



UNIVERSITY  
OF  
LUSAKA



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OF LUSAKA

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND  
HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENT  
HANDBOOK

University of Lusaka | School of Medicine and Health Sciences

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# THE UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA

## SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

### MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Prof Kasonde Bowa  
Dean School of Medicine and Health  
Sciences

What is the first thing that a new student wants to hear when they are coming to the University or entering a School in the University for the first time? I know there will be many answers to this question. This small student handbook tries to answer some of these questions. When I entered

Medical School for the first time many years ago, I was very nervous. I was the first one in my

family to ever get to study Medicine, and all I had heard was about how difficult a course the Medical Course was. It reminds me of a child that I saw once trying to get on to an Escalator (Those moving stair cases) for the first time. The first instinct is to jump off right away, Medical School feels like that sometimes. The second is to hold on to something you are familiar with, whether its parents or the stairway rails or sit on the walkway itself. We all look for something familiar when we are in an unfamiliar environment something we can hold on to. This little handbook represents that safe hand that acts as a safe guide through the Medical program. Think of it as a Scout's road map on an outdoor trip or adventure. Many of you will probably be as nervous and as excited as I was on my first day in Medical School. This little handbook will hold your hand and assure you that you have chosen a great career. It tells you about the path that you will need to walk to achieve this great career that you

have chosen. It will also point out the pit falls and the dangers on this road. This handbook will tell you about the History of the School, the ideas that govern the school, the place where you will learn, the teachers, the course and some of the rules that govern the school. This is not all that there is about the School, but it will be enough to make you comfortable about what you will be doing in the next 5 to 6 years you will be in the school. I wish I had a little book like this when I was starting off as a young student. The Medical and Health Science career is a great career, it is one that will take you all over the world, it is full of challenges and promises. This book will clear that path and make the journey a lot less bumpy.

Good luck and may God guide you through your training.

**Kasonde Bowa**

**MSc(Glasgow),M.Med,FRCS(Glasgow),FACS,FCS(Uro),MPH(London)**

**Professor of Urology**

**Executive Dean School of Medicine and Health Sciences**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES</b></p>
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The University of Lusaka School of Medicine and Health Sciences (UNILUS SOM & HS) idea was conceived in 2015. The University of Lusaka was started in 2007, as the Institute of Research (ICTAR). Prof Pinalo Chifwanakeni was the founding Vice Chancellor. The initial focus was on Business courses, in the area particularly of accounting, finance and economics. In 2012 the UNILUS commenced the Bachelors degree in Public health, which was the first program of its kind in Zambia. With increasing demanding for Medical Science and Health Science training, the University began plans to set up a School of Medicine and Health sciences in

2016. A needs assessment was done by a consultant in 2016, with stakeholder participation, the needs assessment showed a gap in the number health care providers, especially for Medical Doctors. In December 2018 the Founding Dean of the school of Medicine and Health Sciences Prof Kasonde Bowa was appointed.



## MISSION AND VISION

The vision and mission of the School or University will not always make any sense to new students and they often consider these unimportant. One way of looking at this that can make sense to you is to think of the School or the University like a car. When you look at the University or School, that way you can ask this question, “What is the fuel that drives the engine of this place and where is it aiming to reach?”

The fuel is the energy that drives a car, in the same way for the School the fuel is the mission that carries it to its destination. The destination is where the car is going or plans to go to on its journey. In the same way for the School the vision is its

destination. So, when we speak of the mission and vision, we want to show you what drives the school and where it is going.

### **The Vision**

The vision of the UNILUS SOM & HS is to be a “bench marking” school in the provision of Medical and Health Science training and research in both the public and private sector in Zambia and beyond.

### **Mission**

The Mission of the UNILUS SOM & Health Sciences is to promote equitable lifelong learning in Health care provision for the Zambian community through training and research. The School will seek to provide practical and community-based solutions in Health Care provision in Zambia and beyond.

**In a short phrase the vision of the School is to be the best and the mission is to produce the best. When you realise this is the Vision and the Mission then you will certainly want to join in, and see that it is achieved.**

## **ADMISSION CRITERIA**

Since you are reading this handbook, you will already most likely have been admitted into the School, so it may not matter to you a great deal what the admission criteria is. However, you might find it useful to understanding the philosophy or the thinking which determined your admission. In future someone may also ask you what the requirements for admission to the School of Medicine and Health Sciences are.

Therefore, for these reasons, it is important to know these. There are three main grounds of admission;

1. A student needs to have passed their O level (Grade 12 exams) with a credit or better (6 points and better), in 5 subjects. These subjects must include English, Mathematics and Sciences subjects. For those who study pure sciences, this means Physics, Chemistry and Biology. However, Sciences with Biology or Agricultural Sciences is also acceptable.

The reason for this is that a student will need good sciences knowledge to study in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

2. A student may be admitted into the direct entry program if they have passed Advanced levels science courses in Mathematics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry.

3. A student may also be admitted if they have a Science degree in any Biological Science, or Medical or Health Science.

These admission criteria help the School to select those students who are most likely to be successful in the School, because they have the right foundation and background. A good knowledge of numeracy (Mathematics) and literacy (English) is important in Medicine and Health Sciences. This is so because Medical English requires a good grasp of English and Medical Science training needs a good grasp of basic mathematics.



## STUDY PROGRAMMES

The are currently three main programmes offered in the school, these are

- 1.The Diploma in Nursing sciences
- 2.The Bachelor's Degree in Public Health
- 3.The Bachelor's Degree in Medicine and Surgery

The Diploma in Nursing Sciences leads to the career in the Health System as a Registered Nurse. The Bachelor's Degree in Public Health Leads to a career in Health System and other allied industries as a Public Health Specialist. There are opportunities in this career Veterinary Services, Local Government and Food Processing.



The Bachelor's Degree in Medicine and Surgery leads to a career as a Medical Doctor.

### **1.The Diploma in Nursing sciences**

This is a 3-year course leading to a Diploma in Nursing certificate.

**Course Content:** The Curriculum is the same for all nursing Programmes in Zambia. The structure of the Curriculum is governed by the General Nursing Council of Zambia. The course consists of 10 weeks block, which alternated between lecture blocks and practical blocks. The lecture blocks consist of class room-based teaching. The practical blocks consist of Hospital based Nursing practical training. The first year is broken into two semesters of 6 months each. The first years is called the foundation years. Students in the year wear a nurse cap with one strip. During this period the Nursing science course which form the basis on nursing practice are taught. In the second-year students are learn the principles and practice of General Nursing Sciences. In the final year students learn the specialised aspects of Nursing sciences. This includes courses like Midwifery (the delivery of babies) and Mental Health Care Nursing.

**Duration:** The minimum duration of the course is 3 years or 6 semesters. The maximum period is 5 years or 10 semesters. The total teaching hours are 4,800 hours which is equivalent to 480 credit hours.

**Special Aspect:** There is a code of conduct that Nursing Trainees are expected to uphold. The course is accredited by the General Nursing Council of Zambia (GNCZ). Upon completion a student will need to sit the General nursing council of Zambia certification examinations. This examination has a theory and practical component.

## **2.The Bachelors in Public Health**

This is a 4-year training programme. Which leads to the award by the university of the Bachelor's Degree in Public health (BScPH)

**Course Content:** The courses have an initial 6 months training in foundational sciences of Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This is followed by teaching in the principles of General Public Health in the later part of first year and the beginning of second year. In the last block students do the principles of Specialised areas of Public health and research. This includes Environmental Health, Occupational Health, Nutrition and Population Studies. Students are required to do research for six months to show that they have understood and can apply the major Public Health concepts in solving common Public health problems in Zambia.

**Duration:** The minimum duration is 4 years or 8 semesters. The maximum duration is 6 years or 12 semesters. The total teaching hours are 6,400hours of 640 credits hours.

### **Special Aspects:**

The course is licensed by the Health Professions Council of Zambia. All students entering this course will need to be indexed by the HPCZ and hold a training number. This will be the basis of registration with this professional body at completion of their training.

## **3.The Bachelor's Degree in Medicine and Surgery**

This course leads to the award of the degree of the basic degree of Doctor of Medicine. The qualification is an undergraduate degree and to become a specialist in a field of Medicine additional training is required. However, to practice as a general doctor, this qualification is sufficient.

**Course Content:** The training is divided into 3 aspects namely premedical training (18months) (This includes a Bridging Course), Basic Medical Science training (2years) and Clinical Science training 3 years. The premedical science training is a 12 months A level training in the four Natural sciences. These are Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These can be waived or skip if the students have done equivalent A level training. The Bridging course is preparatory course for entry into the Medical Course. The course acts as a bridge between the pure science training at the Medical Science training. It equips the students to start Medical science training. The course provides training in professional courses such as Ethics and the History of Medicine. It also provides preparatory training in Medical Sciences and Clinical Sciences in Medical Terminologies and Basic Medical Biochemistry. The Basic Medical Science course provides training in five key Medical sciences using a Systems based approach. It also provides training in the main Professional Courses such as Clinical sciences, Public Health and Behavioural Sciences. This course is four two years. This is a laboratory or classroom-based training. The Clinical sciences course is a 3-year hospital-based training. This involves attachment to a Medical Specialist and a Medical Training facility for 3 years. This is rotational in units of 10 weeks.

**Duration:** The total Medical programme is 5 years with an additional 18 months of premedical training. The minimum training is 5years or 10 semesters. The maximum is 7 years or 14 semesters. The teaching or notional hours are 6,000 hours or 600 credit hours.

**Special Aspects:** The students are required to do an entry oath called the White Coat day oath and an exit oath called the Medical School Graduation Oath. They will also

do a Hippocratic Oath conducted by the Zambia Medical association upon induction into Medical practice.



### UNILUS GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system below is applied in the School. This grading determines the graduation level for the degree as well as the progression from one year to next.

Letter Grade	Grade Points	Meaning	Approximate % Equivalence
A+	5	Exceptional	85 – 100
A	4	Excellent	76 – 85
B+	3	Very Good	66 – 75
B	2	Good	61-65
C+	1	Satisfactory	56 – 60
C	0	Definite pass	50-55
D	0	Fail	0 – 49

Grades A+ to C are passing grades, i.e., the work is considered satisfactory for the successful completion of the course or unit, and justifies moving on to the next course or level.

Grade D means that the work is not considered adequate for successful completion of the course or unit.

#### **Examination Process and Procedure**

The examination process and procedure are an important part of the assessment process in the School. Unfortunately, students pay very little attention to this until they fail an examination. This is when they then begin to ask what this or the other examination comments means. In addition, they tend not to be aware of what the continuous assessment is and what the final

assessment is and their weighting. Sometimes by the time they learn about these things they may already be on their way to a failed grade.

It is worth your while to learn about the examination process and procedures, don't rely on your friends or your class representative or your union representative to tell you this.

The teaching system at the University divided into semester. A semester is a 6months period of teaching and learning. This period is about 20 weeks. The University produces a University Calendar which can guide you through the main events of each semester. The calendar is available at the University web site which is [www.unilus.ac.zm](http://www.unilus.ac.zm). A semester has about 15 weeks of teaching and 4 to 5 weeks of assessment. The assessment or examination takes two forms. The continuous assessment which makes up 30 to 40% of the total assessment. The Final assessment which makes up 60 to70% of the total assessment mark. The continuous assessment will be consisted of assessment of assignments, quizzes or practical's given to students during the course of the semester. These will appear on your computer web site portals as CAs. The final assessment is the end of semester examination. The two will comprise your total assessment at the end of the assessment. You should pass your continuous assessment, because when you do not, it is very difficult to pass your final assessment.

The School is not like a secondary school where you play during the term and just try and cram everything at the end and just scrap a pass mark. You cannot be successfully in this simply because the material is too much and the final exam is only a part of the total assessment.

### **Examination Comments**

The end of the semester you will find an examination results script with a final comment on your portal. You will find a list of the course you took in that semester and a grade and or comment against each course. Many students do not know what the comments mean. We have listed some of the common comments and what the mean.

NE= This stands for Not examined this means you did not sit of this course. This is the default comment whenever your results are not entered for this course.

S=This means satisfactory. This is used for a project course which is not graded with a mark. Satisfactory means you have passed the project course.

WP= Withdrawn with permission. This means you fell ill and was allowed not to write the course due to illness or other reasons.

Repeat course=This means you have to repeat the semester and redo all the courses you failed

Repeat semester=This means you have repeated the semester and redo all the courses in that semester.

Repeat and Proceed=This means you care the course or courses you failed and continue into the following semester

### **Progression Criteria**

The School has a set of criteria which determine which students can proceed to the following semester. These are not always clear to students. The comment in the last column on your examine script indicated the decision for you. The following are the common comments

CP=Clear pass. This means you have passed all your course and can proceed to the next semester.

When you fail one course you will have to repeat that course. In the MBChB program in particular it means you cannot proceed to the next semester.

E=Exclude. This means you can no longer continue in the degree program. This will be because you have failed too many courses.

When you fail more than half the courses you are taking you will be excluded from the program.

### **Supplementary Examination**

Some Universities provide Supplementary Examinations. Especially Universities which run an annual or term system. This is intended to provide remediation for students with a bare fail (45% to 49%). The University of Lusaka does not have supplementary examinations because it has a semester system which has already a lot of examinations. Instead the School provides a compensatory pass system. This means any student with a bare pass of 45% to 49%, will automatically be elevated to a pass without the need for an additional examination.

### **Appeals**

There is a provision for an appeal of any course. This is done by obtaining an appeal form from the academic office. This should be filled in and signed by the student stating the grounds of appeal. The form is addressed to the Vice Chancellor. The student is required to pay an appeals fee.

### **Academic Procedures and Processes**

The Student will have a timetable on their portal. This will consist of all the classes they have to attend that semester the location of the class and the lecturer. Each class will have a Class Representative and a deputy Class Representative chosen by the class. The Class Representative will have the contact numbers of all the lecturers and can contact them on behalf of the class for any matters related to academic activities in the course. Students are discouraged from contacting the lecturers directly except through their class.

### **Laboratory Work**

Students are required to do some laboratory work as part of their course work. Students must be familiar with laboratory safety and the requirements for each laboratory. Students are required to wear the UNILUS branded laboratory coat, no other coat is permitted to be used for laboratory work.

### **Student Code of Conduct and Dress**

Students are required to conduct themselves in line with the University code of conduct and dress in a manner appropriate to students learning in a tertiary institution.

### Contact Details

For any queries or additional information contact the Dean of the School of Medicine on email [deanmedicine@unilus.ac.zm](mailto:deanmedicine@unilus.ac.zm) or the Administrative Officer in the school of Medicine.