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STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF 2016 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 2016 Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) Examination for release to the public, in accordance with Section 4(2) of the UNEB Act, Cap 137, Laws of the Republic of Uganda. The examination was conducted between 17th October and 23rd November, 2016 under the theme "Consolidating Technological Innovations, Security and Teamwork for Quality Assessment".

Hon. Minister, I am glad to report to you that the 2016 UCE examination was conducted successfully throughout the country. There were no incidences of examination leakage.

2.0 TOTAL CANDIDATURE

Candidature increased by **10,105** (3.2%) from **313,171** in 2015 to **323,276** in 2016. Of these, **157,364** (48.7%) were USE beneficiaries. The gap between male and female candidates has continued to reduce with the former constituting **164,473** (50.9%) and the latter, **158,722** (49.1%). In tandem with the 2016 Theme, all the candidates were registered through the e-Registration process. UCE examination centres which presented candidates increased from **3,329** in 2015, to **3,454** in 2016, an increase of **125** centres.

In 2016, **316,624** candidates appeared for the examination compared to **306,507** candidates who appeared for the examination in 2015. This is an

increase of **3.3** per cent over 2015. The gap in enrolment between girls and boys has been shrinking in recent years due to interventions aimed at the retention of girls in school. The USE programme has also enabled quite a number of disadvantaged children to attain the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) level.

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
2016	323,276	316,624	6,652	2.0
2015	313,162	306,507	6,655	2.1
2014	310,414	306,185	4,229	1.4
2013	295,494	288,738	6,756	2.3
2012	268,906	262,987	5,903	2.2

Absenteeism of candidates dropped from 2.1 per cent in 2015 to 2.0 per cent in 2016. More boys (3,543; 2.2 per cent) were absent than girls (3,109; 1.9 per cent).

A total of **366** Special Needs Education (SNE) candidates registered for the 2016 UCE examination, an increase from **325** in 2015. These consisted of the **blind (59)**, those with **low vision (75)**, the **deaf (62)**, the **dyslexics (15)** and **physically handicapped (63)**. There were **92 others** with minor 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.

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 47 candidates, an increase from the 38 registered in 2015. Forty-four candidates of whom five were females sat the examination. Their results show that four passed in Division 1; five in Division 2; 10 in Division 3; 21 in Division 4. Four did not reach the minimum level to be graded. The best candidate scored an aggregate of 21 in the best eight subjects.

3.0 COMPARISON OF GENERAL CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE FOR 2016 AND 2015 UCE EXAMINATIONS

Performance of candidates who sat in 2016 and 2015 in terms of Division passes is compared in Table 2 below.

Table 2: General Performance in 2016 Compared to 2015

Division	2016				2015			
	No. of Cands	% age	Cumm no. Of Cands	Cumm %	No. Of Cands	% age	Cumm no. of Cands	Cumm %
1	23,489	7.5	23,489	7.5	25,750	8.5	25,750	8.5
2	44,307	14.1	67,796	21.6	48,642	16.0	74,392	24.5
3	63,072	20.1	131,868	41.7	70,413	23.1	144,805	47.6
4	142,479	45.3	274,347	86.9	130,058	42.7	274,863	90.3
9	41,632	13.2	314,979	100	29,593	9.7	304,456	100

NB: Figures do not include withheld results.

The table shows that there was a slight drop in performance in 2016 compared to 2015. This is attributed to performance in English Language, Mathematics and the Sciences.

Table 3 below compares performance between USE and Non - USE candidates in terms of passes at the different divisions.

Table 3 USE and Non - USE performance compared

DIVISION	USE Candidates		Non – USE Candidates	
	No	% age	No	% age
1	4,454	2.9	19,035	11.8
2	16,058	10.5	28,249	17.5
3	28,900	18.9	34,172	21.2
4	78,455	51.2	64,024	39.6
9	25,392	16.6	16,045	9.9
X (Absent)	3,434	2.2	1,495	2.0

The table indicates better performance by Non - USE candidates. It should be noted, however, that most non – USE candidates are from the traditional government aided secondary schools, most of which are boarding schools whose fees structures do not fit in the USE fees framework. The disparity in performance is, perhaps, not unexpected.

Performance of candidates in 2016 in various subjects is compared to the 2015 performance of candidates in the same subjects in Table 4. .

Table 4: Comparison of 2016 and 2015 Candidates' Performance in Selected Subjects

Subject	2016				2015			
	No. of Cands.	Percentage at			No. of Cands.	Percentage at		
		2	6	8		2	6	8
English Lang.	314,538	1.0	40.0	73.6	304,004	2.4	56.1	82.3
Christ. Rel. Ed	197,466	10.3	59.5	83.6	187,475	5.8	58.3	88.0
Islam. Rel. Ed	26,540	18.4	77.3	93.1	23,162	22.1	79.5	92.5
History	313,074	4.9	44.9	65.8	302,590	6.2	46.8	68.1
Geography	314,357	2.0	45.9	77.2	303,581	1.7	46.4	77.5
Mathematics	314,597	3.1	28.9	60.7	304,055	3.0	32.2	79.2
Agriculture	201,704	1.4	38.7	72.1	199,704	0.5	43.4	82.7
Physics	313,950	0.4	9.3	31.9	303,237	0.5	15.4	41.7
Chemistry	314,110	1.3	11.4	40.1	302,792	1.3	13.9	42.8
Biology	314,157	0.1	16.1	45.1	303,458	0.3	13.0	40.7
Art	28,404	1.9	34.8	79.8	66,199	1.3	25.9	72.0
Art (IPS)	56,648	0.1	50.6	96.7	30,929	0.3	65.5	90.0
Commerce	178,361	2.6	31.1	50.0	171,685	6.2	52.6	71.4

NB: Figures do not include withheld results.

Christian Religious Education, Geography, Mathematics, Agriculture and Art showed improved performance at the Distinction grades. Biology had a significant improvement at the Credit and overall pass level compared to 2015. Slight decline in performance is observed in the other subjects. Despite the slight improvement in Biology, the percentage pass levels for all science subjects remain low, with almost 55 per cent of the candidates unable to exhibit the minimum required competency to be graded. The worst performed science subject is Physics.

4.0 COMPARISON OF FEMALE AND MALE CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE

Table 5 compares performance of female and male candidates in selected subjects expressed in terms of cumulative percentages at the indicated levels.

Table 5: 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.	1.1	0.8	41.5	38.5	75.1	72.2
CRE	10.1	10.5	59.4	59.6	83.8	83.3
IRE	15.8	21.3	74.8	80.1	92.4	93.9
History	3.6	6.3	38.5	51.2	60.0	71.3
Geography	1.3	2.5	40.8	50.6	73.7	80.4
Mathematics	1.9	4.3	23.4	34.4	56.7	64.8
Agriculture	0.7	2.1	29.9	46.6	65.2	78.4
Physics	0.2	0.6	6.2	12.5	26.8	37.6
Chemistry	0.8	1.9	8.4	14.0	36.6	43.1
Biology	0.1	0.2	12.0	20.8	39.3	50.5
Art	1.8	1.9	31.6	37.0	77.1	81.6
Art (IPS)	0.0	0.2	46.2	50.5	96.6	96.6
Commerce	1.6	3.4	24.2	37.2	42.1	56.9

NB: Figures do not include withheld results.

Female candidates performed better than males in English Language and also in Christian Religious Education, whereas their male counterparts performed better in all the other large entry subjects. 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 6 below.

Table 6: Comparison of Percentage Divisional Passes

Gender	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4	Division 9
Males	4.6	8.1	10.7	21.3	6.2
Females	2.9	6.0	9.3	23.9	7.0

NB: Figures do not include withheld results.

Table 6 confirms that overall, male candidates performed better at all the higher grades than their female counterparts.

5.0 PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES: THE CHALLENGES

The UCE examination was meant to assess the degree of acquisition of the requisite knowledge, attitudes and competences in the various learning areas. Examination Papers were designed to test the candidates' understanding, and ability to apply the knowledge acquired to solve problems in given novel situations and to show analytical skills.

In the Sciences, the candidates' ability to manipulate science apparatus, the science process skills of making measurements and observations, recording observations and other data, drawing inferences or conclusions from observations, data presentation and interpretation among others, were also tested.

Those candidates awarded Division 1 were able to demonstrate high levels of knowledge and skills in the subjects they took. Division 2 represents sufficient levels of competence. Candidates demonstrate knowledge with understanding, apply knowledge and deal with some high order skills. Division 3 represents moderate levels of competence. Candidates at this level demonstrate knowledge and some level of comprehension but are not able to deal with the higher order level skills; while Division 4 represents the basic (minimum) level of competence. Candidates at this level showed the ability to understand elementary concepts and skills only. Those who are awarded Division 9 have not achieved the basic level of competency required to be graded.

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.

5.1 Language Deficiency

English is the official language and the language of instruction in this country. It follows that candidates' ability to understand the demands of questions in the examination papers and offer adequate responses to those questions depends a lot on the candidates' level of proficiency in English. Reports of the examiners indicate that this is a real challenge. Difficulties were reported in the use of correct grammar, spellings, tenses and punctuations when writing compositions. Candidates are expected to read a passage and write out a coherent summary of the main issues. They are also expected to answer comprehension questions to show their understanding of the context in a story. Serious weaknesses were shown here, indicating inadequate teaching. Teachers are still making candidates cram passages from story books or what they call "model compositions." They then reproduce these in answer to questions requiring original imaginative compositions. There is also evidence of spotting even in

English where the teachers now concentrate on what skills they think will be examined in a particular year. This was very evident in this examination. The low levels of proficiency also meant that candidates were not able to express themselves adequately in those papers that required them to offer answers in essay form.

5.2 Performance in Higher Order Questions

Higher order questions are those questions that require candidates to draw from their knowledge and experiences, draw inferences or make predictions from a set of data. Performance in these types of questions were not as good as desired. There is evidence of candidates failing to understand and interpret questions. Those questions that require computation and the skills of representing data graphically were poorly done.

5.3 Performance in Science Subjects

Performance in Sciences continues to be poor for the majority of candidates. As can be seen from **Table 3**, only about 45 % (on average) reach the minimum competency level. Despite the significant efforts by the Ministry of Education and Sports to avail laboratory chemicals and equipment to schools, there is still evidence of theoretical teaching of Sciences. The strategic interventions towards the effective practical teaching of sciences through the SESEMAT programme are yet to reflect in the quality of the candidates' work. As in previous years, candidates experienced problems in the handling of apparatus during the practical tests as well as making and recording observations and drawing conclusions from those observations; tabulation of experimental results and interpretation of the results, among others. The lower achievers found difficulties with questions requiring explanations, description of experimental procedure, use of chemical symbols and formulae, writing of units and dealing with tasks that require practical experience. Little wonder then, that about 75 per cent of the suspected cases of examination fraud that have been reported are in Practical Physics alone.

6.0 FIELD CONDUCT OF THE 2016 UCE EXAMINATION

The field conduct of the 2016 UCE examination was generally quite smooth and peaceful. The Board put in place measures that ensured that examination papers did not leak. However, other forms of examination breaches occurred inside the examination rooms due to acts of omission or commission by invigilators, subject

teachers and school head teachers. Scouts reported cases of external assistance, collusion, impersonation, and smuggling of unauthorized materials into the examination rooms. In the course of marking the scripts examiners unearthed most of these cases of external assistance and collusion. The most affected subjects were the Sciences, especially the practical papers, and Mathematics.

A new phenomenon has emerged where teachers of science subjects are masquerading as laboratory technicians in order to remain in the examination rooms in a desperate effort to help candidates.

In accordance with Section 4 (3) of the UNEB Act, Cap 137, the Board is withholding results of **1,893** candidates from 86 examination centres (0.6 % of candidature), to allow for completion of investigations and accord the suspected persons a fair hearing. This is a reduction from the 2,060 results withheld in 2015 examinations.

A list of all the affected centres from which results of significant numbers of candidates are being withheld and the actual number of candidates is appended. The nature of malpractice suspected will be communicated to them as they pick the rest of the results.

7.0 APPRECIATION

I wish to express my profound appreciation to you, Hon Minister, and the entire Ministry for your invaluable support by helping to secure the necessary funds for the completion of this exercise. I equally extend my immense gratitude to the Inspector General of Police, General Kale Kayihura, who put the resources of the Police Force throughout the country at UNEB's disposal during the entire examination period.

I wish to thank all those persons 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. I also thank the vigilant members of the public who volunteered vital information and the Press who covered the field conduct of the examination.

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.

I congratulate all the candidates who passed the examination and thank their parents and guardians for their support. I encourage those who did not do well this time to try again.

Finally, in a very special way, I thank my staff at the UNEB Secretariat for their utmost perseverance, selfless commitment to duty and the personal sacrifices they made to ensure the timely release of these results. They have continued to uphold the credibility of the examination system, in keeping with the Board's Vision "*To be a leading centre of Assessment for Quality Education*".

8.0 ACCESS TO RESULTS AND COLLECTION OF RESULTS SLIPS

Honourable Minister, in line with our Theme of consolidating technological innovations, the results of this examination will be automatically uploaded on school portals as soon as you click the button on our computer. Heads of UCE examination Centres can download the results from the comfort of their offices. Result lists will still be issued and may be collected together with result slips from UNEB offices at Ntinda starting today **31st January, 2017** from **2:00 pm**. Apart from the school result lists, no individual candidate's results will be available from UNEB offices.

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. **U0001/001**. Send to **6600** on the **MTN, AIRTEL, AFRICELL and UTL** networks.

It should be noted that results obtained by this method are for notification only, and cannot be tendered as official. Result slips and certificates remain the only authentic proof of performance, and candidates should collect these from their respective schools from where they registered.

At the request of school head teachers, UNEB has not put on the SMS the results of those candidates who were allowed to sit the examination without paying school fees and have not honoured their obligations to date. Parents, guardians and candidates are advised to complete the payment of such fees before they can access the results at their sitting centres.

Dan N. Odongo
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY