



# MMUST NEWS

A Digital Publication of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

## Post

Vol. 4. Issue 8: 29<sup>th</sup> July – 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2020

## MMUST COMPLIANCE TO HEALTH MINISTRY'S COVID-19 GUIDELINES



## INSIDE;

- ❑ Academic Registrar's address on online exams, attachments and collection of certificates
- ❑ Signing of Memoranda of Understanding
- ❑ Annual Biophysical Society-Kenya Chapter Conference



## Editor's Pen

**Dear MMUST Community,**

We appreciate you for your continued support towards our publication.

On this issue, we cover MMUST's inspection by the Education Cabinet Secretary, Prof. George Magoha, in preparedness for post Covid reopening.

As institutions of higher learning are resorting to online methods of teaching and administering exams, the Ag. Registrar Academic Affairs, Prof. Thomas Sakwa addresses the growing concern over this subject as well as students' attachments and collection of certificates.

We have highlighted various collaborations between MMUST and other organizations.

Finally, we bring you the yearly Biophysical Society-Kenya Chapter Conference, hosted by MMUST through Zoom.

Enjoy the read.



**Nashilluh Brendah Kabindio**  
**Ag. Public Relations Officer/  
Editor-in-Chief**



**Awuor Sandra Dorcas**  
**Writer, Creative Design and  
Layout**



**Wambugu Mary Wangari**  
**Writer, Creative Design and  
Layout**



**Induli Albert**  
**Writer**



**Shiundu Wilberforce**  
**Photographer**

# EDUCATION CS PROF. GEORGE MAGOHA LAUDS MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PREPAREDNESS FOR POST COVID REOPENING

By Dr. Lydia Anyonje and Linet Owuor [[lanyonje@mmust.ac.ke](mailto:lanyonje@mmust.ac.ke)]  
[lowuor@mmust.ac.ke](mailto:lowuor@mmust.ac.ke)]

The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Prof. George Magoha, on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020, commended Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) on its preparedness for post Covid reopening during an inspection



*Prof. Magoha inspects the University's Multi-Purpose Hall together with other MMUST top officials.*

tour of the institution. “I have been part of this University from its conception and I can attest to the great work that has been done. I am therefore happy to say that this institution is ready to open” said Prof. Magoha.

Prof. Magoha began his inspection by visiting the Multi-Purpose Hall (MPH) which hosts a large number of students during lectures. He expressed his satisfaction with what the University has put in place to ensure adherence with the Ministry of Health guidelines to combat the spread of the lethal virus, COVID-19.

He further cautioned the University Management to stop petty politics and focus on building the University to greater heights. Prof. Magoha also urged the students to be cooperative with the management to enable continuity of learning through online platforms. He advised the University to avail special exams to those students who will be unable to access the online learning and examinations. “This is one of the top universities in Kenya, an excellent institution that I am determined to nurture”, he asserted.

Speaking during the event, MMUST Council Chairperson Dr. Jane Mutua pledged her support of the institution, adding that the Ag. VC Prof. Solomon Shibairo is doing a very good job in managing the University. “Let us all work together and build this great University”, she said. Addressing members of the media after the ministerial inspection, Ag. Vice Chancellor stated that despite the challenges of COVID-19, MMUST is ready and willing to do all that it takes in order to ensure that the students who are due for graduation this year can graduate.

**“I have been part of this University from its conception and I can attest to the great work that has been done. I am therefore happy to say that this institution is ready to open”**

However, the Cabinet Secretary highlighted a few areas that the University requires to improve to ensure full compliance with the Ministry of Health guidelines.

He advised that more hand washing points be installed at various sections of the university with the observation of one metre social distance. The renowned professor also directed that the staff working in sensitive areas like the kitchen be provided with proper attire and surgical masks to curb any infections from their places of work.



***Prof. Magoha inspects the Main Catering Unit.***

Prof. Magoha was accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Education. The University managers present during the inspection included Council member Mr... Joshua Odhiambo, Ag. Deputy Vice Chancellor Planning Research and Innovation- Prof. Judith Achoka, Ag. Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration and Finance- Prof. Charles Mutai, Ag. Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and Student Affairs- Prof. Peter Odera, Registrar Academics Prof. Thomas Sakwa and Registrar Administration Ms. Racheal Atamba. Other notable leaders included MMUST COVID-19 Committee Chairman RTD. COL Prof. John Okoth and Former Deputy Vice Chancellor Planning, Research and Innovation Prof. John O. Shiundu. The event was also attended by MMUST Union officials- Prof. Samuel Kubasu (UASU), Prof. Stanley Omuterema (UASU), and Mr... Robinson Oduma (UASU), Mr.. Ronald Wamalwa (KUSU), Onzere Mulongo (KUSU) as well as Deans, Directors, Chairmen of Departments and student leaders.

## ACADEMIC REGISTRAR'S ADDRESS ON ONLINE EXAMS, ATTACHMENTS AND COLLECTION OF CERTIFICATES

**Those who will not be able to sit for the online examinations due to various reasons, will do them as special examinations. Learning for Academic Year 2020/2021 shall commence on 10th September 2020.**

**By Awuor Sandra Dorcas**  
[[sdorcas@mmust.ac.ke](mailto:sdorcas@mmust.ac.ke)]

In a series of radio programs tackling different aspects of COVID-19, Prof. Thomas Sakwa, in his capacity as the Acting Registrar in charge of Academic Affairs at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), addressed growing concern over the issue of online exams, students' attachments and collection of certificates on 12th August, 2020 at the University's radio station, 103.9 MMUST FM.

Prof. Sakwa said that the University had to resort to online methods of teaching and administering exams due to the COVID-19 situation in the country. He added that the final year students were urged to apply for online exams scheduled for 24th August to 4th September 2020, which mark the end of the 2nd Semester for 2019/2020 Academic Year.

"We don't want the final year students to wait a whole year just to do exams," said the Prof. Sakwa.

Students called in during the live program, raising concerns over allegations of certifications offered after online graduations being nullified. Prof. Sakwa disclaimed the allegations saying that as long as students meet Senate and School Board of Examiners requirements, the certificates will be recognized by the Commission for University Education (CUE).

Prof. Sakwa also addressed the contentious issue of missing marks, stating that the online method of administering examinations provided a seamless platform for the Office in charge of Academic Affairs to monitor the marking progress of the online examinations. On the issue of students protesting online examinations due to reasons such as lack of mobile devices, bundles and fees, Prof. Sakwa said that he understands the students' predicaments but the zero-balance policy must still be adhered to despite the current situation in the country. He added that the University provides students with bundles to facilitate online learning and examinations and procedures are in place to ensure that more students get access to them.

"Those who will not be able to sit for the online examinations due to various reasons, will do them as special examinations. However, learning for Academic Year 2020/2021 shall commence on 10th September 2020," said Prof. Sakwa.

# ONLINE EXAMS



**Prof. Thomas Sakwa (Acting Registrar Academic Affairs, MMUST)**

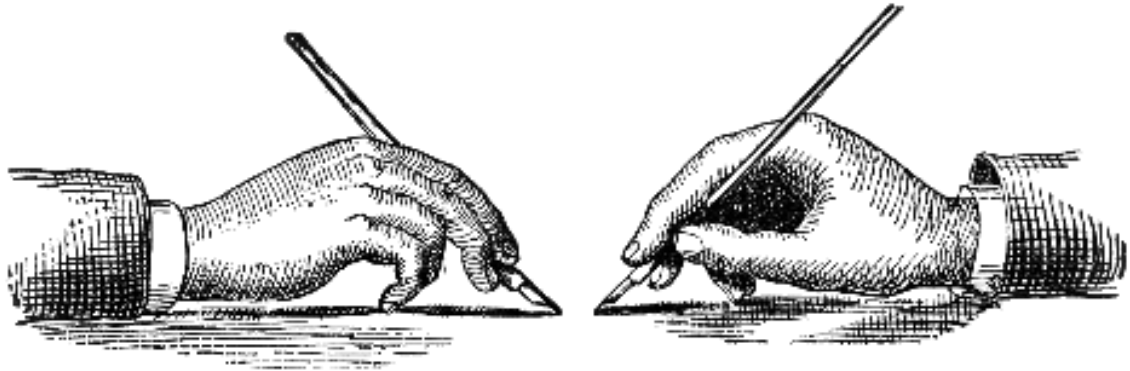
He further said that the Senate suspended attachments until the COVID-19 curve flattens, however, it will require concerted efforts of the Deans and the Office of the Registrar in charge of Academic Affairs to come up with a solution that is in the best interest of the students.

“We are benchmarking with other universities in regard to offering practical examinations to students. However, through the Deans of Schools at MMUST, we will come up with schedules of small number of students who will be allowed to access the University while still observing social distancing,” said Prof Sakwa as he addressed the issue of practical examinations for technical courses like Engineering and Medicine.

Prof. Sakwa said that the 2019 Cohort will receive scanned copies of their certificates through email after providing scanned clearance forms, gown -return form and a copy of National Identification. He said that this is the only way to ensure safety of students, staff and the community while at the same time abating risk of COVID-19 contraction through unnecessary crowding of students when they come to physically collect their certificates.

In his ending remarks, Prof. Sakwa alluded to working closely with newly appointed Acting DVC (Academic and Student Affairs) at the institution, Prof. Peter Odera. He said that the Academic and Student Affairs division is working tirelessly to ensure that students get the help needed.

## MMUST SIGNS MOUS DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH



**By Wambugu Mary Wangari**  
[\[mwangari@mmust.ac.ke\]](mailto:mwangari@mmust.ac.ke)

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, led by the acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Solomon Shibairo, signed two (2) Memoranda of Understanding with Cross County Chamber of Commerce (CCCC), and Vyxer Research Management and Information Technology (REMIT) Consultancy Limited.

The CCCC MoU focused on strengthening public-private partnerships for purposes of community economic development. According to the Chairman of CCCC, MMUST, as an educational and research institution, has a responsibility to improve the state of the community.

“We want to see if we can solve some of the problems in Western Kenya and beyond,” said one of the members.

Here is the scope of the MoU:

- ✓ To cooperate in the field of community engagement including work integrated learning
- ✓ To create a variety of platforms for innovative staff and students exchange
- ✓ To undertake collaborative research and innovative activities and share the results
- ✓ To jointly organize meetings, workshops and conferences on subjects of mutual interest
- ✓ To cooperate in the area of capacity building
- ✓ To develop joint industrial linkages

The second one was with Vyxer REMIT, an organization founded in the year 2015 whose main focus is to transform lives by bringing technology, research and top

## COLLABORATIONS

quality leadership to one circle.

“We offer support to researchers and institutions that are doing research,” stated Ms. Caroline Nekesa, one of the founders, adding that most of their clients are international universities.

The following are the areas of collaboration:

1. Capacity building
2. Scientific research collaboration

### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

**Vyxaer REMIT Kenya agrees to:**

- ✓ Bring on board an average of 5-7 students for internship every year depending on availability of on-going projects: location of internship shall depend on the location of ongoing projects and the period for internship shall not exceed 3 months
- ✓ Interns shall be paid a monthly allowance of Kshs. 7,000
- ✓ Sponsor one Masters student in Research Methods yearly: the sponsorship shall be based on performance under the guidance of the departmental head
- ✓ The maximum amount of scholarship shall be Kshs. 200,000 over a period of 2 years
- ✓ The scholarship is intended to cover for tuition fees levied by MMUST only and shall be directly paid to the University. Scholarship funds may **not** be used for personal expenses, travel, equipment, or any other incidental costs
- ✓ Hire high performing interns or Masters students after graduation. This will solely depend on merit and availability of job opportunities

**MMUST agrees to:**

- ✓ Announce the program to the students in the selected program at the beginning of the semester
- ✓ Inform Vyxaer REMIT Kenya of the results of the top students in a transparent way
- ✓ Provide facilities for research
- ✓ Provide subject matter experts in specific projects

### **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

MMUST shall serve as a local affiliate institution for Vyxaer REMIT Kenya’s research projects.





**MMUST Biophysics Kenya chapter President, Mr. Philip Amuyunzu, facilitating at a past Biophysics event.**

## **MMUST EXHIBITS LEADERSHIP AND EXPERTISE AS THE HOST OF THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL BIOPHYSICAL SOCIETY-KENYA CHAPTER CONFERENCE**

**By Dr. Lydia Anyonje and Linet Owuor**  
[\[lanyonje@mmust.ac.ke\]](mailto:lanyonje@mmust.ac.ke)  
[\[lowuor@mmust.ac.ke\]](mailto:lowuor@mmust.ac.ke)

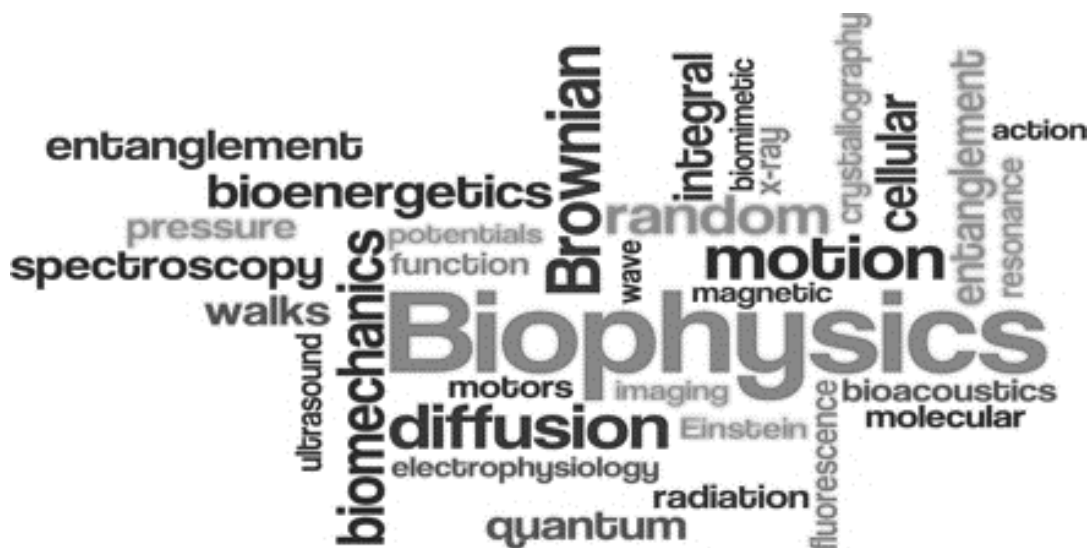
Once again, MMUST has shown leadership and expertise in matters of science and technology. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2020 hosted the yearly Biophysical Society-Kenya Chapter conference through zoom. The conference was spearheaded by MMUST's Mr. Philip Amuyunzu who is the President of Biophysical Society (Kenya Chapter). Biophysics is an interdisciplinary science that applies the theories traditionally used in physics to study biological phenomena. The conference, which was organized using a Special Grant, attracted scholars in the Chemistry, Biology and Physics fields from various institutions in Kenya.

Speaking during the conference, the Executive Dean of the School of

Natural Sciences (SONAS) Prof. William Shivoga expressed his gratitude to the Biophysical Society of Kenya for granting MMUST the opportunity to host this year's conference. He urged the members to put more effort in strengthening Biophysics not only in Kenya but Africa at large. During one of the sessions, Mr. Amuyunzu noted that the virtual conference has greatly benefitted the researchers and young scholars at MMUST. "This has ensured exposure of our staff to establishment of linkages, career opportunities, travel grants for networking events, joint effort in lobbying for equipment essential in the research of Biophysics and has left everyone more knowledgeable and informed on matters of Biophysics," said Mr. Amuyunzu.

The Annual Biophysical conference exhibited several paper presentations from different scholars. Mr. Tavasi Ndombi, a Bio-informatics Masters student at MMUST presented his well-researched paper alongside Mr. Amuyunzu who also presented his research work on ‘Protection index elicited by 35 to 60Khz of droughted sound of *Odorana tormota* in Malaria vector.’ Presenters from other institutions included Dr. Onesmus Maweu from South Eastern University Kenya (SEKU) and Prof. Harrison Tsingalia from Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST).

The institutions represented in the well attended conference included MMUST, Egerton University, Maasai Mara University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University (JOOUST), South Eastern University Kenya (SEKU), Kabianga University, Chuka University and Moi University. Other scholars present during the conference included the patron of the Biophysical Society Prof. Rotich from Moi University, deputy president of Biophysical Society Dr. Kamweru from Chuka University, Dr. Jackline Makatiani-Moi University, MMUST’s Physics Chairman of Department, Dr. Bonface Ndinya, Dr. Victor Odari, Dr. Humphrey Agevi, Dr. Benard Omogo, Dr. Ombiro-Maasai Mara and Ms. Caitlin Simpson from Biophysical Society of Kenya among others.





# MMUST NEWS

A Digital Publication of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

*Post*

**A Publication of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology**

**P.O.Box 190-50100**

**Kakamega, Kenya**

**Tel No: +254 702597360/1,**

**+254 733120020/2**

**Email: [pr@mmust.ac.ke](mailto:pr@mmust.ac.ke)**