

University Guide



Adapting to university life

Unemployment. Youth unemployment is one of the biggest problems government is grappling with.

BY JOAN SALMON

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One of the main reasons that form a successful and happy university experience is the ability to adapt to university environment easily.

To some students, being at university are the best days anyone will ever have in their life. However, just like any new environment, transitioning is crucial if one is to enjoy and benefit from their time at the university.

"The world in secondary school is different from that at university. Therefore, there is a need to study the social-political environment of the university you have been admitted to," Mr Mandy Fagil, an educationist says.

He adds: "You could also go extra mile to study the people that come out of that university because their character will help in painting a picture of what will be expected of you. This is your new family so knowing the dynamics of the place is important if you are to thrive."

Mr Mandy says students need to ask themselves if they are ready to get that specialised education.

"This education leads to a specialisation and you must be ready to take it on if you are to succeed. Your readiness is measured in your commitment to attend lectures, going the extra mile to read more than is found in your lecture notes for better understanding, and taking time to prepare for your lessons".

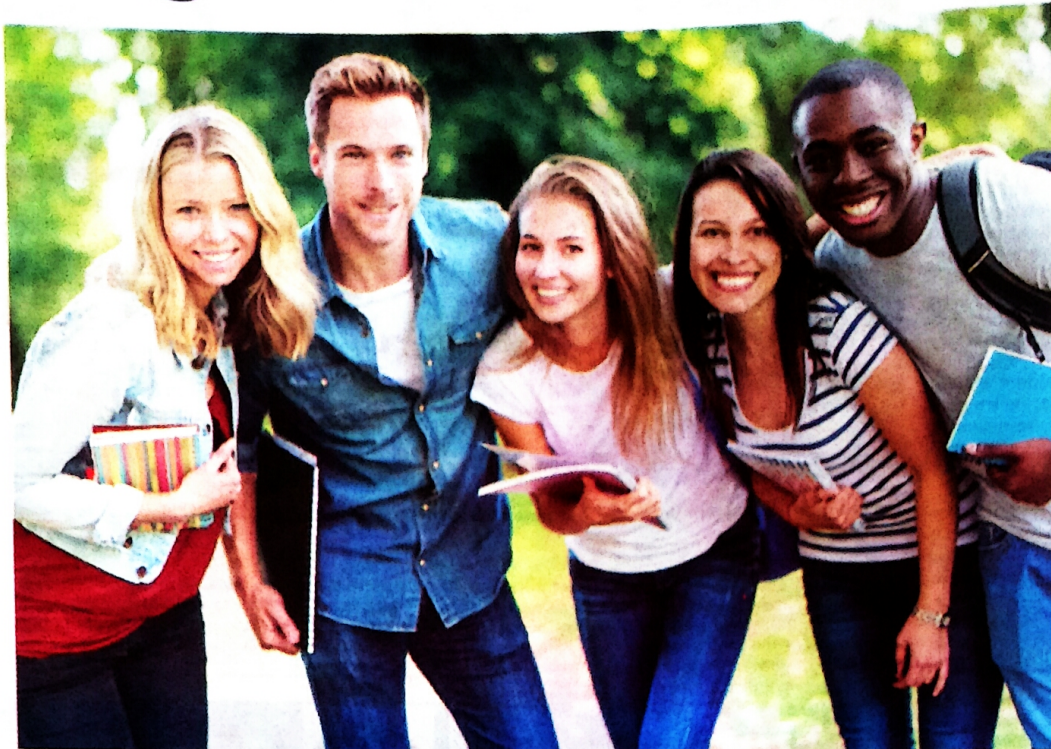
Mr Mandy adds, "Your parents and teachers will not be there to police you in this open world yet you must behave yourself in a mature and responsible manner. Therefore, having a programme and goals sets out will help you achieve a lot in a place where diversions are very many".

He says with people from different walks of life and while you need friends, you need to be very particular about whom you attract to yourself.

"Picking friends wisely is very important because your character and life at university is highly dependent on the company you keep," he adds.

Besides studying, Mr Mandy urges freshers to get an income generating venture before joining university.

"This will help you mature because besides the course you are getting, you need to train yourself in other skills. That is the only way to better thrive during and after university. Besides that, you learn financial discipline and self-reliance



Freshers need to be guided in order to have a successful life at university.

NET PHOTO

which displaces transcend the university gates".

Dr Fr William Kaggwa, a senior lecturer at Uganda Martyrs University, urges students to be mindful of why they are going to the university.

"Knowing why you are at the university and what you are supposed to do will help you work towards achieving it. It also helps to better understand the course you are undertaking because failure lies in not understanding what is required of you. For example, as a student of medicine, you need to know that the course is gruelling hence calling for your undivided attention if you are to make the best of your time in medical school and graduate in time".

In case there is an orientation, Dr Kaggwa advises that students pay

attention to the information given.

"Most of the basic things you may need to know about the university will be said during the orientation process. Failure to adhere to university guidelines thereafter would be no excuse," he says.

Dr Kaggwa reminds would-be university students that it is crucial to understand that time at university flies fast, "Therefore make the most of it to avoid regrets".

He says those who fail or drop out of school are not necessarily the poor or weak students but that calls for picking the right course, asking help and giving it your all.

Mercy Kiwalya, a former student of Kyambogo University, advises new students to get to know where some key places at the university such as administration offices, dining hall, classrooms are situated.

"Before you settle down at the university where you have been admitted, knowing the location of such places will ease your life as chances of someone taking you around may be slim. In my case, my first day of class was a disaster because it took me an hour before I could locate my lecture room hence missing the course orientation".

For a better understanding of the university, Richard Nyanzi, a former student of Kampala International University says, "Ask someone who has been at the university you have been admitted to, they will tell you a thing or two that will be of great help. For example, when I

was joining university, I was advised to work hard in the first semester as performance was cumulative and if I failed in the first one, catching up would be difficult. That helped me while some of my course mates partied away and had it rough catching up."

Unlike high school where bells are sounded to signify certain things such as class time, in university, times are set and you need to follow without supervision.

Therefore, Dr Kaggwa urges

freshers to appreciate the change.

"The nature of university life calls for maturity and self-supervision if you are to succeed," he says.

Fred Okatch, a former student of MUBS, says university is not all about books thus urging freshers to engage in clubs for socialisation and skill building.

"These skills will come in handy as you job hunt, and so will the relations you will have built during the interactions in those extra curricular activities".



New university students should get time to know where some key places at the university such as swimming pools, administration offices, dining hall, classrooms are situated. FILE PHOTO

NEW ENVIRONMENT

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