



# THE LEP BENEFICIARY

## *HANDBOOK*

## OVERVIEW

The LEP is small volunteer nonprofit made up of a program board and executive director. All funds for the program are raised through generous small donations from people hoping to make a difference in the lives of our students. The main Mission of LEP's university scholarship program is to provide a foundation of quality high education to build the future leaders of South Sudan.

"The LEP is lucky to have such wonderful students who further their own paths to becoming productive leaders in South Sudan. The LEP should run smoothly as the volunteers and the students are all working toward the same goal of providing education and improving South Sudan". (A note from the LEP President, Brent McCann).



*LEP President Brent McCann and Executive Director Jok Nhial*

## THE LEP SCHOLARSHIP

The LEP Scholarship is for a university degree in Kenya or Uganda. Scholarship may be used for a degree in any discipline. The LEP strives for the students to attend high quality universities and study in areas that will be beneficial to the leadership and development in South Sudan.

Under the scholarship there is the potential for a partial monthly living stipend. This may include basic needs such as rent and food but will not include non essential expenses such as cell phones, holiday needs, and clothing. A scholarship is a partnership between a student and his or her family and the LEP. It is required of the student to obtain family financial support. The LEP is to help in large part with a student's financial needs while at university but not in entirety.

**Student Evaluation:** Students are to maintain quality marks, participate, and have a quality attendance record while at the university.

## PROGRAM COORDINATION

The Program Scholarship Coordinator (PC) role is to conduct on the ground LEP Program tasks. These include overseeing all aspects of the scholarship program. The position is essentially an elder or superior and s/he should be treated as such. The PC should be accorded respect and corporation at all times. S/he is an extension of the board and as such any issues with disrespect will be seen as a sign of disrespect towards the LEP program as a whole and quick disciplinary action will be taken. The PC is there to run budgeting and transactional aspects of the LEP and also assist students academically and in leadership roles.

It is not the responsibility of the Scholarship Program Coordinator to make sure your needs are met i.e. making sure your grades are on time or to fix your problems. S/he is to be asked for assistance when needed but s/he is not commanded. Students are to first come to the PC with any questions or concerns. The PC is an extension of the Board and Executive Director.

## BLOGS

The LEP program is about leadership and peace. Monthly blogs encourage students to think critically, be informed about world events, write intelligently, and encourages self reflection; all of which help students become peaceful leaders.

*Why blogs?* Blogs help the LEP raise money for the scholarship program. They are a way for donors to see your progression and abilities in school. Some people who donate want to see your improvement.

Your blog needs to be finished on time and unless otherwise stated, the 20th of each month is the deadline. If they need to be revised, they are due back by the 30th of that month. These dates are not negotiable. We don't have time to make long revisions and so the blogs must be fully edited by the students and formatted correctly. Always send your blogs on time.

*Kindly ensure there is no plagiarism on blogs.*

## BENEFICIARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (BMS)

All students will have BMS accounts with their student profile. Students are required to post to the student BMS in a timely manner and will not be notified if items are late. All students should provide the following details:

- ☛ Landlord contact.
- ☛ Your academic calendar and major events in your school.
- ☛ Units registered for per semester.
- ☛ Monthly blogs.
- ☛ Each term grades.
- ☛ Receipts and petty cash reports.

A permanent record of the academic performance of each student will be reflected on the BMS account. It is confidential. Hand in your grades on time as per your academic calendar. You have one month after the end of term to send your grades in. It is the students responsibility to update the Performance Management Tool at the beginning of every term/semester. It is meant to help you track your progress and seek personal development e.g. through workshops, seminars or remedial classes where need be.

Note: Minimal email communication will be used for the LEP leadership to make follow ups.

## POLICIES



### ***1.0 Policy No 01/2014: Student Participation Policy***

The students may form a LEP Scholarship Beneficiary Student Council. This is aimed at making the beneficiary's part of the LEP team, to develop leadership skills in students and to meet LEP's mission on leadership. Beneficiaries will have their own forums through beneficiary meetings. They will elect Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Suggestions or complaints could be channelled through the student leadership. Students are encouraged to seek to solve their own issues. Note that issues are best solved on the ground. Changes to the LEP policy have a better chance if decided as a group.

As the LEP Scholarship Program promotes leadership, it is encouraged that the scholarship students engage in leadership positions and community service. While community service is currently not a requirement it is highly encouraged.

## **2.0 Policy No 02/2014: Bank Account/Transactions Policy**

You are expected to read and carry out all authorisations of finance transactions as noted in this policy. School fees apply to all the students under the program and shall be paid directly to the respective universities bank accounts according to invoice (not fee structure) provided.

Note: If there is ever an issue with the BMS system there are to be emailed directly to the PC. School fees and personal money (for those receiving it) will only be paid after the students meet the following conditions:

- ☛ Invoice for fees is posted in BMS account.
- ☛ Set performance objectives and have it posted in the BMS.
- ☛ Submit school grades in the BMS account.
- ☛ Blogs have been turned in on time.
- ☛ There is no current probation/reprimand issue.
- ☛ Any other requested information e.g. account statement.

Any variation to the above may lead to tardiness of payment. Each payment made/received must be supported by invoice, receipt or other appropriate documentation. For payments made to any students earlier or later than the agreed terms, the Scholarship Program Coordinator will alert the student. Students must acknowledge receipt of fees/personal money received and send in any receipts required on their part. Where a *payment stop* for a student is required e.g. student is on probation, this will be authorised by the LEP President or the Chairman to the Board by

- ☛ Ensuring the Scholarship Program Coordinator receives notification of the stop payment to a student or staff.
- ☛ Receiving confirmation of action from the LEP President of the stop payment.
- ☛ Ensuring the details of the stop payment are sent to the student.
- ☛ Keeping record of this stop in payment.

Prior to any change in request for financial transactions from the PC, the President or Executive Director must authorise the transaction.

## **3.0 Policy No 03/2014: Bank Account Policy**

Each student must have a personal bank account and submit the bank account details through the BMS accounts. Direct bank payments for personal money shall be made to students. No students will receive money through Mobile Money transfer.

Most institutions in Kenya make transactions with Equity Bank. All students are encouraged to submit **Equity bank accounts** to ease payment of fees in a timely manner.

#### **4.0 Policy Number 04/2014: Petty Cash Policy**

- ☛ This policy applies where petty cash is issued to a student. Petty cash will be used to pay for small LEP expenses where payments through accounts payable are not justified or appropriate. This is left to the discretion of the Scholarship Program Coordinator.
- ☛ Petty cash vouchers must be completed and signed before any cash is taken from the petty cash float and must be approved by the Scholarship Program Coordinator.
- ☛ Any balance of monies unspent should be returned either through the LEP bank account or directly to the Scholarship Program Coordinator. This includes payments not made in a reasonable time or when payment has been suspended.

#### **5.0 Policy No 05/2014: Other Financial Needs Policy**

Students are advised to make their requests upon initial scholarship acceptance. The scholarship award and any stipend is for the entirety of the student's schooling. If you have a need outside of the money and schooling provided, This process shall be followed: Send a letter of need (LON) within a reasonable time frame, fill it out, have it signed, dated, and emailed. It shall be no less than 500 words explaining the situation, why the money is needed, and why this situation is exceptional. If it meets an immediate and essential need, it will be taken to the board. If it does not meet the criteria, it will be denied. The board may or may not approve the application.

*Students with 3 reprimands are not eligible for ANY application requests outside of extreme circumstance.*

#### **Don'ts**

- ☛ You are not to ask the Scholarship Program Coordinator, Jok, or Brent individually for requests.
- ☛ Borrowing personal money from staff is not allowed.
- ☛ If an activity is not budgeted for in the yearly budget, it means there are most likely no funds available and the request will not be approved.
- ☛ Always take responsibility for any personal property should it get lost or stolen. *The LEP unfortunately does not reimburse students for it's lost or stolen items.*

#### **6.0 Policy No 06/2014: Stipend Spending Policy**

No more/no less.

- ☛ At the beginning of the semester, some students will be allocated stipend for their personal expenses, depending on their initial agreement with the LEP. The personal money allocated to you shall be credited to your student account except rent one (1) week earlier before resuming your studies.
- ☛ Students are expected to watch their expenses and to handle their personal money responsibly. It is highly recommended that you use an expense tracking sheet to assess and monitor your own spending behaviour and rate yourself on the same.

## **7.0 Policy No 07/2014: LEP Contract Policy**

All terms and conditions of the initial contract between LEP and you as a student must be reviewed and adhered to in accordance with this policy. At no point will the contract be bent to suit your changing interests.

## **8.0 Policy No 08/2014: Correspondence**

All emails sent have to be copied to the Executive Director (Jok Nhial), the Board President, and the PC. Email is the preferable means of communication as it allows the Board, Executive Director, and PC communicate one on one and quickly. With the time difference, phone conversation can be difficult. Please do not be upset if the PC ask for a phone conversation to be emailed. It is requested in the handbook and for the benefit all persons. All correspondence should be done respectfully.

## **9.0 Policy No 09/2014: Requests**

All PC or board requests to students are to be complied with in a timely manner. For example, if s/he asks you for a receipt, 2 to 3 days is appropriate in most cases, 4 to 5 days is not acceptable. Required dates for blogs, grades, and other required items are important and required.

## **10.0 Policy No 10/2014: Pupil Pass/Visa/Passport**

All students are required to have their own passports and pay for them. LEP will pay for the pupil pass where applicable. A new student must provide LEP with copy of passport before s/he is accepted into the scholarship program. However in case of very poor students, there could be an exception to this rule. Continuing students must renew their own passports and visas once these expire.

## **11.0 Policy Number 11/2014: Giving back to the Community Policy**

- ☛ **Year of service:** Upon university completion, a student is obligated to provide one year of educational service in South Sudan. Every student must therefore commit to one year of service as per the signed LEP contract specifically in the Alian area as a teacher in a primary or secondary school or through a non-profit organization selected by the LEP.
- ☛ **Community Service:** Currently not adopted in this handbook but good for you to have it at the back of your mind for the near future.

## **12.0 Policy No 12/2014 Student housing/rent policy**

LEP pays for your rent (if this falls within your contract ). If you want to move out we need notice. The LEP prefers dorms. LEP does not pay more money if students switch housing. LEP will not pay for a house and other things you want.

Rent shall be deposited to the respective hostel/landlord's accounts as provided by the students. Receipts should be scanned and sent via email within 2-3 days and not later than that.

## **13.0 Policy No 13/2014 Internship policy**

- ☛ If internships are required for graduation, students are to find an appropriate internship as required by the university.
- ☛ The LEP may check into internship to see that all requirements are being met.

- ☞ It is not the responsibility of the LEP to find student internships.
- ☞ Effective 1/1/2015 students are required to produce a monthly update during internships instead of required monthly blog.

#### **14.0 Policy No 14/2014 University disruption policy**

If the university term is disrupted by unforeign circumstance i.e. strike, the LEP will continue to support students up to 2 months without classes starting. Time beyond this is left up to the discretion of the board. The LEP will try and work with the students to find a solution at another university.

#### **15.0 Policy No 15/2014: Discipline Policy**

Non-compliance with the policies and procedures stipulated above will result in disciplinary action through reprimands and probations. Notice will come up automatically when e.g. blogs are not handed in on time.

- ✘ A *reprimand* will be sent to inform the student of the issue and corrections needed. Further violations will result in more severe disciplinary action.
- ✘ *Probation* will be imposed for a specific period of time in case of further violations of the discipline policy in any area. This may result in loss or denial of specified privileges for a designated period of time.
- ✘ *Suspension*: In certain circumstances, the Board may impose a suspension until satisfactory improvement is made.
- ✘ *Expulsion*: A decision of expulsion permanently terminates your status as a LEP scholarship beneficiary. Examples of some issues that may result in disciplinary action:
- ✘ *Blogs*: If they are not sent to the Board President by the required date (20th of each month).
- ✘ *BMS*: Students do not post to the student BMS with required materials in a timely manner.
- ✘ *Grades*: Grades are not at an acceptable level.
- ✘ *Support documents*: Failure to provide payment support documents within the stipulated time will attract disciplinary action against the student.
- ✘ *Passport*: Failure to possess legal documents to be in the country you are residing when it is in within your power to do so. Note that this could lead to criminal prosecution that may be pursued by law enforcement authorities in the country of residence.
- ✘ *Gross Misconduct*: Disrespect, lying, cheating, or stealing in any way to anyone associated with the LEP, the university, or elsewhere.
- ✘ *Class Attendance*: Students found to be attending classes infrequently.

Please note: Being part of the LEP and receiving a scholarship to pay for your schooling is a privilege. The LEP reserves the right to change handbook policies or student participation at any time.