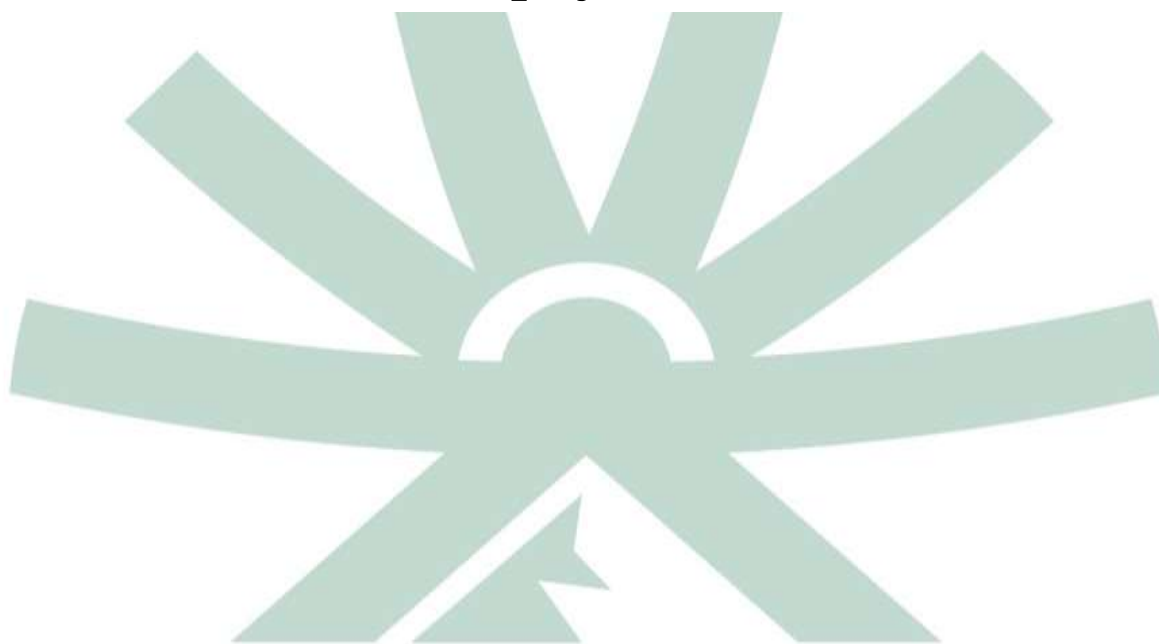




AHSU Philosophy and Core Values



Policy Code: AHSU/001/2024

Version: 1.0

Draft Date: 1 June 2024

Review Date: 1 June 2027 (or earlier if required)

Policy Owner: Dean's office

Responsible Offices: Dean's Office and PGME Office

Applies To: All AHSU staff & students (undergraduates and postgraduates)

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1. Purpose

This document outlines how Africa Health Sciences University (AHSU) embeds its institutional philosophy and core values into:

- Orientation activities
- Teaching and learning processes
- Faculties and residents' development

The aim is to ensure that AHSU graduates and educators demonstrate professional competence, ethical conduct, and social accountability in line with the Rwanda Higher Education Council (HEC) and the East African Community (EAC) regulatory and quality assurance frameworks.

This document also serves as a reference for accreditation processes, institutional self-evaluation, and continuous quality improvement initiatives. It provides practical guidance for translating institutional philosophy into daily academic and clinical practice.

2. AHSU Philosophy

AHSU is founded on the philosophy of redefining healthcare education in Africa and beyond through preparing compassionate, skilled, and forward-thinking healthcare professionals.

This philosophy emphasizes:

- Compassionate service to communities, particularly underserved populations
- Combined excellence in education, service, and research
- Professional identity formation alongside technical expertise
- Regional and global standards adapted to the local context

AHSU recognizes the importance of health systems strengthening, ethical leadership, and sustainability in healthcare delivery. The philosophy promotes transformative education that equips graduates to respond effectively to emerging health challenges, technological advancements, and evolving patient needs.

3. AHSU CORE VALUES

The following core values guide all academic and professional activities at AHSU:

- Excellence: Strive for high standards in education, research, and care.
- Integrity: Act ethically, honestly, and professionally.
- Compassion: Show empathy and kindness.
- Collaboration: Work together and communicate openly.
- Lifelong Learning: Continuously grow and update knowledge.
- Patient-Centered Care: Prioritize patients' needs and well-being.
- Cultural Competence: Respect diversity and cultural differences.
- Innovation: Apply creativity and new approaches.
- Service: Engage with and support the community.
- Evidence-Based Practice: Base decisions on current research.
- Resilience: Adapt and cope with challenges effectively.

These core values are integrated into institutional policies, codes of conduct, curriculum design, performance evaluations, and community engagement initiatives. They serve as benchmarks for professional behavior and academic excellence across all programs.

4. Embedding values in orientation programs

4.1. Faculty orientation

During onboarding, faculty members are introduced to:

- AHSU's mission, philosophy, and values
- National and regional regulatory expectations (HEC and EAC)
- Roles as educators, researchers, mentors, role models, and assessors

Orientation activities explicitly link:

- Teaching responsibilities in professionalism and ethics
- Supervision roles for patient safety and learner welfare
- Academic freedom to accountability and quality assurance

Faculty orientation includes structured sessions on curriculum governance, assessment integrity, safeguarding policies, research ethics approval processes, and institutional quality assurance mechanisms. Faculty are oriented to student support services, reporting channels for professional concerns, and expectations regarding scholarly productivity and community engagement.

4.2. Resident orientation

Resident orientation emphasizes:

- Professional conduct and ethical clinical practice
- Respect for patients, colleagues, and communities
- Social accountability, particularly during rural and community rotations

Residents are guided on:

- Expected professional behaviors
- Institutional codes of conduct
- Learning responsibilities and patient safety culture

Residents are introduced to clinical governance principles, incident reporting systems, infection prevention standards, interdisciplinary teamwork, and respectful workplace policies. Orientation reinforces the importance of confidentiality, informed consent, documentation standards, and responsible use of digital and social media platforms in clinical settings.

5. Embedding values in teaching and learning

5.1. Curriculum delivery

Across all programs:

- Teaching integrates clinical competence with ethical reasoning
- Case discussions include professional, ethical, and system-level considerations
- Community and rural training reinforce equity and social responsibility

Faculty are expected to:

- Model professionalism in clinical and academic settings
- Encourage reflective learning and respectful dialogue
- Promote teamwork and interprofessional collaboration

Teaching strategies include problem-based learning, simulation training, structured bedside teaching, multidisciplinary case conferences, and community-based education. Ethical dilemmas, health equity issues, patient safety principles, and resource stewardship are incorporated into learning activities to ensure holistic professional development.

5.2. Learning Environment

AHSU promotes a learning environment that is:

- Respectful and inclusive
- Free from harassment and discrimination
- Supportive of learner well-being

This aligns with HEC requirements on safe and supportive learning environments.

The institution maintains clear policies on prevention of harassment, academic misconduct, and discrimination, with confidential reporting mechanisms and fair investigation procedures. Wellness initiatives, mentorship programs, and access to counseling services are available to promote psychological safety and professional growth.

6. Embedding values in assessment and feedback

Assessment and feedback processes are designed to reinforce AHSU values by:

- Evaluating not only knowledge and skills, but also professional behavior
- Providing constructive, respectful, and timely feedback
- Addressing lapses in professionalism through mentorship and remediation

Faculty are trained to ensure:

- Fairness and transparency in assessment
- Documentation of professional conduct
- Alignment with institutional and regulatory standards.

Assessment tools may include workplace-based assessments, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), multisource feedback, portfolio reviews, and reflective writing assignments. Clear criteria are used to evaluate professionalism, communication, teamwork, and ethical reasoning alongside clinical competence.

7. Embedding values in faculty and resident professional development

7.1. Faculty development

Faculty development activities include:

- Teaching ethics and professionalism
- Effective feedback and mentorship
- Leadership, governance, and academic responsibility

These activities reinforce:

- Accountability to learners and patients
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Alignment with EAC regional standards for academic staff

Additional faculty development initiatives include training in curriculum design, research supervision, grant writing, quality improvement methodologies, and use of educational technology. Participation in scholarly activities and regional academic networks is encouraged and supported by grants to foster innovation and academic excellence.

7.2. Resident development

Residents participate in:

- Professionalism and ethics workshops
- Leadership and communication training
- Reflective practice and career development sessions

This supports the formation of competent, ethical, and socially responsive specialists.

Residents are encouraged and supported to engage in research projects, quality improvement initiatives, community outreach programs, and professional societies. Structured mentorship and periodic performance reviews support career planning and the development of leadership competencies.

8. Alignment with HEC and EAC expectations

This approach fulfills key HEC and EAC requirements by:

- Demonstrating clear institutional philosophy and values
- Showing how values are operationalized in teaching and training
- Ensuring professional conduct, quality assurance, and social accountability
- Supporting regional harmonization of health professions education

It also supports accreditation standards related to governance, curriculum relevance, faculty qualifications, assessment integrity, learner welfare, and community engagement. Continuous monitoring and periodic program reviews ensure sustained compliance and quality enhancement.

9. Shared responsibility

Embedding philosophy and values is a shared responsibility:

- Leadership provides governance and oversight
- Faculty model and teach professional values
- Residents uphold ethical and professional standards
- The institution ensures systems that support quality and accountability

Administrative staff, clinical partners, and external stakeholders also contribute to maintaining standards of professionalism and service excellence. Open communication, transparency, and collaborative decision-making strengthen institutional culture and accountability.

10. Conclusion

Africa Health Sciences University embeds its philosophy and core values across orientation, teaching, assessment, and professional development to produce competent, ethical, and socially accountable health professionals. This integrated approach ensures compliance with HEC Rwanda and EAC standards while responding to Rwanda's and the region's health priorities.

Through continuous reflection, stakeholder engagement, and quality improvement, AHSU remains committed to advancing excellence in health professions education and contributing meaningfully to national and regional health system development.

11. University approval signatures

Names	Role	Signature	Date
Dr Edgar Kalimba	Dean of the School of Medicine		May 06, 2024
Dr. Kara Neil	Ag. Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic and Research Affairs		May 06, 2024
Dr. Zerihun Abebe	Ag. Vice Chancellor	 	1 June 2024