of those afflicted by HIV/AIDS in Mountains of the Moon University.

2.2 Specific objectives

This policy will serve to:

- i. Ensure the community is sensitized about HIV/AIDS
- ii. Enable easy access to counseling and testing services
- iii. Consolidate practices to minimize stigma and discrimination of the afflicted
- iv. Provide channels for access to comprehensive HIV/AIDS care, including social support for staff, dependents, and students who need them
- v. Encourage research efforts to combat the scourge of HIV/AIDS and its effects in the University and beyond
- vi. Address ways to comprehensively sustain this policy, resultant action plan, and activities

2.3 Policy Outputs

The implementation of the policy is expected to result in the following outputs HIV/AIDS prevention, management, and mitigation activities:

- i. Study and work Stigma and discrimination based on HIV/AIDS status eliminated
- ii. Effectiveness of measures to combat HIV monitored within the University
- iii. The impact of HIV/AIDS mitigation monitored within the University
- iv. Greater qualitative knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS within the University



CHAPTER THREE

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Anecdotal reports suggest that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has had major effects on tertiary education institutions, especially in African countries south of the Sahara Desert. The institutions are also challenged by the epidemic's impact at the country, regional, and global levels. Mountains of the Moon University, like many universities elsewhere, has a very high concentration of young people who are a very valuable national resource and yet are extremely vulnerable to HIV acquisition. The institution also has a very high concentration of well-trained personnel that the country cannot afford to lose through ill health and premature death. Therefore, the need for an HIV/AIDS policy for an institution like Mountains of the Moon University cannot be over-emphasized in guiding and streamlining HIV/AIDS-related issues.

This policy has its core foundation guiding principles as listed below: -

- i. **HIV/AIDS is of concern to all:** Infected or not, the scourge affects us all in diverse ways and should be fought at all levels and on all fronts. The fight, therefore, is not only for saving lives but also securing a worthwhile future for upcoming generations of Ugandans in line with the University's commitment to ensuring *socio-economic transformation and sustainable development* embodied in its mission statement.
- ii. **Non-discrimination:** Those infected are fellow beings who should not be denied the enjoyment of all rights and freedoms: This is anchored on the University's core value of equity and is by what is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations as an inherent entitlement for all humans.
- iii. **Standard procedures:** The fact that there is no current evidence that HIV infection can be transmitted by casual contact suggests that the standard procedures concerning the protection of students, staff, and researchers in university laboratories, instruction in classrooms, sanitation standards in student housing and in food service operations, and medical practice in University Health Services adequately address the majority of concerns that may occur.
- iv. **Rule of exceptions:** If situations arise in which existing policies and procedures do not apply or in which it is necessary to make a case-by-case decision, the University Secretary, Human Resources Director, and Dean of Students shall consult with the Head of Health Services, the University Legal Officer, and any other relevant staff member/party to review the matter and provide a recommendation of action.

- v. **Gender mainstreaming:** The University recognizes the centrality of gender issues in the fight against HIV/AIDS and will mainstream gender considerations in all aspects of this Policy



CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 POLICIES PERTAINING TO STUDENTS

The University policies involving students shall include:

4.1 Admissions

A student shall not be required to reveal his/her HIV/AIDS status before admission or during his/her course of study at Mountains of the Moon University. This stipulation will apply to students admitted into the joint admissions board programs and the self-sponsored (SSP) programs.

4.2 Medical examination for students

- i. New students will not be required to undergo mandatory HIV-related medical examinations except on clinical grounds and as determined by a health care provider. However, under general University dispensation, new students will be required to undergo basic and routine medical examinations when they report to the University.
- ii. Continuing students may undergo HIV-related medical examination on clinical grounds and as determined by a health care provider.

4.3 Access to facilities

Students with HIV infection shall have full access to educational facilities, student assemblies, residential halls, dining areas, swimming pools, restaurants, rest rooms, recreation, entertainment, or other common areas.

4.4 Attendance

- i. Students with HIV infection shall be allowed normal classroom attendance or other student employment opportunities and participation in co-curricular activities (e.g., social, cultural, and athletic events) without restriction as long as they are physically and mentally able.
- ii. If the program load of a student with HIV infection must be modified or reduced for medical reasons, existing guidelines about reduced course loads shall be followed.
- iii. Students, who experience anxiety about the risk of infection and refuse to attend class or other functions because of the presence of a fellow student or an instructor who is HIV-infected or perceived to be infected, shall receive counseling as to current medical information related to the risk of exposure to HIV infection through routine contact.



4.5 Mainstreaming the Provision of HIV/AIDS Education and Training

The University shall ensure that HIV/AIDS education is mainstreamed into the curricula for all students. All staff members shall receive education and information about HIV/AIDS and related issues through organized HIV/AIDS workshops and seminars.

4.6 Financial or other aid

University policies relating to financial or any other aid apply equally to all students attending the University, irrespective of their HIV status.

4.7 Food services

- i. Students with HIV infection shall have full access to all residence dining halls, rented housing dining rooms, privately contracted food facilities, fraternity and sorority dining rooms, and University cash-operated restaurants, outlets, stores, and catered events without restriction.
- ii. Students may, however, ONLY be excluded if they are not members of the applicable organization or active participants in the sponsoring organization.

4.8 Non-discrimination

- i. Discrimination based on the actual or assumed disabling effects of HIV infection is prohibited. The University condemns all occurrences of emotional and/or physical abuse as intolerable and will respond to them quickly and effectively.
- ii. Exclusion may be acceptable if the HIV-infected student is a risk to others in pursuance of a particular activity e.g. a medical practitioner could pose a risk to his/her patients while performing invasive procedures.

4.9 Disabling condition

Students with HIV/AIDS may be considered as having disabling conditions. Students with HIV/AIDS seeking assistance shall receive appropriate assistance.

4.10 University-approved/regulated housing

- i. To serve the needs of HIV-infected students, decisions about housing for students with HIV infection will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- ii. There may be, in some circumstances, reasonable concern for the health of students with immune deficiencies when those students might be exposed to certain contagious diseases (e.g. measles or chicken pox) in a close living situation.
- iii. University administrators and health officers may recommend/require that a student with HIV infection seek special housing arrangements for safety precautions.



4.11 Safety precautions

- i. Mountains of the Moon University will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of individuals who may be at risk of exposure to body fluids, blood, or blood products.
- ii. In order to prevent student exposure to HIV during electives, internships, or other curricular activities at collaborating/patterning
- iii. Institutions, the University will liaise with collaborating institutions to ensure the safety of students within the limits of those institutions' existing framework.

4.12 Off-campus study programs

Students participating in off-campus study programs shall be informed of health risks, particularly regarding the blood supply and medical practice or other related care and support activities that may increase their risk of exposure to HIV. Students who have to travel abroad shall also be informed of HIV test requirements to obtain visas to visit certain countries.

4.13 HIV testing

- i. There is no current justification for mandatory HIV diagnostic testing, and the University will not require it for participation in any activity. However, when other institutions, agencies, or governments require testing for participation, enrollment, or travel, University Health Services or a referral center will make diagnostic testing available.
- ii. There is no current medical justification for mandatory HIV diagnostic testing for enrollment to study at the University. No individual may be tested for the presence of HIV without the informed written consent of that individual except if mentally incapacitated.



CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 POLICIES PERTAINING TO UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES

Mountains of the Moon University is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe work environment for all employees and providing support for individual employees who may face HIV-related illnesses. Unless stated otherwise, the following policies apply to university employees.

5.1 Workplace safety

The University is desirous to provide and to have a safe work environment for all employees.

5.2 Employment

Mountains of the Moon University accepts otherwise qualified individuals presenting themselves for employment, irrespective of their HIV status. Although a medical examination may be required of all new employees before the assumption of duties, such shall not include HIV testing.

5.3 Employment of Persons living with HIV/AIDS

The University will not refuse to hire or promote, and will not bar or discharge from employment or otherwise discriminate against, any individual because that person is HIV-infected or perceived to be infected, so long as the individual can, with reasonable accommodation, perform the duties of the position or unless the individual poses a significant risk of substantial harm to other individuals or employees or the public, that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable precautions.

Further, the University will not subject an employee so infected to job conditions, discipline, standards of performance, or other requirements that differ from those applied to applicants or employees not so infected, except as a means of accommodation for a disabling condition that may exist.

5.4 Employee refusal to work

- i. Employees who experience anxiety about the risk of infection and who refuse to work with a co-worker, student, or member of the public who is HIV infected or perceived to be infected shall receive counseling as to current medical information related to the risk of exposure to HIV infection through routine contact in the workplace.
- ii. Continued unreasonable refusal to work with an HIV-infected person could make an employee subject to disciplinary sanctions consistent with applicable provisions of Uganda laws and regulations, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and applicable University / administrative rules.



5.5 HIV testing

- i. There is no current justification for mandatory HIV diagnostic testing, and the University will not require it for participation in any activity. However, when other institutions, agencies, or governments require testing for participation, enrollment, or travel, University Health Services or a referral center will make diagnostic testing available.
- ii. There is no current medical justification for mandatory HIV diagnostic testing for employment at the University. No individual may be tested for the presence of HIV without the informed written consent of that individual except if mentally incapacitated.

5.6 Employee benefits

With regard to employee benefits programs, the University will treat HIV-related illnesses the same as other life-threatening illnesses.



CHAPTER SIX

6.0 POLICIES PERTAINING TO HIV PREVENTION

Although Uganda has made significant progress in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, the country as a whole is still vulnerable to the persistent epidemic. There is a need for aggressive policies and programmes that promote prevention efforts. The University will persistently pursue proactive prevention efforts that align with the national policies and guidelines. These will include but are not limited to the provision of HIV prevention information, education and communication (IEC), promotion of the ABC strategy, emphasizing abstinence, safe sex and use of condoms, and avoiding unsteady partnerships. In addition, infrastructure for easy access to HIV testing and counseling services within the University will be enhanced and maintained coupled with the promotion of students and staff HIV/AIDS prevention clubs.

Programs that lead to the prevention of parental transmission of HIV, for example, through safe transfusions, the use of safe syringes and needles, and avoiding the use and abuse of intravenous drugs, will be established. Other approaches to HIV prevention, like prevention of mother-to-child transmission and treatment of those infected by use of anti-retroviral, will be promoted.

Other policies beneficial to promoting HIV/AIDS prevention, such as gender mainstreaming policy, sexual harassment policy, and any other that may be considered appropriate, will be developed or strengthened and enforced. The above measures are intended to create a safe environment conducive to the prevention of the acquisition and transmission of HIV.



CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 POLICIES PERTAINING TO HEALTH SERVICES

Medical information and public health policy regarding HIV/AIDS are rapidly evolving. The policies of Mountains of the Moon University Health Services are to keep abreast of all relevant information about the epidemic and put it to maximum use for the benefit of students and staff within the limits that resources allow. This will be accomplished by:

7.1 Safe Medical Practices

University Health Services seeks to ensure that no person contracts infectious diseases during medical procedures. Stringent universal precautions for the prevention of HIV and related infections through infected body fluids or instruments contaminated by such fluids shall be maintained. The health staff will continuously review these procedures.

7.2 Management of exposure to HIV infection

Post-exposure prophylaxis for those who get accidentally exposed to the virus, for example, through needle stick injuries or rape, will be provided by University through the University Health Services or appropriate referral services.

7.3 Counselling, confidentiality, and Care Support

- i. Counseling services on HIV/AIDS and related issues will be available to all University students and staff. Counseling will be provided by professionally trained personnel only.
- ii. Condoms shall be dispensed at accessible locations within the University.
- iii. The University and Community will endeavor to provide a conducive environment where students and staff members may reveal their status to an appropriate and professionally trained person in the support services.
- iv. All students and staff living with HIV/AIDS will have the legal right to confidentiality about their status, except where legally otherwise indicated.

7.4 HIV testing services

Confidential, inexpensive diagnostic testing for HIV will be offered to students by University Health Services. Priority is given to persons with a significant risk, by history, of having been infected by HIV. No tests will be provided without informed consent, and results cannot be released to third parties without the patient's specific and express prior authorization unless otherwise required by law.



7.5 Referral

The university will partner with institutions, programs, and projects that provide care to the infected.



CHAPTER EIGHT

8.0 POLICIES PERTAINING TO UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Care

- i. Mountains of the Moon University will make the best efforts within the limits of available resources and existing University health care policies to provide staff and students affected with HIV/AIDS with the necessary care and refer HIV/AIDS infected staff, their families, and students to suitable treatment sites as appropriate, where additional treatment is required, which is not provided by the University.
- ii. The University shall offer appropriate counseling and basic health care and maintenance to all staff members and students on the different University campuses. The level of care offered by Mountains of the Moon University shall be determined by budgetary considerations and the reality of the sustainability of such care interventions. The University will pursue initiatives to demonstrate the highest possible standard of care.

8.2 Research

- i. Mountains of the Moon University is committed to undertaking extensive empirical and operational public health, biomedical, and social science research on HIV/AIDS.
- ii. Policies, plans, and guidelines will be developed to support and promote coordination of HIV/AIDS research underway while creating mechanisms to encourage more research to be undertaken by university staff and students.
- iii. Efforts to develop and sustain meaningful collaborations and partnerships with communities' other institutions and the public and private sector will be encouraged and nurtured.

8.3 Education and outreach

- i. The University shall actively support instruction that mainstreams HIV/AIDS education in the University curricula, services, and activities.
- ii. The University shall support distributing training materials and make available training sessions and knowledgeable speakers.
- iii. Recognizing the regular turnover of students and employees, the university will offer programs and conduct mailings at regular intervals.

8.4 Leadership

Mountains of the Moon University will play a leadership role in fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic and mitigating its impact on the University itself and the wider society in Uganda in controlling the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Leadership skills will be developed in areas related to prevention, care and treatment, legal and human rights aspects, and other areas relevant to the epidemic.



8.5 Community involvement/advocacy

The University recognizes that the struggle against HIV/AIDS is not restricted to the University campuses and employees or students, but that wider community involvement and participation are required to control the spread of the disease and mitigate its impact. Mountains of the Moon University, a leading institution in the community, must accordingly establish community partnerships and outreach programs for creating HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

The University will also coordinate its efforts with NGOs, tertiary education institutions, community organizations, and the public and private sector.



CHAPTER NINE

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

9.1 Implementation

Details of HIV/AIDS guidelines, rules, and regulations in accordance with this policy will guide the successful implementation of this policy.

9.2 Monitoring and Evaluation of the HIV/AIDS Policy

- i) The policy actions, strategies, and implementation process will be monitored and evaluated based on the timelines and modalities under the existing University's monitoring and evaluation framework;
- ii) Through the appropriate Information Management Systems at the University, the responsible offices will ensure a timely collection, analysis, and dissemination of data on HIV/AIDS; and
- iii) The performance of the existing sources will be evaluated using the institutional monitoring and evaluation frameworks to establish impact, gaps, emerging issues, and implementation challenges.



CHAPTER TEN

10.0 POLICY REVIEW

The HIV/AIDS Policy will be reviewed as guided by the Mountains of the Moon University Policy and Review Guidelines, 2023.

10.1 Policy Commencement Date

The commencement date shall be the date of approval of the Policy by the University Council.

Approved during the 11th University Council meeting held on **8th November 2024** under

Minute: **175/11th/MMU UC/NOV 24 d (V)**

