

Janet warns institutions against certifying own students

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Education minister Janet Museveni

The Education minister Janet Museveni has warned institutions against issuing own certificates to vocational education trainees.

The minister said such a practice will not be tolerated by the ministry since it contradicts with requirements of the BTVET Act. She said in order to maintain standards and assure quality of the assessment and resultant certification, only legally and nationally recognised bodies like the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) will be supported by the ministry.

“This certification by DIT is really important and must be followed. If there are so many people certifying our people, we won’t know what quality is better than the other,” Mrs Museveni said.

She added that DIT certification will ultimately increase chances for employability of the certified skilled workforce in the country and globally, regardless of how the skills were acquired.

Museveni made the remarks recently at the joint release of results for the 8th series of the DIT Occupational and Modular Assessment for the period of October, November and December 2018 and the 14 series of the Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board (UBTEB) November to December 2018 end of programme examinations.

Initially, UBTEB and DIT released results on separate occasions but Mrs Museveni considered a joint release more “cost-effective”.

“There is a very thin line between skills that are delivered through formal, non-formal or informal education and training. Ultimately, the goal is having a skilled workforce with competences relevant to the labour market to spur the country’s economic development,” she said.

While presenting the results, DIT acting director Patrick Byakatonda said that some institutions do not submit their trainees for certification which compromises their competitiveness and quality in the labour market. At least 45,957 candidates registered for the 2018 Uganda Vocational Qualification (UVQ) and Modular Assessment from 1,000 assessment centres in 61 occupations compared to 22,526 candidates from 708 centres in 38 occupations in 2017.

Of the 45,957 candidates, 27,285 (59.4 per cent) were female and 18,672 (40.6 per cent) male. Overall, Byakatonda said female candidates performed better than their male counterparts. The manufacturing sector registered the highest pass rate at 37.3 per cent (12,540 candidates) while the Agriculture sector had the lowest failure rate at 0.1 per cent (17 candidates).

UBTEB RESULTS

Meanwhile, UBTEB executive secretary Onesmus Oyesigye noted an increment in candidature from 64,510 in 429 centres to 71,091 in 580 centres countrywide.

“This is an indication of improvement in the perception about technical and vocational education among students, parents, guardians and the community,” Oyesigye said.

He believes this will increase on the youth who are skilled and reduce on unemployment levels. Out of the 71,091 candidates, 43,691 did promotional examinations while 21,428 did end of programme examinations in technical certificate, business diploma and business certificate national programmes.

“While 21,428 candidates registered, 19,940 sat for this category of exams. Of these, 14,353 passed while 5,583 could also join the world of work but have one or more modules to improve upon their competencies,” he said.

He expressed the need for a deliberate campaign by government to attract females to technical programmes whose numbers remain very low as opposed to business programmes.

The board did not register any cases of paper leakages but malpractices involving 86 candidates from 18 centres were recorded. The board’s security committee heard their pleas and

recommended cancellation of results for 69 candidates in accordance with regulation 9(3) of the UBTEB Statutory Instrument 2009.

In a bid to improve performance, Oyesigye called for retooling of all instructors of technical institutes and colleges of Commerce.

“Most instructors recruited to teach subjects like Soft Skills, Entrepreneurship and Mathematics do not have the technical background and therefore cannot link these subjects to the trades and occupations offered by candidates,” he said.

He added that this has affected performance of candidates in Mathematics, English and Computer aided drawing in most of the technical national certificate programmes.

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