



Tuesday, 4th March 2025

Vice Chancellors' Press Statement

As we commence the month of March, I wish to start by thanking all our staff for their diligent and dedicated service to our University and Country. Makerere University occupies a prominent position in the region when it comes to teaching and learning, research and innovation as well as knowledge transfer partnerships. I therefore wish to update the public on a few developments:

1. Automation of University Business Operations

Makerere University's Strategic Plan (2020-2030) prioritizes digital transformation (DX) to establish the institution as a research-led, digitally driven university. To this end, the University Council has approved several Management Information Systems whose aim is to further professionalize management of university functions. In line with Uganda's Buy Uganda Build Uganda (BUBU) policy, Makerere has embraced in-house software development as a sustainable approach to business process automation. Leveraging student and staff expertise, the university has developed several information systems to enhance efficiency and transparency.

Key systems include:

1. Academic Management Information System (ACMIS) – Enables online student applications, tuition payments, results access, and timely graduation. ACMIS successfully supported the 74th and 75th graduation cohorts.
2. Electronic Human Resource Management System (eHRMS) – Automates job applications, leave management, promotions, and payroll accuracy, improving staffing planning.
3. Financial Management System (Mak-FMS) – Facilitates digital requisitions, approvals, and financial monitoring, increasing transparency and reducing paperwork.
4. Biometric Attendance Management System – Tracks staff presence and ensures adherence to schedules. A student attendance system will soon provide mobile-based lecture attendance monitoring.
5. Academic Registrar's Electronic Document and Records Management System (AR-EDRMS) – Digitizes student records and credential verification, set to greatly reduce the need for physical visits from April 2025 onwards.
6. Grants Management Information System – Monitors financial performance, research alignment with the National Development Plan, and research outputs.

7. Hospital Management Information System – Still in early implementation, but evolving to automate hospital operations.

These systems have streamlined operations, improved service delivery, and enhanced transparency, reinforcing Makerere's commitment to digital transformation and innovation in higher education. This is why you no longer have students in long queues, while transcripts and certificates are given to the student before graduation day.

2. Search for Deputy Vice Chancellors –A/A and F/A

The search for individuals to fill the positions of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Finance and Administration) at Makerere University has officially commenced.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Finance and Administration) – DVC F&A

The Office of Deputy Vice Chancellor Finance and Administration has not had a substantive official since 2020 when the high court nullified the appointment of Prof. William Bazeyo, after one of the contestants alleged that the process was irregular. The second attempt to have the position filled substantively was again stopped by court following a petition by the same contestant.

Last year, the contestant withdrew the case, allowing for the search process to resume. Upon its resumption, however, another contestant petitioned court. The University Council has now guided that the university holds a fresh search for a substantive DVC F&A.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) – DVC AA

For the position of DVC AA, the former's term ended in Dec 2023, whereupon he was given a short acting contract. While his appraisal was going on, he petitioned court, citing delays in completing his appraisal. Owing to the court matter, the University Council could not continue with his appraisal. However, Council has decided it is time to substantively fill the position hence setting up the search committee.

To ensure a rigorous and objective selection process, the University Senate on 26th February constituted two Search Committees – one for each of the vacant positions. The committees were given two (2) months in which to report back to Senate. Senate will then forward the required three (3) names to Council. We hope that this process will be completed within three (3) months.

3. Students Work Scheme

Every year, over 1,000 students drop out of university due to failure to raise tuition. The University Council has negotiated various work schemes to support such students. Some of these include; Mastercard Female Scholarships Scheme, Chinese Ambassador Scholarship, Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Scheme, Welcome Trust Scheme, NORAD as well as the University

Graduate Fellowship Scheme which waives tuition for students who engage in teaching. The university has also got a Staff Scholarship Scheme, which waives tuition for staff that wish to further their education. Despite all these interventions, we still continue to see students dropping out of university. To this end, the University Council established the Students Work Scheme, through which students can raise fees.

Through the work schemes, students access part-time employment to help them meet their financial needs and also, to get work experience which they will use in search for gainful employment after studies. Under the Scheme, **56 students** were recruited as Hall Attendants and office attendants. Their roles include cleaning and assisting in administrative duties. **Another 10** were attached to a private company as sales representatives. Students work part-time, with flexible hours that do not conflict with their academic commitments. They receive a modest salary of Shs1.2m as compensation for their services, helping them meet their financial needs. The successful recruitment of **66 students** under the scheme is just the beginning. We plan to expand the program to more than 100 students and include more diverse roles across different departments.

4. Guild Elections

Makerere University is set to hold elections for a new Students Guild Council **on 12th March, 2025**. These elections provide an important platform for students to exercise their democratic rights and actively participate in shaping the leadership that will represent their interests. The university administration encourages all students to fully participate in the electoral process, so as to ensure that their voices are heard and their concerns are represented in the governance of the institution.

We extend our appreciation to the outgoing Guild President, Mr. Vincent Lubega Nsamba, and his leadership team for their dedicated service and contributions to the student community. Under his leadership, the Guild Council has advocated for student welfare, promoted peaceful dialogue, enhanced student engagement and strengthened student governance.

The university administration, in collaboration with the Student Electoral Commission, is taking necessary measures to ensure free and fair elections as well as safety and security of all staff and students of the university during and after electioneering.

5. Disability Support Centre

The University has a comprehensive policy on Disability and recently Council approved a Safe Guarding Policy. Both policies will go a long way in supporting students. Owing to this, Council recently established the Disability Support Centre, with support from Mastercard Foundation which has provided initial equipment and staff.

Located at Level 1 of the Frank Kalimuzo Building, this dedicated space is transforming the educational experiences of students with impairments, fostering a sense of community, and

equipping them with vital academic and life skills. The Centre will support the students in various ways so that they don't have to move from building to building for support.

The Endowment Fund, recently conducted the MakRun, whose proceeds will go towards supporting the Disability Centre.

6. Infrastructure development

With substantial support from the Government, Makerere University has made significant strides in enhancing its critical infrastructure for teaching, research, and student residences/welfare, alongside initiating new infrastructure projects.

Following the phased approach to renovate student halls of residence, the University Management is pleased to report that the renovation of Lumumba Hall was completed in 2024, while that of Mary Stuart Hall is ongoing. On completion of the renovation of Mary Stuart Hall, the Contractors will proceed to Complex Hall. The University has also constructed two (2) new buildings for the School of Law and School of Dentistry.

Others include;

i) School of Graduate Training and Research Building

This building will go a long way in helping the university achieve its strategic goal of becoming research-led. The building will house study rooms for PhD students and an innovation hub. We appreciate Tororo Cement who are funding this project, with support from the First Lady, to the tune of US\$8 million.

ii) School of Public Health Building

The construction of the School of Public Health building, near the Eastern Gate is nearing completion. This project was an initiative of the staff of the school who raised the funds that kick started the construction. The building is supposed to be a 6-storey two tower building, with an Auditorium that has since been completed. We appreciated the support of our partners such as the government of Uganda, the government of the Netherlands and USAID through the American Hospitals Abroad.