

## History and Background

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The Department of Communication Skills and Studies, which houses the Communication skills Course, dates back to 1990s with the advent of the 8-4-4 system of education. The Communication Skills project was established as result of an agreement between the Government of Britain (ODA) and Kenya for the setting up of a Communication Skills Course for the 8-4-4 students who were joining the National Universities for the academic year 1990-1991.

The Communication skills department at University of Nairobi has since then held the sole responsibility of Managing and administering the Communication Skills program. The Department plays a very pivotal role in teaching Communication Skills to Students taking all courses in the University. It is staffed with highly qualified staff in Language, Communication Skills, General and Applied Linguistics. The British Council sponsored some members of staff for degree courses and seminars in highly recognized British Universities amongst them were University of Leeds, Lancaster University, University of Reading, Birmingham; while others were highly trained by our prestigious local Universities.

The Communication Skills Department serves the role of a fully-fledged department and therefore has a significant role to play in the university's organizational framework. Hence the Unit has enriched and broadened its program. These program intersects with the UoN's overall mission of preparing students for academic pursuits, professional development, enhanced personal lives, and responsible global citizenship. At the centre of its focus is the enhancement of student's academic and professional competence in communication in a multicultural setting.

The curriculum for communication Skills has been subjected to regular review to reflect an inter disciplinary and market orientation in keeping with the needs of students in various university faculties and departments. It is a course offered to first year students and yet its impact is felt even after students have left the university to join the job market.

Among its many strengths as highlighted in the strategic plan is its focus on the development of the communicative skills and competence of students as part of scholarly and professional competence. The course focuses on competency in writing research papers and documenting sources, Academic, Professional and technical writing skills, reading skills for academic purposes, information science, report writing, proposal writing, CV writing oral presentation and public speaking skills.

### Department of Communication Skills and Studies: Chairpersons 1990-2013

[Dr Charles B. Oduol \(1990 - 2004\)](#) [8]

[Mrs Mary A. Okebe \(2004 - 2013\)](#) [9]

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