

Kabale University trains fake doctors

Illegal. The National Council for Higher Education accuses the university of teaching courses without their accreditation.

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KAMPALA. Kabale University in western Uganda has secretly recruited students, many of them reportedly unqualified, for medical courses not accredited by the government as required by law.

Our investigations show that at least 170 trainees are enrolled to study Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery or other undergraduate and graduate nursing, public health, paediatrics and Obstetrics/Gynecology courses.

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), the statutory body responsible for accrediting programmes for tertiary and university trainings, said it is unaware of the impugned courses, which the institution began teaching last year, and the government will not be responsible for the students in the cohort.

The council, however, will sit this morning to review the unaccredited medical discipline courses for which the university has already been sued.

"Our teams have been to Kabale University to verify some of the information, and the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Nursing are some of the programmes that await consideration," NCHE spokesperson Saul Waigolo said.

Two businessmen Mr Kennedy Rwaboona Misindo and Mr William Kururagire, sued the university on August 23 for teaching and awarding qualifications unaccredited by NCHE.

The duo want the university to stop admitting students on illegal courses and cancel the honorary degrees they awarded on June 24.

"The defendant is further teaching and admitting students to the university on courses such as



On spot. Kabale University main entrance. The university is accused of recruiting unqualified students. NET PHOTO

Bachelors of engineering civil and building engineering, Bachelor of engineering electrical, mechanical engineering, Master of Medicine Paediatrics and Child Health, Bachelor of Medicine Obstetrics and gynecology...without accreditation from NCHE," the suit reads in part.

The university secretary, Mr Johnson Baryantuma Munono, said the court case "is not a big scare; we shall handle that issue because we have ever handled more complicated ones".

Some Second-Year medical students who talked to *Daily Monitor* said the administration had assured them that their course would be accredited.

"Our lecturers come from Mbarara University of Science and Technology and Kampala International University. The administration asked us not to worry because the accreditation process is underway," a student said on condition of anonymity in order to speak freely.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Resources: Equipment, laboratories.

- Lecturers must have 15 hours of contact with students per week
- 1:15 Lecturers to student ratio, although the ideal is 1:8
- 60 per cent of staff should be permanent
- Lecturer should have a higher qualification than the students being taught
- Student must have passed Chemistry and Biology subjects at A-Level in one examination sitting
- Students must have scored at least two principal passes and have five passes in O-Level

have inadequate infrastructure, inadequate academic staff and their medical students have limited access to patients for clinical training.

For instance, it noted that Makerere University dental training had stagnated over the years with limited infrastructure and personnel; the sanitation at Gulu University Medical School and their teaching hospital were wanting.

Kampala International University had increased the number of medical students to 500 annually without matching staffing or infrastructure.

The council will today consider accreditation of 99 out of 221 programmes submitted by universities across the country.

When *Daily Monitor* visited Kabale University last week, it found that the institution had 50 students already admitted to Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, 62 on Bachelor of Nursing, five students on Master of Public Health, four are pursuing Master of Obstetrics/Gynecology while one is doing Master of Pediatrics.

It was also established that the block, which has been housing Chemistry, Physics and Biology laboratories for the students in the Faculty of Science has been turned into the School of Medicine without an alternative.

Sources close to the university who asked for anonymity because they are not allowed to speak to press, have told this newspaper that a team from NCHE visited the university last year to verify facilities for the programmes the institution had applied for accreditation.

Instead, they found the university was already teaching the programmes such as Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, Nursing and Allied Health without accreditation.

Mr Patrick Muinda, Education ministry spokesperson, yesterday said: "It is a legal issue. NCHE has not come out yet that they have failed. They will take the decision under their mandate and the ministry will advise on policy issues."