Standards and Guidelines
for University Libraries in Kenya

Commission for Higher Education
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Part I: Preliminary

1. Preliminaries and acknowledgements

The first attempt at producing standards for University libraries in Kenya was made in the Universities (Establishment of Universities) (Standardization, Accreditation and Supervision) Rules, 1989. In the Second Schedule, section 23(a)-(i), the Rules focused on the spatial requirements and the size of the Collection in a University library. Other aspects that collectively add up to a library were not covered.

In due course the importance of having a more comprehensive set of standards to serve as a tool for evaluation of library services and facilities was realized. In year 2000 therefore, a sub-committee was set up by the Documentation and Information Technology Committee [DITC] of the Commission with the mandate to draft comprehensive standards which would assist the Universities, the Commission and sponsors of Universities in determining resources allocation and in assessing the quality of services and resources.

It was necessary for the proposed standards for University Libraries to gain acceptance by their intended users. Hence a series of meetings to discuss them were held between the committee and the University librarians, before releasing them to the public. The Committee produced the final draft before the end of the year 2003.

In view of the rapid changes in the field of Information and Communication Technologies and the experience gained by the Commission using the standards in the inspections of University libraries, the need to clarify and widen the scope covered in some of the areas was again realized.

A Standards review sub-committee was consequently formed in August 2005. The sub committee developed the draft standards and guidelines which were presented to a workshop for University Librarians held in June, 2007. The draft standards presented were enriched through paper presentations by invited resource persons in various fields.

The workshop approved the draft standards with amendments. These revised standards have adopted a major shift in their approach from the earlier version in a number of ways:

(i) In addition to the physical needs of the University library the conceptual basis are clearly articulated.

(ii) They make a serious attempt to point out specific evaluation mechanisms for University libraries.
(iii) They bring out the professional competencies which may be examined in a professional written examination.

(iv) A set of standards in Information Literacy Skills and Distance Learning Libraries and a list of the required documentation have been added.

(v) They have brought together the Standards and Guidelines which assists the intended user applying them.

The sub-committee is convinced therefore that the Standards will;

(i) Be of greater assistance to the work of quality control and assurance.

(ii) Find a place in the curriculum of library schools

(iii) Point the direction for future developments in University libraries.

The development of these standards has been as a result of a lot of hard work and sacrifice by the members of the sub-committee whose contribution we wish to acknowledge.

The sub-Committee consisted of:

Dr. Tirong Arap Tanui - University Librarian, Moi University

Dr. Sophia Kaane - University Librarian, United States International University

Mr. James M. Ng’ang’a - University Librarian, Africa Nazareen University.

Ms. Salome W. Mathangani - Former University Librarian, University of Nairobi.

Mr. Solomon Mutai - Systems Librarian, Moi University

Mr. Washington Gachira - Systems Librarian, United States International University.

Mr. John M. Murage and Mrs. Beatrice Odera Kwach of the Commission for Higher Education provided the Secretariat services.

In developing the standards, the sub-committee was aware of library standards developed in other parts of the world. In that respect reference was made to, among others, the following:

(i) Library Quality Assurance and self Audit, 2005. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

(iii) ACRL. Objectives for Information Literacy Information: A model statement for Academic Librarian, Jan. 2001.

(iv) ACRL. Guidelines for Academic Status for College and University Librarians, June, 2002


Part II: Background

2. Introduction:

The library plays a central role in the University. Its primary responsibility is to assist its users in the process of transforming information to knowledge. The Librarian in the University coordinates the evaluation and selection of information resources required for the various programmes, organizes and maintains the collection of these resources. Equally important is the responsibility of providing information literacy skills. This enables the learners to master content and to make their investigations into the literature as comprehensive as possible. Information literacy significantly contributes to the learners becoming more self directed thus assuming greater control of their learning. Such attributes are invaluable to the attainment of excellence in the learning and research processes of the University. The Librarians and faculty therefore share the common goal of maximizing the learning opportunities and in assisting the students to attain their desired ends.

Developments in ICT have led to a large increase in electronic publications alongside paper and micro text publications which have continued to be produced. Thus libraries and librarians, in addition to acquiring, organizing and providing information, are also called upon to assist users in evaluating and interpreting information available in its various formats. The evolving role of the librarian therefore demands closer partnership with the teaching faculty and the users and a greater responsibility for education process.
In view of the foregoing, the University is obliged to set aside adequate human and financial resources to ensure that library services are within reach of all faculty and students regardless of their geographical location or mode of delivery of their education.

3. Definition of Terms

(1) These Standards may be cited as ‘Revised Standards and Guidelines for University Libraries in Kenya’.

(2) In these Standards, unless the context otherwise requires the following terms shall be taken to mean:

“Bibliographic control” means creation, development, organization, management and exploitation of records prepared to describe items held in libraries or databases and to facilitate user access to such items.

“Collection management policy:” means a policy outlining the systematic evaluation of size, appropriateness, accessibility and usefulness of a library collection in terms of the objectives, patrons and programmes of the sponsoring institutions.

“Conservation:” means the process of ensuring the survival of library or archive materials, at the simplest level. This may mean basic repair or strengthening work.

“Distance learning community” means all those individuals, agencies, or institutions, directly involved with academic programs or extension services offered away from a traditional academic campus.”

“Distance learning library services” means those library services in support of college, university, or other post-secondary courses and programs offered away from a university campus.

“E-mail:” means a system for transmitting messages and data electronically through the medium of a computer.

“Information and Communication Technologies (ICT):” means hardware, software, networks and media for collection, storage, processing, transmission and preservation of information.

“Information Literacy” means a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use the information effectively.
“Information resources:” means formal, informal, human, printed or electronic resources that contains information that can be accessed to meet a need.

“Information services:” means storing, accessing, processing or delivering information to meet the needs of specific users. It can include traditional library and information services comprising of books, archives, standards, patents, research reports and electronic materials comprising of CD-ROMs databases, software, electronic documents, multi-media and video.

“Inter library loan:” means a system by which libraries borrow publications from other libraries.

“Librarian:” means a professionally trained person with a minimum of a Master degree in Library and Information Science or in a related field.

“Library budget:” means the total amount which is available for library purposes.

“Originating institution” means the entity, singular or collective, one of its chief responsibilities being the credit-granting body, marketing and supporting of distance learning courses and programs.

“Paraprofessional:” means somebody holding a degree or diploma who provides technical support to the librarian and is trained and skilled in library operations and applies them according to pre-established rules, under normal circumstances.

“Physically challenged user” means a user with a condition that markedly restricts the user’s ability to function physically.

“Preservation:” means the provision of adequate care and maintenance facilities to ensure the safe survival of library stock or archives. This is generally synonymous with conservation.

“Senate:” means the body in universities and colleges responsible for academic affairs.

“Standard:” means the minimum level of quality accepted as norm or by which actual attainments are judged.

“Trunking:” means housing used to conceal wires.
Part III: Library Services and facilities

4. Vision, Mission and Objectives

(1) Standards
The Library shall develop an explicit statement of its vision, mission and objectives.

(2) Guidelines
(a) The library should develop an explicit statement of its vision, mission, goals and objectives.
(b) The Vision and mission of the University library should state the purpose for its establishment and its core business.
(c) The Vision and mission statement should be clearly understood by all library staff, the University administration, faculty and users.
(d) The library shall develop guidelines on assessment and achievement of the plan.
(e) The vision and mission statements should be reviewed periodically and revised as necessary.
(f) They should be compatible with the institution’s vision, mission, its goals and objectives.

5. Information Resources

(1) Standards
The Library shall provide varied, authoritative, and up-to-date information resources, which supports its mission.

(2) Guidelines
The University Library shall provide a collection of information resources for all academic programmes to include:

(a) Current and relevant collection of textbooks; journals, reference and bibliographic sources. The resources shall be in print, non-print and electronic formats.
(b) Minimum collection of 60 titles per programme or 5 titles per unit,
(c) Provision of multiple copies shall be made on the basis of the user population.
(d) Minimum collection of 5 (Five) core journal titles per academic programme plus appropriate abstracting and indexing services.
6. ICT Resources

(1) Standards

The Library shall adopt and maintain new information Communication technologies as they develop and are useful in meeting its goals.

(2) Guidelines

Every University Library shall embrace the new Opportunities created by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) used in teaching, learning and research by:

(a) Establishing a phased ICT Development plan.
(b) Establishing a library information network as part of a campus wide network of information service.
(c) Subscribing to external electronic databases and journals.
(d) Installing a Library Management System with an interface that will support data exchange between Libraries.
(e) The Library system implemented must include on a minimum, modules for database creation and maintenance (cataloguing), Public Access Catalogue. (OPAC) and circulation.
(f) Disaster recovery plan should be in place so that the system can be restored quickly in the event of a system crash or failure.
(g) Local area network must use the latest version of internationally recognized communication protocol.
(h) Providing a full range of current ICT hardware and software to facilitate processing and retrieval of information.
(i) Provide for the acquisition, storage, preservation and dissemination of information produced digitally within the organization.
7. Organization and Access to Information Resources

(1) **Standards**
Library information resources shall be organized by internationally approved conventions and arranged for efficient access and retrieval.

(2) **Guidelines**
The information resources shall be organized and efficiently arranged for easy access and retrieval by all, including the physically challenged.
(a) The resources shall be organized by using Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC) and the latest version of Anglo American Cataloguing Rules (AACR II).
(b) The resources shall be accessed through a comprehensive catalogue of the library holdings.
(c) The Library system used shall support the current version of MARC.
(d) The system used must be capable of importing and exporting full bibliographic records in a standard format preferably MARC.

8. Services

(1) **Standards**
The Library shall establish, promote and maintain a wide variety of quality services that will support the vision, mission and objectives of the University.

(2) **Guidelines**
The Library shall establish, promote and maintain a wide variety of quality services that will support the academic programmes of the University. These shall include the following:
(a) Reference and information services
(b) Borrowing and lending services
(c) Current awareness services
(d) Inter Library loans services
(e) Access to online and media services
(f) Provision of the information literacy skills
(g) Ensuring reasonable and convenient access for the users.
(h) User education.
9. **Library Building**

(1) **Standards**

The University shall provide a library building for use by students, lecturers, staff and other communities as a quiet and a convenient place for study and research.

(2) **Guidelines**

(i) The building and its furnishings should create an ambience appropriate for quiet scholarly environment that is conducive to learning, access to information and the delivery of high quality services.

(ii) A high standard of internal finish and furnishings is essential to create this quality, and to withstand heavy use over an extended period.

(iii) Stable environmental conditions are required not only for long-term preservation of library materials but also for operation of computers.

(iv) The building should also put in place mechanisms to minimize or avoid security risks associated with the users, the collection, the equipment and data.

(v) Functionally, the space must be adequate for print and IT based resources and to facilitate for the delivery of services. The design should recognize the crucial importance of people, books and information technology and information services. The building must also enable the library to develop, and provide services that are responsive to the changing library and information needs of learning and scholarship.

(vi) The building shall have a high degree of flexibility or adaptability so that the use of space can easily be changed by rearranging the furniture and shelving.

(vii) The building design shall permit future growth with minimum disruption to the services being offered.

(viii) The building shall be designed for ease of movement of users, staff and library resources.

(ix) Access to all parts of the library, shall be as straightforward as possible, requiring minimum directional signs and guiding.

(x) The entrance and exit points for users, which are essential for good security and safety, shall be clearly defined.
(xi) Sufficient doorways which are opneable outwards to ensure rapid exit in case of an emergency shall be provided.

(xii) The entrance shall be convenient for all including the physically and visually challenged users.

(xiii) A separate door for delivery and dispatch shall be provided.

(xiv) The library shall provide spaces for the collection, display, reading, meeting, space for electronic workstations, multimedia workstations, viewing rooms and listening rooms, open use seating, user instruction rooms, staff working areas, space for special use, preservation and conservation such as bindery.

(xv) Conducive fenestration is essential to bring more natural light and users can enjoy good surrounding views.

(xvi) The building shall have controlled temperature, humidity, dust and pollution levels.

(xvii) The building shall have ventilation and controlled sources of indoor air contamination.

(xviii) The building shall be built so as to enhance the psychological and social aspects of space.

(xix) The building must place a high priority on indoor air quality, electrical safety, fall protection, ergonomics, and accident prevention.

(xx) Emphasis shall be placed upon good systems of fire detection, use of sprinkles, fire extinguishers and other ways of fire suppression.

(xxi) Visible fire and other emergency evacuation exits shall be provided with no obstruction to their access.

(xxii) Keys to the emergency exit doors shall be stored at a location which is secure but easily accessible.

(xxiii) The building design shall also involve implementing countermeasures to detect, delay, deny and deter attacks from human aggressors.

(xxiv) Library stacks and records storage area shall typically be designed to bear full stack weight at all points.

(xxv) The professional librarians shall be involved in the planning of the library building at every stage.

(xxvi) Ambient lighting, whether natural or artificial, sufficient for shelving, circulation, reading and workrooms shall be provided.
(xxvii) The building shall be provided with secure windows, the effective areas of which shall not be less than 20 per cent of the floor area of the room and 75 per cent of the windows should be openable to external air.

(xxviii) Carrels and tables shall be sized to accommodate users with laptops.

(xxix) Each study space shall occupy between 2.5 and 4 square metres.

( xxx) Each stack area for books shall be at least 10.75 square metres.

( xxxi) Stack area for bound journals and reference books shall be 10.75 square metres for 1000 volumes.

( xxxii) Display area for current journals shall be 9 square metres for 100 titles.

( xxxiii) Aisles between fixed ranges of book stacks shall be 42-inch (1653) in order to accommodate wheelchairs and permit them to turn.

( xxxiv) Library staff and service areas shall constitute 18 to 25 per cent of the combined user space and stack area.

( xxxv) Service areas such as toilets and corridors shall constitute 18 per cent of the usable space.

( xxxvi) From the functional point of view, the minimum ceiling heights should be uniform at minimum of 3.5 metres.

( xxxvii) The library building shall be regularly maintained.

( xxxviii) The building shall incorporate ICT needs as an integral part of the design concept including trunking and cabling and wireless connectivity.

( xxxix) The library building shall conform to the requirements for building in Group IB of the sixth Schedule of the Building Code of Kenya.

10. **Staffing**

(1) **Standards**

The library shall have appropriate qualified and adequate staff. The size shall be determined by, inter alia, the academic programmes offered, the institutional enrolment, the number of service points, and the hours during which service is offered.
(2) **Guidelines**

(a) The recommended titles for Librarians shall be as follows: University Librarian, Deputy University Librarian, Senior Librarian and Librarian.

(b) The librarians shall have appropriate educational background in Library and information science, and also in other relevant disciplines, with a minimum of a master’s degree in Library and Information Science.

(c) The composition of the library staff shall be: Librarians shall constitute 35 per cent and Para-professional, technical and clerical staff shall constitute, 65 per cent of all staff.

(d) The librarians shall be on the same terms and conditions of service as other academic staff.

(e) All Librarians, Para-professional and other library staff shall be trained so as to be able to use ICT products and services available in the library.

(f) Library staff shall have access to different forms of ongoing/continuing education with a view to exposing them to new developments in all areas of information work.

(g) Librarians shall be subjected to regular and rigorous review of performance in their professional duties by a committee of peers.

(h) Librarians shall be eligible for membership in the faculty senate or equivalent governing body. They shall have the same degree of representation as other academic units on all university governing bodies.

(i) Librarians shall be funded to do research and for professional development.

11. **Administrative Structure**

(1) **Standards**

The Library administrative structure shall aim at ensuring and encouraging effective optimization of available library resources. The Library shall be fully integrated into the institutional organizational structure.
Guidelines

(a) The place of the Library in the University shall be clearly stipulated in the Proposal, Act or Charter of accreditation issued to the institution.

(b) The Library shall be a fully fledged academic organ within the University structure and shall be formally represented in the Senate and all Committees not only by the University Librarian but also by representatives of other professional Librarians.

(c) The University Librarian shall be designated in the Proposal, Act/Charter as head of library, as an academic unit, one of the Chief Officers of the university and an academic member of staff.

(d) The University Librarian shall report to the Vice Chancellor of the institution or equivalent.

(e) The University shall establish a standing library advisory committee, which shall be responsible to the Senate for considering all aspects of Library policy, its development and integration in the University’s academic programmes.

(f) A clear library internal administrative structure shall be established with well-designated job responsibilities at the various levels.

12. Library budget

(1) Standards
At least ten percent (10%) of the total institutional operational budget shall be provided annually for acquisition of information resources excluding personal emoluments and capital development.

(2) Guidelines.
The library budget shall:

(a) be adequate to support the ongoing and appropriate needs of the library
(b) take into account the institutions curriculum
(c) consider the instructional methods of the institution, especially as they relate to independent study.
(d) ensure that it maintains appropriate levels of collection
development especially in the fields pertinent to the
curriculum.
(e) support appropriate levels of staffing and staff
compensation.
(f) take into account the current and anticipated size of the
student population and classroom faculty.
(g) consider the adequacy and funding for other library
resources such as Archives and special Collections.
(h) take into account the need to acquire, process/services
and provide access to the media and computer resources.
(i) include adequate support for extended campus
programmes.

It shall be the responsibility of the University Librarian to:
(i) prepare, justify and administer a library budget that is
appropriate to the objectives of the library.
(ii) have the authority to apportion funds and initiate
expenditure within the library budget in accordance with
the laid down institutional guidelines.
(iii) ensure that the resources available are utilized efficiently
and effectively.
(iv) monitor the library’s encumbrances and the payments of
its invoices.

**Part IV: Information Literacy and Competency**

**13. Information Literacy and Competency**

(1) **Standards**
The library shall facilitate academic success, as well
as encourage lifelong learning by combining new
techniques and technologies with the best traditional sources.

(2) **Guidelines**
(a) Librarians shall assist primary users and others, in
information retrieval methods, evaluation and
documentation.
(b) The Librarians, in partnership with the faculty, shall
provide information and instruction to all users through a
well-structured information literacy competency
programme.
(c) Planning for the Information Literacy Programme shall be
conducted by Librarians and Faculty at the programme,
Curriculum and institutional levels.
(d) Staffing levels and needs shall be clearly defined by the University librarian.
(e) Budget information for the programme shall be done by the University librarian.
(f) The Information Literacy programme shall include a mission statement which:

(i) Clearly lists the purpose for its establishment, existence and core business.
(ii) Clearly lists priority audience and partners for information literacy programme
(iii) Is consistent with the University and Library missions and with national standards.
(iv) Is regularly reviewed and revised as needed.

(g) The programme shall maintain an updated list of goals and objectives with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each major goal.

**Part V: Distance Learning Library Services.**

14. **Distance learning library services**

(1) **Standards**

The University shall provide adequate resources to support distance learning library services.

The University Librarian shall develop written statements of the vision, mission, goals and objectives for distant learning library services which addresses the needs and outlines the methods by which progress shall be measured in line with those of the University.

(2) **Guidelines**

The University librarian shall:

(a) involve distance learning community representatives, including administrators, faculty, and students, in the formulation of the goals and objectives and the regular evaluation of the achievement;
(b) prepare a written profile of the distance learning community’s information and literacy skills and information needs;
(c) assess and articulate, on an ongoing basis, both the electronic and traditional library resources needs of the distance learning community, the services provided to them
including instruction, and the facilities utilized;
(d) assess the existing library support for distance learning, its availability, appropriateness, and effectiveness, using qualitative, quantitative and outcomes measurement devices, as well as the written profile of needs;
(e) prepare and/or revise collection development and acquisitions policies to reflect the profile of needs;
(f) promote library support services to the distance learning community;
(g) survey regularly distance learning library uses to monitor and assess both the appropriateness of their use of services resources and the degree to which needs are being met and the skills acquired;
(h) initiate dialogue leading to cooperative agreements and possible resource sharing and/or compensation for unaffiliated libraries;
(i) develop methodologies for the provision of library materials and services from the library and/or from branch campus libraries or learning centres to the distance learning community;
(j) develop partnerships with computing services department to provide the necessary automation support for the distance learning community; and
(k) pursue, implement, and maintain all the proceeds in the provision of a facilitating environment in support of teaching and learning, and in the acquisition of life long learning skills.

15. Finance

(1) Standards
The originating institution shall provide the financial support to addressing the library needs of the distance learning community.

(2) Guidelines
The financing shall be:
(a) related to the formally defined needs and demands of the distance learning program;
(b) allocated on a schedule matching the originating institution’s budgeting cycle;
(c) designated and specifically identified within the originating institution’s budget and statement of expenditure.
(d) accommodated in arrangements involving external agencies, including both unaffiliated and affiliated, but independently supported, libraries;
(e) sufficient to cover the type and number of services provided to the distance learning community; and
(f) sufficient to support innovative approaches to meeting needs.

16. Personnel

(1) Standards
The originating institution shall provide, either through the main library or directly to separately administered distance learning library service, professional, Para professional and technical personnel. Their responsibilities shall be clearly defined. They shall be adequate in numbers and quality necessary to attain the goals and objectives for library services to the distance learning program.

(2) Guidelines
The originating institution shall:
(a) plan, implement, coordinate, and evaluate library resources and services addressing the information and skills needs of the distance learning community;
(b) provide additional professional and/or support personnel on site with the capacity and training to identify informational and skills needs of distance learning library users and respond to them directly;
(c) provide classification, status, and salary scales for distance learning library personnel that are equivalent to those provided for other comparable library employees;
(d) provide opportunities for continuing growth and development for distance learning library personnel, including continuing professional education, and participation in professional organizations.

17. Facilities

(1) Standards
The originating institution shall provide facilities, equipment, and communication links, sufficient in size, number, scope, accessibility, and timeliness to reach all students and to attain the objectives of the distance learning programs.

(2) Guidelines
Arrangements to provide facilities, equipment and communication links shall be appropriate to programs offered. Examples of suitable arrangements include but are not limited to access to facilities through agreements with a non affiliated library;
(a) designated space for consultations, ready reference collections, reserve collections, electronic transmission of information, computerized data base searching and interlibrary loan services, and offices for the distance learning library personnel;
(b) a branch or satellite library; and
(c) virtual services, such as Web pages, Internet searching, and using technology for electronic connectivity.

18. Resources

(1) Standards
The University shall be responsible for providing or securing convenient, direct, physical and electronic access to library resources for distance learning programs, equivalent to those provided in traditional settings and in sufficient quality, depth, number, scope, currency, and formats.

(2) Guideline
When more than one institution is involved in the provision of a distance learning program, each shall be responsible for the provision of library resources to students in its own courses; unless an equitable agreement for otherwise providing these resources have been made. Costs, services, and methods for the provision of the resources for all courses in the program shall be borne uniformly.

19. Services

(1) Standards
The library services offered to the distance learning community shall be designed to effectively meet a wide range of information, bibliographic, and user needs.

(2) Guidelines
The library services offered shall include the following:

(a) reference assistance;
(b) computer-based bibliographic and informational services;
(c) reliable, rapid, secure access to institutional and other networks, including the Internet;
(d) consultation services;
(e) a program of library user instruction designed to instill independent and effective information literacy skills while specifically meeting the learner-support needs of the distance learning community;
(f) assistance with and instruction in the use of non-print media and equipment;
(g) reciprocal or contractual borrowing, or interlibrary loan services using broadest application of fair use of copyrighted materials;
(h) access to reserve materials in accordance with copyright fair use policies;
(i) adequate service hours for optimum access by users; and
(j) promotion of library services to the distance learning community, including documented and updated policies, regulations and procedures for systematic development, and management of information resources.

Part VI: Documentation

20. Documentation

To provide records indicating the degree to which the originating institution is meeting these “Guidelines” in providing library services to its distance learning programs, the library, and, when appropriate, the distance learning library units, shall have available current copies of at least the following documents;

(1) printed user guides;
(2) statements of mission and purpose, policies, regulations, and procedures;
(3) statistics on library use;
(4) statistics on collections;
(5) facilities assessment measures;
(6) collections assessment measures;
(7) needs and outcomes assessment measures;
(8) data on staff and work assignments;
(9) institutional and internal organization charts;
(10) comprehensive budget(s);
(11) evidence of professional qualifications and experience;
(12) position descriptions for all personnel;
(13) formal, written agreements;
(14) automation statistics;
(15) guides to computing services;
(16) library evaluation studies or documents;
(17) library and other instructional materials and schedules; and
(18) evidence of involvement in curriculum development and planning.
(19) titles of research and publications by library staff.
(20) list of conferences, seminars, and short courses attended by staff.