



UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

OUR REFERENCE: CF/UNEB/50

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YOUR REFERENCE:

11th February, 2025

STATEMENT OF RELEASE OF RESULTS OF THE 2024 UGANDA CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (UCE) EXAMINATION UNDER THE COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Honourable Minister of Education and Sports, the Uganda National Examinations Board presents to you the Results of the 2024 Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examination. The examination was conducted successfully under the theme: **Embracing security and holistic assessment of learners in a dynamic environment**. The theme enjoined all concerned to accept the essence of security at all stages of the examination process. It emphasizes the assessment of the whole person, the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Assessment is taking place in a rapidly changing environment driven by rapid developments in technology. We must be alive to these realities.

These are the Results of the first cohort of candidates under the competency-based curriculum that we are presenting to you. We are excited that we have finally got to this point.

Mama, in 2020 you rolled out the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for the lower secondary school level. This presented a requirement for assessment reforms that introduced new components of Continuous Assessment (CA) and Project Work

on top of the existing End of Cycle examination. The Board then embarked on various activities in preparation to assess the first cohort of learners following a roadmap that had been developed.

Firstly, the Board had to build capacity of its staff, given that the assessment of the curriculum would fundamentally shift from what was then in practice. Secondly, the Board embarked on development of a format for students' identification to facilitate registration of Senior Three and Senior Four learners; and tracking of their CA scores **in all the schools, not just the ones which had UNEB examination centres.** Therefore, a unique format of numbers to identify learners in schools without UNEB centres was also developed. This was then followed by developing assessment tools, guidelines, training materials, capacity building for teachers as item writers and scorers, benchmarking to pick best practices, and sensitization of key education stakeholders.

The Board was able to put in place all the necessary assessment tools including an in-house software code-named Assessment Management Information System (AMIS); we trained a total of 63,041 (43,741 male and 19,300 female) Senior Three and Four teachers throughout the country on the assessment of CA with emphasis on the use of digital assessment tools. The training also included assessment of the Project Work, a mandatory component of the curriculum. We also retooled 5,200 out of the targeted 8,000 existing examiners to equip them with new skills of scoring under competency-based assessment. We successfully administered the examination that has culminated into these results you are due to release. However, there is urgent need to do mop-up training in some areas where training had not been properly concluded, and to target the teachers of Senior One and Two classes.

Important to note, Mama, is that the new assessment comes with a change in the reporting and certification. The Board, in close consultations with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), has come up with a reporting mechanism that presents a learner's level of achievement in each subject with a letter grade (**A, B, C, D or E**).

The levels of achievement were arrived at through systematic and technical processes (statistical and psychometric) that combine the learner's score based on Continuous Assessment done at school, and End-of-Cycle examination score in the proportion of 20%, and 80% respectively.

Additionally, the Project Work is assessed at school, and the achievement level is presented as a stand-alone on the certificate. The achievement level on the Project reveals a learner's creative competency in dealing with actual and contemporary world problems. The meanings of these letter grades are explained later on in this Statement.

Mama, during implementation, we encountered some challenges such as the lack of efficient IT infrastructure in many schools, twhich was a major constraint in the ability for schools to make timely submissions of CA scores to UNEB. The volume of data that UNEB must receive and store requires larger capacity servers at UNEB. There is the challenge of shortages of school laboratory facilities. The new curriculum, being skills-based, requires that science labs and workshops are well-equipped to give the learners enough chance to create new knowledge through self-learning. Unfortunately, many rural and private schools lack these and are also short of science teachers.

Along the way, we also discovered that some schools appeared to be resisting the change to the new curriculum. They were stuck to teaching the old curriculum with the hope that Government would retract the new curriculum, given the challenges that were evident at the start of the implementation of the curriculum. They were surprised when the Board released the sample examination papers. These challenges impacted greatly the candidates' achievement in Sciences.

Despite these challenges, the new competency-based curriculum assessment has been successful.

Mama, during the marking, the Board also suffered the pressure from scorers' strikes for increased pay as I had occasion to brief you about earlier.

Your guidance on the course of action was well taken and Management is taking appropriate action. Nonetheless, the other non-striking groups, in their end of scoring reports, have overwhelmingly recommended that UNEB trains more scorers (due to the more complex nature of scoring this examination) and seriously considers raising the scoring fees across the subjects. I believe these issues will be addressed with the availability of extra financial resources which we have requested for.

2.0 REGISTRATION OF 2024 UCE CANDIDATES

2.1 Total Candidature

A total of **359,417** candidates were registered as the first cohort for the examination. Of these **177,133 (49.3%)** were males, while **182,284 (50.7%)** were females. **136,785 (38.1%)** were beneficiaries of the USE programme and **222,632 (61.9%)** were Non-USE. A total of **357,120 (99.4%)** candidates were present for the examination. Only **2,297 (0.6%)** were absent. The rate of absenteeism continues to drop and this is a good sign.

2.2 Registration of Special Groups

2.2.1 Special Needs Candidates

A total of **743** Special Needs Education (SNE) candidates (**354** males and **389** females) registered for the 2024 UCE examination. These consisted of the **blind (31)**, those with **low vision (138)**, the **deaf (71)**, the **dyslexics (100)** and the **physically handicapped (70)**.

There were **333 others** with other forms of disability that only needed to be given extra time. Only **5 (0.7%)** candidates were absent.

The Board made adequate arrangements for these candidates, which included modification of questions, provision of questions written in Braille form, providing support personnel for the handicapped and dyslexics, and Sign Language interpreters for the deaf. Candidates with low vision were given question papers with enlarged print to enable them read more easily. All SNE candidates were allowed extra 45 minutes in each paper.

2.2.2 Prison Inmates

The Board also registered **28** candidates from Uganda Government Upper Prison, Luzira (**27** males and **1** female), and **11** from Mbarara Main Prison (all male).

3.0 GENERAL CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE IN THE 2024 UCE EXAMINATION

As mentioned above, the format of reporting performance under the competency-based curriculum differs significantly from the old curriculum. Performance is reported by achievement levels indicated by letter grades A, B, C, D and E. The Table below shows the achievement levels and their generic descriptors. The achievement level for each subject is arrived at from scores generated from the assessment of competencies at the school level; that is, through Continuous Assessment (CA), and the scores from competencies assessed in the final, End of Cycle examination.

Table 1: Achievement Levels and their Descriptors

Grade	Achievement Level	Descriptor
A	Exceptional	Demonstrates an extraordinary level of competency by applying innovatively and creatively the acquired knowledge and skills in real life situations.
B	Outstanding	Demonstrates a high level of competency by applying the acquired knowledge and skills in real life situations.
C	Satisfactory	Demonstrates an adequate level of competency by applying the acquired knowledge and skills in real life situations.
D	Basic	Demonstrates a minimum level of competency in applying the acquired knowledge and skills in real life situations.
E	Elementary	Demonstrates below the basic level of competency in applying the acquired knowledge and skills in real life situations.

Given the complete departure from the old grading system reporting of Grade/Division 1, 2, etc.; no comparison can be made between results of 2023 and 2024.

Under the competency-based assessment, there is no ranking of candidates into Divisions as in the previous curriculum. **A candidate will qualify for the UCE Certificate if he/she obtains a competency level grade of D in at least one subject sat for.**

The overall results show that **350,146 (98.05%)** of the candidates who sat qualified for the UCE certificate. This will be indicated on the Transcript and Certificate as **Result 1.**

The candidates who did not fulfil the conditions for the award of the UCE certificate will have **Result 2** indicated on their transcripts.

These are candidates who did not sit for some compulsory subjects, or did not sit for a minimum of **eight subjects, or** who have **no Project Work** scores.

Result 3 will be indicated on the transcript of a candidate who has not met the minimum level in all the subjects; i.e. the candidate will have only achievement level **E** in all subjects taken.

Candidates with **Result 2** and **3** respectively shown on their Transcripts do not qualify for a UCE certificate.

Table 2 below shows achievement levels in compulsory and large entry subjects.

Table 2: Achievement Levels in Compulsory and Large Entry Subjects

Subject	Percentages				
	A	B	C	D	E
English Language	2.7	19.6	69.3	96.4	3.6
Christian Religious Education	1.6	21.3	78.6	99.3	0.7
History & Political Education	6.4	22.3	94.7	98.8	1.2
Geography	3.1	27.1	81.5	99.9	0.1
Mathematics	3.8	18.7	42.0	97.2	2.8
Agriculture	4.7	50.3	93.1	99.7	0.3
Physics	1.9	22.6	45.9	87.2	12.8
Chemistry	1.0	18.4	49.8	93.9	6.1
Biology	1.9	18.6	65.2	97.7	2.3
Art & Design	13.0	42.5	98.0	2.0	0.0

Exceptional levels of achievements are noted especially in Art and Design, History & Political Education, Agriculture and Mathematics. Proportions of candidates achieving at the elementary level (below basic level) are most significant in Physics followed by Chemistry and then English Language.

The reports from our Scorers (examiners) indicate that in the Science practical assessments, candidates were expected to use a given scenario and materials provided to develop aims and a hypothesis, plan and carry out investigations and draw conclusions. The main problem observed is the failure of candidates to interpret the scenarios, or connect the scenarios and the materials supplied to real life situations, or interpret the results of the experiments carried out and create meaning connected to everyday situations. Candidates that appear not to have been guided properly tried to use recall to respond to the scenarios.

In English and other foreign languages, the challenges observed have been inadequate vocabulary; inability to paraphrase (use own words without copying directly from a given text) in summary writing; use of inappropriate examples in comprehension texts or literature analysis. In those languages where speaking was part of the assessment, candidates demonstrated a fair understanding of the given scenarios and responded fairly.

The challenge that cuts across all areas is the difficulty candidates showed in linking scenarios to problem solving in real life situations. This competency is at the core of the curriculum and implies that teachers need to do much more to guide the learners towards this focus.

4.0 ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS OF MALE AND FEMALE CANDIDATES

The Table below compares achievement levels of male and female candidates in large entry subjects expressed in terms of cumulative percentages at the indicated levels.

Table 3: Achievement Levels of Male and Female Candidates in Compulsory and Large Entry Subjects

Subjects	Achievement Levels of Males and Females Compared									
	A		B		C		D		E	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
English Lang.	2.2	3.2	16.4	22.7	65.3	73.3	95.3	97.4	4.7	2.6
Christian Rel. Educ.	1.4	1.8	18.9	23.5	75.1	81.9	98.9	99.5	1.1	0.5
History & Pol. Educ.	6.9	5.8	23.6	20.9	94.8	94.5	98.8	98.8	1.2	1.2
Geography	3.6	2.8	28.7	25.5	82.5	80.5	99.9	99.9	0.1	0.1
Mathematics	4.7	2.9	21.9	15.5	45.6	38.5	96.7	97.7	3.3	2.3
Agriculture	5.3	4.1	51.8	48.7	93.4	92.9	99.6	99.7	0.4	0.3
Physics	2.4	1.6	24.8	20.4	47.5	44.5	86.2	88.2	13.8	11.0
Chemistry	1.1	0.9	19.8	17.1	50.1	48.9	93.8	94.1	6.2	5.9
Biology	2.2	1.8	19.7	17.6	65.9	64.5	97.5	97.8	2.5	2.2
Art & Design	12.6	13.6	41.7	43.7	97.8	98.4	2.2	1.6	0.0	0.0

Female candidates demonstrated higher achievement levels in English Language, Christian Religious Education, and Art and Design. In the other subjects; History and Political Education, Geography, Mathematics, Agriculture, Chemistry and Biology, the proportions of females in the **exceptional** and **outstanding** levels are lower than that of males.

5.0 ACHIEVEMENTS OF SPECIAL CANDIDATE GROUPS

5.1 Prison Inmates

At the Uganda Government Upper Prison School, Luzira, 28 candidates were registered. Of the **28** candidates who registered, **27** candidates sat; while **one** did not sit for the examination. All the candidates qualified for the UCE certificate.

At Mbarara Main Prison Inmates' Secondary School, **11** candidates were registered and they all sat for the examination. All of them also qualified for the UCE certificate.

5.2 Special Needs candidates

Table 4 below shows the number of SNE candidates qualifying for the UCE certificate. These are indicated by category.

Table 4: Achievement Levels of Special Needs Candidates by Category

Result	Result 1			Result 2&3			Total Who Sat			Absent			TOTAL
SNE Type	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	Registered
Blind	9	19	28	0	2	2	9	21	30	1	0	1	31
Low Vision	52	79	131	2	5	7	54	84	138	0	0	0	138
Deaf	46	25	71	0	0	0	46	25	71	0	0	0	71
Physically Handicapped	30	38	68	1	0	1	31	38	69	0	1	1	70
Dyslexia	44	44	88	6	6	12	50	50	100	0	0	0	100
Other	188	129	317	8	5	13	196	134	330	2	1	3	333
Grand Total	369	334	703	17	18	35	386	352	738	3	2	5	743

The Table shows that **703 (95.3%)** SNE candidates qualified for UCE certificates, while **35 (4.7%)** candidates did not qualify. Worth noting is that all the candidates in the Deaf category qualified for the UCE certificate. This is unlike in the past when they appeared to be very disadvantaged. We believe that with CA being part of the final achievement grade, the competencies the Blind can demonstrate at the school level are assessed and recognized, unlike under the Old curriculum.

6.0 FEEDBACK FROM CANDIDATES

UNEB conducted a survey with the first cohort of candidates to find out their perceptions of the examination papers they just sat. The intention was to have feedback from candidates that may inform future improvements.

A total of 50,631 candidates drawn from all districts took part in the survey. Of these, 25,716 (50.8%) were males while 24,915 (49.2%) were females. The candidates gave the feedback on 53 examination papers. They completed the brief questionnaire shortly after completing the examination papers.

The key quality aspects of the examination papers and responses of the candidates are summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Percentages of Candidates, by Level of Agreement with Selected Quality Aspects of the Examinations Papers sat

Key quality aspects	Yes	No	Non-response
Items were from syllabus areas covered	94.6	4.1	1.3
Time allocated was adequate	67.4	30.8	1.8
Items were clear	83.2	15.5	1.3
Overall view of the examinations papers	Easy	5.0	
	Fair	60.1	
	Difficult	31.9	
	Non-response	3.0	

Mama, it should be noted that UNEB developed and administered pretest papers as part of its preparation to assess candidates under the Competence-Based Curriculum; which were scored and analysed to arrive at those key quality findings above. The final paper formats used in the End-of-Cycle examination were based on the results of the pretests.

The results of this survey are not surprising, given the challenges many schools faced in the implementation of the curriculum. But overall, they indicate to a good extent, great strides of implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum and Competency Based Assessment.

7.0 EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

There has been a very welcome reduction in cases of malpractice. There are 64 cases with a total of 984 candidates suspected, compared to nearly 3,000 suspected last year. The nature of the items in the papers do not lend themselves to malpractice. However, the cases reported are mostly in the science practical papers, with Physics being most affected. Of the cases, 883 (93.1%) are in the Sciences, and only 65 (6.9%) in the rest of the other subjects. In these Science cases, there is overwhelming evidence that the candidates were given experimental results by teachers merely to copy. The work done by the candidates do not relate to results recorded.

8.0 GRATITUDE

Mama, in Romans 8:13 Scripture says “In view of all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us?”. Indeed, when all is said and done, we acknowledge that God has been for us in this journey to deliver the ultimate product in the implementation of the new curriculum. By His providence and unfailing faithfulness, whatever obstacles were against us, were overcome; whatever weapon formed against us did not prosper (Isaiah 54:17). Mama, you prayed for us, and you supported us all the time. We are grateful.

I thank the Chairperson, Professor Obua and members of the Board for the prompt decisions that they make on matters referred to them by Management and the guidance they give.

I am very grateful to our colleagues at the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Directorate of Education Standards (DES) for their cooperation, and the support rendered in these efforts.

I applaud and praise my technical team at UNEB for the meticulous work leading to this advent of the first cohort of UCE results under Competency Based Assessment. For the last two years, they have given everything; time, intellect, innovation, and energy to ensure the success of this curriculum. We weathered all sorts of enquiries from all corners; concerns from anxious members of the public and our schools, from doubting Thomas’s wondering whether this examination would ever see the light of day. Mama, here we are!

I am grateful to the Chairperson and Members of the Committee on Education and Sports of Parliament represented here by the Chairperson and two members. They have done their best to support UNEB in its quest for the appropriate funding in order to effectively deliver on its mandate.

I am grateful to the security agencies which assisted the Board during monitoring the field conduct of the examination. The Area Supervisors, heads of examination centres, scouts and invigilators did a great job during the conduct of the examination as required by the stipulated Board’s regulations.

I am grateful to the scorers who handled the candidates' scripts and completed on time to enable other processes to take place, culminating in the release of these results. I also thank the heads of the schools that allowed UNEB to use their premises as marking centres.

Finally, I congratulate all the candidates who have qualified for the UCE certificate, the teachers who guided their learning and the parents/guardians who provided for and supported them

9.0 COLLECTION OF RESULTS

Results will be uploaded on the examination centre Portals. Each school can, therefore, download their results as soon as they are officially released.

No hardcopies are available but Examination Centres that may be interested will be notified as soon as they are ready for collection from UNEB offices, Ntinda.

Parents, candidates and other interested parties wishing to access results may use the Short Messaging Service (SMS) on MTN and Airtel mobile networks. Results of the candidates will be posted on their mobile sets instantly; if the correct procedure is followed as per instructions below:

9.1 Instructions to get UCE Results by SMS

- Go to **Messages** on the phone menu
- Type **UCE**
- Leave space
- Type **the full index number of the candidate**
- Send to **6600** on the MTN and Airtel networks.

10.0 SUBMISSION OF RESULTS QUERIES

I urge heads of examination centres to study the result lists and submit any queries e.g. on name spellings, date of birth, etc. they may have identified to UNEB Secretariat via their Portals within 21 working days from the date of release. Queries submitted after that period may not be attended to.

11.0 CONCLUSION

May God bless His Excellency, the President as he leads and guides the nation towards prosperity. May God bless you, Mama, as you support His Excellency, the President and as you guide the Ministry of Education and Sports; May God bless UNEB, bless our Parliament and bless our Motherland Uganda.

Mama, thank you very much for your kind attention.

Dan N. Odongo
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR