University of Global Health Equity (UGHE)
Policy on Academic Certificate Numbering, Coding, and Verification

1. Policy Statement

UGHE is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, authenticity, and accountability in the issuance of all academic and professional certificates. This policy establishes clear and consistent procedures for the numbering, coding, issuance, replacement, and verification of all certificates conferred by the University. Security measures are in place to prevent fraud, forgery, or unauthorized reproduction of certificates. Certificates must be of suitable quality, contain complete and accurate information, and reflect duly approved qualifications only. UGHE will not issue certificates for incomplete or unapproved qualifications.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define a standardized and secure system for assigning serial numbers, digital verification codes (QR codes), and authorized issuance protocols for all certificates granted by the UGHE. The objectives are to:

i.   Ensure authenticity and traceability of all academic awards.
ii. Prevent fraudulent duplication or alteration of certificates.
iii. Facilitate efficient verification and audit of credentials.
iv. Support compliance with national and institutional quality assurance and record-keeping requirements.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all:

i.   Undergraduate and postgraduate programs accredited by Rwanda's Higher Education Council (HEC);
ii. Professional academic degrees and postgraduate diplomas conferred by UGHE;
iii. Professional development and continuing professional development (CPD) programs accredited by the HEC or relevant professional councils, such as the Rwanda Medical and Dental Council (RMDC); and
iv. Non-accredited short courses and certificate programs offered by UGHE academic units.

The policy covers the full life cycle of a certificate, from initial issuance to replacement, authentication, and reprinting.

4. Certificate Issuance Authority

i. **Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Certificates** (HEC-accredited) shall be issued solely by the Office of the Registrar, following Senate approval of graduation lists.

ii. **Accredited CPD or Professional Courses** recognized by HEC or RMDC shall be issued by the program-delivery academic unit in collaboration with the Educational Development and Quality Center (EDQC). All such certificates shall bear sequencing numbers generated by the EDQC.

iii. **Non-accredited short courses** shall be issued by the relevant academic units under the oversight of EDQC. All such certificates shall bear sequencing numbers that is to be generated by the EDQC.

5. Signatories:

i. All academic degree certificates must bear the signatures of the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, and Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic and Research Affairs (DVC-ARA), or as determined by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) from time to time. The official titles of the authorized signatories shall be printed on the certificates. Post-nominals will not be used.

ii. The signatures are entered electronically onto the electronic version of the degree certificates by the custodians of their signatures in their respective offices.

iii. In the case of CPD and short-term training certificates, the signatures of the relevant academic unit lead and the program director will be electronically entered on the certificate.

iv. All certificates must be printed and stored securely at the UGHE premises, under the direct supervision of the Registrar's Office.

6. Certificate Numbering and Coding System of certificates issued by the Registrar's office

Each UGHE degree certificate issued by the Registrar's office shall carry a unique serial number structured as follows:

Academic Program	Numbering Sequence
MBBS-MGHD	MBBS/Year/Serial Number
MGHD – Health Management Option	MGHD/HM/Year/Serial Number

MGHD – Gender, SRH Option	MGHD/GSRH/Year/Serial Number
MGHD – One Health Option	MGHD/OH/Year/Serial Number
MGHD – Global Surgery Option	MGHD/GS/Year/Serial Number
MGHD – Social and Community Medicine Option	MGHD/SCM/Year/Serial Number
Masters in Global Nursing Leadership	MGNL/Year/Serial Number
PgCert in Health Professions Education	PgCertHPE/Year/Serial Number
PgDip in Health Professions Education	PgDipHPE/Year/Serial Number
MSc in Health Professions Education	MHPE/Year/Serial Number
PhD in Global Health	PhD/GH/Year/Serial Number

Components of the Numbering and Coding System:
   i.   **Program Code:** Program identifier (e.g., MBBS, MGHD, HPE, MGNL, PhD).
   ii. **Option (when applicable):** Sub-program where applicable GSRH, GS, HM).
   iii. **Year:** 4-digit Year of graduation.
   iv. **Sequential Number:** Three-digit serial number in order of issuance.

7. Certificate Register
   i.   The Office of the Registrar shall maintain a **Certificate Register** in both digital and physical formats. Each entry shall include:
   ii.   Graduate's full name;
   iii. Student ID number;
   iv.   Degree and program title;
   v.   Date of award;
   vi.   Assigned serial number;
   vii. Status (original, duplicate, or reprint); and
   viii. Date of issuance and signatures.
The register shall be password-protected, audited annually, and retained permanently in the University's secure archives.

8. Numbering of certificates issued by other program delivery units.
Each UGHE certificate issued by the program delivery units in collaboration with the EDQC shall carry a unique serial number structured as follows:

Components of the Numbering and Coding system:
i. **Program delivery unit code:** Program identifier (e.g., ExecEd, EDQC, clinical medicine .....)
ii. **Year:** 4-digit Year of graduation.
iii. **Sequential Number:** Three-digit serial number in order of issuance.

9. Security and Verification

All serial numbers shall be encoded into the UGHE Certificate Verification Database. Each certificate will include security features such as QR codes. Graduates, employers, and authorized third parties may verify authenticity through the official UGHE Verification Portal or by written request to the Registrar's Office.

10. Collection of Certificates

Certificates are awarded after the official UGHE Graduation Ceremony, after all university clearance processes are completed. Graduates can collect their certificates from the Registrar's Office during official working hours after graduation.

i. Graduates must present a valid national ID or passport and sign the collection register.
ii. Certificates will not be released to third parties without proper authorization.

If a graduate requests mailing, certificates shall be sent via registered courier to the address provided at graduation. Courier costs and arrangements are the responsibility of the graduate.

11. Authorized Representatives and Power of Attorney

If a graduate is unable to collect their certificate in person, they may authorize another person or a courier to do so on their behalf by submitting:

i. A signed authorization letter including the graduate's full name, ID or passport number, and explicit consent for collection.
ii. Copies of both the graduate's and the authorized person's identification documents.
iii. In cases of legal incapacity or absence abroad, a Power of Attorney duly notarized may be accepted.

The authorized person must present identification and sign the collection register upon receipt. UGHE reserves the right to reject incomplete or unverifiable authorizations.

12. Reprinting of Certificates

Reprinting is only allowed under the following conditions:

i. Correction of an error on the original certificate (e.g., spelling or name mismatch with official student records).
ii. Physical damage to the certificate.

Procedures:

i. The graduate must submit the original certificate with an updated copy of their ID or passport.
ii. The reprint must be authorized by the Registrar and recorded in the Certificate Register.
iii. The original certificate will be stamped **"CANCELLED"** and archived with a copy of the replacement.

13. Replacement of Lost Certificates

A replacement certificate will be issued only if the original is lost. The applicant must:

i. Apply in person or through an authorized legal representative.
ii. Present a valid ID or passport.
iii. Submit a notarized affidavit declaring the loss and confirming the original is no longer in their possession.
iv. Pay the applicable replacement fee.

Applications:

Applications for a duplicate certificate must comply with the following conditions:

i. Applicants must submit an electronic application to the certification office for this purpose via the secure digital certificate system. The application must indicate the reasons for the duplicate certificate.
ii. Payment of the prescribed fees for a duplicate certificate must be made electronically or at the University Finance Office, and the receipt (bank slip, MoMo, or other official evidence) must be submitted together with the application.

Controls:

The following controls must be carried out by the issuer of the duplicate certificate before the duplicate is printed and made available.

i. Confirmation of conferment of the qualification on the applicant is obtained from the program of the specific graduation ceremony at which the certificate was issued and the Student Administration System.

Preparation and issuing:

i. After all the controls regarding the correctness of the information have been performed, a duplicate certificate is prepared in the same manner as other certificates.

ii. The date of issue of the original certificate appears on the duplicate certificate, namely the date of the ceremony during which the qualification was officially awarded.

iii. The following words appear at the bottom of the duplicate certificate: "DUPLICATE – issued on ... (date of issue of the duplicate certificate)". The latter wording also legitimises the signatures on the duplicate certificate, which may differ from the signatures on the original certificate.

14. Name Changes

- An original certificate will not be reissued on grounds of a request for a name change (e.g., name change after graduation).
- An exception is made for any error contained on an original certificate, for which a rectified certificate will be issued.
- The replacement certificate will bear the same serial number as the original, with the word **"DUPLICATE"** clearly printed. All replacement requests shall be recorded in the Certificate Register.

15. Authorized Recipients

Only the following persons may receive UGHE academic certificates:

i. The graduate to whom the certificate is awarded.

ii. A person authorized in writing by the graduate, accompanied by valid identification. If students have fulfilled all requirements but are unable to collect their certificate in person due to circumstances beyond their control (such as illness or residing abroad), they may provide written authorization for a designated representative to collect it on their behalf after the graduation ceremony.

iii. The authorized individual must present proof of this authorization to the University, produce a valid personal identification document, and sign a University-issued form acknowledging receipt of the certificate.

iv. A person holding a notarized Power of Attorney for collection on behalf of the graduate.

v. If a student who complied with the requirements of a qualification passes away before the qualification is conferred, the family of the deceased may, after satisfactory identification, receive the certificate. In such a case, the certificate indicates that it was issued <u>posthumously clearly printed in the certificate</u>.

16. Withdrawal and Revocation of Degree, Diploma, Certificate or Other Qualifications

i.   The Senate of the University may withdraw and revoke any degree, diploma, certificate or other qualification that was awarded,
   - on the basis of a material error on the part of the University, provided that such withdrawal and revocation may only take place within a period not exceeding two years after the conferment concerned; or
   - as a result of a fraudulent or dishonest act in connection with the obtaining of such degree, diploma, certificate or other qualification at any time after conferment.

ii.   The withdrawal and revocation of a qualification is initiated by the relevant School and passed to the DVC-AAR who takes a recommendation to Senate, and in some cases may be initiated by the ELT. Prior to a determination being made, the Registrar or an official in the Registrar office, must on behalf of the Academic Commission:
   - notify the recipient of the qualification concerned that a revocation and withdrawal is being considered;
   - provide the recipient relevant information justifying the intended action; and;
   - provide the recipient with an opportunity to obtain legal or other assistance and to present his or her case in writing and orally.

iii.   The Office of the DVC-Academic and Research Affairs, in formulating its recommendations to the Senate, must record in sufficient detail the written and oral submissions and representations of the recipient. The Senate, in formulating its recommendations, must consider the submissions and representations of the recipient.

iv.   In the event that any degree, diploma, certificate, or other qualification that was awarded is withdrawn or revoked, the Vice Chancellor's Office must inform the Higher Education Council (HEC) so as to amend the UGHE graduates database.

16.   Roles and Responsibilities

i.   The **Registrar's Office** is responsible for generating, numbering, recording, securing, and issuing all academic certificates.
ii.   **Academic Departments** must submit verified graduation lists and student information to ensure accuracy.

iii. **IT Department** is responsible for maintaining the security and accessibility of the digital verification system.

iv. **EDQC** oversees coordination for professional and short-course certificates.

17. Compliance and Audit

Non-compliance with this policy constitutes a breach of institutional procedure and may result in administrative or disciplinary action. Regular internal audits shall be conducted to ensure adherence to security and verification standards.

18. Review and Approval

This policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years by the Registrar's Office and submitted to the Senate for approval. Amendments may be made earlier if necessary, due to regulatory or technological changes.

19. Effective Date

This policy is approved by the Senate of the UGHE, on December 15, 2025.

Version Numbers	Review Date	Changes Made	Next Review Date
v1.0	December 15 2025	Initial	December 2028

Approved by:

Professor Abebe Bekele

Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic Affairs and Research,

University of Global Health Equity