

TANZANIA COMMISSION FOR UNIVERSITIES

PROFILE

2025

INTRODUCTION

A system of higher education was first introduced in Tanzania in 1961 with the establishment of the University College Dar es Salaam as an affiliate of the University of London. In 1963, the University of East Africa was established as a regional university for three East African countries: Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya, with the University College Dar es Salaam, Makerere University College in Uganda, and Nairobi University College in Kenya as its constituent colleges. In 1970, the University College Dar es Salaam was transformed into the present-day University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) following the decision by the three East African countries to establish national universities in each country, leading to the dissolution of the University of East Africa.

Beginning in the late 1980s and continuing through the mid-1990s, Tanzania liberalised its political and socio-economic policies. These reforms led to an increased demand for social services, including higher education. Since then, higher education has experienced exponential growth, including the establishment of private universities. However, the proliferation of higher education institutions was seen as a potential threat to both the quality of the institutions being established and the education provided. In response, the government deemed it necessary to establish a University Regulatory Framework to ensure that this rapid expansion did not compromise the quality of education. Consequently, in 1995, the Higher Education Accreditation Council was established by the Education Act, Cap. 523 of 1995, to regulate the establishment and accreditation of private university institutions in the country.

The fact that HEAC's mandates were limited to private universities was considered unfavourable for the promotion of a viable public-private partnership in higher education, as stipulated in the National Higher

Education Policy of 1999. Additionally, the need for a harmonised higher education system in the country, since quality issues apply to both public and private universities, led to the establishment of the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) in 2005 through the enactment of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania. TCU is mandated to regulate the establishment, registration, and quality assurance of both public and private university institutions in Tanzania.

MANDATES AND CORE FUNCTIONS



The mandates and core functions of TCU are outlined in Section 5(1) of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania. The functions are categorised into three main areas: regulatory, advisory, and supportive.

1) Regulatory Function:



- i) Registration and accreditation of universities to operate in Tanzania;
- ii) Periodic evaluation of universities, their systems and programmes;
- iii) Validation and accreditation of programmes to ensure their credibility; and
- iv) Recognition of university qualifications attained from local and foreign institutions for use in Tanzania.

2) Advisory Function:

Advices the government and general public on:

- i) Higher education issues within and outside Tanzania;
- ii) International issues pertaining to higher education; and
- iii) Programme and policy formulation and also best practices.



3) Supportive Function:

- i) Ensuring the orderly conduct of university operations by enforcing adherence to established standards and benchmarks;
- ii) Coordinate admission of students; and
- iii) Coordinate training and sensitisation in key areas such as:
 - a) Quality assurance;
 - b) University leadership and management;
 - c) Fund raising and resource mobilisation;
 - d) Entrepreneurship skills; and
 - e) Gender mainstreaming.



LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWOK

i) Legal Framework:

There are two major legal instruments that grants the Commission legal mandate and powers to execute its functions.

- a) The Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania; and
- b) The Universities (General) Regulations, G.N. 226 of 2013.



ii) Policy Framework:

- a) Major policy directives on higher education are informed by the Education and Training Policy 2014 (2023 Edition); and
- b) Policy guidelines issued to universities and the general public by the Commission from time to time on all matters related to the provision of higher education in Tanzania.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the years, TCU has achieved notable milestones that have contributed to the development of the higher education sub-sector in the country. These achievements include:

- i) Advancement of quality assurance practices in university institutions in Tanzania.
- ii) Increased access to university education through the growth in the number of university institutions, from 1 in 1961 to 50 to date.

Distribution of university institutions in Tanzania by ownership

Category of university institution	Ownership		Total
	Public	Private	
Full-fledged universities	12	21	33
University Colleges	7	10	17
Total	19	31	50

- iii) Registration of Overseas Student Recruitment Agencies.
- iv) Development of online systems for TCU operations, such as:
 - a) Universities Information Management System (UIMS);
 - b) Programme Management System (PMS);
 - c) Foreign Awards Assessment System (FAAS); and
 - d) No Objection Certificate System (NOCS).
- v) Development of programme benchmarks, such as:
 - a) Benchmarks for the Doctor of Medicine (MD)/ Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS/MChB) Programme;
 - b) Benchmarks for Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programme;

- c) Benchmarks for Bachelor Degree Programmes in Engineering;
 - d) Benchmarks for Bachelor Degree Programmes in Information and Communication Technology; and
 - e) Benchmarks for Bachelor Degree Programmes in Tourism and Hospitality.
- vi) Development of quality assurance tools, such as:
- a) Training Programme for Preparing University Leaders in Tanzania, 2023.
 - b) Guidelines for Conducting Tracer Studies by University Institutions in Tanzania, 2023.
 - c) Standards and Guidelines for Postgraduate Studies, Research and Innovation, 2023.
 - d) Guidelines for Online and Blended Delivery Modes of Courses for University Institutions in Tanzania, 2022.
 - e) Standards and Guidelines for Academic and Technical Staff Disposition in Universities offering Health Profession Programmes in Tanzania, 2020.
 - f) Handbook for Standards and Guidelines for University Education in Tanzania, 2019.
 - g) Principles and Guidelines for Licensing Overseas Students Recruitment Agencies and Issuance of a No Objection Certificate, 2019.
 - h) Principles and Guidelines for Evaluation of Foreign Awards and Recognition of Qualifications, 2019.
 - i) Evaluation of Foreign Awards and Recognition of Qualifications: Appeal Procedures, 2020.



- vii) Enhanced capacity-building training and support, such as:
- a) Training workshops on university leadership and management;
 - b) Pedagogy trainings;
 - c) Development of market driven curriculum;
 - d) Workshops on admission matters;
 - e) Development of admission and data management systems;
 - f) Peer reviewers' workshops;
 - g) Development of programme benchmarks;
 - h) Consultative workshops with Professional Registration Bodies;
and
 - i) Public awareness programmes

- viii) Strengthened collaborations with regional and international agencies and networks, such as:
- a) Inter-Universities Council of East Africa (IUCEA);
 - b) Association of African Universities (AAU);
 - c) The Association of Common Wealth Universities
 - d) South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA);
 - e) East African Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN);
 - f) African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN);
 - g) International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA);
 - h) Commission for University Education (CUE – Kenya);
 - i) National Council for Higher Education (NCHE – Uganda);
 - j) Higher Education Council (HEC – Rwanda);
 - k) Commission for Higher Education (CHE – South Africa);
 - l) National Council for Higher Education (NCHE – Malawi); and
 - m) Higher Education Commission (HEC – Mauritius).
- ix) Strengthened collaborations with national professional and registration bodies, such as:
- a) Medical Radiology and Imaging Practitioners Council (MRIPC);
 - b) Traditional and Alternative Health Practitioners Council (TAHPC);
 - c) Veterinary Council of Tanzania (VCT);
 - d) Information and Communication Technologies Commission (ICTC);
 - e) Council for Legal Education (CLE);
 - f) Engineers Registration Board (ERB);
 - g) Medical Council of Tanganyika (MCT);
 - h) Health Laboratory Practitioners Council (HLPC);
 - i) Architect and Quality Surveyors Registration Board (AQRB);
 - j) Tanzania Nursing and Midwifery Council (TNMC);

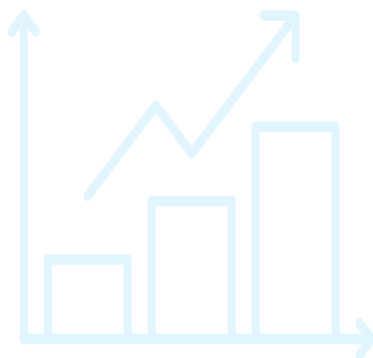
- k) Environmental Health Practitioners Registration Council (EHPRC);
 - l) Pharmacy Council;
 - m) Optometry Council;
 - n) National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET);
 - o) National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA);
 - p) Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB); and
 - q) Zanzibar Higher Education Loans Board (ZHELB).
- x) Hosted, chaired, and participated in various international committees, conferences, and exhibitions, including:
- a) Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa (HAQAA);
 - b) African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN);
 - c) SADC Technical Committee of Certification and Accreditation (TCCA);
 - d) African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF);
 - e) IUCEA Conferences;
 - f) IUCEA Quality Assurance Committee;
 - g) IUCEA Common Higher Education Committee;
 - h) Higher Education Forum; and
 - i) Higher Education, Science and Technology Exhibitions.
- xi) Major projects implemented include:
- a) Tanzania Internationalisation Strategies for Higher Education (TANZIE) Project;
 - b) Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project;
 - c) Education and Skills for Productive Jobs Programme (ESPJ) Project; and

d) Carnegie Project on Human Resource Capacity Building for Institutional Management in Tanzanian Universities.

TCU extends its profound gratitude to stakeholders and development partners for their incredible cooperation and support. We acknowledge and greatly value your invaluable contributions to TCU's success. We remain grateful for your patience during times of unforeseen challenges. TCU is committed to fostering continued collaboration in the coming years.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

TCU's agenda is to continue supporting the systematic growth and excellence of university education in Tanzania by advocating for improvements and addressing the challenges that adversely affect university education. Our aim is to enhance accessible, equitable, harmonised, and quality university education systems that produce a competitive human resource base for national development. However, the goal of promoting accessible, equitable, harmonised, and quality university education systems that produce nationally and globally competitive outputs should also be the responsibility of every university in the country.





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