



Enhancing Employability of Accounting Graduates in Uganda
and Nigeria by Integrating Employability Skills into
Accounting Education using a Work-Integrated Learning
(WIL) Approach (DESIRED)

Project No. 101228707No



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European Union

ACTIVITY REPORT

2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference Makerere University Business School (MUBS)



Participants at the 2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference – ADB Theatre 2, MUBS, 22nd April 2026

EVENT	2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference
THEME	"Building a Tax-Alert Generation: Insights and Opportunities"
DATE	22nd April 2026
VENUE	ADB Theatre 2, Makerere University Business School (MUBS)
SPONSOR	The DESIRED Project
ORGANIZER	Makerere University Business School (MUBS)
PREPARED BY	ISALE EZRA VICE PRESIDENT MUBS TAX SOCEITY

1.0 Introduction

The 2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference was held on **21st April 2026** at **ADB Theatre 2, Makerere University Business School (MUBS)**. The Conference was organized by the MUBS TAX SOCIETY with support from the DESIRED Project, the conference brought together students, academic staff, industry practitioners, and representatives from peer universities to explore timely issues at the intersection of taxation, financial literacy, and professional development.

The conference was themed "**Building a Tax-Alert Generation: Insights and Opportunities.**" This theme reflected the growing recognition that Uganda's future economic competitiveness depends significantly on nurturing a generation of young professionals who are not only technically proficient in taxation but are also aware of their roles as taxpayers, advisors, and advocates for fiscal transparency.

The event was conducted in line with Activity 4.3 of Work Package 4 of the DESIRED Project, which focuses on Industry Engagements and Employer Relationships Building. It reinforced the project's broader objective of strengthening Work Integrated Learning (WIL) approaches within Accounting Education by bridging the gap between academic instruction and professional practice.

The conference also drew participation from representatives of university tax societies and peer institutions, including **UCU Tax Society, Victoria University, and Nkumba University**, underlining the regional relevance and collaborative spirit of the initiative.



A speaker addresses participants at the 2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference

2.0 Objectives of the Conference

The conference was designed to advance both student professional development and institutional capacity in alignment with the DESIRED Project's Work Integrated Learning objectives. Specifically, the conference sought to:

- Cultivate a tax-aware culture among young Ugandans and equip students with an understanding of their civic and professional responsibilities in the tax ecosystem.
- Equip students with practical strategies for building competitive careers in taxation, drawing on insights from leading professional services firms.
- Promote financial literacy as a foundational competency for future accounting and tax professionals.
- Provide students with actionable guidance on building professional networks within the taxation field.
- Challenge prevailing misconceptions about tax careers and inspire students to consider taxation as a rewarding, dynamic, and intellectually stimulating profession.
- Strengthen industry–academia linkages through structured engagement between students and experienced practitioners from the Uganda Revenue Authority,

KPMG, Crossline Management Solutions, Capital College of Accountancy, and Deloitte Uganda.

- Contribute to the institutionalization of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) by embedding periodic professional engagement events within the accounting education framework at MUBS.

3.0 Overview of Conference Presentations

The conference featured five thematic presentations delivered by experienced professionals from diverse sectors of the taxation and accounting profession. Each presentation was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session, enabling students to engage directly with speakers, seek career guidance, and deepen their understanding of practical professional realities.

3.1 Developing a Tax-Aware Culture among Young Ugandans

Presenter: Ms. Hasfah – Supervisor, Tax Education, Uganda Revenue Authority (URA)

Ms. Hasfah opened the conference with a compelling presentation on the importance of cultivating tax awareness among Uganda's youth. She highlighted the critical role of voluntary tax compliance in driving national development and underscored the responsibility of young professionals to champion a culture of tax integrity in both their personal and professional lives.

The presentation outlined URA's strategic tax education initiatives targeting young Ugandans, including outreach programed in tertiary institutions and community-based tax literacy campaigns. Ms. Hasfah emphasized that an informed citizenry is essential for broadening the tax base and reducing the country's dependence on external financing.

The Q&A session generated significant interest, with students raising questions about URA's graduate recruitment processes, tax education programs, and how they can contribute to national tax compliance efforts while still at university.



Students engage actively during the Q&A session

3.2 Standing Out Early: How Students Can Build a Competitive Edge for Careers in Tax

Presenter: Ms. Jemimah Nanziri (Senior Tax Manager, KPMG East Africa)

Ms. Nanziri delivered a highly practical and motivating presentation on how accounting and taxation students can distinguish themselves in a competitive job market. Drawing on her experience at one of the world's leading professional services firms, she outlined the key attributes that employers seek in entry-level candidates, including analytical rigour, professional communication, adaptability, and a genuine passion for the profession.

She provided actionable advice on how students can leverage internships, professional certifications such as CPA and CTA, academic excellence, and extracurricular involvement to build a compelling professional profile. Ms. Nanziri also spoke candidly about her own career journey, offering students a relatable and inspiring perspective on navigating the path from university to a senior role in a global firm.

During the Q&A session, students sought guidance on KPMG's internship and graduate recruitment processes, the skills most valued by international firms operating in Uganda, and how to balance professional certification with academic studies.

3.3 Taxation and Financial Literacy: Empowering the Next Generation

Presenter: Ms. Claire (Crossline Management Solutions)

Ms. Claire's presentation addressed the intersection of taxation and financial literacy, arguing that the two are inseparable competencies for the modern accounting professional. She explained that many businesses and individuals fail to comply with tax obligations not out of willful evasion, but due to a fundamental lack of financial literacy, including an inability to maintain proper books of account, understand cash flow, or interpret financial statements.

She outlined how accounting professionals can serve as catalysts for change by educating their clients and communities on the basics of financial management and tax compliance. The presentation also highlighted the growing demand for tax advisory services among Uganda's rapidly expanding small and medium enterprise (SME) sector, presenting significant career opportunities for well-prepared graduates.

The Q&A exchange explored practical strategies for engaging SME clients, the role of digital financial tools in improving compliance, and how Crossline Management Solutions supports businesses in navigating the Ugandan tax environment.

3.4 Building a Professional Network in Taxation: Tips and Strategies

Presenter: CPA Baron Ariho – Capital College of Accountancy

CPA Baron Ariho delivered an engaging and practical session on the art and science of professional networking within the taxation field. He emphasised that technical competence alone is insufficient for career advancement and that building meaningful professional relationships is a critical strategic skill for young professionals.

CPA Ariho outlined practical networking strategies including participation in professional associations such as the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Uganda (ICPAU) and the Chartered Institute of Taxation, attendance at industry conferences and events, and the effective use of digital platforms such as LinkedIn to build a visible and credible professional presence.

He also spoke about mentorship, encouraging students to proactively seek out experienced professionals who can provide guidance, open doors, and offer honest feedback on their professional development. The Q&A session generated animated discussion on how students can initiate networking conversations and sustain professional relationships over time.

3.5 Is Tax Boring? Debunking the Myths about Tax Careers

Presenter: Mr. Stuart Mulabi – Senior Manager, Deloitte Uganda

Mr. Stuart Mulabi delivered what was widely regarded as one of the most engaging sessions of the conference, directly challenging the common perception that tax is a dry, repetitive, and uneventful career path. Through a series of compelling real-world examples, he demonstrated that taxation is, in fact, a dynamic, intellectually stimulating, and commercially significant profession that sits at the heart of business strategy and government policy.

Mr. Mulabi highlighted the diversity of career pathways available within taxation, from corporate tax planning and transfer pricing to international tax advisory and dispute resolution. He also touched on the evolving landscape of digital taxation, emerging challenges in cross-border transactions, and the growing importance of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) considerations in tax practice.

The presentation concluded with an energetic Q&A session in which students engaged enthusiastically with questions about life at Deloitte, the skills most valued in tax professionals, and opportunities for internships and graduate roles within the firm.



Exhibition area featuring DESIRED Project and partner organisation banners

4.0 Participation and Engagement

The 2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference attracted strong and diverse participation from Taxation and Accounting students at MUBS, alongside representatives from peer institutions. The conference was attended by student representatives from the UCU Tax Society, Victoria University, and Nkumba University, reflecting the growing regional profile of the DESIRED Project's activities and the cross-institutional appeal of the conference theme.

Student engagement throughout the event was exceptionally high. Participants demonstrated a strong level of professional curiosity and enthusiasm, contributing meaningfully to the Q&A sessions following each presentation. The range and quality of questions posed to speakers indicated that students had engaged thoughtfully with the content and were actively connecting it to their own academic and career aspirations.

The most frequently raised topics during the interactive sessions included:

- Pathways and requirements for professional certification through CPA and CTA programmes.
- Strategies for securing internships and graduate roles at leading firms including KPMG, Deloitte, and URA.
- How to effectively build and maintain professional networks while still in university.
- Career opportunities available within both the public sector (URA) and private tax advisory firms.
- The role of digital tools and technology in transforming tax compliance and advisory services.

The diversity of institutions represented, as well as the depth of student participation, affirmed the relevance of the conference as a structured Work Integrated Learning intervention and underscored its value in advancing the DESIRED Project's objectives.

6.0 Outcomes and Impact

6.1 Improved Practical Understanding

Students gained a significantly broader and more applied understanding of taxation practice across multiple domains, including tax education and compliance, career development in professional services, financial literacy, professional networking, and the diversity of career pathways available within the profession.

6.2 Enhanced Career Awareness

The conference substantially increased students' awareness of career opportunities within both the public and private sectors of the tax profession. Exposure to professionals

from URA, KPMG, Deloitte, Crossline Management Solutions, and Capital College of Accountancy broadened students' understanding of the range of roles available and the qualifications required to access them.

6.3 Strengthened Industry–Academia Linkage

The conference reinforced collaboration between MUBS and key industry stakeholders by creating a structured platform for direct and sustained engagement with experienced practitioners. This supported the institutionalization of accounting education–industry engagement, a core objective of the DESIRED Project.

6.4 Cross-Institutional Collaboration

The participation of student representatives from UCU Tax Society, Victoria University, and Nkumba University promoted peer learning and cross-institutional collaboration, extending the reach and impact of the DESIRED Project's WIL activities beyond MUBS.

6.5 Increased Professional Confidence

Students reported feeling better informed, more motivated, and more confident about their career prospects following the conference. Direct engagement with senior professionals from leading organizations contributed to improved self-efficacy and a clearer sense of direction in their professional development.

7.0 Challenges Encountered

The conference was successfully conducted; however, the following challenges were noted:

The breadth and diversity of topics covered meant that the time available for in-depth exploration of each subject area was limited. Several students expressed a desire for more extended engagement with individual speakers beyond the allocated Q&A sessions.

The high level of student enthusiasm and participation at times necessitated facilitation to manage the volume of questions and ensure equitable engagement across all attendees.

These challenges reflected the strong demand for practical, industry-oriented learning experiences among students and highlighted the need for follow-up engagements, mentorship initiatives, and more targeted workshop-style sessions.

8.0 Recommendations

Based on the outcomes of the conference and the level of student engagement, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Establish structured follow-up workshops and masterclasses with individual speakers to allow for deeper exploration of specific topics such as digital tax compliance, professional certification pathways, and internship preparation.
- Introduce a formal mentorship programme linking students with professionals from the participating organizations, facilitating sustained guidance and career support beyond individual conference sessions.
- Strengthen institutional partnerships between MUBS and participating organizations including URA, KPMG, Deloitte, Crossline Management Solutions, and Capital College of Accountancy to formalize internship pipelines and expand experiential learning opportunities.
- Extend the reach of future conferences to include additional peer universities and student tax societies, building on the cross-institutional participation achieved at this year's event.
- Institutionalize the Annual MUBS Tax Conference within the academic calendar as a recurring flagship event, ensuring sustained momentum in industry–academia engagement and WIL delivery.

- Explore the introduction of simulation-based tax exercises and case competitions as complementary WIL activities to deepen practical competence in taxation practice.

9.0 Sustainability and Way Forward

To ensure the long-term impact of the Annual MUBS Tax Conference, it is recommended that the event be formally integrated into the academic programme as a regular, institutionalized activity supported by the Faculty of Commerce. Embedding the conference structurally within the academic calendar would strengthen the continuity of industry–academia collaboration and ensure that successive cohorts of students benefit from structured professional engagement.

Student associations and tax societies, including those from UCU, Victoria University, and Nkumba University, represent strategic platforms for sustaining professional discourse, peer learning, and networking beyond formal conference events. Continued support from the DESIRED Project in facilitating and resourcing these experiential learning initiatives would further consolidate the gains achieved.

10.0 Conclusion

The 2nd Annual MUBS Tax Conference themed "Building a Tax-Alert Generation: Insights and Opportunities" was successfully conducted and made a significant contribution to the professional development of accounting and taxation students at Makerere University Business School. Supported by the DESIRED Project and co-funded by the European Union, the conference brought together five distinguished speakers from the Uganda Revenue Authority, KPMG East Africa, Crossline Management Solutions, Capital College of Accountancy, and Deloitte Uganda, alongside student representatives from UCU Tax Society, Victoria University, and Nkumba University.



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