7 universities introduce courses to fill skills gap

The new programmes target global needs and respond to gaps in trainings, research and specialised skills.

BY SYLVIA NAMAGEMBE

As the 2026 academic year begins, various universities are unveiling new and proposed academic programmes aimed at better aligning higher education with the demands of the job market and national development needs.

This initiative is a direct response to current concerns about the mismatch between graduate skills and labour market demands. Concerns have been raised regarding the practicality of some university courses, with employers pointing out that many graduates are missing essential skills for the workplace.

Makerere University

At Makerere University, the country's oldest public institution of higher learning, four new programmes have been introduced aimed at strengthening research and responding to national needs.

According to the academic registrar, Prof Buyinza Mukadasi, the programmes are targeting global needs, particularly in economic management, climate change adaptation and agricultural development.

"The world now lies on research and value addition which is critical. For instance, the meteorology programme is intended to address the shortage of trained weather and climate experts, at a time when Uganda continues to experience extreme weather events that affect agriculture and disaster preparedness," he explained.

Kyambogo University

The Vice Chancellor of Kyambogo University, Prof Eli Katunguka, stressed that the proposed programmes to the NCHE intend to meet societal and professional needs, as institutions adjust to changes in the economy and technology.

"The proposed programmes respond to gaps in advanced training, research and specialised skills required in the public sector, private industry and community development. These programmes reflect our commitment to skills-based training, inclusion and responsiveness to societal needs and have been developed in line with NCHE standards and are aligned to Kyambogo's mandate as a skills-oriented institution."

Makerere Business School

Prof Moses Muhwezi, the principal of Makerere University Business School (Mubs), said the university is actively developing and refining programmes across multiple fields, including health management, innovation, auditing, business intelligence and energy management.

"These programmes are designed to meet current

University	New Progammes (2026)	Duration
Makerere	PhD In Accounting & Finance	3 years
	PhD In Management	3 years
	Bachelor of Science In Meteorology	3 years
	Bachelor of Science In Horticulture	4 years
Victoria	Bachelor of Science In AI & Data Science	3 years
	Bachelor of Science In Cyber security & digital forensics	3 years
Kyambogo	PhD In Procurement and Supply chain management	
	PhD In Human resource management	
	PhD In Entrepreneurship	
	PhD In Accounting	
	PhD In Civil Engineering	
	PhD In Mathematics	
	Master of Education in Curriculum Studies	
	Master of Hospitality and Tourism	
	Master of Science In Mathematics Education	
	Master of Education in Educational Technology	
	Postgraduate Diploma in Visual Impairment	
	Bachelor of Ugandan Sign Language Translation and Interpretation (BSLTI)	
	Bachelor of Vocational Studies in Fashion and Cosmetology with Education	
	Bachelor of Illustration and Animation	
	Diploma in Community Nutrition	
MUBS	Bachelor of Health Management	3 years
	Master of Innovation and Entrepreneurship	2 years
	Bachelor of Social Enterprise Development	3 years
	Bachelor of Multilingualism & Franchising	3 years
	Bachelor of Digital Business Innovation	3 years
	Masters In Sports Administration and Talent Administration	2 years
	Bachelor of Scienc...	

University	New Progammes (2026)	Duration
	Bachelor of Auditing & Forensic Analytics	3 years
	Bachelor of Sustainable Energy Management	3 years
	Master of Science In Real estate	2 years
	Bachelor of Energy Economics and Governance	3 years
	Bachelor of Business Intelligence & Data Analytics	3 years
	Postgraduate Diploma in Competency-Based Teacher Education	1 year
	Bachelor of Business Software Engineering	3 years
	Master of Transport and Logistics Management	2 years
Kampala International	Master of Medicine in Dermatology	2 years
	Integrated Master of Pharmacy	6 years
	Master of Veterinary Pharmacy	2 years
	Master of Pharmaceutical Microbiology	2 years
	Master of AI & Data Science	2 years
	Master of Clinical Pharmacy	2 years
Mbarara University of Science and Technology	Bachelor of Science in Animal Health and Production Technology	3 years
	Bachelor of Science in Environmental Conservation and Tourism Management	3 years
	Bachelor of Science in Water Resources and Irrigation Engineering	4 years
	Bachelor of Science in Food Systems and Technology	4 years
	Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Health and Management	3 years
Kampala University	Bachelor of Islamic Banking	3 years
	Bachelor of Interior & landScape Design	3 years
	Bachelor of Science In Oil & Gas Management	3 years
	Bachelor of Environmental Science & Technology	3 years
	Bachelor of Administrative & Secretarial Services	3 years
	Bachelor of Nursing & Mid...	

NCHE SPEAKS OUT

When our reporter checked in with the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) to find out the status of new university programmes, officials confirmed that some courses had already been accredited, while others remain under evaluation and still await final approval.

Dr Vincent Ssembatya, the director of the Quality Assurance Department, said the accreditation process is multi-staged. "Programmes go through a desk review, facility verification, departmental and management evaluation and final approval by the council. Only after these stages is a programme posted as accredited and the university allowed to admit students," he said. He added that universities are at different stages, with some still completing internal submissions before NCHE can begin its review. "Institutions proposing new courses must provide a clear rationale, demonstrate demand and national relevance, and show they have the resources, teachers, and facilities required to run the programme.

Government institutions also need a Certificate of Financial Implications from the Ministry of Finance before courses can be approved," Dr Ssembatya explained. "The timeframe runs up to August which is the intake month. If the remaining steps are completed, they can be cleared in one of the three council meetings [in February, May and August]."

Kampala International University

KIU Vice Chancellor, Prof Muhammed Ngoma called for a broader shift away from teaching-only models towards universities that are driven by research, innovation and problem-solving.

"Universities must move away from knowledge reproduction to knowledge creation and research should inform public policy, industry and national development. With time, we shall introduce bachelor's degree programmes in the...

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