Kyambogo University to scrap diploma, certificate courses

By Martin Kitubi

Kyambogo University has laid out a plan to stop offering undergraduate diploma and certificate courses.

According to Prof. Fabian Nabugoomu, the university deputy vice-chancellor in charge of finance and administration, they want to leave these courses for the different public Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) institutions.

These include National Teachers Colleges (NTCs), Uganda Technical Colleges (UTCs), Uganda Colleges of Commerce (UCC) and Uganda Cooperative Colleges (UCC).

Engineering-related diploma and certificate courses will be offered at UTCs, education-related at NTCs, whereas business-related courses will be offered at UCCs.

The arrangement affects over 30 undergraduate diploma and several other certificate courses.

Nabugoomu said the move is to give the university an upper hand in research, higher education and training.

For instance, he said, Kyambogo has been offering a diploma in engineering and yet UTCs also offer similar diploma courses under the BTVET arrangement.

“We have a lot of duplication of courses, so these can go. It seemed like BTVET institutions were competing with us,” the deputy vice-chancellor said.

According to Nabugoomu, the move will enable Kyambogo to concentrate on undergraduate degrees, postgraduate programmes and research, which should be the ultimate purpose of university.

“We are searching for public BTVET institutions which will be affiliated to Kyambogo to handle the courses on our behalf,” he said.

Nabugoomu said this is part of the university strategic plan, which is to run from 2020/2021 to 2024/2025 fiscal years.

“We have realised that we can give opportunity to technical and vocational institutions to take up these courses. It is the best move for our institution,” he said.

Nabugoomu said the university will open more doors for diploma holders to upgrade.

The deputy vice-chancellor made the revelation yesterday at the opening of the Joint Admissions Board (JAB) national selection exercise for BTVET institutions at Makerere University.

Kyambogo University was established in 2003 following the merger of the Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo (UPK), the Institute of Teacher Education-Kyambogo (ITEK) and the Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE).

Stakeholders say

Dr Safina Musene, the commissioner in charge of BTVET at the education ministry, lauded Kyambogo for the brave move, urging other universities to follow suit.

“We are streamlining BTVET training in the country. Undergraduate diploma and certificate courses should be offered by technical institutions so that universities concentrate on higher awards,” she said.

Silver Mukwasibwe, the principal of UTC-Bushenyi, said: “We have been at loggerheads with Kyambogo, especially on engineering diploma courses; allowing BTVET institutions to teach such courses is the best way.”

However, Paul Angura, the academic registrar at UCC-Soroti, wondered whether the courses would be examined by Kyambogo University or under Uganda Business and Technical Examination Board (UBTTEB).

The 2008 BTVET Act mandates UBTTEB to streamline, regulate, coordinate and conduct credible examinations, award certificates and diploma in the BTVET sector.