



UNIVERSITY of
RWANDA



POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR VACCINES, IMMUNISATION AND HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (UR EAC RCE-VIHSCM)

STUDENT GUIDE



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WELCOME



Dear Student,

Welcome to the East African Community Regional Centre of Excellence for Vaccines, Immunization, and Health Supply Chain Management (EAC RCE-VIHSCM) at the University of Rwanda. We are delighted to have you join our postgraduate community.

Your acceptance into one of our programs marks the beginning of an exciting academic and professional journey. Whether you are joining the Master's in Health Supply Chain Management, MSc. in Pharmaceutical Analysis and Quality Assurance, MSc. in Vaccinology, or MSc. in Medical Products Regulatory Affairs, you are now part of a regional hub dedicated to excellence, innovation and impact in vaccines, immunization and health supply chain management (HSCM) systems performance.

This Student Guide is designed to help you understand key procedures, from admission and registration to assessment and graduation and to ensure you can successfully navigate both academic and campus life. We urge you to read it carefully and refer to it for guidance.

At EAC RCE-VIHSCM, we are committed to providing you with a dynamic learning experience that blends rigorous academic content with practical field exposure. Through our blended learning model, dedicated faculty, and collaborative learning environment, you will gain the competencies needed to address healthcare challenges across the East African Community region.

We encourage you to take full advantage of the resources available, digital learning platforms, academic support, research opportunities, and extracurricular activities to make the most of your time here. Equally, we expect each of you to uphold the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and community engagement.

Once again, welcome to the EAC RCE-VIHSCM family. We are proud to have you with us and look forward to seeing your contributions in shaping healthcare performance for our region and beyond.

All the best!





Upcoming EAC RCE-VIHSCM premises, designed for innovation and collaboration

The EAC Regional Centre of Excellence for Vaccines, Immunisation and Health Supply Chain Management (RCE-VIHSCM) was established in 2016 *“to contribute to improved health of the people of the East African Community”* by building supply chain management capacity for EAC health sector personnel and also for being a regional focal point for the introduction and dissemination of innovative and proven procedures in Health Supply Chain Management (HSCM).

The Centre has the following objectives;

- Offering high-quality pre-service and continued professional training to strengthen human resources capacities in the EAC Region;
- Influencing policy improvements for the recognition of health supply chain management profession within the country’s human resource development plans/ structure;
- Achieving excellence in evidence-based research and dissemination of knowledge that informs best practices for HSCM;
- Promoting innovative practices in HSCM in the EAC region;
- Establishing a financially sustainable, well organised and internationally recognised Centre of Excellence;
- Positioning the RCE as the “to go” to institution for technical assistance, consultancy services and hosting international events in the area of vaccines, immunisation and health supply chain management.





University of Rwanda Headquarters

UR EAC RCE VIHSCM Governance

Within the University of Rwanda, the College and the Centre are other levels of governance to serve different purposes. At the national level, the EAC RCE-VIHSCM reports to the University of Rwanda, under the College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS) and to the University of Rwanda Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Research (DVC-AAR) regarding academic programs. Specific governance related matters, however, are handled through other national and regional bodies as established and provided by EAC Partner States.

- **College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS)** - Oversees the quality of academic programs
- **College Academic Council (CAC)** - Responsible for academic affairs, research, and education in the college
- **Internal EAC RCE-VIHSCM Committees**
 - Grievance Redress Mechanism and Student Welfare Committee (GRM)
 - Timetabling and Examination Committee
 - Curriculum and Quality Assurance Committee
 - Research and Innovation Committee
 - Admission, Training, and Scholarships Committee
- **Students' Representatives**

Each class is entitled to a class representative. The representative is nominated by fellow students and serves as a bridge between the class and the Centre. For more information, please refer to the official policies at: <https://ur.ac.rw/?Key-Documents-and-Policies>





Master's Programs

The Master's Programs are delivered using a blended learning approach over two years to cater for in-service professionals. Studies are organized through face-to-face sessions in Rwanda, online off-campus learning, and field/industrial placements offered in different settings and countries. The selection and admission criteria follow the UR postgraduate admission guidelines.

The EAC RCE-VIHSCM offers the following Master's programs.

1. Master's in Health Supply Chain Management (MHSCM)
2. Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Analysis and Quality Assurance (MPAQA)
3. Master of Science in Vaccinology (MVAX)
4. Master of Science in Medical Products Regulatory Affairs (MPRA)

Master's in Health Supply Chain Management (MHSCM)

This program strengthens the skills of professionals working in the health supply chain system aiming to create a regional pool of researchers in Health Supply Chain Management (HSCM) in the region. By the end of the program, the students will have gained technical and managerial skills needed for improved HSCM performance.





Students' Profile and Admission Criteria:

- Prospective students must hold a bachelor's degree with at least an upper second division from a recognised university
- The degree should be in a relevant field of health sciences, biological science, business and administration.
- Have at least one year of working experience in health supply chain management.

Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Analysis and Quality Assurance (MPAQA)

The program aims to equip graduates with high-level knowledge and skills in design, production, quality assurance and quality control (QA&QC), as well as regulatory frameworks governing medicine and vaccine manufacturing. It is customized to support the manufacturing of pharmaceuticals and vaccines.

Student's' Profile and Admission Criteria

- Prospective students for admission into this programme are expected to have a bachelor's degree in any of the fields of; Pharmacy, Chemistry, Life Sciences, Biomedical Laboratory Sciences, Biotechnology
- Hold a bachelor's degree with a GPA of at least 3.25, or an average of at least 70%, and a classification of First Class or Second-Class Upper Division.
- Candidates should be working in academia or research institutions, regulatory bodies, manufacturing industries and quality control laboratories with at least 2 years of experience.
- Candidates may also be required to sit for entry exam in accordance with the UR academic regulations for postgraduate studies.





○ **Master of Science in Vaccinology**

The program aims to provide to academia, researchers, pharmaceutical industries, and policymakers with knowledge and skills needed to better understand the latest research, innovations, technical and commercial challenges of bringing new vaccine therapies to market. The overarching goal is to address public health issues by producing graduates with expertise in vaccine design, production, and manufacture.

Students' Profile and Admission Criteria

- Prospective students are expected to have a bachelor's degree in any of these fields; Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmacology, Human Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Process/Bioprocess engineering/Science, Life Sciences (Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Immunology, Molecular Biology) and Biomedical Laboratory/ Biomedical Sciences.
- Specific admission requirements include having a First class or Second-Class upper division grade and a bachelor's degree with a GPA of at least 3.5/5 or an average of 70%.
- Should be working in academia, research institutions, regulatory bodies, manufacturing industries and quality control laboratories, pharmaceutical companies/establishments, multinational and international organizations. A minimum of two (2) years of related work experience in medical products life cycle are desirable to be admitted in this programme.
- Candidates with a GPA of 3.00/5.0 or average 60% should have at least 3 years' relevant experience in industry (R&D, manufacturing, regulatory bodies).
- Candidates who completed studies outside of Rwanda should obtain an equivalence certificate issued by the Higher Education Council of Rwanda.



○ **Master of Science in Medical Products Regulatory Affairs**

The aim of the MSc. in Medical Products Regulatory Affairs programme is to produce graduates who can apply complex regulatory principles in the regulation of medical products such as medicines, vaccines, medical devices, biologics, cosmetics, and blood products. Graduates of this programme are equipped with the competencies necessary to navigate the evolving landscape of global regulations and apply them to ensure the safety, quality, and efficacy or performance of medical products.

By offering a comprehensive curriculum, integrating regulatory science, ethics, and management aspects, the programme aims to train professionals who can work in the development, approval, market surveillance and control, vigilance and rational use of medical products to ultimately safeguard public health and foster innovation in the healthcare industry.

Students' Profile and Admission Criteria

- Prospective students should hold a bachelor's degree in any of the following fields;
 - Pharmacy, pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmacology, Medicine and Dentistry, Process/Bioprocess, Biomedical engineering sciences.
 - Life Sciences (Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Immunology, Molecular Biology) Biomedical Laboratory Biomedical Sciences, Chemistry, Public Health.
- Specific admission requirements include having a first class or second-class upper division, First/Bachelor's degree with at least a GPA of 3.5/5 or an average of 70% or its equivalent.
- Candidates to be admitted to the programme should be working in academia, research institutions, regulatory bodies, manufacturing industries and quality control laboratories, pharmaceutical companies/establishments, multinational and international organizations.
- Two (2) years of related work experience in medical products life cycle are desirable to be admitted in this programme.
- Have a GPA of 3.00/5.0 or average 60% s
- Have at least 3 years' relevant experience in industry (R&D, manufacturing, regulatory bodies).
- The candidate with qualifications from outside of Rwanda should have the equivalence certificate offered by the High Education Council of Rwanda.



EAC RCE-VIHSCM Postgraduate Program Life Cycle

The EAC RCE-VIHSCM Postgraduate Program is a structured academic journey that begins with a call for applications, includes comprehensive learning, evaluation, and hands-on field experience, and concludes with formal graduation. While competitive scholarships are available to eligible candidates from EAC Partner States, self-paying students are also welcomed. Graduates are encouraged to remain engaged through a vibrant alumni network that supports ongoing collaboration and impact.



○ **Call for applications**

Ahead of the start of each academic year, the Centre launches a call for applications, published on its website and all social media platforms. A professional who wishes to join EAC RCE-VI-HSCM submits an online application specifying the program they wish to pursue. Application documents detailing required information are always shared in the call.

○ **Selection process**

The selection is done through the assessment of submitted documents. Only applicants who meet the entry requirements and who submit all the required documents get selected. The Admission and Scholarships Committee analyzes and approves admission applications and produces a comprehensive report on eligible and ineligible candidates.

○ **Admission notification**

Admission is the stage where applicants are notified of the results of the selection process and informed of their acceptance or rejection status.

○ **Scholarship award**

The EAC RCE-VI-HSCM offers scholarships for students from public institutions in EAC Partner States. Once selected, highly deserving applicants are ranked for scholarship award based on quota system and other relevant criteria and successful applicants immediately notified.

○ **Tuition fees**

The scholarship funding covers studies, airfares, stipends, health insurance, and tuition fees. Detailed scholarship conditions are provided in each call for applications.

○ **Self-sponsored students (Private)**

Self-sponsored students are responsible for covering all costs. Tuition and other fees are due on the first day of the academic year. The Centre provides detailed information to the applicants during the admission process.

○ **Registration**

- Application documents as availed on the website ur.ac.rw
- The registration is done online in the first fifteen (15) days of the first semester of each academic year
- Registration fees are deposited at the account of the College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS) opened in the Bank of Kigali and can be paid at any branch
- If the registration requirements are not followed, enrolment is instantly revoked at any point throughout the academic year.
- Students' identity cards are issued during this period.

○ **Equivalence**

Students who completed their studies outside of Rwanda must provide an equivalent qualification issued by Rwandan competent authorities, namely, the National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA) and the Higher Education Council (HEC), to verify that their credentials meet the Centre's standards.



○ **Requirements to apply for equivalence at the HEC are:**

- A well-filled application form with all necessary information, including an official email for the awarding institution, is available at www.irembo.gov.rw.
- A notarised copy of the final Certificate or Degree for which the equivalence is applied.
- A copy of the admission letter offered by the institution that issued the degree for which equivalence is applied.
- A notarised copy of academic transcripts for each level studied.
- A notarised copy of a Certificate or Degree that served as the basis to be admitted to the level of higher education for which equivalence is requested (In case a foreign Higher Learning Institution awarded this certificate/Diploma or degree, this needs “Equivalence” too),
- A copy of the applicant’s ID card or Passport.
- An admission letter for foreign applicants studying or wishing to study in Rwanda.

○ **Orientation/Induction**

This is done in the first two weeks of the academic year for new students. A rundown of what is done throughout this time is as follows:

- Overview of registration and related requirements
- Overview of digital learning skills and study skills
- Overview of academic regulations
- Get familiar with Rwanda and UR campuses

○ **Learning methodology**

- The academic year is comprised of two semesters, each with six months.
- Module learning is the approach employed.
- Modules are credit-rated; the minimum number of credits is 10, while the maximum is 20, except industrial attachment or field placement modules, which can weigh more than 20 credits.
- Blended (face to face for 2 to 3 weeks, and online). During face-to-face sessions, semester modules are introduced for more practicals module face to face is received for lab based learning activities
- A student’s attendance for face-to-face sessions, practical work/tutorials and assessments, public lectures, and online sessions is mandatory.

○ **Face-to-face sessions**

- Module Introduction and Practical Application: Face-to-face sessions will introduce semester modules and provide hands-on experience for lab-based learning activities.
- Mandatory Attendance: Regular attendance is crucial for all face-to-face sessions, including practical work/tutorials, assessments, public lectures, and online sessions.
- Session Duration: Master’s in health supply chain management and medical Product Regulatory Affairs: Three weeks per semester.
- Masters in Vaccinology and Pharmaceutical Analysis and Quality Assurance: Four weeks per semester.



○ **Online learning**

- Flexible Scheduling: Online sessions will be conducted weekly, typically lasting one to two hours, starting at 6 PM CAT or 7 PM East Africa Time. The module's content and complexity will determine the number of sessions.
- Engaging Activities: A combination of weekly major assignments and interactive e-activities will be uploaded to the Learning Management Information System (LMIS) to enhance student engagement and knowledge retention.

○ **Continuous assessment /Grading and appeals**

- Modules are assessed through continuous assessment tests (CAT) and final examination. Continuous assessments shall contribute 60% to the module's total mark, and the final module examination shall make up 40% of the total mark for the module. The pass mark in all the assessed modules shall be 60%
- In writing, students may appeal against a grade based on a factual error in the marker's comments, demonstrable bias, or maladministration of the process.

○ **Final examination - Assessment and academic honesty**

- Formative assessments evaluate modules through case studies, presentations, practicals, and assignments. Grades and feedback are given before summative assessments, which are completed during teaching weeks and at module conclusion.
- Summative assessments are done at the end of each semester
- Special assessments are provided to individuals who missed but have good reasons upon written request.
- Cheating in coursework, including plagiarism, involves actions like fraud, falsification of results, misrepresentation, and attempting to influence examiners or Centre officers. The TURNITIN antiplagiarism check typically checks 12% %- 25% of work.

○ **Academic progression**

To successfully progress in a postgraduate programme at the University of Rwanda, students must achieve a minimum score of 60% in each module. Each module is assessed through Continuous Assessments (60%) and a Final Exam (40%). Attendance is also crucial, with at least 85% participation in scheduled learning activities required. Progression to the next academic year depends on earning a minimum number of credits, which varies from 100 to 150, depending on the total credits offered. Credits are only awarded for modules passed with at least 60%. Any failed module must be retaken to meet progression requirements.

○ **Academic research and graduation**

- During the first semester of the previous year, candidates confer with their supervisors, draft a project proposal, submit it to their supervisor, and defend it in front of a panel of two lecturers.
- The project defence and presentations are conducted before a panel of at least three trainers, including the supervisor.
- A formal graduation ceremony awards certificates and degrees to candidates who have met all graduation requirements.



Alumna Community

Annually, the EAC RCE-VIHSCM confers degrees upon students from EAC partner states and beyond. These graduates join an alumni forum dedicated to preserving the bonds between the alums and their alma mater.

Key Academic Regulations

i. Postponement/resumption of studies

- For legitimate reasons, students may pause or stop their studies for a year (renewable once), after which they can resume in the semester they left off.
- Resumption of studies is requested formally following suspension or postponement.

ii. Drop out/abscondment.

- A student is deemed a dropout if they miss more than three consecutive months of class without permission or good reason.
- Should students miss class for twelve consecutive months during the academic year without permission or explanation, they are deemed absconders.

Short and Professional Courses

The Centre offers short courses that provide hands-on skills to professionals in the health supply chain from EAC partner states. However, upon request and with the support of the home country's Ministry of Health, staff in the same field from outside the EAC bloc also benefit.

- General Health Supply Chain Management (GHSCM)
- Forecasting and Quantification for Health Commodities
- Immunization Supply Chain Management (iSC)
- Strategic Training Executive Leadership Program (STEP)
- Effective Procurement of Reproductive health products
- Access To Medicines and Supply Chain system Re-design
- Humanitarian Supply Chain Management
- General Health Supply Chain Management: Principles and Practices
- Governance, Leadership, Transparency and Accountability in Pharmaceutical Procurement
- Effective Vaccines Management Assessment (EVMA 2.0)
- Cold-Chain Equipment Management (CCEM)
- Global Standards, Traceability and Verification Systems (GS & TRVST) for Health Products and Technologies
- Vaccinology short course



Social life

The Centre has established a welcoming atmosphere for learning; however, students are expected to contribute actively to campus life.

- **Accommodation:** Students are advised to seek privately owned off-campus apartments or rental units
- **Catering services:** Service providers charge staff and students on a cash basis. However, there are other restaurants near the training areas.
- **Health care:** Students receive health insurance through scholarships or tuition fees, and the campus clinic offers first aid services. For more comprehensive care, students can access public or private medical facilities through agreements with the University of Rwanda.
- **Support in case of disability:** Students with disabilities are advised to promptly contact the Centre's Training Unit to discuss their support needs and make necessary adjustments to suit their requirements.

Extra-Curricular Activities

- **Umuganda:** On the last Saturday of each month, all students must participate in *Umuganda*, a nationwide community service program that runs from 8:00am to 11:00 am.
- **Car Free Day:** A bi-monthly event in Kigali and secondary cities that promotes mass participation in sports activities. During this event, streets are closed to vehicles, allowing people to walk, run, or cycle freely from 8:00 am to 11:00 am.

Our Campuses

- The University of Rwanda has a range of campuses and learning resources where the EAC RCE-VIHSCM delivers its programs. Face-to-face classes are held at the UR Gikondo Campus while programs that require laboratory work are conducted at UR/Huye Campus.

The RCE VIHSCM office is currently housed at the University of Rwanda Gikondo Campus.

More information

<https://ur.ac.rw/?Key-Documents-and-Policies>

<https://ur.ac.rw/documents/academics/GENERAL%20ACADEMIC%20REGULATIONS%20FOR%20POSTGRADUATE%20STUDIES.pdf>

https://ur.ac.rw/IMG/pdf/approved_guidelines_for_application_and_selection_of_research_grants_in_priority_areas_of_vaccines_vihscm.pdf



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Websites and Social Media Platforms

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LinkedIn: EAC RCE-VIHSCM

Facebook: EAC RCE-VIHSCM

YouTube: EAC RCE-VIHSCM

Website: <https://hscm.ur.ac.rw>

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