

National Council for Higher Education



Tuesday, 23rd May 2023

PRESS STATEMENT

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) was established by the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001 (as amended). The NCHE is mandated to regulate and guide the establishment and management of Higher Education institutions.

The Management of NCHE has noted with concern the media reports on validity of academic and professional programmes offered by higher education institutions in Uganda and would like to clarify as follows:

1. Section 5(d) (ii) of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001 (as amended) mandates NCHE to accredit academic and professional programmes of those institutions, in consultation with professional associations and regulatory bodies;
2. The process of accreditation is guided by a prescribed set of Quality Assurance capacity indicators specified in the NCHE Quality Assurance Regulatory Framework. These indicators include those on infrastructure and human resources available for implementing a programme, among others. The NCHE, in addition, assesses the quality and relevance of the programme and its learning outcomes as well as the teaching and learning methods. Institutions are required to re-submit programmes for reassessment every 5 years (for Masters, Bachelors, Diplomas and Higher Education Certificates) and every 10 years for PhDs;
3. In accrediting professional programmes NCHE consults professional bodies which include among others:
 - i. Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council;
 - ii. Engineers Registration Board;
 - iii. Pharmaceutical Society of Uganda;
 - iv. Allied Health Professionals Council;
 - v. Uganda Nurses and Midwives Council;
 - vi. Uganda Veterinary Board;
 - vii. Surveyors Registration Board;
 - viii. Architects Registration Board and;
 - ix. Law Council.



4. On accreditation, institutions receive letters specifying the period after which the programme should be reviewed and submitted for reassessment;
5. **RE-ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMMES: Re-assessment of programmes is best practice to ensure quality and relevance of graduates.** Upon completion of the internal institutional programme review processes, institutions apply for re-assessment of a programme by the NCHE. Once an institution has applied for re-assessment, the NCHE re-assesses the programmes to establish, among others:
 - i. The implementation of NCHE regulations regarding minimum standards;
 - ii. The adherence to the programme design, the content, the duration, contact hours and assessment of what is taught;
 - iii. Relevance of what is taught for the job market and the nation;
 - iv. The quality of graduates.
6. **INFORMATION ON ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES:** Section 5(b) of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act of 2001 (as amended) gives NCHE the mandate to promote and develop the processing and dissemination of information on higher education for the benefit of the people. Information on accredited programmes is readily available;
7. **EXPIRY OF ACCREDITATION: “Expiry”** of accreditation, as reflected on the NCHE website, means that the programme needs re-assessment to establish whether the key aspects upon which accreditation was granted are still in place. **No programme will receive this label once institutions conform to the requirements for re-assessment.** Institutions with programmes requiring re-assessment are urged to submit them for re-assessment as soon as possible, in any case by **30th November 2023;**
8. **PROGRAMMES THAT HAVE RECEIVED PRIOR ACCREDITATION:** NCHE wishes to assure the public and all stakeholders around the world that **qualification of graduates on programmes that have received prior accreditation, in accordance with NCHE minimum standards and regulations, by NCHE are valid;**
9. In the process of programme review, some Higher Education Institutions have found it necessary to delete from offer, merge, and/or improve the existing accredited programmes. These changes ought to be communicated to the NCHE for appropriate update of the programme database at NCHE;

10. The NCHE wishes to reassure the general public that qualifications awarded by Higher Education Institutions in Uganda are highly regarded both at home and abroad. **Graduates from these institutions continue to receive international admissions, recognition and acclaim.**

The NCHE disassociates itself from all media reports from any institution other than NCHE on expired programmes. **We, therefore, call upon the public to seek the right information from the National Council for Higher Education to allay any anxiety on the validity of programmes.**



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR