



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**THE UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER
TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS (MINIMUM
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION
TO CERTIFICATE, DIPLOMA AND DEGREE
PROGRAMMES) REGULATIONS, 2026**

S.I. No. 21 of 2026.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS
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S T A T U T O R Y I N S T R U M E N T S

2026 No. 21

**The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Minimum
Entry Requirements for Admission to Certificate, Diploma
and Degree Programmes) Regulations, 2026**

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2026 No. 21

The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Minimum Entry Requirements for Admission to Certificate, Diploma and Degree Programmes) Regulations, 2026

(Under section 128(2) (a) and 134 of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, Cap.262)

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon the National Council by section 128 (2) (a) and 134 of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, and with the approval of the Minister, these Regulations are made this 20th day of April, 2026.

PART I—PRELIMINARY

1. Citation

These Regulations may be cited as the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Minimum Entry Requirements for Admission to Certificate, Diploma and Degree Programmes) Regulations, 2026.

2. Application

These Regulations apply to admissions to certificate, diploma or degree programmes in tertiary institutions, other degree awarding institutions and universities.

3. Interpretation

In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires—

“Act” means the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act;

“foreign qualifications” means qualifications attained outside the national curriculum or from institutions of higher education not regulated under the Act;

“National Council” means the National Council for Higher Education established under section 3 of the Act;

“relevant bachelor’s degree” means a degree or its equivalent obtained in a field of study that is related to a master’s degree programme to which it is required for admission;

“relevant diploma” means a diploma or its equivalent obtained in a field of study that is related to a bachelor’s degree programme to which it is required for admission;

“relevant higher diploma” means a higher diploma or its equivalent obtained in a field of study that is related to a bachelor’s degree programme to which it is required for admission;

“relevant master’s degree” means a master’s degree or its equivalent obtained in a field of study that is related to, and supports progression into, the doctoral degree programme to which it is required for admission.

PART II—MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSIONS

4. Eligibility for admission

A person who wishes to be admitted to a programme at a university, other degree awarding institution and a tertiary institution shall possess the qualifications provided under these Regulations.

Undergraduate Programmes

5. Admission to higher education certificate programme

(1) The minimum entry requirements for admission to the higher education certificate programme shall be—

- (a) the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education with at least two subsidiary passes obtained in principal subjects, or its equivalent;

- (b) a foreign qualification obtained at secondary level not equivalent to Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education but meets minimum entry requirements for admission in the country where the qualification was obtained; or
- (c) a mature age entry examinations certificate.

(2) A mature age entry examinations certificate referred to in subregulation (1) (c) shall be obtained within two years immediately preceding the date of admission to the higher education certificate programme.

(3) A mature age entry examinations certificate shall not be awarded to a person who is below twenty two years of age.

6. Admission to diploma programme

(1) The minimum entry requirements for admission to a diploma programme shall be—

- (a) the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education with at least one principal pass and one subsidiary pass or its equivalent;
- (b) a higher education certificate with at least a pass; or
- (c) a mature age entry examinations certificate.

(2) A mature age entry examinations certificate referred to in subregulation (1) (c) shall be obtained within two years immediately preceding the date of admission to the diploma programme.

(3) A mature age entry examinations certificate shall not be awarded to a person who is below twenty two years of age.

7. Admission to higher diploma programme

The minimum entry requirements for admission to a higher diploma programme or its equivalent shall be the relevant diploma or its equivalent.

8. Admission to bachelor's degree programme

(1) The minimum entry requirements for admission to a bachelor's degree programme shall be the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education with at least two principal passes or its equivalent.

(2) A person who does not meet the minimum entry requirements for admission under subregulation (1), may be admitted to a bachelor's degree programme if he or she possesses—

- (a) a higher education certificate with at least a credit;
- (b) a mature age entry examinations certificate;
- (c) a relevant diploma or its equivalent; or
- (d) a relevant higher diploma or its equivalent.

(3) A mature age entry examinations certificate referred to in subregulation (1) (b) shall be obtained within two years immediately preceding the date of admission to a degree programme.

(4) A mature age entry examinations certificate shall not be awarded to a person who is below twenty-two years of age.

(5) A person with a relevant diploma with a distinction or credit may be admitted to a bachelor's degree programme in the second year of the relevant degree programme, where this option is expressly provided for in the bachelor's degree programme.

(6) A person with a higher diploma with at least a credit or a second class upper, may be admitted to a bachelor's degree programme in the third year of the degree programme, where this option is expressly provided for in the bachelor's degree programme.

Postgraduate Programmes

9. Admission to postgraduate certificate programme

The minimum entry requirements for admission to a postgraduate certificate programme shall be the relevant bachelor's degree or its equivalent.

10. Admission to postgraduate diploma programme

The minimum entry requirements for admission to a postgraduate diploma programme shall be the relevant bachelor's degree or its equivalent.

11. Admission to master's degree programme

(1) The minimum entry requirements for admission to a master's degree programme shall be the relevant bachelor's degree or its equivalent.

(2) A person with a bachelor's degree and a relevant postgraduate diploma may be admitted to a master's degree in the final year of the master's degree programme, where this option is expressly provided for in the master's degree programme.

12. Admission to doctoral degree programme

(1) The minimum entry requirements for admission to a doctoral degree programme shall be a relevant master's degree or its equivalent.

(2) The minimum entry requirements for admission to a joint master of philosophy and a doctoral programme shall be a relevant bachelor's degree with at least second class upper or its equivalent.

(3) The minimum entry requirements for admission to a doctoral degree by publication programme shall be—

- (a) a master's degree or equivalent qualifications in a relevant field of study; and
- (b) at least four peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters or ranked peer reviewed conference papers in a thematic area of study published within a period of five years immediately preceding the admission.

(4) For the avoidance of doubt, a person who holds a doctoral degree shall not be admitted to a doctoral degree by publication programme.

Foreign Qualifications

13. Admission of students with foreign qualification

(1) A person with a foreign qualification who wishes to be admitted to a certificate, diploma or degree programme shall—

- (a) meet the minimum entry requirements for admission set for the respective programmes under these Regulations; and
- (b) demonstrate proficiency in the English language.

(2) For the purposes of determining the equivalence of a foreign qualification—

- (a) to any qualification of higher education in Uganda, the equivalence shall be determined by the National Council; and
- (b) to the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education or the Uganda Certificate of Education, the equivalence shall be determined by the Uganda National Examinations Board.

PART III—MISCELLANEOUS

14. Amendment of S.I No. 34 of 2008

The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Quality Assurance) Regulations, 2008 S.I No. 34 of 2008 are amended by revoking regulations 9.

15. Amendment of S.I No. 35 of 2008

The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards for the Procurement Education and Training) Regulations, 2008, S.I No. 35 of 2008.

16. Revocation of S.I No. 63 of 2007

The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Minimum Entry Requirements for Admission to Universities or Other Tertiary Institutions) Regulations, 2007 S.I No. 63 of 2007.

17. Validation of higher education certificate programme and awards

(1) Any admission to a higher education certificate programme subsisting at the date of publication of these Regulations is hereby validated and deemed to have been lawfully done.

(2) Any admission to a certificate, diploma or degree programme subsisting at the date of publication of these Regulations, which was made on the basis of a higher education certificate awarded between the 4th day of January, 2016 and the date of publication of these Regulations is hereby validated and deemed to have been lawfully done.

(3) A certificate, diploma or degree awarded to a person who was admitted to a certificate, diploma or degree programme on the basis of a higher education certificate awarded between the 4th day of January, 2016 and the date of publication of these Regulations, is hereby validated and deemed to have been lawfully awarded.

(4) A higher education certificate awarded to any person who was admitted to a higher education certificate programme on or after the 4th day of January, 2016 is hereby validated and deemed to have been lawfully awarded.

PROFESSOR JOY. C. KWESIGA

Chairperson, National Council for Higher Education