



The Student's Academic Handbook

Procedures, Rules and Regulations Governing Academic Affairs of Students

nurturing innovators

Riara 
University



Preface

This Handbook is designed to provide you with the information that you require as a Student of Riara University, in order to help you make the best out of your learning experience, and life on Campus. It gives you a lot of information about how the academic programmes are organized, and how to go about pursuing the programme of study that you have chosen. The detailed guidelines enable you to make the right decisions for any action required, and the Handbook also provides you with information on the support network you will require while at Riara University.

Take time to read and understand the information contained in this Handbook. You are also required to look out for other information that may be shared by the University regularly during your studies.

The Handbook may be revised/updated from time to time.

Nairobi, June 2022



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Abbreviations

CA	Cumulative Assessment
CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
DAB	Department Academic Board
DBE	Departmental Board of Examiners
FT	Full time
GPA	Grade Point Average
ODEL	Open Distance and e-Learning
PBLA	Project -Based Learning and Assessment
PT	Part time
RU	Riara University
SAB	School Academic Board
SBE	School Board of Examiners

Definitions

Academic Staff - Members of the teaching staff of Riara University.

Academic Year - A continuous period of teaching, examination, study, and other academic events typically consisting of two semesters/trimesters.

Course - A single unit of study in a curriculum or programme of study.

Curriculum - A document containing all the details of a specific programme of study.

Deferment - Authorised absence from studies for a specified duration of time.

Department - An academic division within a School. This normally happens when a School has many programmes but ordinarily having a Departments may not be necessary. We got Departments and Schools that are independent of each other with unique programmes headed by Head of Departments or Deans respectively.

Entry Requirements - The grades or qualifications a student must obtain in order to be accepted for admission into a particular programme of study.

Faculty - A member/members of the teaching staff.

Fail - This refers to a case where a student has not achieved the minimum pass mark for a course after completing continuous assessments and the final examination.

Incomplete - This refers to a case where a student has completed continuous assessments for a course, but not the end-of-semester examination.

Lecture hour - A period of time equivalent to one hour and representing one such continuous hour in lecture form, two in a tutorial session, three in a laboratory practical or practicum, or as may be stipulated in the curriculum.

Pass - This is when a student has successfully completed all the requirements of a course at the end of the semester.

Personal Statement - A text written by a student highlighting their skills, motivation, and ambitions in support of their application for admission to a particular programme of study.

Prerequisite - A course that one is required to successfully complete before they can be allowed to register for another course.

Programme of Study - A programme of study is the complete set of requirements that one must undertake and successfully complete to qualify for an academic award, be it a degree, diploma, certificate, or any other award.

Project - A carefully planned set of learning and assessment activities and resources involving students and faculty aimed at achieving educational objectives.

Retake - Retake means fresh registration for a course. It requires a student to undertake and complete a course afresh with all its requirements.

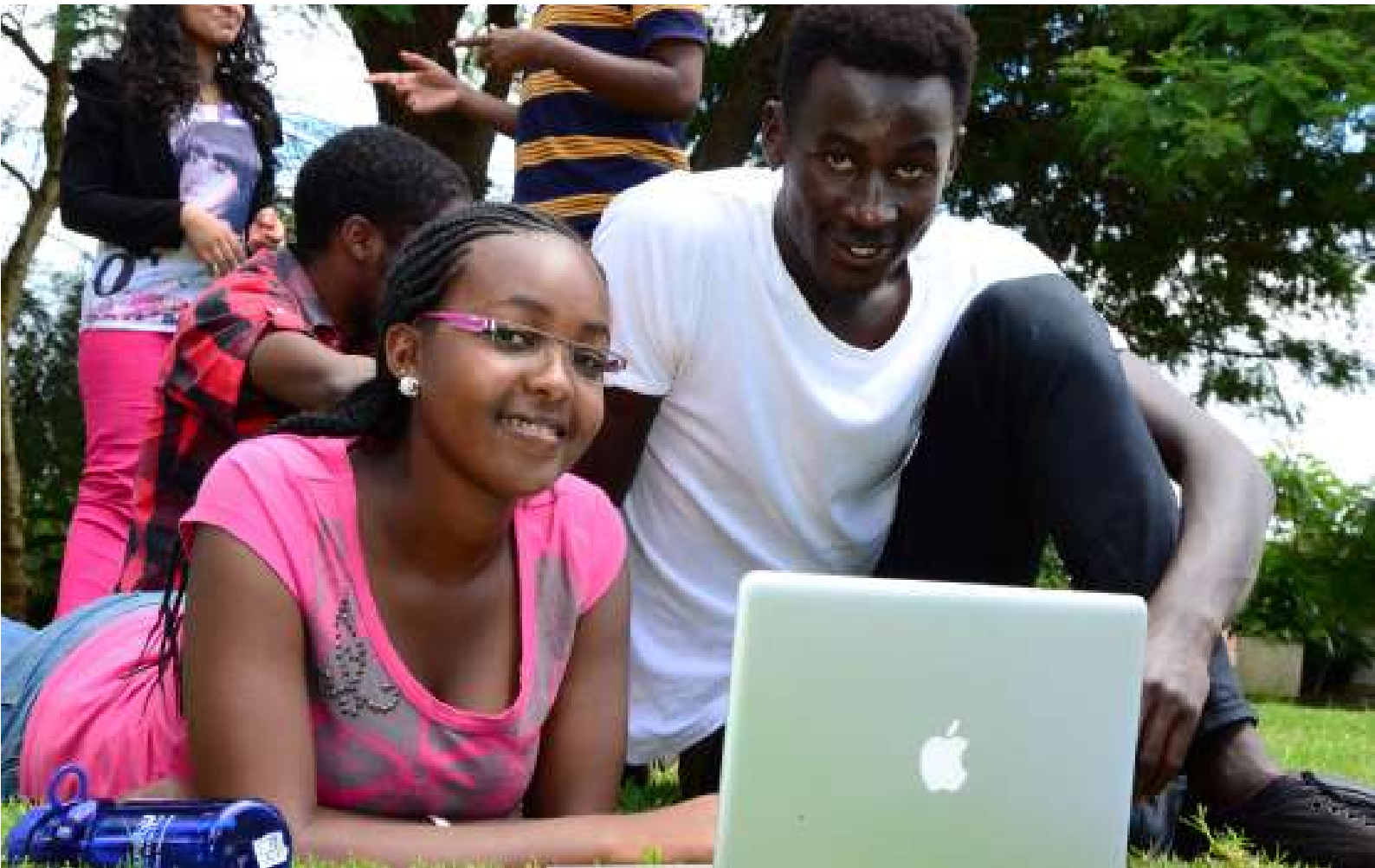
School - An Academic Division with a cluster of programmes and faculty members specialising in a particular subject area.

Semester - The minimum duration that a student is expected to register and complete their courses.

Student - A student is any person who, having met all the requirements for admission into Riara University, has been admitted and has registered for courses offered by Riara University, is paid up as invoiced and has not been discontinued or expelled from the University for any reason.

Trimester - Three main teaching periods in an academic year (See Semester)

Withdrawal - This refers to a case where a student registered for courses but decided to stop attending a course or programme.



About Riara University (RU) 1.0

Riara University is founded upon and guided by the following key statements:

1.1 Vision

To be a centre of excellence in scholarship, research, and human resource development.

1.2 Core Purpose

Empowering Lives; Impacting Communities.

1.3 Mission Statement

To provide a holistic education that enables students to develop an enquiring mind and to pursue truth as well as be socially balanced and responsible members of the society.

1.4 Value Statement

- Excellence – We have only one standard: - EXCELLENCE!
- Leading by example – We strive to lead by EXAMPLE.
- Teamwork – We cultivate the spirit of TEAMWORK.
- Integrity – We are ETHICAL and PROFESSIONAL in our CONDUCT.
- Innovation – We encourage and reward INNOVATION, especially BREAK THROUGH IDEAS.

1.5 Philosophy of the Academic Programmes

The philosophy behind the academic programmes at Riara University (RU) is the pursuit of scholarly and professional excellence. RU graduates are identified by clear personal, professional and societal qualities. They are encouraged and supported to develop distinctive personal character, marked by an inquiring mind, broadmindedness, independence of thought, ethical, moral integrity as well as a strong desire for life-long personal professional development.

They become accomplished professionals with sound people skills, hands-on competence, creative and innovative skills, possessing critical and analytical skills, and being able to display good judgment in decision making. Their education inculcates the attitude and skills necessary to resolve interdisciplinary barriers, expand intellectual horizons, and enables them to also take an integrated approach to problem-solving.

RU graduates are self-driven, entrepreneurial and capable of recognizing opportunities and exploiting them for self and community development. In a rapidly changing global environment, RU deliberately strives to impart the skills and attitudes necessary for the graduates to be cognizant and knowledgeable in global issues, trends, opportunities, and perspectives. This appreciation of cross-cultural dimensions equips them to serve effectively in local, national, regional and global environments.

As a unique dimension of this approach, education at RU involves close scholarly interactive engagement with the community to integrate community values, wisdom and solutions to societal issues. In this way, RU graduates become effective agents of transformation in the society, the nation and globally.



1.6 Broad Objectives

The main objectives of Riara University are:

i.To Create a Learning Community Committed to the Advancement of Knowledge and Quality Education

This is achieved through excellence in teaching, learning and research; providing up-to-date knowledge and appropriate skills to students as well as trendsetting in the selected professional disciplines, research and consultancy. The RU community promotes appreciation for cultural diversity in learning and working. Moreover, provides professional and educational opportunities in support of national, regional and global development goals

ii.To Develop Effective Graduates

Effective graduates are produced by: being equipped with the skills necessary for the achievement of their career goals and educational aspirations; acquiring the capacity to serve in public, private, and civil society organizations and institutions; being able to serve their communities, having the capacity to pursue advanced studies in their areas of specialization, as well as having the skills and knowledge necessary to understand and positively impact local, national, regional and global issues.

iii.To Build Sustainable Scholarly Community Engagement

The community is the genesis of and the reason for the need for the scholarly effort that goes on at Riara University. The objective of RU is to transform for the better, the lives of all members of the community at large and the social-economic welfare of the society. Meaningful, active involvement and participation with the community ensures that the beneficial outcomes of scholarly efforts of the university are sustainable and impactful in the society.

1.7 Historical Background

Riara University is a dynamic private institution of higher learning that has its roots in the strong traditions and foundations of the Riara Group of Schools. It is the culmination of the desire of the Founders, **Mr. Daniel Gachukia and Prof. Eddah Gachukia**, to provide quality education and personalized attention to all within a professional and caring environment. The Founders have been involved in education for most of their lives, having trained as educators at Makerere University in the 1950s. They established the Riara institutions under the conviction that education should equip learners with the skills of self-confidence, analysis, creativity, innovativeness, an enquiring mind and a value system geared towards service to, and transformation of, the society; and a concern for its vulnerable members. In their early careers, they both taught in public schools, more specifically at Kagumo and Thika High Schools, before venturing into other sectors of private and public service, and eventually founding the Riara Group of Schools.

The Schools have their roots in the Riara Kindergarten, started in 1974 along Riara Road, Kilimani, and Nairobi. The Founders were driven by the passion to develop the school into a Centre of Excellence and hence in 1984, they started the Riara Primary School with only three children. Within a short period, and due to public demand, the Primary School experienced exponential growth and is today one of the best private primary schools in the country, having produced the best candidate nationally in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations of 2018.



In the year 2000, they founded a model Girls High School to meet the need for girls' education in the country and to mould them into future leaders with strong character and morals.

Riara University is therefore the culmination of this rich heritage of quality, holistic education of the Riara brand. The University seeks to nurture and promote the same leadership qualities, character formation, and servitude in its students and graduates.

Education at Riara flows like the perennial Riara River which is forever challenging, forever nourishing, forever fulfilling. Each level of growth of the Riara experience then becomes a fountain springing from fertile ground, showering all those it reaches, who in turn impact others with enthusiasm, courage and God-given brilliance that has continually been embodied by the ever-flowing Riara River.

1.8 Why RU?

The education concept at Riara is one that goes beyond the conventional classroom and syllabus-based learning. The Guiding Mantra of the Founders of the Riara Group of Schools is:

“Quality Education is the Solid Bedrock for National Development”

Our vision is to be a Centre of Excellence in Scholarship, Research and Human Resource Development, with a core purpose of Empowering Lives; Impact Communities.

Riara University prides itself in being a dynamic community of scholarship in which learners and trainees experience holistic and transformative education for careers and for life. Learners are exposed to the best learning experiences and practices to equip them with the 21st Century Skills and Competencies that prepare them for the global competitive world.



Riara University is accredited by the Commission for University Education and the Council of Legal Education in Kenya. It is also accredited by the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA), KASNEB, Huawei, ICDL, SAP, Cisco, among others. The University is also accredited by the Teachers Service Commission (one of only 4 institutions in Kenya) to offer the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programme to all registered teachers in Kenya.

Some of the reasons why RU stands out among its peers in terms of preparing future-ready graduates include:

1. Small Classes that mean students interact one-on-one with facilitators
2. Homely Community with great camaraderie and comradeship, making RU a true home away from home.
3. Modern teaching methods such as Project Based Learning & Assessment (PBLA) and Socratic Method that emphasise Active Learning rather than simply taking notes passively.
4. Meticulous selection of faculty members and staff to ensure only the best are picked.
5. Rigorous Quality Assurance evaluations by Students & External Examiners.
6. School & Class Representatives in all classes, who provide feedback on areas needing attention.
7. Corporate World Skills training for all students in 3rd year, preparing them for the world of work.
8. Very high Employability Rates of over 93%, meaning that 93% of RU graduates are able to secure productive engagements within one year of graduation. Of these, 50% do this before graduation, and 83% within 6 months of graduation.

9. Stakeholder Advisory Boards that advise the University regularly on modern trends in the world of employment and innovation.
10. Countless opportunities for volunteership and community service for all students, thereby differentiating them in the world of work.
11. Assistance with securing attachments for a significant number of students.
12. An Honour Code that we all live by.
13. Excellent partnerships with employers, government, international bodies, Embassies, global universities, among others.
14. A very vibrant student community with plenty of student activities such as Clubs, Sports, Culture Weeks, Health & Wellness activities, Entrepreneurship Weeks, among others.
15. Opportunities to participate in countless local and international activities including student exchange programmes, competitions, hackathons, and mentorship programmes, among others.

Riara University is all about Nurturing Innovators. At Riara, students are not merely taught. They are also mentored, inspired, enriched, and nurtured. Students' best experience is our jubilation. Join us for Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Postgraduate, Executive, and Professional Development Courses.



2.0 How the University is Organised

2.1 Decision Making Organs of the University

Universities in Kenya are regulated by the Universities Act (No. 42 of 2012). Whereas there are other Acts of Parliament which implicate the Universities in one way or another, the Universities Act is the supreme law with regard to University education in Kenya.

In line with the Universities Act, each University sets up its own independent decision making organs. Riara University operates under the following decision making organs in relation to student matters. Other organs also exist for other purposes.

2.1.1 University Council

Membership: The Council is comprised of external distinguished experts from diverse backgrounds and fields.

General Mandate: Approval of academic programmes, policies, budgets, fees, and strategies of the University, among others.

2.1.2 University Senate

Membership: Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, Heads of Departments, Professors, and other senior officers of the University.

General Mandate: All academic matters relating to students. It is the final authority on a majority of matters affecting the students and its decisions are often **final**.

2.1.3 Management Board

Membership: Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, Heads of Sections.

General Mandate: All administrative matters of the University such as planning, budgeting, facilities maintenance, utilities, among others.

2.1.4 School Board

Membership: Often referred to as the School Academic Board (SAE), it is comprised of the Dean and teaching staff of a particular School.

General Mandate: All academic matters relating to students in a particular School such as course registration, timetabling, class attendance, examinations, student progression, as well as monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the School. Some of its decisions are final while some have to be ratified by the University Senate.

2.1.5 Students Disciplinary Committee

Membership: Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, Heads of Departments, Professors, and other senior officers of the University.

General Mandate: Handling all cases of malpractice in the University – see the section on Students Discipline.

2.1.6 External Examiners

Membership: External examiners are distinguished scholars or professionals in a particular area of study. All Schools have external examiners for their programmes.

General Mandate: They provide external reviews of the quality of the programmes, course outlines, teaching, examinations, among others for quality assurance and continuous improvement.

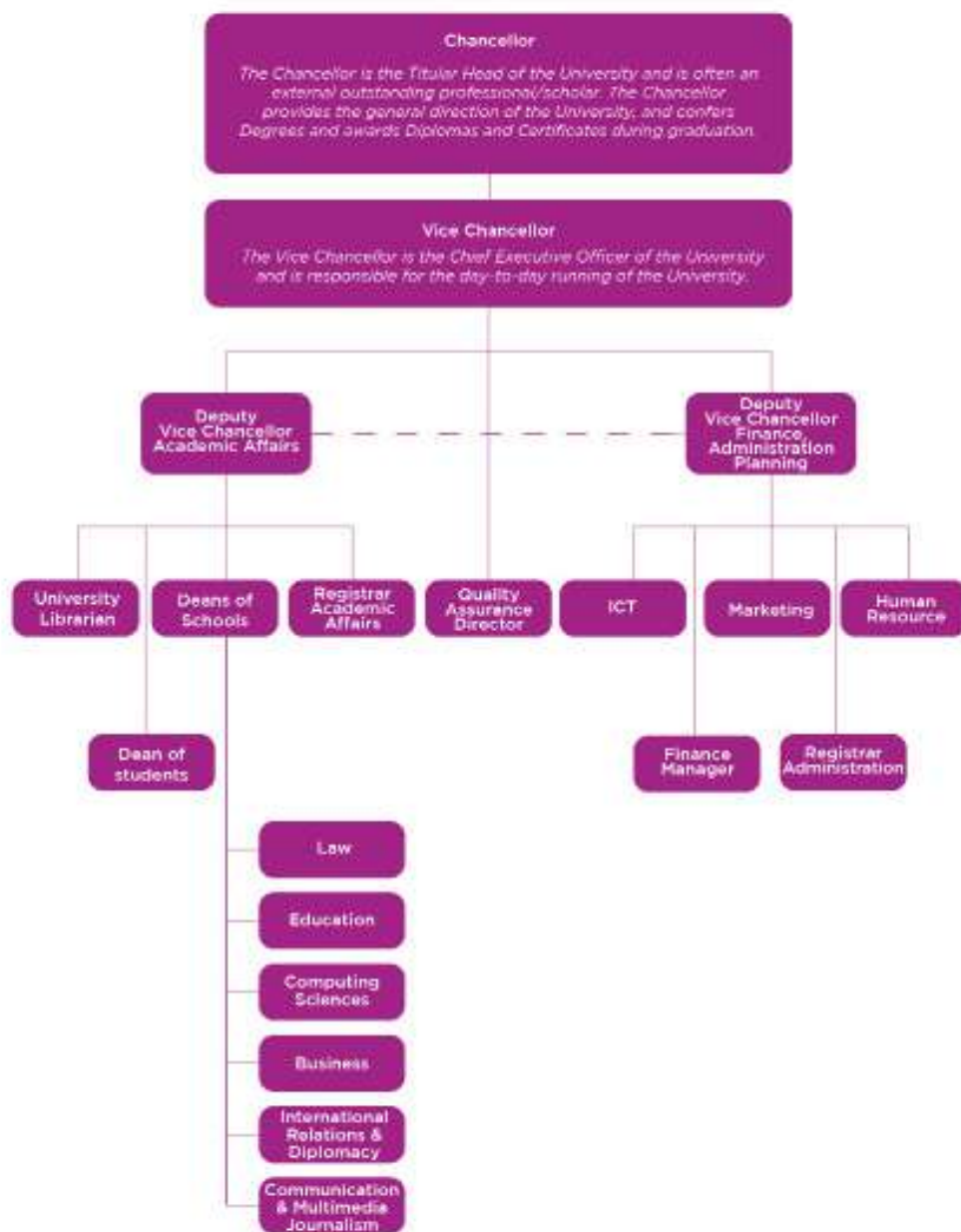
2.1.7 Students Council

Membership: Student leaders elected by fellow students in line with the Universities Act (or subsequent Acts/revisions).

General Mandate: Serves as a bridge between the students and the University Senate by capturing student issues, proposing solutions and following up with the Chair of Senate, or other staff for resolution of the issues. They also articulate University strategies to students and help to enhance the learning and campus experiences of students.

2.2 The Administrative Structure of the University

The University is organised in terms of Schools/Departments according to the programmes on offer. Similar programmes are housed in one School/Department, while other non-academic Departments also provide support to students and staff. The following is the general Administrative structure of Riara University. The structure may change from time to time as need arises.



See below for descriptions of other staff that are ready to help you during your time at Riara University.

2.3 Persons Ready to Help You

Issues affecting students can be handled or addressed through the following persons:

2.3.1 Class Representative

This is a student nominated by other students to be the representative of that class. Each class is entitled to have a class representative.

2.3.2 School/Department Representative

This is a student elected by other students in a School/Department to represent the affairs of the students in that School/Department.

2.3.3 Students Finance Officer

Assists students with matters related to fee payments, fee statements, among other financial issues.

2.3.4 Dean of Students

Assists with matters related to the social life of a student such as clubs, sports, hostels, activities involving diverse students, among others.

2.3.5 Dean of School / Head of Department

Assists with all matters related to the academic life of a student such as course registration, class attendance, results of continuous assessment tests, academic progression, lecturers/course instructors, activities involving students from that particular School/Department, among others. This should be the first point of contact for students on all academic matters.

2.3.6 Registrar - Academics

Assists with processes related to the records or standing of a student in the University such as timetabling, examination records after release by Senate, deferments, withdrawals, add/drop of units, among others. Students are encouraged to visit the Registry Section of the University website for more information.

2.3.7 Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic Affairs

Assists with matters related to academics where the officers listed above have been unable to resolve.

2.3.8 Deputy Vice Chancellor - Finance and Administration

Assists with matters related to fees, and other financial matters where the officers listed above have been unable to resolve.

2.3.9 The Vice Chancellor

The Vice Chancellor is the last resort in terms of escalation of student issues and students are required to exhaust the channels above before reaching out to the Vice Chancellor for assistance. However, the Vice Chancellor welcomes comments, suggestions, feedback, or external opportunities from any student at any time, whether anonymous or not, where such feedback is geared towards quality improvement in the University, or enhancement of student life/campus experiences.



3.0 How to Join a Programme in RU

3.1 Admissions Cycle

Students will be admitted to RU any time of the year, but they will generally report to the University at the beginning of each Semester. Some programmes may admit students at different times or less frequently.

3.2 Admission Requirements

3.2.1 General Minimum Entry Requirements

- i. Mean grade of **C+** (plus) in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) or equivalent qualifications.
- ii. The **Senate** shall determine the equivalence between qualifications.
- iii. Students may also be required to obtain an equivalence of their qualifications from appropriate Government/Examination Agencies.

3.2.2. School or Departmental Requirements

In addition to the minimum entry requirements, there may be other programme-specific requirements with regard to the mean grade, subject clusters, individual subject grades, entry exams, motivation statements, or other requirements as may be approved by the Senate from time to time.

3.3 Admission Procedure

3.3.1 Application Forms

- i. All applicants must complete an application form and submit it to the Admissions Office.
- ii. The application should be accompanied by all supporting documents.
- iii. A non-refundable application fee is charged.

- iv. The application forms can be obtained from the Admissions Office or downloaded online from www.riarauniversity.ac.ke.
- v. One can also apply directly through the University website.

3.3.2 Admitted Student

- i. An **Admitted Student** is one who has met all the requirements for admission into a particular programme and has been issued with a formal Letter of Offer for admission.
- ii. After admission, a student is expected to register for specific units offered in a particular semester.

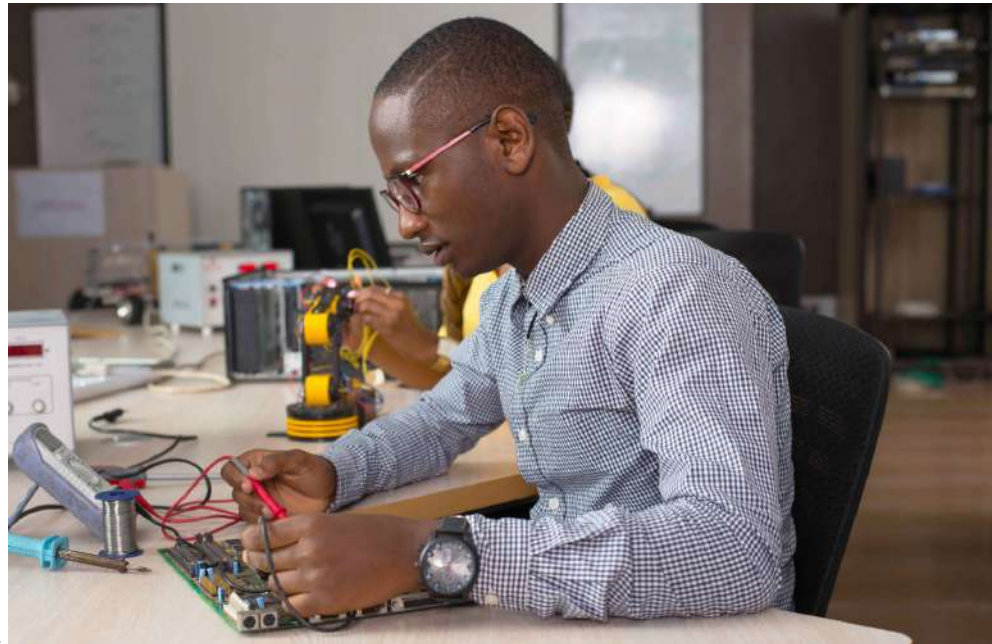
3.3.3 Registered Student

- i. A **Registered Student** is one who is admitted into a programme, assigned a registration number and paid the requisite fees.
- ii. Registration is done at the beginning of each semester.
- iii. Newly admitted candidates are required to have the official Letter of Offer, together with the originals and copies of the documents stated in the Letter of Offer.
- iv. A student who may not have obtained the legal age for obtaining a Government-issued Identity (ID) Card is required to present a Passport, and/or a Birth Certificate, plus a certified copy of the Government-issued photo Identity Card / Passport of the parent/guardian.
- v. The **names** of a student will appear in all official University records, including in the final certificate and transcripts, in the same manner and order that they appear in the official qualification document used for the granting of admission of the student into the University.
- vi. If a student wishes to change names in the course of their stay in the University, the same must be done in accordance with existing legal procedures, and official documentation submitted to the Registrar - Academics.
- vii. No changes in names, including the order, may be made after a student graduates from the University.

3.4 Credit Transfers and Exemptions

3.4.1 Credit Transfers

- i. Credit transfers apply to students who have completed course units in other institutions which are similar to the ones offered in the programme of interest.
- ii. Students already admitted to RU can also apply for credit transfers when moving to a different programme within RU.
- iii. Students from other institutions may, on qualifying for admission, apply to join RU programmes as transfer students.
- iv. In the same manner, students wishing to undertake a higher level programme or wishing to obtain another qualification at RU may be eligible for relevant credit transfers/exemptions, subject to statutory provisions.
- v. Credit transfers reduce the number of credits required for a particular programme, but are not used in the calculation of the final CGPA.
- vi. Specific fees may be charged for credit transfers.



3.4.2 Course Exemptions

- i. Course Exemptions are offered where content from a previous course is similar to the content of a required course but not sufficient for a full credit transfer.
- ii. Exemptions do not reduce the number of credit units required to be taken for the programme of interest.
- iii. There are no grades or credit points awarded for exempted courses.
- iv. A student given an exemption may be given a substitute course/unit to take in the place of the prescribed unit.
- v. Specific fees may be charged for exemptions.

3.4.3 General Conditions for Credit Transfers/Exemptions

Credit transfers/exemptions are subject to the following general conditions:

- i. Application for Credit Transfers and Exemptions shall be made during admission into the programme by filling in a Credit Transfer/Exemption Form for approval.
- ii. Only courses/units completed from accredited institutions shall be considered for credit transfers/exemptions.
- iii. All applications for credit transfers/exemptions shall be accompanied by the relevant supporting documents, including but not limited to Official Transcripts from the institution the course being considered for acceptance was obtained from.
- iv. Copies of the Official Transcripts must be certified as true copies of the original transcripts by either the university issuing them, or an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya.
- v. The Senate will from time to time set the minimum pass-grade for courses to be transferred/exempted.
- vi. An applicant may be granted up to a maximum of 49% of the programme credits or as per the prevailing statutory provisions.
- vii. Individual programmes may have specific additional conditions on credit transfers/exemptions.

- viii. Where an application for credit transfer/exemption is requested on grounds of a disciplinary process at another institution, the request shall be rejected.
- ix. An applicant shall receive official communication from the Registrar - Academics, in writing, confirming the credits transferred/exempted.
- x. The **Senate** reserves the right to determine the number and type of credits to be transferred/exempted for each student, and to approve or decline the same.

The decision of the Senate is final.



How Studies are Organised 4.0

4.1 Academic Calendar and Academic Year

- (a) An **Academic Calendar** is the schedule of academic events that take place within a **calendar year**.
- (b) The Academic Calendar consists of **two semesters or trimesters**. The duration of a semester/trimester varies per programme.
- (c) An Academic **Year** is the period where one completes a level of study.
- (d) The **Year of Study** for a student is the **Level of Study** attained in a given Programme. The level of study is determined by the cumulative number of credit hours successfully completed. This is determined by the sum of credit hours transferred from other institutions, where applicable, and the number of credit hours successfully completed at RU, irrespective of the calendar duration of the student at the University.

The Year of Study of a student is normally determined as follows. This may, however, vary slightly from programme to programme:

Year of Study	Credits earned at RU + Credits Transferred
First Year (Level I)	0 – 36 (Equivalent to 2 semesters of study)
Second Year Level II)	37 – 72 (Equivalent to 4 semesters of study)
Third Year (Level III)	73 – 108 (Equivalent to 6 semesters of study)
Fourth Year (Level IV)	109 and over (Equivalent to 8 semesters of study)

- (e) In general, **two semesters** completed by a student taking a full load is equivalent to **ONE Academic Year**. It is thus possible for students who were admitted at the same time in the calendar year to be in different years of study, depending on the credits transferred and the course load taken in each semester. Fig.1 defines these concepts:

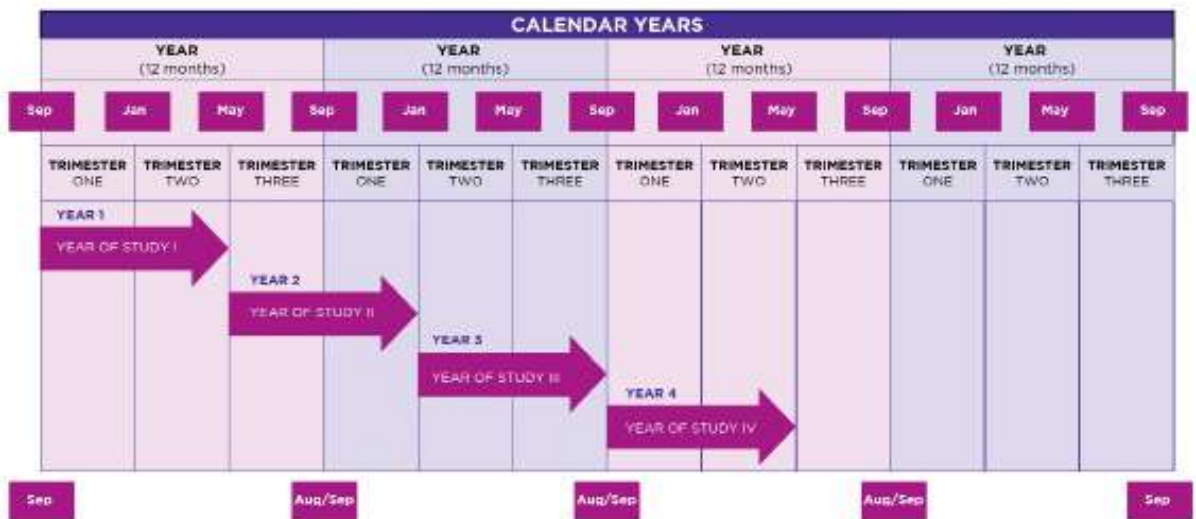


Fig.1. Organization of the Academic Year

- NB: 1. Calendar Year = Financial Year = 12 Months
 2. Year of Study = Students' Level of Progression in Programme
 (= Courses/Credit hours completed)

4.2 Credit Hours

- (a) RU employs a **Credit Hour System** in determining the minimum duration of study of a programme, in line with guidelines from the Commission for University Education.

- (b) Each course is awarded credit hours defined as follows:
 - i. **One Credit Hour** is equivalent to 15 contact hours per week.
 - ii. **One Contact Hour** is equivalent to 60 minutes of physical/live teaching/examination time per week. For example, a typical class that requires 3 hours of teaching a week for 15 weeks in a semester has 45 Contact Hours, which when divided by 15 (see item i. above) gives 3 Credit Hours.
 - iii. One Contact Hour is equated differently for other forms of learning including practicals, projects/dissertations, laboratory/studio time, independent study time, among others.
 - iv. The curriculum for each programme stipulates the equivalences applicable for students taking that programme.
- (c) A student completes his/her programme after successfully completing the total number of Credit Hours required for the programme.

4.3 Modes of Study

- (a) Students may study under various modes of study including but not limited to: full-time; part-time; Online, Distance, and e-learning (ODEL); Blended; and Modular.

A student's mode of study shall be declared and approved at the time of admission.

- (b) Subsequent changes in the mode of study are permitted, but are subject to approval by the University based on diverse factors including but not limited to: reasons for the change; performance of the student within the current mode of study; fair assessment of the student's ability to cope in the desired mode of study, among others.
- (c) The following is a brief description of the various modes of study available. These are subject to change based on statutory or institutional definitions. It is also worth noting that it is possible to have overlaps between the various modes:



i. Full-time

This is where a student takes a full course load (typically 6-7 units) each semester and attends each class/lesson physically on campus every day of the week, or whichever day the lesson is scheduled. A full-time student can also undertake parts of their courses through e-learning/blended/modular modes.

ii. Part-time

This is where a student takes a reduced course load (typically 3-5 units) each semester and attends each class/lesson physically on campus every day of the week, or whichever day the lesson is scheduled. In this case, the student takes longer to complete the Program of Study than a full-time student. A part-time student can also undertake part(s) of their courses through online/e-learning/blended/modular modes.

iii. Online

This is where a student takes all their studies entirely online, through the Learning Management System of the University, or through other RU-prescribed internet-based systems.

iv. Blended

Blended learning occurs when a student undertakes their studies through both face-to-face and online modes.

v. Modular

Modular studies occur when a student undertakes most or all their studies in blocks (of content and/or time), which do not follow the regular semester durations.

vi. Open and Distance

This is a mode of study aimed at providing access to students/learners who are not able to attend classes in the above modes, or who wish to undertake general knowledge courses that may or may not lead to academic credits.

vii. e-Learning

e-Learning refers to technology-enhanced learning that may be available to students in all the modes above. e-Learning in its simplest form means that a student is undertaking parts of, or the entirety of their courses, through some form of a technology system, especially a Learning Management System (LMS).

4.4 ICT Systems of the University

The University employs diverse Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Systems and Tools geared towards enhancing the learning experience of a student, among other functions. Some of the ICT Systems include:

4.4.1 Students Portal

This is the portal where students select and register for courses, pay fees, view their examination grades and academic progress, among others.

4.4.2 Learning Management System (Online Campus)

This is the system used to host all learning activities from course materials, videos, live online classes, among others. It also allows students to interact with instructors online, discuss with other students, review content at one's own pace, among others.

4.4.3 Riaru University Mobile App

Riaru University has, and will continue to develop appropriate Mobile Apps to bring services closer to stakeholders, more so to students. These enable students to access RU services and content from the convenience of their mobile devices.

4.4.3 Other Tools

Besides the two main systems above, the University uses diverse range of other systems, tools, and devices. Some of these include:

- RU Email addresses
- Google Apps for Education
- Computers and Laptops
- Software in Laboratories and Studio
- Online Examination Proctoring Software
- Biometric Systems
- Other Systems and Apps prescribed from time to time

4.4.4 General Requirements on ICT Systems/Readiness

To make the most out of the ICT Systems, Apps, Tools and Devices, students are required to:

- i. Invest in their own Laptop and Smartphone.
- ii. Use the official Riaru University Email Address at all times, including for accessing RU ICT systems and communications.
- iii. Always create own Passwords to devices and systems.

- iv. Read and understand the **COMPUTER MISUSE AND CYBERCRIMES ACT (No. 5 of 2018)**, an Act of Parliament guiding the use of ICT Systems.
- v. Ensure to use/download only the official/prescribed RU ICT Systems and not parody/fake ones.

4.5 Academic Programme / Programme of Study

- i. An **Academic Programme / Programme of Study** refers to a complete body of prescribed courses and other activities that a student must complete in order to qualify for an academic award at the appropriate levels, which may be at Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, or other recognised level.
- ii. Academic programmes at Riaru University are carefully designed, developed and administered to meet the needs of the 21st Century Learner, Employers and Society.
- iii. The programmes are developed through a rigorous process which incorporates diverse stakeholders including but not limited to internal staff, experts from the industry/employers, experts from professional bodies, members of the community, alumni, and students, among others.
- iv. Once developed, the programmes are approved first by the Departmental Academic Board (DAB), School Academic Board (SAB), Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) then by the University Senate, followed by the University Council, and finally by the Commission for University Education.
- v. The courses and all other requirements of a programme are stipulated in the Curriculum of the programme, and each student is entitled to access to the Curriculum.
- vi. The courses/units are normally offered on a semester-by-semester sequence and are arranged methodically to ensure that higher-level courses are taken when prerequisite courses are completed in lower levels, among other considerations.
- vii. It is therefore important for a student to regularly refer to the Curriculum and to observe the ordering of courses in the programme to ensure that all courses are completed within the level of study prescribed.

4.6 Number of Courses in a Programme

- (i) The number of courses/credit hours required for completion of a programme is specified in the approved Curriculum of each programme.
- (ii) Each student is expected to obtain from their respective School/Department, the schedule of courses they are required to complete in the programme at any time.
- (iii) Whereas the University issues result slips/transcripts at the end of each examination cycle, it is the responsibility of each student to monitor their progress in completing and passing all required courses.

4.7 Types of Courses in a Programme

Academic programmes at Riaru University comprise courses categorised as University Foundational Courses, Programme Core Courses or Elective Courses. Students are also allowed to take Audited Courses with approval from the School/Department and the Registrar's office. These categories of courses are defined broadly below. However, it is important to note that this may vary from programme to programme and a student is expected to liaise closely with the School/Department for specific advice.

4.7.1 University Foundational Courses

- i. The University foundational courses are a set of courses undertaken by students across ALL Programmes of Study to develop unique skills and attributes expected of all Riaru University graduates.
- ii. These courses transcend all the programmes to ensure that a graduate of RU is defined by unique competencies that employers and the society demand.
- iii. The courses develop some of the most critical soft-skills required of a 21st Century graduate and further serve to broaden the perspectives of the student regarding the fundamental and transformative nature and value of university education.
- iv. Every programme prescribes a set of these interdisciplinary Foundational courses as stipulated in the approved curricula or as approved by the University Senate from time to time and students are required to complete them as prescribed.

4.7.2 Programme Core Courses

- i. This refers to a set of discipline-specific courses that all students undertaking a particular Programme of Study must complete in that subject area.
- ii. These courses form the core of the body-of-learning expected of a student in order to master the subject area that is the focus of the programme.
- iii. The courses give the students the core technical/discipline-specific skills and competencies required of a graduate of that programme.

4.7.3 Elective Courses

- i. These are supplemental courses provided in a programme for a student to choose from in order to fulfil the requirements of the programme.
- ii. Often, these are courses provided in programmes with different areas of specialisation in order to allow students to select courses aligned to their areas of interest.
- iii. Elective courses may be compulsory or optional and they may be offered from one's programme of study or in other programmes offered in the University.
- iv. The School/Department provides all information required regarding the electives.

4.7.4 Audited Courses

- i. To provide further education and learning opportunities to students, Riara University allows students to take courses outside those prescribed in one's Programme of Study.
- ii. These types of courses are called **Audited courses** and are optional for students who wish to take extra courses out of their own interest.
- iii. Audited courses can be taken from courses that are not mandatory within one's programme, or from other programmes offered at the University.

- iv. For the **Audit** option, the student registers for and takes the required coursework but they are not required to take or pass the final examination. However, one is free to do so.
- v. Audited courses are included in the computation of a student's Semester Course Load to ensure that one does not overload themselves while taking an Audited course.
- vi. Audited courses appear in the transcript of a student but are not used in the computation of the student's GPA.

4.8 Changing an Academic Programme

- (a) Newly admitted students** are allowed to **change their academic programmes** within the first two weeks of the semester by completing a prescribed application form obtainable from the Admissions Office.
- (b) For continuing students,** a transfer from one programme to another is allowed at any time. However, one is required to:
 - i. Apply to and obtain approval from the Registrar's Office using a prescribed application form obtainable from the Registrar's Office or the University website.
 - ii. Give valid reasons to warrant approval of the change of programme.
 - iii. Successfully complete the semester in which they are already registered in if the application is made in the course of a semester.
 - iv. Pay a non-refundable application fee.

Further, the student is required to note that:

- v. A change of academic programme is discouraged (though not prohibited) after the First Year of study.
- vi. Upon approval of a change of programme, one is not entitled to any fee refunds for courses already undertaken.
- vii. The conditions on Credit Transfers may apply when one is registering for the new programme of study.
- viii. The University has a right to reject an application for a change of programme and to give reasons for the rejection to the student.

4.9 Special Programme Requirements

(a) Practicals

Some academic programmes have practicals incorporated in the course work and all such requirements have to be met for completion of the programme. Online and distance learning students who register for practical-based courses are not exempted from undertaking practicals and are expected to comply with guidelines from the School/Department on how the practicals are to be undertaken.

(b) Projects / Seminars

Riara University values and espouses research as a core competence for all students. In this regard, students may be required to carry out class projects, research projects, investigative studies, or seminars in a special area of interest, either as part of regular courses, or as a course by itself. The credit hour weighting of research projects and seminars varies from programme to programme.

(c) Practicum / Attachment / Clinicals

Practicums, attachments, externships, and clinicals involve professional practical work experience in an organization, private business, industry or a public agency, where students get to put into practice in real life what they have learnt in respective courses. These are assessed by the student, the University supervisor, and the supervisor at the place where the student was placed.

(d) Community Service

Community Service is a mandatory course/activity for all students at Riara University. It helps students connect their learning with real- life situations in the community, and to serve/impact the lives of other members of the society. Additionally, Community Service develops vital soft skills for employment, self-enterprise, innovation of solutions, and for personal life.

(e) Non-Academic Seminars and Workshops

Students are encouraged to attend seminars, make presentations, attend professional meetings/conferences and carry out other scholarly activities in and out of the university.

4.10 Duration of Study

- a. Duration of study** in a programme is the total academic time, evaluated in terms of credit hours, or calendar years, required to complete the requirements of the programme. The duration of study varies from programme to programme.
- b. The following is a summary of the typical durations of study for the various levels of programmes:
 - i. A **Diploma Programme** is expected to take a minimum of two (2) academic years (or 4 semesters) for a Full Time student. This may vary depending on the mode of study.
 - ii. A **Bachelor's programme** is expected to take a minimum of four (4) academic years (or 8 semesters) for a Full Time student. This may vary depending on the mode of study.
 - iii. A **Master's programme** is expected to take a minimum of two (2) academic years (or 4 semesters) for a Full Time student. This may vary depending on the mode of study.
 - iv. A **Doctorate programme** is expected to take a minimum of three (3) academic years (or 6 semesters) for a Full Time student. This may vary depending on the mode of study.

4.11 Failure to Complete a Programme

- a. Registered students are expected to complete their programmes within the stipulated durations of study.
- b. A student who is unable to complete their programme within the stipulated time or within a specific semester due to valid reasons is required to request for authorisation to defer their studies.
- c. A student who fails to defer their studies and fails to register for the expected units is considered to have abandoned their studies and may be required to reapply for admission.

- d. The maximum allowable duration for completion of studies shall not be more than double the minimum duration prescribed for a full time student in the programme.
- e. A student who fails to complete their programme within the prescribed maximum duration will be eligible for discontinuation from the University and shall not be eligible for refund of any unutilised fees paid.

4.12 Academic Advisory

- i. Students have the right to request for an **academic advisor** to guide them on diverse matters regarding their studies.
- ii. Academic advisors are experienced instructors well versed in general matters of university education and have the necessary professional skills to guide a student in their academic journey.
- iii. In some cases, a student may be asked to undertake career readiness tests/assessments to match their skills, programme of study, or desired career.
- iv. A student may also be referred to certified career coaches, professional mentors, or counsellors.
- v. Students are required to maintain regular contact with their advisors/coaches who may subsequently update the School/Department on a students' performance.
- vi. Specific details regarding a student's professional counselling journey are retained as confidential between a counsellor and the student, and are not to be disclosed.
- vii. A counsellor may however give general updates about a student's response to counselling to a Dean of School, the Vice Chancellor, or another senior staff, if such information may be required in determining a student's academic standing/progress.



5.0 What is Required of a Student Each Semester

5.1 Registering for a Semester

- a) Students are required to register for their respective semester course loads before the start of each semester.
- b) Pre-registration is carried out before the end of the preceding semester and before the start of the semester that the courses are to be taken.
- c) To register, a student is required to log in to the Students Portal and select the courses to register from the list of courses on offer.
- d) Failure to register within this period is considered to be an indication that a student will be away for that semester.
- e) A student who is not registered in the manner described above shall not gain or claim academic credit for that course, irrespective of any academic work done.
- f) The University reserves the right to call off a course if it lacks quorum and students affected will be provided alternative courses that they can register for.
- g) A student wishing to be away for a semester is required to formalize it by submitting an application for deferment to the Registrar - Academics (see the section on Deferments).
- h) Students on practicum/attachment/community service/clinicals, research projects, or such other courses that do not require weekly class attendance are required to register for such courses at the end of the previous semester, and certainly before commencing work on the course.
- i) A student taking practicum/internship/field attachment/community service out of the country or in areas without reliable means of access may be required to pay an extra fee for the course.
- j) A student wishing to add/drop a course can do so within the first two (2) weeks of the semester by completing an Add/Drop Request Form available on the University website.



- k) No registration for courses will take place more than two weeks from after the commencement of the semester.

5.2 How Many Courses Should One Take in a Semester?

- a) The number of courses that one is expected to take in a semester is called the Semester Course Load.
- b) A full-time student is expected to take a Semester Course Load of six (6) courses per semester as a minimum, and seven (7) courses as a maximum unless with approval from HoD/Dean.
- c) The Semester Course Load may vary from programme to programme.
- d) The minimum Semester Course Load for part-time students is normally communicated by each School.
- e) Courses that are not normally taught in the regular manner also form part of a semester's course load when they are due. These may include but are not limited to **research projects, seminars, community service, practicum / attachment, clinicals**, among others.

5.3 Class Attendance

- a) Attending lectures, practicals and other scheduled classes is mandatory for all students.
- b) The Registrar - Academics issues official Class Lists to respective teaching staff as well as the Schools/Departments by the 2nd week of the semester.
- c) Only students who have registered for a course are authorized to attend the classes and assessments/examinations for that course.
- d) It is the duty of the student to make arrangements to attend all classes and other required sessions as scheduled, whether they are physical, online, or self-paced.
- e) A student who fails to attend classes for a consecutive or cumulative period of **three weeks** (or **25% of teaching time**) in a semester is not allowed to take examinations in that course.
- f) Absence for periods totaling more than three weeks in a semester is

- considered as absence for the whole semester.
- g) A class attendance register is kept for all classes for purposes of determining satisfactory attendance. For online classes, tracking of attendance is done using the Online Learning Management System of the University, or any other prescribed technology systems.
 - h) Where a student has valid reasons for failure to attend classes, the same should be communicated in writing to the Course Instructor and to the School/Department through the School Administrator.
 - i) Continued unauthorized absence from classes or other scheduled academic activities may result in disciplinary sanctions against a student, including but not limited to discontinuation, or notification of the sponsor/guardian.
 - j) Requests to be absent from studies for a semester should be forwarded through the School for approval by the Registrar - Academics in line with the guidelines in the Deferment section. This applies to all modes of study.

5.4 Course Outlines

- a) Each student is entitled to receive a **Course Outline** for each course registered for from course instructor/facilitator, or from the School/Department.
- b) The Course Outline stipulates the purpose and expected learning outcomes of the course, what is to be covered, the activities of the course, the resources/tools required, how the course will be assessed, course reading materials, among others.
- c) The student is expected to study the Course Outline in detail and adhere to it.

5.5 Continuous Assessments and Examinations

- a) Besides class attendance, students are required to undertake and successfully complete all continuous assessments, examinations, and all other course requirements.

- b) See section on Examinations for further details regarding these.

5.6 Payment of Fees

- a) The University charges competitive fees for each programme in an effort to make higher education affordable and accessible.
- b) Fees are normally classified into two broad categories: tuition fees and administrative fees.
- c) **Tuition fees** are fees paid towards the direct costs of teaching of a particular programme each semester and are determined on the basis of the requirements of the programme and mode of study.
- d) **Administrative fees** are fees paid to cater for other support services applicable to a student which may include infrastructure development, library, ICT resources, laboratory/studio access, and medical insurance, among others. Some of these are payable per semester while others are at different intervals as per the fee structure.
- e) Each student is entitled to an invoice, a receipt, a fee structure, and a fee statement.
- f) Students are required to pay full fees before they can be allowed to complete the semester.
- g) The University Council reserves the right to review both tuition and administrative fees as and when it deems necessary.

5.7 Course Evaluation

- a) Course evaluation is the process by which students (and other stakeholders) may be asked to evaluate courses that they are taking (mid-semester course evaluation) or courses that they have just completed (end of semester course evaluation).
- b) Course evaluations assess diverse aspects of the teaching and learning process including the effectiveness of the course, the instructor, the learning tools and resources provided, among others.
- c) Course evaluations are analyzed at the Departmental/Senate level for the purpose of improving the course and its teaching.

- d) Students are required to participate fully in the course evaluations and to ensure to give accurate, honest, and objective feedback.
- e) The above notwithstanding, students are free to provide feedback about a course at any time through feedback@riarauniversity.ac.ke.

Other Options Available for a Student in a Semester

5.8 Deferment of Studies

- a) Deferment refers to authorised absence from studies, where a student takes a break for a specified period and for valid reasons.
- b) A student who wishes to defer their studies is required to submit an application for deferment to the Registrar - Academics.
- c) The application for deferment must be in the prescribed format and within the stipulated timelines.
- d) The deadline for deferment of studies is normally within the first two (2) weeks of each semester and the Registrar - Academics may publish any variations to such deadlines from time to time.
- e) A student who defers their studies within the stipulated timeline will have any fees already paid retained for use when they resume their studies.
- f) A student who defers their studies outside the prescribed deadline will not be eligible for any refunds or for retention of any fees paid for that semester.
- g) The deferment period should not exceed two consecutive academic years.
- h) In case of extended deferment, readmission shall be at the full discretion of the University.

5.9 Withdrawal from a Course/Programme

- a) Whereas a student is expected to undertake and complete their studies uninterrupted, there could be reasons for a student to withdraw from a unit/programme.

- b) A student who wishes to withdraw from a course or a programme shall submit an application for withdrawal to the Registrar - Academics.
- c) The application for withdrawal must be in the prescribed format and within the stipulated timelines.
- d) The deadline for withdrawal from a specific unit(s) that a student has registered for is normally within the first three (3) weeks of each semester and the Registrar - Academics may publish any variations to such deadlines from time to time.
- e) A student who withdraws from a specific unit(s) within the stipulated timeline will have any fees already paid retained for use when they register for the unit(s) at a later date.
- f) A student who withdraws from a specific unit(s) outside the prescribed deadline will not be eligible for any refunds or for retention of any fees paid for that semester.
- g) In case of extended withdrawal from units, the University may prescribe deadlines for re-registration into the specific or other units.
- h) Withdrawal from an entire programme can happen at any time. However, the regulations regarding the deadlines will apply.

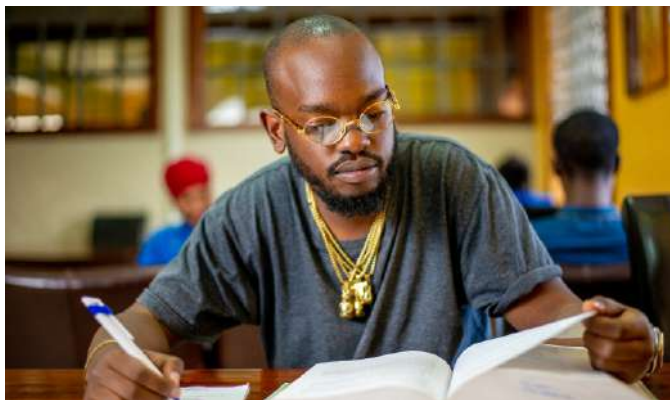


6.0 Examinations

6.1 Grading System

- a) RU uses the Grade Point Average (GPA) system. GPA is mainly in three forms i.e. **Course Grade Points**, **Semester GPA**, and **Cumulative GPA**.
- b) A **Course Grade Point** is a number between 0 and 4 (inclusive) that is a measure of the performance of a student in that course, based on the marks achieved, and the letter grade assigned to the performance.
- c) The letter grades with their corresponding range of marks and Grade Point values are as shown below:

Range of marks	Letter Grade	Grade Points
80 - 100%	A	4.00
76 - 79%	A-	3.70
70 - 75%	B+	3.33
66 - 69%	B	3.00
60 - 65%	B-	2.70
56 - 59%	C+	2.33
50 - 55%	C	2.00
46 - 49%	C-	1.70
40 - 45%	D	1.33
0 - 39%	F	0.00



- d) The **semester GPA** on the other hand is a measure of the performance of a student within a single semester and is computed as follows: First, multiply the credit hours of each course taken during the semester by the corresponding grade points of the letter grade obtained in that course. Second, sum up all these two products. This sum is called the Semester Points. Third, sum up the credit hours of all the courses taken during the semester. This sum is called Semester Credit Hours. Then, finally, divide the semester points by the semester credit hours. The resulting number is the semester GPA of the student for that semester and it also ranges from 0 to 4 (inclusive).
- e) The **Cumulative GPA** is a measure of the performance of a student for a number of semesters and it is also a number between 0 and 4 (inclusive).
- f) **Cumulative GPA** is computed in the same way as the semester GPA, only that in the case of the Cumulative GPA, all the courses taken during all the semesters in consideration are used in the computations.
- g) The Semester and Cumulative GPAs are rounded to the nearest second decimal place.
- h) All courses with Grade Points attained/assigned to them are used in the computation of the GPA, including the failure grade F which has zero grade points.
- i) Courses with the following letter grades have no corresponding Grade Point values and are therefore not used in the calculation of the Semester/Cumulative GPAs:

W = Withdrawn course	=No value
T = Audited course	=No value
P = Passed course on Pass/Fail	=No value
Q = Failed course on Pass/Fail	=No value

- j) A course withdrawn after the third week of a semester is recorded as **W** and has no credit points.

6.2 Types of Examinations

Riara University offers various types of examinations in line with global best practices. These are categorized into two broad categories as illustrated below. However, it must be understood that the Riara University Senate may, at its discretion, designate and authorize the organization of other types of examinations at such times and in such manner as the Senate may deem appropriate based on legal requirements or prevailing circumstances.

6.2.1 Continuous Assessments

- i. Continuous assessments are forms of assessments done during the course of a semester, normally within the scheduled classes.
- ii. Continuous assessments can be given to individual students or groups of students and can take many forms including but not limited to: written tests, quizzes, projects, term papers, practical sessions, group work, and class presentations, among others.
- iii. Continuous assessments form part of the final performance/score/grade of a student for that course and must therefore be completed as guided by the course instructor/lecturer/facilitator.
- iv. Individual course instructors, as well as Schools/Departments, determine the nature and number of assessments to be taken for each course.
- v. The maximum number of marks that one can earn in continuous assessments, and their contribution to the overall grade of that course vary per programme and per course. However, each student is entitled to this information at the beginning of each course.
- vi. Results of continuous assessments are required to be made available to all students before the end of a semester and it is the right of every student to receive from the course instructor the results of the assessments, and any other feedback related to their performance in the assessments.
- vii. A student is not allowed to take the final end-of-semester examination of a course if they did not complete all the required continuous assessments and other requirements for that course within the timelines given.

viii. In Project Based Learning and Assessment (PBLA), a student undertakes continuous assessments and final assessment in an integrated format through three main phases: Ideating - creating many ideas in ideation semesters; Prototyping - adopting a hands-on approach in developing the idea; and Testing - developing a prototype/solution to the problem and building lessons for life-long learning.

6.2.2 End of Semester Examinations

- i. These are examinations taken at the end of each semester.
- ii. To be eligible for end-of-semester examinations, a student must have completed all course requirements, including but not limited to, class attendance, payment of full fees, and completion of all continuous assessments.
- iii. Some courses may be examined entirely on continuous assessments and hence may not require final examinations at the end of the semester.
- iv. The general procedures for the Setting and Administration of the End-of-Semester Examinations are outlined below.

6.2.3 Special Examinations

- i. Special examinations are examinations offered to students who are/were eligible to sit for an examination/assessment but missed it because of reasons beyond their control.
- ii. Special examinations are not offered to students who completed a course but obtained a grade of **Fail**, or those who missed other course requirements for reasons not proven to be beyond the control of the student.
- iii. Students wishing to be considered for special examinations are required to make a formal application to the Registrar -Academic by completing the Special Examinations Request Form obtainable from the University website, and to attach documentary evidence of the reasons that made them miss the examination/assessment.

- iv. The University reserves the right to determine if a student is eligible for special examinations or not, and to confirm documentary evidence with third parties.

6.3 General Procedures for End-of-Semester Examinations

6.3.1 How the Examinations are Set

- i. The course instructors/lecturers set the end of Semester examination questions/activities and produce the Draft Examination Papers, and a marking scheme/rubric.
- ii. The draft examination papers and the marking scheme/rubric are submitted to the School/Department.
- iii. The School/Department Board of Examiners moderates all draft question papers and marking schemes/rubrics for quality, appropriateness, and fairness.
- iv. A Board of Examiners may choose to form small committees within areas of expertise to moderate examinations in specific subject areas but the final responsibility rests with the Board.
- v. The moderated draft examination papers are forwarded to an External Examiner, who is an external expert in the field, for secondary moderation.
- vi. The final moderated examination papers are forwarded to the Registrar - Academics for processing in readiness for the examination period.

6.3.2 How *Physical* Examinations are administered

- i. The examinations are administered to students in line with the set examinations timetable(s).
- ii. Students are required to properly read the timetable and to look out for any official communications from the Registrar, School/Department or Course Instructor regarding any change in the time or venue of an examination during the examination period. The University however aims to avoid such disruptions at all times.
- iii. The course instructor invigilates his/her respective examination(s), assisted by extra invigilators where need be.

- iv. Students write their answers on the official prescribed answer booklets or Learning Management System.
- v. If an examination is closed-book, no other handwritten, printed, electronic or such other material is allowed in the examination room including revision notes. For open-book examinations, the specific material to be allowed in the examination room will be communicated in advance. For both forms of examinations, no equipment, devices, or tools are allowed other than those specified by the examiner.
- vi. At the end of the examination, every student authorised to take the examination signs the examination attendance register and hands over their answer booklet to the course instructor or authorised invigilator and quietly leaves the room.
- vii. Students are required to familiarise themselves with, and observe all examination regulations at all times.

6.3.3 How *Online* Examinations are administered

- i. Online examinations are set and moderated in a manner similar to physical examinations.
- ii. Online examinations are, however, administered through the official Learning Management System of the University. The University may authorise the use of other systems from time to time but these will be communicated through official channels by the Registrar - Academics or the Course Instructor, and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure they do not use an unauthorised system.
- iii. Online examinations may also take other forms such as open book, take home, or project -based assessments.
- iv. Open book examinations will ordinarily be open for a period not exceeding seven (7) calendar days unless a different time period is specified.
- v. The RU standard for assessment of online and blended courses is 60% for Continuous Assessment Tests (CAT) and 40% for the final semester examination. This may however vary according to specific course requirements, or as the Senate may approve from time to time.

- vi. Online examinations are only available to students within the prescribed examination duration and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they log in at the prescribed time.
- vii. Students MUST log in to the examination portal using Riara University issued email addresses only and not any other email address.
- viii. Before sitting for the online examination, a student is expected to ensure that they have:
 - a. registered for the Unit and it is reflected in their portal;
 - b. their student ID card, examination card or any other identification document that may be required;
 - c. a quiet distraction-free space to take the examination from;
 - d. access to stable power and internet connectivity, as well as backups for the same, in case of any interruptions during the examination;
 - e. downloaded, installed and tested any software, App or other tools that may be required of them; and
 - f. Raised any technical issues with the Learning Management System or other prescribed systems to ict@riarauniversity.ac.ke or exams@riarauniversity.ac.ke at least 48 hours before the time of the examination.
- ix. Students may be asked to maintain their microphones and video cameras on at all or specific times, or to share their screens with the instructor/invigilator, and such instructions must be obeyed.
- x. Students taking online assignments/examinations are normally provided adequate durations for the submission of assignments or completion of online examinations.
- xi. The University may prescribe online proctoring software and systems that students taking online examinations are obligated to install and use.
- xii. Failure to install prescribed software in one's electronic device or to follow such other guidelines or instructions given for proctoring of online examinations may lead to the cancellation of a student's examination, and/or the requirement for the affected student to take a different mode of examination.
- xiii. Whereas the University will aim to avail technical support to students

undertaking online examinations, students will not be allowed to blame last-minute technology glitches for failure to submit assignments or examinations on time and are therefore required to invest in resources that will ensure timely submission of assignments and examinations.

- xiv. Any issues that a student experiences during an ongoing examination must be raised with the Course Instructor during the period of the examination through the mobile phone of the Instructor, which each student is required to have, or through the main switchboard line of the University which is +254703038000.

6.3.4 How Examinations are Graded

- i. The course instructors mark and grade the examinations for their respective courses, whether online or physical, and award a mark and grade for each eligible student.
- ii. The course instructors submit the marks and grades for each course in a standard format to the School/Departmental Board of Examiners.
- iii. The Board of Examiners meets after each examination cycle to review the performance of each student and each course.
- iv. The examination booklets and marking schemes/rubrics are also forwarded to external examiners who review the grading and performance of each course and submit his/her report to the Vice Chancellor with observations and recommendations for the Senate's consideration.
- v. Once examination results are approved by the School/Departmental Board of Examiners, they are forwarded to the University Senate for consideration and final approval.

6.3.5 Approval and Release of Examination Results

- i. Results from the Boards of Examiners are presented to the University Senate by each School/Department.
- ii. The Senate discusses the results from each School and receives the status and performance of every student that had registered for the Semester in every programme.

- iii. The Senate then approves the Examination Results for the semester, with attendant recommendations for action, if need be.
- iv. Once the results have been approved by the Senate, the Registrar - Academics publishes the results for immediate access by students through the Students Portal, and notifies the students of the same.

6.4 Outcomes of an Examination Process

6.4.1 Pass

- i. This encompasses all students who have ***successfully completed and passed all the courses*** they had registered for during that semester.
- ii. These students are free to register for other units offered in the subsequent semester.

6.4.2 Fail

- i. This refers to students who have ***failed at least one course*** for that semester.
- ii. Fail grade means a student has not obtained the pass mark for the course(s).
- iii. Such students are required to retake the failed unit as they register for other units in consultation with the School/Department.

6.4.3 Incomplete

- i. This refers to students who ***completed continuous assessments but not the end-of-semester examination/assessment***.
- ii. Courses where a student has an end of semester examination mark but they never completed continuous assessments are also considered Incomplete.
- iii. Depending on the reasons for the incomplete, a student may be required to retake the incomplete course, or be allowed to sit for a special examination.

6.4.4 Withdrawal

- i. This refers to students who had registered for courses in the particular semester but never completed continuous assessments, irrespective of whether they sit for the end of semester examination or not.
- ii. Students in this category are required to retake the withdrawn courses.

6.4.5 Academic Warning

An **Academic Warning** is given to a student whose GPA is below 1.33 in the first academic year.

Academic warnings are given by the Dean of School/Head of Department in writing on recommendation of the School/Departmental Board.

A student who has received an academic warning and fails to achieve the set minimum Cumulative GPA for one academic year or as guided in the Academic Warning letter will be eligible for **discontinuation** from the University.

6.4.6 Discontinuation on Academic Grounds

- i. A student can be discontinued from the University on academic grounds if they fail to pass their courses consistently for more than one semester or within prescribed timelines:
- ii. A student may receive an academic warning from the Registrar - Academics or the School/Department before discontinuation or they may be discontinued out rightly.
- iii. Discontinuation is approved by the Senate.
- iv. A discontinued student can re-apply for a fresh admission into Riara University and they may be recommended to join a different Programme of Riara University.
- v. Readmission of a discontinued student is at the full discretion of the University Senate.

6.5 Remedies for Courses not Passed

6.5.1 Retaking / Repeating a Course

- i. A student who fails to obtain the minimum pass grade in any course is required to retake (repeat) that course by registering for the course afresh when it is next on offer, attending all classes, completing all course requirements, and taking the assessments/examinations again.
- ii. A student who perennially fails a mandatory course may be discontinued from the University.
- iii. The University Senate reserves the right to determine how many times a student can repeat the same course.
- iv. A repeated course is taken when next on offer, but it must precede all other courses to which it is a Prerequisite.

6.5.2 Remarking of an Examination

- i. A student who feels aggrieved about the final grade they received in a particular course may apply to have such an examination remarked.
- ii. Application for remarking is done through the office of Registrar - Academics using a prescribed form obtainable from the University website.
- iii. Remarking shall be done by an examiner (or examiners) appointed by the Dean or Head of Department.
- iv. The examiner to conduct the remark shall be different from the instructor/examiner who graded the initial student's work.
- v. Only the final examination, where it is offered, will be remarked, and not continuous assessments.
- vi. For courses examined entirely through projects or such other activities, only the final project/activity may be remarked.
- vii. A non-refundable remarking fee applies for each course where a remark is being requested and this should be paid before approval of the request for remark.
- viii. Where a remark is declined, the student will be given the reasons thereof.

6.6 Disposal of Examination Answer Scripts

- a) Physical examination answer scripts are retained by the University for four (4) academic years from the time the examination was taken. After this duration, the scripts are disposed of in a manner prescribed by the Senate.
- b) Students are required to lodge any complaints with regard to any examination within this period, after which no complaints will be processed.
- c) Content uploaded onto the online Learning Management System or such other prescribed systems of the University may be retained for longer durations. However, the period for acceptance of complaints remains the same as that for physical examinations.



7.0 Academic Integrity and Discipline

7.1 General Expectations

- a) Riarra University strives to create a culture and community of honour and to develop graduates with the right balance of academic competencies (technical skills), and employability skills (soft skills, habits, and attitudes).
- b) One of the key competences that all Riarra University students, graduates, staff and other stakeholders are expected to develop and uphold is Academic Integrity and Honesty.
- c) **Academic Integrity** means being honest in the academic work you do at the University, taking responsibility for learning, earning and deserving your qualifications including components of course work, and being committed to the truth.
- d) It is the University's responsibility to award students credit only for honestly conducted work, and it is the student's responsibility to uphold and demonstrate academic integrity.
- e) Those who fail to meet these expectations undermine fundamental tenets of RU, and are therefore liable for their actions.

7.2 Riarra University Honor Code

- a) To achieve the aspirations above, Riarra University operates a **Students Honour Code** that serves as a guiding mantra for students and graduates on ethics and values.
- b) All students are expected to accept and sign the Honour Code and failure to do so may lead to the deregistration of a student.
- c) The Honour Code may be revised from time to time.

7.3 Academic Integrity Policy

- a) Further to the Students Honour Code, Riara University has an **Academic Integrity Policy** with guidelines on the expectations of the University with regard to Academic Integrity and Honesty.
- b) All students are expected to obtain a copy of the Academic Integrity Policy from the University website and to familiarise themselves and abide fully, with it.
- c) The University has Anti-Plagiarism software that may be used to detect the levels of academic honesty in a student's work.
- d) In line with the above, the University may require some or all of a student's work to be submitted to the Anti-Plagiarism software and students required to do so are required to comply fully.
- e) Failure to comply with instructions regarding academic integrity, including but not limited to, subjection of a student's work to the Anti-Plagiarism software is an academic offence and may lead to the cancellation or rejection of a student's work.

7.4 Academic/Examination Malpractices

- a) According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English (10th Ed.), **malpractice** refers to careless, wrong, or illegal and undesirable professional behaviour.
- b) The following constitute some of the academic/examination malpractices that students need to guard themselves against while studying at RU in order to uphold the Honour Code, as well as the Objectives and the Philosophy of the University.
- c) The malpractices listed below **cover all physical, online, remotely administered, or such other academic and examination activities.**
- d) It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive list but a simple guideline and students are required to uphold academic integrity at all times:
 - (i) failure to attain the required level of academic performance;
 - (ii) long periods of unauthorized absence;

- (iii) being in possession of unauthorized materials or devices during, or for purposes of an examination or assessment;
- (iv) communicating with other candidates, or any other unauthorized person during an examination;
- (v) disobeying instructions of course instructors, examination invigilators, or other appropriate officers of the University;
- (vi) failure to use or comply with prescribed systems, tools, Apps, email addresses, among such other technology-based systems as required by the University;
- (vii) disrupting or being a nuisance in class, library, examination room or anywhere else that activities of the University are taking place;
- (viii) being in possession of used or unused answer booklets outside the examination room;
- (ix) Copying or reading from other candidates' work or from other unauthorized sources, whether physical, online, or otherwise;
- (x) lobbying or attempting to obtain undeserved grades or advantages;
- (xi) abetting, aiding or covering up an examination malpractice;
- (xii) forging reports in order to obtain preferential treatment with regard to special examinations, deferment, or other academic processes;
- (xiii) plagiarism, i.e. using the words or ideas of another person as if they were one's own without acknowledgement of the same;
- (xiv) attending, or attempting to attend classes, lectures or any other university activity after being barred, suspended, dismissed, discontinued or expelled for any reason including but not limited to fee payments, disciplinary proceedings, among others;
- (xv) threatening or attempting to threaten an instructor or any other officer of the University in the performance of their duties;
- (xvi) attempting to forge any records of the University, whether physical or electronic;
- (xvii) impersonating a student in a class/examination room; or having, attempting to have, or allowing another student to impersonate oneself;

- (xviii) assisting others in their attempts/efforts to commit an academic malpractice;
- (xix) presenting, or attempting to present oneself for an examination without due clearances or valid identification documentation;
- (xx) failure to respond to summons for disciplinary proceedings.
- (xxi) destroying, or attempting to destroy evidence of an alleged academic malpractice;
- (xxii) a second examination malpractice following conclusion of disciplinary proceedings for a similar malpractice;
- (xxiii) qualifying for suspension after serving two previous suspension periods, whether consecutive or not; and
- (xxiv) committing, or being involved in any activity or act which is deemed by the University Senate as an Academic/Examination malpractice.

7.5 Procedures for the Management of Academic/Examination Malpractices

The University is a responsible citizen committed to giving each accused student(s) a fair hearing and a fair chance to explain themselves. Where cases of alleged malpractices occur, the following general procedure will be followed:

- e) The evidence of the alleged malpractice shall be confiscated immediately by the course instructor, invigilator, or other officers of the University and all parties involved including the accused student(s) are required to comply fully.
- f) The accused student(s) shall be required to write down their statements of account regarding the incident.
- g) In cases of examinations, a student may be allowed to continue with the examination to the end.
- h) The staff member involved in capturing/documenting the case shall report the case immediately to the respective Dean/Head of Department where the student is registered or to the Dean of Students.
- i) The respective Dean/Head of Department shall report the case immediately to the Chair of the Students Disciplinary Committee (SDC).

- j) In some cases, a student may be suspended from the University pending investigations, disciplinary summons, and the hearing and the suspension may be for a specified period or indefinitely depending on the circumstances. This shall be determined by the Chair of the SDC.
- k) Once satisfied that the case is valid and ready for hearing, the Chair of the SDC summons the accused student(s) for a hearing of the case.
- l) The SDC adjudicates all the academic offences and takes appropriate action on behalf of the Senate.
- m) The SDC has a right to communicate (in writing) some or all of its decisions to the accused person(s) pending ratification by the Senate.
- n) Decisions of the SDC are presented to the University Senate.
- o) The Senate may either ratify or vary the decisions of the SDC.
- p) The final decision is communicated to the Student in writing if it is varied by the Senate.
- q) Where the decision of the SDC is ratified as-is by the Senate, the communication by the SDC stands as the final decision.
- r) Students who feel aggrieved by the decisions of the SDC may appeal to the Chairman of Senate within fourteen (14) days from the date of communication of the verdict.
- s) The decisions of the Senate shall be final.

7.6 Outcomes of a Disciplinary Process

The following are some, but not all, of the main possible outcomes of a disciplinary proceeding:

- (a)** Verbal or written **warning**.
- (b)** Academic / psychological **counselling**.
- (c)** **Cancellation** of part or the whole of a course or an examination.
- (d)** **Suspension** from the University for a specified or indefinite period.
 - i. On completion of a suspension period, a student may be required to apply (in writing) for re-registration.
 - ii. The University may give conditional/unconditional re-admission, extend the suspension period or discontinue the student if the student has not made satisfactory progress in meeting any conditions given with the suspension.

- (e) **Discontinuation** from the University - see below for more details.
- (f) **Expulsion** from the University - see below for more details.

7.7 Discontinuation from the University

7.7.1 General Reasons for Discontinuation from the University

A student may be ***discontinued*** from the University on any of the following grounds, among others, as the University Senate may determine from time to time:

- i.failure to attain the required level of academic performance.
- ii.long periods of unauthorized absence;
- iii.incapacitating health grounds;
- iv.voluntary withdrawal;
- v.examination malpractices/irregularities; and
- vi.prolonged/multiple suspension from the University

7.7.2 General Terms on Discontinuation

- i.A discontinued student may be eligible to receive records of their valid academic progress up to the time of discontinuation.
- ii.A student discontinued from the University may be eligible to reapply for admission back to the University.
- iii.Re-admission of a discontinued student is entirely at the discretion of the University.
- iv.A re-admitted student may be allowed to carry some of the credits rightfully earned before the discontinuation, or they may be required to restart their programme afresh, or to pursue a different programme altogether.
- v.A student who is discontinued on the grounds of poor health is entitled to a compassionate leaving certificate, and they will be allowed to carry all credits rightfully earned before the discontinuation if they return, provided that the period of return is within acceptable durations of absence for academic continuity. Where such a student has stayed for a prolonged period of time, they may be required to register afresh.

- vi. The University has the right to inform and/or cooperate with relevant government authorities on matters relating to a student who has been discontinued.

7.8 Expulsion from the University

7.8.1 General Reasons for Expulsion from the University

A student may be **expelled** from the University on the following grounds, among others, as the University Senate may determine from time to time:

- i. Inability, or unwillingness to make sufficient progress in one's academic programme.
- ii. An offence deemed by the Senate to be too serious or detrimental to the objectives, mission and smooth running of the University.
- iii. A criminal offence.
- iv. Overstaying in the University or failure to complete one's programme within acceptable or specified timelines and without acceptable reasons.

7.8.2 General Terms on Expulsion

- i. A student who is expelled from the University may not be entitled to any records of current or previous academic standing or performance.
- ii. The University has the right to inform and/or cooperate with relevant government authorities on matters relating to a student who has been expelled.
- iii. An expelled student is **not** eligible for readmission into the University.

7.9 Appeals

- a) Students have a right to appeal the outcomes of a disciplinary proceeding.
- b) Appeals for all verdicts except discontinuation and expulsion must be made within fourteen (14) days of the date of communication (via email) of the decision.

- c) Appeals against discontinuation or expulsion must be made within thirty (30) days of the date of communication (via email) of the decision.
- d) Where a student has appealed on time and had been discontinued or expelled, such student remains discontinued or expelled pending the decision of the Appeals Committee.
- e) All appeals must be made in writing to the Vice Chancellor and can only be accepted if delivered via the official email address of the Vice Chancellor, or delivered by hand or by registered mail to the Office of the Vice Chancellor.
- f) Any appeal not submitted within the specified periods shall not be considered.

7.10 Cautionary Note

The provisions herein or any decisions made by the University do not in any way waive the right of the police, the state, or any other statutory agency or member of the public so entitled, to bring any action or institute any legal proceedings in respect of the same state of facts against any student.



8.0 Commencement / Graduation

8.1 What is Graduation and How is it Conducted?

- a) Graduation is the successful completion of a programme of study for which one becomes eligible for an Academic Award such as a Degree or Diploma.
- b) The **Commencement Ceremony** is the ceremony where all students that have completed all the academic and other requirements for their programmes of study are awarded or conferred their Certificates, Diplomas, Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, and other earned awards.
- c) The Commencement Ceremony is normally held once per calendar year, either physically or virtually.
- d) The University Senate determines who graduates, the nature and dates of the Commencement ceremonies, and all other matters related to graduation.
- e) The University Senate also has a right to schedule more than one Commencement Ceremony in a year as it may deem appropriate.

8.2 Graduation Requirements

- a) A student will be eligible to graduate after completing all the requirements of the academic programme.
- b) To be considered for graduation, a student must meet the following minimum requirements:
 - i. Complete and pass all the prescribed courses.
 - ii. Attain the minimum number of credit hours required for the programme in which the student is registered.
 - iii. Obtain a minimum Cumulative GPA of 1.33
 - iv. Meet all financial obligations.
 - v. Settle all outstanding liabilities.

- vi. Have no outstanding disciplinary sanctions.
- vii. Complete prescribed clearances from the University.
- c) All records of a student are subject to internal audits by the University and hence meeting the above requirements is not necessarily an automatic guarantee of graduation.
- d) A candidate who is preparing to graduate may be required to give notice of his/her intention to graduate by applying to the Registrar - Academics through the School at the time of registration for the anticipated final semester of study. This is done through the prescribed Intent to Graduate form.
- e) A student who has applied to graduate should seek clearance of all liabilities in the University during, or immediately after, the final semester of study.
- f) The University Senate is the final authority on who is cleared to graduate or not. Where a student is not cleared to graduate, they will be given reasons thereof.

8.3 Classification of Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates at Graduation

- a) Riara University awards Qualifications at different classifications based primarily on the performance of a student throughout the entire programme.
- b) The classifications are benchmarked with local and global best practices and are easily recognisable by employers, other institutions, and other stakeholders.
- c) Students are required to note that **ALL prescribed courses for ALL semesters** from the first semester to the last semester of the programme **count towards determining the overall classification of the qualification upon graduation/award.**
- d) Below is a summary of the classification types for the various levels of programmes, together with the overall performance levels required for each category:

8.3.1 Certificates

Certificate qualifications are normally awarded as:

- PASS
- FAIL (under this category, the student does not graduate and is required to retake failed units)

8.3.2 Diplomas

Graduates of Diploma programmes graduate with Diplomas categorised as follows:

- DISTINCTION
- CREDIT
- PASS
- FAIL (under this category, the student does not graduate and is required to retake failed units)

8.3.3 Bachelor's Degrees

Degrees awarded for Bachelor's programmes are classified as follows:

Degree Classification	Average Percentage Marks (for all courses taken)
First Class Honours	75% and above
Second Class Honours (Upper Division)	60% - 74%
Second Class Honours (Lower Division)	50%-59%
Pass	40-49%

8.3.4 Master's Degrees

Degrees awarded for Master's programmes are classified as follows:

- PASS
- FAIL (under this category, the student does not graduate and is required to retake failed units)

8.3.5 Doctorate Degrees

Degrees awarded for Doctoral level programmes are classified as follows:

- PASS
- FAIL (under this category, the student does not graduate and is required to retake failed units)

- e) The Senate has a right to alter the classification system at any time based on legal or industry requirements.

8.4 Other Awards and Recognitions

Awards and recognition are given at every Commencement Ceremony to students who exhibit exemplary/outstanding scholarly, leadership and other achievements. Some of the awards may include:

8.4.1 Chancellor's Award

This award is bestowed at every Commencement Ceremony to the overall outstanding student in academia, leadership, community service, internship, innovation, club and other co-curricular activities. The recipient of this year's award has been celebrated in all these areas, both on national and international platforms.

8.4.2 Vice Chancellor's Award

This is an award given at every Commencement Ceremony to the overall outstanding students in academia in each school, having satisfied the rigours of coursework, examinations, projects, fieldwork, internship and research. Additionally, the nominees have shown great curiosity for the scholarship and have high potential in academic pursuits.

8.4.3 Innovators Merit Award

This award is presented at every Commencement Ceremony to graduands who have demonstrated outstanding innovative and entrepreneurial skills both within the campus and outside.

8.4.4 Community Service Award

The Community Service Award is presented at every Commencement Ceremony for the outstanding contribution in serving the community within Riara University and beyond.

8.4.5 Sports Award

The Sports Award is presented at every commencement to graduands who have demonstrated outstanding performance in sports in male and female categories.

8.4.6 Leadership Award

The Excellence in Leadership Award is presented at every Commencement Ceremony to the students' outstanding transformative leader(s) who are visionary, motivating, team players, supportive and influential in the university and beyond.

Other recognitions may be given by the Senate, Vice-Chancellor, School or Departments, as the Senate or School Boards may determine.

8.5 Academic Transcripts and Final Certificates

- a) Students are required to closely monitor and keep track of their academic performance at all times.
- b) Once examination results are approved by the Senate, the Registrar-Academics releases them for immediate access by students.
- c) Students can view their results and performance through the Grade Slips available at the Students Portal.
- d) Continuing students are entitled to a progressive Transcript showing their performance for all courses completed at RU and approved by the Senate. Requests for progressive Transcripts are made to the Registrar - Academics through a form obtainable from the University website.
- e) Final Official Transcripts, together with the Certificate are only issued after a student has graduated and cleared with the University.
- f) Students who have successfully completed all courses and are only awaiting graduation may be issued with a Letter of Completion to share with employers or other institutions, provided that it is understood that a Letter of Completion is not necessarily clearance for graduation.
- g) The University has a right to retain copies of official transcripts and certificates and to retain them as confidential, save for cases where there may be a legal requirement to disclose such information.
- h) Copies of academic documents of a student such as transcript(s) can be sent to third parties upon request by a student. The request should be made in writing to the Registrar - Academics stating the recipient and the reasons for the request. A fee may be charged for this service.
- i) Additional copies of transcripts may be issued to a student at a fee.
- j) In case a student loses the original Certificate of his/her award, the same may be replaced at the discretion of the Senate under the following general conditions:

- i. The reason for loss must be proven to be beyond the student's reasonable control.
- ii. A request for replacement must be accompanied by a valid Police Abstract.
- iii. A fee may be charged for the replacement.
- iv. The replacement Certificate may only be available during the next Graduation Cycle of the University.

8.6 Revocation of a Degree, Diploma, Certificate or any other Qualification

- a) The University Senate has the right to rescind/revoke any degree, diploma, certificate or any other qualification awarded to a graduate who while registered in a programme of study at Riara University committed an offence which if it had been detected before graduation/award would have resulted in discontinuation, expulsion, or disapproval of that qualification by the Senate.
- b) The University has a right to notify the public and/or all relevant parties of a revocation of a qualification.
- c) Readmission of a student/graduate whose qualification has been revoked will be at the full discretion of the University.
- d) The decision of the University Senate shall be **final** in all cases.



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