

NCHE makes changes in A-Level requirements for university entry

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KAMPALA. The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) has made changes in the minimum A-Level requirements for university entry, which enables students, who have not attained sufficient grades at Senior Six to enrol for degree programmes at university after undertaking a certificate course at a tertiary institution.

According to the programme dubbed Higher Education Certificate (HEC), A-Level students who will fail to attain two principal passes at Senior Six, which is the current requirement for admission to university, will have an alternative route to the university.

The Executive Director of NCHE,

Prof Mary Okwakol, said this is intended to give an opportunity to the youth who want to join institutions of higher learning but are frustrated by grades.

"A student who will fail to attain sufficient grades at A-Level will now be required to join any university offering that programme to study it for one year and later proceed to any university using the certificate he or she has attained," Prof Okwakol said during a dissemination workshop for the programme at NCHE offices in Ntinda yesterday.

This means students with one principal pass at A-Level will not have to repeat Senior Six.

Prof Okwakol said this will increase the enrolment ratio of Ugandans at university.

He said the enrolment ratio is at

6.9 per cent compared to East Africa's 9 per cent and 15 per cent for Africa and 25 per cent globally.

"I strongly urge all institutions that are offering HEC to review their programmes taking into consider-

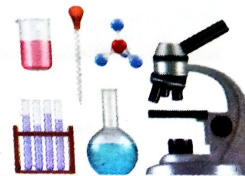
ation the NCHE set standards and submit to us for accreditation. Those planning to develop the programme are similarly advised to do the same," prof Okwakol said.

GIRLS TO BE SUPPORTED

Meanwhile, the executive director of FAWA African, Ms Martha Muhwezi said they are going to sponsor 70 per cent of girls in rural areas offering science subjects but fail to attain sufficient grades for science degrees to undertake HEC and later enter university to pursue degrees.

She said they are targeting girls doing sciences because most of

them fail A-Level and fail to join institutions of higher learning.



Reactions

Most officials at the workshop yesterday welcomed the programme, saying it will help students in rural areas join universities.

Prof Paul Waako, the Vice Chancellor of Busitema University, said many students have been failing at Senior Six not because they are not bright but they studied under harsh conditions.

Dr Mary Mutyaba, the Academic Registrar of Ndejje University, said they will commence the new programme next year after their course has been accredited by NCHE.