



CAPE COAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

HIV POLICY

2016

1.1 INTRODUCTION

HIV/AIDS has emerged as one of the biggest challenges across the globe. Since the first 42 reported cases of AIDS were recorded in Ghana in 1986, accumulative total of 225,478 people was estimated at the end of 2011 (National HIV and AIDS, STI Policy 2013).

Though Ghana as a nation currently has a prevalence rate of 1.5% (National HIV and AIDS, STI Policy 2013), the central region which hosts Cape Coast Technical University has as high as 4.7% prevalence rate making the region the most infected in the country as at 2014.

Cape Coast Technical University is committed to enhancing the well-being of all members of its community. The Technical University is committed to providing and maintaining an enabling environment where all members of its community – students, staff and other people who participate in activities or transact business with the Technical University in one way or the other to function effectively without any form of discrimination with regard to their health or HIV status.

1.2 POLICY STATEMENT

As an educational institution and an employer, the Technical University, through the Vice Chancellor, Academic Board, Personnel Welfare

Officer and SRC will take steps to provide open forum for ongoing education on a wide range of issues as well as providing appropriate counselling and support for members with special needs. Cape Coast Technical University believes that when members of the community are fully informed about the nature of HIV/AIDS, the mode of transmission and those behavioural changes that can limit the spread of HIV, it will achieve a significant feat in protecting the lives and health of students, staff and other members of the Technical University community.

This is because the Technical University acknowledges the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its implications for the individual members of the community as well as the social, economic and developmental consequences on the institution. It therefore seeks to adopt a comprehensive and proactive HIV workplace programmes to protect members, create awareness, encourage behaviour changes and ensure that every member of the Technical University community is treated with adequate dignity, fairness and equity.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the prevention of HIV/AIDS among students, staff and their families, and to the management of the consequences of HIV/AIDS, including the care and support of staff and students as well as those who transact business living with HIV/AIDS. The policy has been developed and will be implemented in consultation with students and employees at

all levels. It is in compliance with National HIV and AIDS, STI Policy (2013). This policy is to provide clarity on Cape Coast Technical University's views and commitment with regards to HIV/AIDS and the comprehensive management of HIV positive students and staff as well as students and staff living with AIDS.

This policy aims at:

1. helping to prevent the spread of HIV infection among students, employees and their families
2. reduce fear of among students and staff in relation, to HIV infection disruption of work and academic activities.
3. focusing on aspects of HIV/AIDS which if not given attention may have negative impact on the activities of the Technical University well as the welfare of the members of its community.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy covers all members of the Technical University's community management, staff, students and all individuals who transact business with the Technical University.

1.5 BENEFIT OF THE POLICY

1. This policy will help reduce / eliminate stigmatization and discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS.

2. Protect the right of all members of the Technical University community including those infected or affected with HIV/AIDS.
3. It will help de-stigmatize HIV/AIDS among students and staff and create an environment where they feel comfortable seeking more information on the disease.

2.0 GUIDELINES TO THE POLICY

Cape Coast Technical University believes that HIV/AIDS is a disease that has no regard to gender or class boundaries and as such a student or an employee infected with HIV or AIDS must be treated on a similar basis to any other member of the Technical University community suffering from a life threatening disease such persons will not be subjected to any form of discrimination or victimization.

This policy is in compliance of the national AIDS policy 2013.

Cape Coast Technical University's commit itself to the following guidelines as far as the issue of HIV/AIDS is concerned;

2.1 Admission

There will be no discrimination in accepting persons living with HIV into any programme of study at the Technical University. Students who get infected will be allowed to continue studying as long as they are in compliance with all the Technical University rules and regulations.

2.2 Employment

Person seeking employment with Cape Coast Technical University will not be discriminated against on the basis of HIV or AIDS. Again employment of staff members shall not be terminated on the basis of being infected. If an individual is unable to perform duties because of HIV/AIDS, benefits will be continued in accordance with the Technical University policy pertaining to employees with any other handicap or illness.

2.3 Access to facilities

There will be no restriction of access for members of the Technical University community who are living with HIV/AIDS to cafeterias, restaurants, unions, clubs, association, recreational facilities and other common areas

2.4 Class attendance;

Students of the Technical University who are HIV positive will not be prevented from attending classes or partaking in Technical University activities. Students who may be too ill to attend lectures will be treated as any other students with a serious illness.

2.5 HIV Testing

There will be no mandatory test required of students or employees or prospective student or prospective employees for HIV or AIDS. The

Technical University health / counselling services provide periodic voluntary services and on such occasions both pre-test and post-test counselling are available. The results are confidential. The testing will not form part of recruitment and selection process for employees and students respectfully

2.6 Confidentiality

Cape Coast Technical University acknowledges that persons infected with HIV/AIDS as well as those affected have the legal right to confidentiality and privacy concerning their health and HIV status and no student or employee of the Technical University will be obliged to disclose their HIV status under any circumstances. There will be no requirement that students or employee (existing or prospective) be asked to respond to HIV and AIDS.

3.0 SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

3.1 Rights of students and staff who are HIV positive

Students, staff and third party members who are HIV-positive will be protected against discrimination, victimisation or harassment. Normal disciplinary and grievance procedures shall apply equally to all employees, as well as the provision of information and education about HIV and AIDS.

3.2 Awareness-raising and education

1. Appropriate awareness and education programmes will be conducted to inform students and staff about AIDS and HIV which will enable them to protect themselves and others against infection by HIV. Some of these will include the families of employees and the local community.
2. The Technical University recognizes the importance of involving employees and their representatives in the planning and implementation of awareness, education and counselling programmes, especially as peer educators and counsellors.
3. Training shall be arranged for key staff including Deans, Heads of departments, and personnel officers; union representatives; trainers of trainers, and peer educators.

3.3.The promotion of students and employees' well-being

The Technical University will treat employees who are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS with empathy and care. The institution will provide all reasonable assistance which may include counselling, time off, sick leave, and information regarding the virus and its effect.

4.IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

4.1.1. Cape Coast Technical University has established an HIV/AIDS committee to coordinate and implement the HIV/AIDS policy and

programme. The committee consists of representatives of all stakeholders of the Technical University, including general management, POTAG, POWAG, PAAG, GAPA and SRC. The committee will report regularly to the Executive Board.

4.1.2. In order to plan and evaluate its HIV/AIDS policy and programme effectively, Cape Coast Technical University will undertake a survey to establish baseline data and regular risk and impact assessment studies. The studies will include knowledge, attitudes and behaviour/ practices. Studies will be carried out in consultation and with the consent of employees and their representatives, and in conditions of complete confidentiality.

4.1.3. This policy, and related information on HIV and AIDS, will be communicated to all Cape Coast Technical University students and staff and the wider public using the full range of communication methods available to the Technical University and its network of contacts.

4.1.4. This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary in the light of changing conditions and the findings of surveys/studies conducted.

References

Ghana AIDS Commission (2010). *National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2011-2015: Towards achieving universal access to comprehensive HIV services*. Accra, Design Express.

ILO AIDS (n.d). *A workplace policy on HIV/AIDS: what it should cover*. Switzerland, ILO

Republic of Ghana (2013). *National HIV and AIDS, STI Policy*. Accra: Ghana AIDS Commission.

University of Malawi (2013). HIV and AIDS workplace interventions: Gap between policy and practice. *Zomba: Malawi Medical Journal*.