

Invigilators check S.4 students at Kibuli SS in 2024. PHOTO/ FILE

Uneb fees: Schools defy govt limit, cheat parents

Paying through the nose. Parents have questioned inflated examination charges as schools and officials trade blame over Uneb registration fees. The looming deadline surcharges also makes life miserable for both candidates and parents.

BY JANE NAFULA

Early this month, the former deputy Lord Mayor of Kampala, Ms Doreen Nyanjura expressed alarm over the varying charges for national exam registration, attributed to the national examiner, Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb).

Ms Nyanjura has been supporting three Senior Four candidates, all of whom presented varying charges, as they are in different schools.

"Uneb registration tuition fees for Senior Four candidates, how much money is it exactly? Is the money set by the schools or Uneb? How come each school has a different figure?" Ms Nyanjura asked.

"I have three students I am supporting and these are their figures, Shs350,000, Shs400,000 and Shs 250,000," she added.

Scores of parents have raised similar concerns, with some now seeking government intervention to save them from exorbitant charges amid difficult economic times.

"Uneb sets the amount of registration fees, but I don't know why schools continue squeezing more money from us," another parent argued.

"We are still struggling to clear tuition fees, yet we have to struggle to look for the extra money for registration that the schools are forcing us to pay."

This parent, whose daughter is in Senior Four, in one of the city secondary schools, declined to be named, for fear of being harassed.

According to Uneb's spokesperson Ms Jennifer Kalule, the official registration fees for this year stand at Shs34,000 for Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) candidates, Shs164,000 for Senior Four candidates and Shs186,000 for Senior Six candidates.

However Ms Kalule suspects that there could be underlying reasons for this situation.

"Some schools could have their different administrative arrangements," she said.

Asked about this, Mr Hasadu Kirabira, the chairperson of the National Private Educational Institutions Association (NPEIA) criticised schools that over charge candidates, but stressed the need for students to pay some extra money to cater for costs associated with conducting Uneb examination registration.

"It is unfair for school administrators to over-charge students. We condemn it. Schools should be allowed to charge [something extra] in addition to registration fees set by Uneb to meet the costs that arise in the course of registration and running examinations," Mr Kirabira said.

"There are a lot of expenses involved in registration and conducting Uneb examinations. During registration, schools use internet, and take students' photos among other things... What schools should do is to separate registration fees from the extra charges," he added.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

EDITOR'S PICK

Nutritionists tip schools on food

As schools across Uganda continue to rely heavily on beans and posho as a major part of their menu for learners, throughout the school term, nutrition experts are calling for a shift in mindset. They say schools should improve feeding without increasing school fees... / P22

Elite High School hold colourful prom party

Elite High School in Entebbe last week held their annual prom, at which students showcased their love for fashion. The event has been in the news in previous years for their lavish expressions by students. / P23



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