

ODONG HAS BEEN ADVISED TO STUDY THE COURSE AFRESH



Kampala International University, western campus in Ishaka, Bushenyi. Odong is suing the university for issuing him a degree which the National Council for Higher Education rejected over the university's failure to obtain accreditation to teach the bachelor's degree in dental surgery.

Mulago medic sues KIU over fake degree

BY MICHAEL ODONG

Despite holding a diploma in health tutorship from Makerere University and Public Health at Mulago Paramedical School, David Odong in 2011 decided to pursue his lifetime career ambition of becoming a specialist in dental surgery.

The move necessitated him to climb up the professional ladder by pursuing a bachelor's degree in dental surgery (BDS) for five years at Kampala International University (KIU).

However, after completing his course on June 10, 2017, he applied to register for a medical licence at the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council (UMDPC). His application was rejected on grounds that his degree is invalid.

"I was posted to Mulago Hospital in order to undertake the internship programme to acquire experience, a prerequisite for registration as a dental practitioner with UMDPC in vain," he says.

He adds: "On receipt of my application, UMDPC invited me for a written examination. When I turned up, the examination was not given to me without an explanation. Later, I was invited to defend my application for a licence, which I complied with."

DEGREE REJECTED

Odong says to his shock and dismay, UMDPC on August 24, last year, rejected his application for a licence on grounds that his degree was invalid after KIU's failure to

Odong accuses KIU of dishonesty

Court documents indicate that in 2011 KIU published adverts in local newspapers, inviting the public to apply for various programmes, including a bachelor's degree in dental surgery (BDS), which was offered at the university's School of Health Sciences, situated at Ishaka in Bushenyi district. In regard to the advert, David Odong says he applied to pursue the course, met the set criteria and was admitted and enrolled for the five-year degree course in September 2011, which he says he completed and graduated. However, he says the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council later rejected the qualification. Odong contends that KIU dishonestly and fraudulently misrepresented to him, when it offered to teach, admitted and taught him a course of BDS, thereby fundamentally breaching the contract. He also faults the university over holding out that it had the requisite accreditation to conduct BDS, whereas not.

obtain accreditation for BDS from the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

He has, therefore, been advised by UMDPC to enroll in another university and study the course afresh.

DEMANDS SH371M

This has prompted the senior public health dental officer from Mulago Hospital to file a case against KIU, UMDPC and NCHE for deceit, fraudulent misrepresentation, breach of contract and trust for which he seeks damages and costs.

He also dragged the defendants to the Civil Division of the High Court in Kampala for negligence, breach of statutory duty, loss of economic and financial prospects and loss of self-esteem for which he seeks compensation.

Odong has asked court to

compel the defendants to pay him sh371m in special damages, which include tuition for five-and-half years, which cost him sh26m.

Odong says NCHE negligently failed in its statutory duties, and/or breached such duties, thereby giving KIU a leeway to illegally conduct a course of study which was not accredited, to his detriment.

He also contends that UMDPC negligently failed in its statutory duties, and/or breached such duties, to his detriment by failing to monitor, supervise, control and maintain the professional medical and dental educational standards, which was exploited by KIU.

Odong also argues that UMDPC failed to protect the society from abuse of medical and dental care by letting

students and, or, graduates of an unaccredited course of study to undertake internship in hospitals.

He also faults UMDPC for failing to give him exams which would have rendered him as a person who qualifies to be registered.

Odong claims that due to the defendant's omissions and, or actions, he has directly suffered huge economic and financial losses, distress and inconveniences for which he holds them liable.

"I am unable to utilise my education and to commercially exploit, develop and to take full benefit of my education investment for which I seek compensation," he contends.

Odong also says a notice of intention to sue was served to the defendants, but they ignored it.

COURT SUMMONS

The court registrar, Sarah Langa Siu, has directed the defendants to write a written statement of defence on Odong's allegations within 15 days, from the date of service of summons.

"Should you fail to file a written statement of defence in the suit on or before the date, the plaintiff may proceed with the suit and judgment may be given in your absence," she warned.

WHAT KIU SAYS

When *Saturday Vision* asked KIU's public relations officer, Alex Businge, whether the university had received the court summons, he said he was not at liberty to comment on a court matter.