

NEW TEACHERS COURSES APPROVED

NEW CURRICULUM

When the Government made changes in secondary and primary curriculum, it necessitated teachers' realignment to fit into the new system. Uganda National Institute of Teacher Education was subsequently created as the process starts, write **Martin Kitubi** and **Ivan Tsebeni**.

The Government has approved nine new academic programmes for teachers ahead of the operationalisation of the Uganda National Institute of Teacher Education (UNITE).

UNITE, formerly Shimon Core PTC, is a planned higher institution of learning for teachers.

Programmes to be offered at UNITE, whose list the *New Vision* has seen, were divided according to level of education such as primary, secondary and vocational education.

At primary school level, teachers will be required to specialise either as lower primary teachers covering Primary One to Primary Three, or as subject teachers for the core subjects at that level.

There are three programmes to be offered by UNITE at this level. These are Bachelor of Education Primary in Science, Bachelor of Education Primary in Arts and Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education for teachers who will specialise in handling learners from Primary Three (P3) downwards.

SECONDARY, VOCATIONAL

At secondary school level, UNITE will offer four programmes for starters, and all will be for science subjects. Sources indicated that the arts subjects will be introduced in phases.

At secondary school level, teachers will specialise in two subjects each.

At this level, UNITE will offer Bachelor of Education Secondary in Physics and Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry, or Biology and Physical Education.

For vocational schools, technical institutions and vocational colleges, the Government has so far approved one programme to be offered at UNITE, which is Bachelor of Education Vocational Studies in Agriculture.

However, the plan indicates that along the way, UNITE will

introduce performing arts and other vocational programmes.

The ninth programme is a postgraduate diploma in teacher education. This strictly targets teacher educators and trainers.

ADMISSION INTO UNITE

Sources in the Ministry of Education revealed that UNITE will open for admissions in July 2024.

However, the sources added that the institution will have an interim management team come next month as part of the operationalisation plans.

Within the next one year, one of the sources indicated that the Government will appoint the management team, including the UNITE governing council.

The Government will also hire competent staff for UNITE and thereafter, apply for a charter through the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) before July 2024.

"The institute will start small. We are starting with nine programmes, but along the way other programmes will come on board," the source said.

Another source added, "We want this institute to start with competent staff and ensure quality in the programmes offered. In addition, we do not want to over-burden the Government with a big staff structure when we start. It is better if we start small, but maintain good quality."

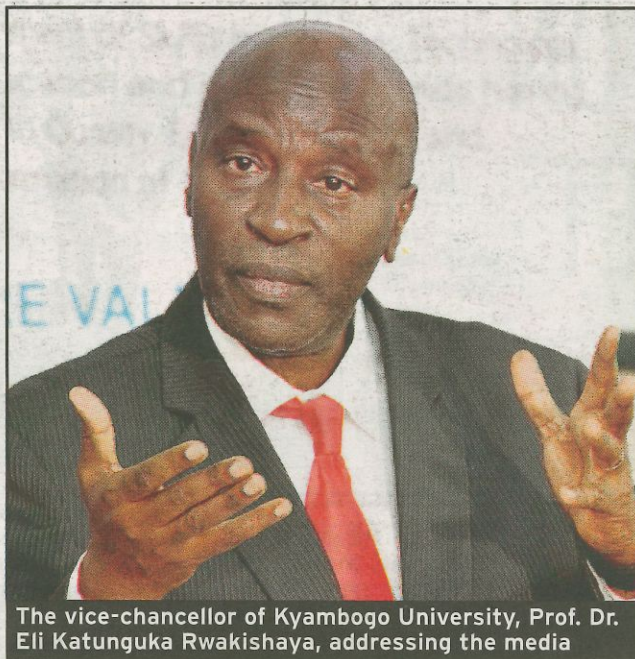
UNITE REGIONAL COLLEGES

In 2021, the education ministry announced a plan and the structure showing the way UNITE will operate. As part of the plan, the ministry phased out 23 of the 46 government-aided primary teacher colleges (PTCs) in the country, but retained the core PTCs.

The plan is that the retained core PTCs will become training institutions for UNITE.

The phased-out PTCs, the plan says, will either become secondary schools or vocational institutions for the respective areas.

If the affected non-core PTC is located in a sub-county



The vice-chancellor of Kyambogo University, Prof. Dr. Eli Katunguka Rwakishaya, addressing the media

DEGREE REQUIREMENT

The establishment of UNITE is part of the recommendations of the National Teachers Policy.

The policy, which was approved by Cabinet in April 2019, set a degree as the minimum requirement for one to teach, even at nursery school.

The policy is aimed at standardising teacher development, qualifications and practice across all levels of education.

The policy also provides for the establishment of the National Teachers' Council to regulate the teaching profession, accreditation and implement the professional code of ethics for teachers.

According to the plan, Grade III teachers will be required to upgrade to Grade V and later to have a bachelor's degree. The Grade V teachers will also follow the same channels so as to obtain a degree.

Under the current arrangement, Grade III teachers are certificate holders, whereas Grade V teachers are diploma holders.

without a secondary school, it will become one, according to the plan.

On the other hand, if a district has no vocational institute, the affected non-core PTC will become one.

As part of the major changes, core PTC functions of Shimon were transferred to Santa Maria Nkokonjeru PTC which became a core PTC.

The retained core PTCs will also serve as teacher development management

systems (TDMS), for both primary and secondary school teachers.

As part of their functions, the core PTCs will also become teacher training and support institutions in special needs education (SNE).

The demonstration schools, partly under the core PTCs, will also be used for teaching practice for graduate teachers.

The new arrangement is that the retained core PTCs will serve under the five national teachers' colleges (NTCs), which are set to become UNITE colleges.

The five NTCs include NTC Unyama (Gulu), Mubende, Kabale, Kaliro and Muni (Arua).

The ministry will conduct a qualification assessment of the current staff at the NTCs to ascertain whether they are fit to teach degree holders.

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) requires one to have at least a master's degree to teach at university or its equivalent.

As part of the arrangement, the ministry will tighten entry points to NTCs where all applicants will be required to be Senior Six leavers, and with at least two principal passes.

KYAMBOGO AND PTC

Prof. Eli Katunguka, the vice-chancellor of Kyambogo University, welcomed the UNITE idea, saying it would relieve the institution of some of the burden.

He said the infrastructure that had been occupied by the managing board of PTCs will be transformed into learning facilities to give students enough space.

Retained Core PTCs

SCHOOL	DISTRICT
1 Arua Core PTC	Arua City
2 Bishop Stuart Core PTC Kibingo	Mbarara City
3 Bishop Willis Core PTC Iganga	Iganga District
4 Bulera Core PTC	Hoima City
5 Bushenyi Core PTC	Bushenyi District
6 Canon Apolo Core PTC	Fortportal City
7 Gulu Core PTC	Gulu City
8 Kabulasoke Core PTC	Gomba District
9 Kabale - Bukinda Core PTC	Kabale District
10 Kibuli Core PTC	Kampala
11 Kitgum Core PTC	Kitgum District
12 Loro Core PTC	Lira District
13 Moroto Core PTC	Moroto District
14 Mukuju Core PTC	Tororo District
15 Nakaseke Core PTC	Nakaseke District
16 Ndegeya Core PTC	Masaka District
17 Shimon Becomes Unite	Kiira Municipality
18 Soroti Core PTC	Soroti District
19 St. Aloysius Core PTC Ngora	Ngora District
20 St. George's Core PTC Ibanda	Ibanda District
21 St. John Bosco Core PTC Lodonga	Yumbe District
22 St. John Bosco Core PTC Nyondo	Mbale District
23 St. Noa Mawaggali Core PTC Busubizi	Mityana District

Phased out Core PTCs

SCHOOL	DISTRICT
1 Bikungu PTC	Mitooma District
2 Buhungiro PTC	Isingiro District
3 Bundibugyo PTC	Bundibugyo District
4 Busikho PTC	Busia District
5 Bwera PTC	Kasese District
6 Canon Lawrence PTC Boroboro	Lira District
7 Christ The King PTC Gulu	Gulu City
8 Erepi PTC Moyo	Moyo District
9 Jinja PTC Wanyange	Jinja City
10 Kabwangasi PTC	Butebo District
11 Kabukunge PTC	Kalungu District
12 Kaliro PTC	Kaliro District
13 Kamurasi PTC	Masindi District
14 Kapchorwa PTC	Kapchorwa District
15 Kisoro PTC	Kisoro Municipality
16 Kiyoora PTC	Kiyoora District
17 Kotido PTC	Kotido District
18 Paidha PTC	Zombo District
19 Rakai PTC Bikiira Maria	Kyotera District
20 Rukungiri PTC	Rukungiri District
21 Sancta Maria PTC Nkokonjeru	Bulkwe District, Replaces Shimon
22 St. Augustine's PTC Butiti	Kyenjojo District
23 St. Mary's PTC Bukedea	Bukedea District

"We are glad that the Government made the resolution to rationalise and repurpose the PTCs. As Kyambogo, we cannot hesitate to realign programmes for continuity," he said yesterday.

Katunguka was giving the state of university address yesterday, at Kyambogo main campus in Kampala.

Accordingly, a team of

university officials has reportedly embarked on the inventory exercise to document students, programmes, teaching and other facilities for the institution.

"We are having engagements with different stakeholders in the transitioning process. We want to have a smooth and successful implementation of the programme," he said.