

One body to examine all paramedics

By Martin Kitubi

Universities have been barred from examining undergraduate diploma and certificate paramedical courses.

The education ministry said all the courses will be nationally assessed by the line examination bodies.

Dr John Chrysostom Muyingo, the higher education state minister, has confirmed the development.

There are two health-related examination bodies under the education ministry — the Uganda Allied Health Examinations Board and the Uganda Nurses and Midwifery Examination Board.

Currently, there are universities that prefer in-house assessment instead of examinations from the two bodies.

The affected courses are paramedical pharmacy, medical radiography, clinical psychiatry, physiotherapy, dental technology, orthopaedics medical lab technology and orthopaedic medicine.

The Uganda Allied Health Examinations Board will examine both diploma and certificate courses in ear nose and throat surgery, audiology, anaesthesia, public health



From left: Joesph Agondua, John Muyingo, BTVET commissioner Safinah Museene and Steven Aisu, the chairperson of the Board of Uganda Allied Health Examination Board, releasing the academic year 2018/2019 results in Kyambogo. Photo by Mary Kansiime

dentist, clinical ophthalmology and occupation therapy.

The Uganda Nurses and Midwifery Examination Board will assess both diploma and certificate courses in midwifery, nursing, mental health nursing and comprehensive nursing.

The other training institutions offering these courses have already been streamlined under the Business Technical Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) setting.

Muyingo said the inter-ministerial steering co-

A total of 4,702 candidates registered for the June 2019 examinations and of these, 4,672 sat for the papers. Out the 4,672 candidates, 3,953 (84.6%) passed. Out of the 3,953 candidates that passed, 2,524 (63.9%) were male.

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ordination committee resolved that all these courses be examined by their respective examination bodies.

This, he said, was intended

to streamline effective co-ordination and uniformity to ensure quality assurance in the health sector.

"We want uniformity where

we set the curriculum and what should be used to train our students," he said yesterday during the release of results for Uganda Allied Health Examinations Board in Kyambogo, Kampala.

"We urge all universities to respect the directives as stated in the ministry circular" he said.

Contradictory laws

The 2008 Business Technical Vocational Education and Training Act created three sector examination bodies.

Apart from the Uganda Allied Health Examinations Board and the Uganda Nurses and Midwifery Examination Board, there is the Uganda Business and Technical Examination Board for courses related to business and vocational education. The Act empowers the above bodies to regulate and co-ordinate examinations and awards in their respective areas.

However, there is a contradiction in the law, which grants universities and other higher institutions the chance to self-examine their students.

The 2001 University and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, through the National Council for Higher Education, requires universities and other tertiary

institutions to only present courses for accreditation and also conduct self-assessment.

Yesterday, Muyingo advised that universities and other institutions to consider the BTVET Act 2008 for diploma and certificate courses.

"We are reviewing these laws to ensure that these courses go directly to examination bodies," he said.

Released results

A total of 15,178 candidates were assessed in 161 examination centres. Of these, 10,506 were continuing students whose results were released on September 6, 2019.

Joseph Agondua, the deputy executive secretary of Uganda Allied Health Examinations Board, said despite the high demand for higher diploma candidates, enrolment was still low.

Agondua noted that the allied health sub-sector faces inadequate funding to meet the increasing costs of conducting examinations.

Other challenges mentioned were few tutors and inadequate equipment.

Muyingo revealed that his ministry through the Education Service Commission had raised sh1.6b for recruitment of tutors.