



NyotaStar Bible School

Chuo cha Biblia na Afya

Student Handbook

Kitabu cha Mwongozo kwa Wanafunzi



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nyotastar.org

Ugweno, Mwanga District · Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania
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Yaliyomo

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1 Karibu — Welcome

Karibu NyotaStar

Welcome to NyotaStar Bible School. For the next six months this valley will be your home, your classroom and your mission field.

You have come to learn to do what Jesus did: teach, preach and heal. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matthew 9:35, KJV).

This handbook tells you how life at NyotaStar works and why. Please read all of it before you apply. On the application form you will sign that you have read it and agree to live by it. We ask this because a school of forty people living, working and praying together only works when everyone knows what has been agreed.

If anything is unclear, ask before you come. Write to contactus@nyotastar.org.

2 About NyotaStar

Kuhusu NyotaStar

NyotaStar was founded in 2004 in the Ugweno valley of the North Pare Mountains, in Mwanga district, Kilimanjaro region. It began as a centre caring for orphaned children and widows in the valley. Today it is a school that trains others to do that work.

NyotaStar is a supporting ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and part of the LIGHT network of health evangelism training schools.

The campus is 20 minutes from Kifaru, 45 minutes from Mwanga town and an hour and a half from Moshi. On a clear morning you can see Kilimanjaro across the plain.

Our mission. NyotaStar trains men and women to teach, preach and heal as Jesus did, and to carry the gospel, the health message and practical help to the villages of Tanzania.



3 The course

Kozi

The course lasts six months and is residential: you live on campus for the whole time. The dates of each course are announced on nyotastar.org and to the churches.

It has four parts:

- **Bible and evangelism.** This runs through the whole course. You will start preaching in the first weeks, because preaching is learned by preaching.
- **NyotaStar Nuru.** One month of health evangelism on the LIGHT curriculum: caring for common illness, simple natural remedies, nutrition and cooking, and running a health programme in a village church.
- **Field outreach.** Three weeks in the villages: Bible studies in homes, health outreach and practical community work.
- **The land.** You will learn to raise seedlings, mulch, irrigate and plant. The fields feed the school kitchen, so your work on the land is also the food on your plate.

The health training supports medical care and does not replace it. You learn to recognise what needs a clinic, and to send people there.

What you study:

- **Doctrines and prophecy:** the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Daniel and Revelation, the sanctuary
- **Evangelism and preaching:** personal evangelism, giving Bible studies, public evangelism, preaching
- **Christian life and home:** Christian living, the Christian home, true education, stewardship
- **Spirit of Prophecy and history:** the gift of prophecy, church history and Adventist history

Teaching is in **Kiswahili and English**, with translation where it is needed.

The weeks of the Nuru month and of field outreach are announced with each course.

4 Who may join

Nani Anaweza Kujiunga

You must:

- be a **baptised member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church** in good standing
- be able to **read and write** in Kiswahili or English. No school certificate is needed.
- come with a wish to serve God and other people after the course

Under 18? You need your parents' permission to join. A parent must contact the director before you apply.

Married couples and parents — see section 16.



5 How to apply

Jinsi ya Kuomba

1. Fill in the **application form**. It is in English and Kiswahili. Write in block capitals, in black or blue pen.
2. Choose **three referees**: your pastor, a church leader, and one more person who knows you well. Give each of them a **reference form**. They send it to the school themselves, not through you, so that they can write freely.
3. Send your application form to the school **by email** (contactus@nyotastar.org) or **as a clear photo by WhatsApp**. The WhatsApp number is on nyotastar.org.
4. The director will call you for a **short interview by phone**.

The form asks about your church, your schooling, the languages you speak, read and write, your practical skills, and your health. What you write about your health is used only to look after you while you are at the school, and it is kept confidential.

At the end of the form you declare that what you have written is true, and that you have read this handbook and agree to live by it.

Applications close one month before the course begins. You will hear the answer within two weeks of your interview.

Only complete applications are considered: the form, and all three reference forms.

6 What we ask of you

Tunachokuomba

By coming to NyotaStar you agree to:

- give time each day to prayer and Bible study, not only in class
- live by the Bible and the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- attend classes, worship and work on time, and finish the work you are given
- treat work with your hands as part of your education, not a break from it
- keep your body free from alcohol, tobacco and drugs, because it is the temple of God
- keep yourself sexually pure
- be honest in everything: in your words, your assignments and money
- put the good of the whole school family before your own wishes

No pranks or tricks on anyone. Do for others what you would want them to do for you, and look for small acts of kindness instead.



7 Daily and weekly life

Maisha ya Kila Siku

A fixed daily rhythm lets forty people share the same rooms, kitchen and fields without confusion. It also protects your sleep, which you will need.

5:30	Rising bell
5:45–6:30	Personal devotion
6:30–7:00	Morning worship
7:00–7:40	Breakfast
8:00–12:30	Classes
12:30–13:30	Lunch and rest
14:00–17:00	Work on the land and campus
17:00–18:30	Free time, washing
18:30–19:00	Light supper
19:00–19:45	Evening worship
19:45–21:00	Study
21:30	Lights out

The week. Classes run **Monday to Thursday and on Friday morning**. Friday afternoon is for preparing for the Sabbath.

Sunday is for rest: washing clothes, study, free time, and family visits (see section 14).

Prayer meeting is on **Wednesday evening**, in place of evening worship.

You will take turns leading morning or evening worship. A rota will be posted.

Once a month, all students and staff meet together to talk about life at the school: what is going well, what needs to change, and what is coming next.

Language on campus. On campus we speak **Kiswahili or English**, so that everyone understands everyone. In the villages you may use the local language to reach people.

Recreation. Recreation here is not competitive: walks in the hills, singing together, morning exercise, a short walk after meals.



8 The Sabbath

Sabato

The Sabbath runs from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. In Ugweno the sun sets at about half past six all year round.

Where you worship. Some Sabbaths you worship together at the school. On others you go to the churches in the villages nearby. A rota will be posted.

Preparing on Friday. Before sunset on Friday your washing is done and dry, your room is clean, and the kitchen has cooked what can be cooked in advance.

During the Sabbath.

- You attend Friday vespers, Sabbath school and the church service.
- There is no buying or selling, no work on the land, no study for exams, and no secular music or entertainment.
- Sabbath afternoons are for rest, nature, visiting the sick, and outreach.

Some work cannot stop on the Sabbath: serving food, washing dishes, caring for anyone who is sick, and feeding and watering the animals. This is done by rota, and only what is necessary.

9 Meals

Chakula

The school keeps a **vegetarian** diet: no meat or fish. Eggs and milk are served. **No tea or coffee** is served.

Students cook, by rota. Cooking is part of what you learn here, and it is part of the Nuru health training.

Two meals a day and a light supper: breakfast at 7:00, lunch at 12:30, and a light supper at 18:30.

The kitchen cannot prepare special meals for individual students. If you have a food allergy or a medical diet, write it in the health section of your application form so that we can discuss it before you come.

No food in the sleeping rooms. Food brings rats and insects.

Take only your share, so that there is enough for everyone. Eat where meals are served, not in other parts of the campus.

10 Work on the land and around the campus

Kazi

Work is part of the course, not an extra. You learn farming by farming, and the fields feed the kitchen.

Work time is **Monday to Thursday afternoons**, three hours, from 14:00 to 17:00.

The work: the land and garden (seedlings, planting, weeding, irrigation, harvest), the kitchen, caring for the animals, and building and maintenance.

Your supervisor will talk with you about your work every month. If your work remains careless after you have been spoken to, it counts in the decision about your certificate.

Around the dormitories, students share the daily chores by rota: cutting firewood, carrying water, cleaning showers and toilets, cutting grass and keeping the compound tidy.



11 Where you live

Makazi

Men and women sleep in **separate buildings**. Men do not enter the women's building, and women do not enter the men's. This protects everyone, including you.

The school provides a bed and mattress, a mosquito net, a blanket and sheets.

Rooms are **dormitories** for six or more students.

You sleep only in the bed you have been given.

Cleaning. You keep your own room clean every day. Shared rooms, toilets and washing areas are cleaned by rota.

Your roommates. Don't use or borrow a roommate's things without asking. Keep your voice and phone low when others want quiet. Pray for the people you share a room with.

Your belongings. There are no lockable boxes, so keep your money and phone with you. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen belongings. Anything left behind more than 30 days after the course ends will be given away.

Save water and electricity. Switch off lights you are not using, and use water carefully.

12 Dress

Mavazi

Your clothes are part of your witness. People in the villages will judge the message by the messenger.

- Dress modestly, neatly and simply, neither careless nor showy.
- In class, worship and outreach: women wear skirts or dresses well below the knee; men wear trousers and a shirt with a collar.
- On the land: work clothes and strong shoes or gumboots.
- No sleeveless tops, see-through or tight clothing, or low necklines.
- No jewellery or coloured make-up.

If you cannot afford to change your clothes, tell us before you come. We would rather help than turn you away.

Jewellery is not worn, and that includes wedding rings. If you are married, you are welcome to talk to the director about this before you apply.

Grooming.

- Hair is clean and neat, and in its natural colour. Men keep their hair short. A beard, if you wear one, is kept tidy.
- No nail polish or painted lips, for men or women.
- If you have a tattoo, keep it covered where you can.



13 Phones, internet and music

Simu, Intaneti na Muziki

You **keep your phone**, also at night. You can **charge it** at the school, and there is **internet** on campus.

Phones are **switched off in worship**. **In class**, you may use your phone as a Bible or for notes in **airplane mode**. You do not take calls or answer messages in class.

No films, TV series or entertainment videos on campus. Music must be sacred music in keeping with Philippians 4:8. Use earphones, or ask your roommates first.

Use your phone and the internet honestly. Do not open anything you would not open in front of your teacher.

No video or computer games on any device while you are a student.

14 Leaving campus, visitors and family

Kutoka Nje ya Chuo na Wageni

Back by 19:00. Be on campus by seven in the evening (saa 1 usiku), before evening worship.

Nights away need the **director's** permission.

Family visits are on **Sundays**, by arrangement with the director beforehand.

Going home during the course is for **emergencies only**, such as a funeral or serious illness in the family. Talk to the director.

Whenever you leave the campus, sign out and sign back in. We need to know where everyone is, for your safety.

Outings. The school sometimes organises walks and outings. Everything in this handbook applies on outings too. Never go into the forest, the mountains or a river alone, and always tell someone where you are going.

Keeping in touch. The school does not receive post for students. Your family keeps in touch with you by phone.

Absent without permission. A student who is away from the school without permission is at risk of dismissal.

15 Relationships

Mahusiano

Friendships between men and women are welcome in groups. You are here to prepare for a life of service, and a new romance takes the heart away from that. For this reason:

- no dating or courtship during the course
- no pairing off: two people who are always together, away from the group
- any physical relationship leads to dismissal

If two students believe God is leading them towards marriage, they speak to the director. Only with the director's permission may a courtship begin.

16 Married students and families

Wanandoa na Familia

Married couples, and parents who would want to bring a child, are considered **case by case**. Talk to the director before you apply.



17 Studies and the certificate

Masomo na Cheti

Attendance.

- Be on time for class, worship, work and outreach.
- Arriving more than five minutes late counts as an absence. Three late arrivals count as one absence.
- If you cannot come because of illness or an emergency, tell the teacher beforehand if you can.
- Three absences without a good reason lead to a warning. If you miss more than one class in ten without a good reason, you do not pass that subject.

In class. No eating in the classroom. Leave it tidy, and take your things with you. Laptops and phones only for the lesson.

Sleeping in class is not acceptable. If you feel unwell, tell your teacher, who will help you.

Honesty. Copying another person's work or cheating in an exam can lead to dismissal.

How you are assessed. You are assessed in four ways:

- **written tests** in each subject
- **preaching:** your sermons are assessed by your teachers
- **practical exams:** health skills, cooking and work on the land
- **your work and conduct:** work, life in the dormitory, and attendance

Your certificate. When you complete the course you receive **one certificate** from NyotaStar. It covers both the six-month Bible and evangelism course and the NyotaStar Nuru health evangelism month. It is issued by the school itself.

To receive the certificate you must pass your subjects and complete field outreach.

Graduation. The course ends with a **graduation service**. Your family is welcome to come.

18 Field outreach

Huduma Vijijini

For three weeks you go out into the villages: Bible studies in homes, health outreach and practical community work. This is where you practise what you have learned.

Where you stay. Church members in the villages host you. The **school pays your transport** to the villages and back.

Two by two. You work in pairs, under the guidance of an experienced teacher or Bible worker. You go with someone else, never alone.

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." (Luke 10:1, KJV)

A man and a woman do not go out as a pair on their own. This protects you, the people you visit and the name of the school.

Everything in this handbook applies in the villages too: dress, the Sabbath, relationships, phones. In the villages you are the school.

When someone is sick, you help them to a clinic. The health training supports medical care and does not replace it.

Books and media. Before you hand out any books, tracts, CDs, videos or flash drives, the staff must approve them.



19 Health

Afya

What you write about your health on the application form is used only to look after you while you are here. It is kept confidential. **No separate medical form is needed.**

Health cover. You are covered through **NHIF**, paid for from the TSh 400,000 you send before the course (see section 20).

If you fall ill, tell the director straight away. You will be taken to the **nearest dispensary in the valley**. For anything more serious, you go to **Mwanga District Hospital**.

For small complaints the school gives first aid and simple natural remedies. The school has no doctor and is not a hospital.

Medicines you take every day: bring enough for six months.

20 Money

Pesa

There are no course fees. Your teaching, your bed and your meals are provided. They are paid for by people who support the school.

You send TSh 400,000 before the course. It is for your teaching materials, your health cover and your own use. The school holds it for you and spends it as those costs come up. **It is your money, not a fee.**

Travel is your own. You pay your own journey to the school and home again. If you need help with the journey, tick the box on the application form and tell us.

If you leave early, for whatever reason, whatever has not been spent is **given back**: to you, or to the person who sent the money for you. You will need it to travel home.

Your statement. There is no fixed amount for pocket money. The school keeps a record of what is spent on your materials and your NHIF cover, and what remains is yours to use.

Sending the money. The TSh 400,000 must arrive **two weeks before the course**, by bank or mobile money. The details come with your acceptance letter.

You can ask at any time to see what has been spent from your money, and on what.

Do not borrow money from staff or from visitors, whether Tanzanian or from abroad. If you are in need, of money or anything else, talk to the teacher responsible for you, and only to them.

21 School property and tools

Mali ya Chuo na Vifaa

Tools are signed out and returned clean by the end of the day. A tool left in the field rusts or disappears, and then someone else has nothing to work with.

Don't nail or stick anything to walls or furniture. Don't move furniture.

Damage. If you damage something through carelessness, you pay **up to half** of the repair cost.

The school vehicle. You do not drive it without permission and a valid driving licence.



22 Things not allowed

Vitu Visivyoruhusiwa

These are not allowed on campus, on outreach, or anywhere while you are a student:

- alcohol, tobacco, bangi or any other drug
- tea, coffee and other drinks with caffeine
- weapons of any kind
- pornography
- charms, amulets or any object used in witchcraft (*hirizi, vitu vya uchawi*)

Bringing or using any of these things leads to immediate dismissal.

23 When things go wrong

Nidhamu

We want to help you stay, not to find reasons to send you away. When a student goes against what has been agreed, we begin with a conversation and prayer.

1. First, at least two spoken warnings. Each is recorded.
2. If nothing changes, a written warning from **the director and the staff committee**.
3. If nothing changes after that, **the director and a committee of staff** decide together whether you leave the course.

Immediate dismissal. For serious wrongs, the steps above may be skipped: violence, sexual misconduct, theft, alcohol or drugs, any of the things in section 22, or harming a child or a vulnerable person.

Appeal. If you are dismissed, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed by the **Seventh-day Adventist district pastor** for the area. Write to him **within 7 days** of the decision.

24 Raising a concern — and keeping everyone safe

Kutoa Malalamiko na Ulinzi

You have the right to be safe here. If someone treats you badly or you see something wrong, tell us. No student will be punished for raising a concern honestly.

You can speak to:

- the director: _____
- a woman on staff, for any concern a woman may prefer to raise with a woman: _____
- someone outside the school's daily leadership, if your concern is about a staff member: _____
phone: _____

If a crime may have happened, the school will help you report it to the police, and will not keep it quiet to protect its name.

No staff member or student may be alone behind a closed door with a child, or with a student of the opposite sex.



25 Photographs

Picha

On the application form you can agree to this:

"Photographs of me taken at the school may be used on its website and printed material. I may withdraw this at any time in writing."

If you do not tick it, we will not use photographs in which you can be recognised. If you tick it and later change your mind, write to the director, and we will stop using them.

Please do not post photographs of other students or of people you visit in the villages without asking them first.

26 After the course

Baada ya Kozi

The course prepares you for service in your church and community. The school does not promise you a job afterwards.

Where it can, the school puts graduates in touch with churches and ministries looking for workers.

27 Coming to NyotaStar

Kufika NyotaStar

Getting here. You pay your own travel (see section 20). From Moshi it is about an hour and a half to the school. **When you reach Mwanga, call the school.** We will tell you exactly where to get off the bus.

Arrival day. Arrive **the day before classes begin, by 16:00**, and report to the director.

Please don't arrive before arrival day. Rooms are not ready before then.

What to bring.

- Bible (Kiswahili and, if you have one, English), and your Spirit of Prophecy books
- notebook, pens
- a pillow
- clothes for class and worship, work clothes, strong shoes or gumboots
- a warm jumper — nights in the Pare mountains are cold. Bedding is provided (see section 11).
- soap, towel, bucket, torch
- your regular medicines for six months
- your identity card and **two passport photos**, to hand in on arrival

What not to bring. Valuables you don't need, a radio or TV, and anything listed in section 22.

International students. Contact the school before you apply, to talk about the permit you will need.



28 Your agreement

Makubaliano Yako

When you tick the box on the application form, you are saying:

"I have read the whole of this handbook. I understand it, and I agree to live by it while I am a student at NyotaStar."

If there is anything you cannot agree to, talk to us before you apply.

On arrival you sign the commitment below and hand it to the director.

Commitment · Ahadi

I have read this handbook, and I agree to live by it while I am a student at NyotaStar.

Name

Signature

Date