



## UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

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### **STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF 2020 UCE EXAMINATION RESULTS**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Honourable Minister of Education and Sports, with pleasure, the Uganda National Examinations Board presents to you Results for the year 2020 Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) Examination for release to the public, in accordance with the mandate of the Board under Section 4(1)(b) of the UNEB Act, No 1 of 2021. The examination was conducted between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 under the theme "***Integrity and Security in the management of examinations, the Health and Safety of Learners is a joint responsibility***".

#### **2.0 TOTAL CANDIDATURE**

Candidature decreased by **4,324** (-1.3%) from **337,720** in 2019 to **333,396**. Of these, **148,128** (44.4%) were USE beneficiaries. The number of male candidates registered is **166,744** (50.01%) and that of females is **166,652** (49.99%). The difference is only 92 more males than females. In 2019, the number of females had surpassed that of the males by **398**.

In 2020, **330,592** candidates (**165,251** males and **165,341** females) appeared for the examination compared to **333,060** candidates who appeared for the examination in 2019. This is a decrease of **2,468** (-0.7%) candidates. The number of females who sat was more than that of males by **90** candidates.

Statistics of the number of candidates who registered for, and those who sat the UCE examination for the last 5 years are given in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Registration over the Last Five Years**

Year	Candidates registered	Candidates who sat	Absentees	% Absent
2020	333,396	330,592	2,804	0.8
2019	337,720	333,060	4,660	1.4
2018	326,212	320,119	6,093	1.9
2017	323,276	316,624	6,652	2.0
2016	313,162	306,507	6,655	2.1

Absenteeism of candidates has continued to drop over the last five years.

A total of **519** Special Needs Education (SNE) candidates (**252** males; **267** females) registered for the 2020 UCE examination compared to **358** in 2019. These consisted of the **blind (29)**, those with **low vision (104)**, the **deaf (78)**, the **dyslexics (43)** and **physically handicapped (76)**. There were **189 others** with other forms of disability that only needed to be given extra time. The Board made adequate arrangements for these candidates, which included modification of questions, provision of questions written in Braille form, providing support personnel for the handicapped and dyslexics, and sign language interpreters for the deaf. Candidates with low vision were given question papers with enlarged print to enable them read more easily. All SNE candidates were allowed extra 45 minutes in each paper.

### 3.0 COMPARISON OF GENERAL CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE FOR 2020 AND 2019 UCE EXAMINATIONS

Performance of candidates who sat in 2020 and 2019 in terms of Division passes is compared in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: General Performance in 2020 compared to 2019**

Division	2020				2019			
	No. of Cands	% age	Cumm no. of Cands	Cumm %	No. Of Cands	% age	Cumm no. of Cands	Cumm %
1	39,968	12.1	39,968	12.1	27,842	8.4	27,842	8.3
2	69,782	21.2	109,750	33.3	58,575	17.6	86,417	25.7
3	81,428	24.7	191,178	58.0	77,289	23.2	163,706	48.7
4	120,055	36.4	311,233	94.4	143,218	43.0	306,924	91.3
9	18,415	5.6	329,648		26,136	7.8	336,060	

NB: Figures do not include withheld results.

There was better performance overall, compared to 2019, with **311,233** (4,309 more) candidates passing compared to **306,924** who passed the examination in 2019.

Performance of candidates in 2020 in various subjects is compared to the 2019 performance of candidates in the same subjects in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Comparison of 2020 and 2019 Candidates' Performance in Selected Subjects**

Subject	2020				2019			
	No. of Cands.	Percentage at			No. of Cands.	Percentage at		
		2	6	8		2	6	8
English Lang.	329,447	1.3	42.8	78.2	330,058	0.6	36.0	77.2
Christ. Rel. Ed	224,695	12.6	64.2	87.9	228,394	4.4	40.5	72.3
Islam. Rel. Ed	35,550	18.1	66.6	87.4	31,953	12.2	60.9	85.4
History	328,550	7.0	53.3	73.4	329,112	2.7	37.2	67.8
Geography	329,380	1.9	55.8	80.4	329,929	3.8	66.6	85.3
Mathematics	329,453	3.9	37.9	67.2	330,080	3.9	32.6	60.7
Agriculture	184,102	7.2	60.4	85.9	198,443	1.8	42.4	75.0
Physics	329,303	1.2	19.1	53.2	329,611	0.6	14.2	46.8
Chemistry	329,292	1.4	13.0	45.3	329,713	1.4	15.5	54.6
Biology	332,524	0.7	28.2	64.3	329,828	0.5	31.5	70.0
Art (IPS)	95,588	1.7	76.1	99.7	80,109	1.0	82.7	99.9
Commerce	153,577	10.9	75.5	89.0	188,185	5.5	36.1	54.9

There is an overall improvement in performance in the large entry subjects except in Geography, Chemistry and Biology, although Biology showed a slight improvement at the Distinction 2 level.

Worth noting with concern is the overall pass levels for Science subjects where nearly half of the candidates have not achieved the minimum Pass 8 level. Chemistry remains the worst done subject.

#### 4.0 COMPARISON OF FEMALE AND MALE CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE

Table 4 compares performance of female and male candidates in selected subjects expressed in terms of cumulative percentages at the indicated levels.

**Table 4: Performance of Females and Males compared**

Subject	PERCENTAGE AT					
	GRADE 2 (Distinction level)		GRADE 6 (Credit level)		GRADE 8 (Pass level)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
English Lang.	1.4	1.3	43.8	41.6	79.3	76.9
CRE	11.6	13.6	63.2	65.3	87.6	88.2
IRE	16.4	20.0	64.9	68.6	86.9	88.0
History	5.2	8.8	47.7	59.0	69.2	77.6
Geography	1.4	2.5	51.5	60.2	77.5	83.3
Mathematics	2.5	5.2	32.8	43.0	64.3	70.2
Agriculture	4.6	9.6	52.2	67.7	81.7	89.8
Physics	0.7	1.8	14.0	24.1	47.6	58.7
Chemistry	0.8	2.0	10.1	16.0	42.7	47.9
Biology	0.5	1.0	23.4	32.8	61.2	67.4
Art (IPS)	1.0	2.3	72.3	79.3	99.7	99.7
Commerce	7.1	14.5	68.2	82.5	84.8	93.0

Female candidates performed better than males in English Language. In other large entry subjects, male candidates show better performance, with the differences more marked in Mathematics and the Sciences. This trend in the disparity between the performance of male and female candidates has been observed over the years.

Percentage passes at the different divisions are compared in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Comparison of Percentage Divisional Passes**

Gender	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4	Division 9
Males	14.3	22.9	24.7	33.2	4.9
Females	9.9	19.4	24.7	39.7	6.3

Table 5 confirms that overall, male candidates performed better at all the higher grades than their female counterparts did.

## 5.0 PERFORMANCE OF SPECIAL GROUPS

### 5.1 Inmates

UNEB maintains an examination centre at Luzira Prisons for the inmates to assist the Uganda Prison Service in their efforts at rehabilitation of offenders. The centre registered 45 candidates and all sat. Four obtained Division 1, eight passed in Division 2, 15 got Division 3; and 18 passed in Division 4. None failed.

### 5.2 Special Needs candidates

Table 6 below shows the candidates' performance by category

**Table 6: Performance of the best SNE candidates by category**

Category	Name	Total Agg	Division	School
Amanuensis	Khauka Joel	10	1	Uganda Martyrs SS Namugongo (Wakiso District)
	Tino Esther Osega	12	1	Trinity College Nabbingo (Wakiso District)
Blind	Nabaka Yudaya	25	1	Iganga SS (Iganga District)
	Asasira Mathew	30	1	Iganga SS (Iganga District)
Deaf	Chedikol Timothy	35	2	Mbale School for the Deaf (Mbale District)
	Nyangoma Brenda	38	2	Wakiso SS for the Deaf (Wakiso District)
Dyslexic	Nanyombi Benitah Katrina	16	1	Uganda Martyrs SS Namugongo (Wakiso District)
	Nalugwa Teddy Mukasa	20	1	Uganda Martyrs SS Namugongo (Wakiso District)
Partially sighted	Mbuya Preance Solomon	8	1	Our Lady of Africa SS, Namilyango (Mukono district)
	Apili Nancy	13	1	Adwari SS (Otuke District)

The best SNE candidates are from the following schools - amanuensis (disability requiring physical support) from Uganda Martyrs SS Namugongo and Trinity College Nabbingo; the Blind are from Iganga SS; the deaf (with hearing impairment) are from Mbale School for the Deaf and Wakiso Secondary School for the Deaf. The dyslexic candidates (who required transcribers) are from Uganda Martyrs SS, Namugongo; and the partially sighted (who needed large print) are from Our Lady of Africa SS, Namilyango and Adwari SS in Otuke District.

## 6.0 PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

As we have stated before, the UCE examination is designed to assess the degree of acquisition of the necessary knowledge, skills and competences in the various learning areas; and to lay a foundation for specialization at higher education levels. Examination Papers are carefully constructed and go through necessary stages to ensure **validity** such that they test the candidates' knowledge, understanding, and ability to apply the knowledge acquired to solve problems in given novel situations and to show analytical skills.

In the Sciences, the papers test the candidates' ability to manipulate science apparatus while carrying out experiments, to apply the science process skills of making measurements and observations, recording observations and other data, drawing inferences or conclusions from observations that they have made, data presentation and interpretation. They should also be able to apply basic scientific knowledge to solve problems in their environment.

The following challenges are persistent, and are responsible for poor performance by the candidates in the lower grades. We have reported on these in previous Statements of Release.

### 6.1 Language Deficiency

We note that performance in English Language has improved. However, in composition writing, where candidates are expected to exhibit creativity and originality teachers in some schools are still making learners cram passages from what they call "model compositions" with unusual and difficult vocabulary. They then reproduce the crammed passages irrespective of what the composition topic is. Candidates also found difficulty in extracting appropriate information from the Comprehension passage to correctly answer the questions based on the passage. There are also weaknesses in using the correct grammar in sentence construction. The essential skill of extracting main ideas from a passage and writing out a coherent summary presents a major challenge to most candidates.

The challenge of language deficiency is reflected in performance in other subjects, where Chief Examiners continue to report failure by the candidates to interpret the demands of the tasks set, failure to follow instructions, misunderstanding key words used in the stem of a question, and generally poor language expression.

In Sciences, the problems have remained the same as in recent years. Candidates showed weaknesses in the handling of apparatus during the practical tests. The weaknesses were also shown in making and recording observations and drawing conclusions from those observations; tabulation of experimental results and

interpretation of the results to meet the demands of the question. They also showed poor mathematical skills required in calculations, inability to write the correct symbols of elements, formulae of compounds and equations, among others. Some candidates merely forged figures of experimental results in the practical papers. Most candidates showed lack of practical experience as many schools tend to handle practical aspects of the curriculum much later in the course. As a result, students do not develop the necessary skills. This could explain why most malpractice cases are in science practical papers.

## **6.2 Performance in Higher Order Questions**

As reported in previous statements, candidates do better in questions which require mainly knowledge and understanding (low order questions). Higher order questions which require candidates to apply knowledge in problem solving situations, draw inferences or make predictions from observations or a set of data are not done well. This has been persistent over the years.

## **7.0 EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The measures put in resulted in a welcome reduction in the cases of malpractice. Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics have been most affected, with external assistance, collusion among candidates, impersonation and script substitution as the common cases. A total of 1,292 results will be withheld in accordance with Section 5 (2) (b) of the UNEB Act No 1 of 2021. This number was 1,825 in 2019. The affected candidates will be given a fair hearing.

Examination centres from which results are withheld will be notified through their portals.

## **8.0 APPRECIATION**

I wish to express my profound appreciation to you, Hon Minister, and the entire Ministry for your invaluable support.

I wish to thank all those persons, the Police and other security agencies who rendered invaluable services to UNEB during monitoring the field conduct of the examination. I sincerely thank the Area Supervisors, heads of examination centres and invigilators, who conducted the examination in accordance with the stipulated Board's regulations and adhered to the Ministry of Health guidelines on the control of COVID-19.

I thank the examiners whose hard work ensured that the marking ended on schedule. I am grateful to the heads of the schools that allowed UNEB to use their premises as marking centres.

Finally, in a very special way, I thank the staff of UNEB Secretariat for their utmost perseverance, selfless commitment to duty and the personal sacrifices they made to ensure the 2020 UCE Results are released.

## **9.0 ACCESS TO RESULTS AND COLLECTION OF RESULT SLIPS**

Heads of UCE examination Centres can download the results from their portals as soon as they are released. No hard copy result lists will be issued from UNEB offices until conditions are more favourable. Examination centres will be notified accordingly.

Candidates, their parents and any other person wishing to access results may do so through their mobile phones. Go to the 'Message' menu and type **UCE**, leave space, then type the correct index number of the candidate; e.g. **U0000/001**. Send to **6600** on the **MTN and AIRTEL** networks.

We warn all schools against gathering the candidates in the school premises or anywhere else for any form of celebration of the results as this act is likely to spread COVID-19 infection.

**Dan N. Odongo**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**