

MBARARA UNIVERSITY HAS TURNED DOWN THE SCHOOL'S REQUEST TO BE AFFILIATED

Mbarara university refuses to 'babysit' Masaka nursing school

MASAKA

By Davis Buyondo

At least 252 students of Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing on Friday received their diplomas and certificates in nursing, comprehensive nursing and midwifery.

But those hoping to upgrade to a nursing degree have to look beyond Masaka for the programme.

Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing was planned to roll out the degree programme in 2018, but Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) has turned down the institution's request to be affiliated.

Mark Kalanzi, the principal of the school, explained that they wrote to the university in 2017, requesting for affiliate status, but they were told to wait.

Kalanzi said the university's quality assurance team inspected the institute last year, but did not give any feedback.

Kalanzi explained that they are now looking at alternative ways of offering the degree programme.

"We are now pushing the process through the Ministry of Education and Sports," he said.

At least 116 students were awarded diplomas in 2017 and many were expecting to enroll for the degree, but their hopes were dashed.



Kalanzi addressing guests at a recent graduation ceremony. The vocational education commissioner said offering degree courses will boost the skills of health professionals. Photo by Davis Buyondo

MUST responds

Denis Lukaaya, the spokesperson of MUST, confirmed that the university did not grant the nursing school affiliate status.

Lukaaya said MUST is only running an affiliate programme for the nursing

degree at Jinja School of Nursing.

Vocational education commissioner reacts

Safinah Kisumusene, the commissioner for Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTNET), one

of the initiators of the project to have a nursing degree at Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing, said the programme is important for nursing and midwifery diploma holders to upgrade and offer more professional services.

She advised Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing administrators to find an affiliate university and further emphasised E-learning degree programmes, saying they are convenient for both employers and workers.

However, Kisumusene said BTNET will only wait to endorse the memorandum between Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing and any university that will accept the affiliation application.

"We are not supposed to force the affiliation process. We will only wait for the school to complete its process for us to approve it," she said.

However, Alex Kakooza, the permanent secretary in the education ministry, told *New Vision* that the ministry does not agree to Masaka School of Comprehensive Nursing offering degree programmes.

About the school

The nursing school is a government-founded health training institution established in 1946. It started training enrolled nurses for certificates in 1966.

It started training comprehensive nurses at diploma level in 1992.