

Revealed: Varsities where most students scramble for places

Nairobi, Moi and Kenyatta emerge as the most popular public universities

BY OUMA WANZALA
owanzala@ke.nationmedia.com

University of Nairobi, Moi, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and Kenyatta are among the most sought after by students across the country.

Statistics from the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS), released on Monday, indicate that the universities with a capacity of more than 5,000 admitted the highest number of students.

Most of them offer elite courses preferred by most students — engineering, pharmacy, law, computer science and architecture among others.

Among private universities, Riara is the most competitive, followed by Daystar and Mount Kenya (MKU). More students were, however, admitted to MKU due to its links with international organisations and its large network across the country.

Official statistics show that when choosing universities, students consider the institutions' grounding on research, extra curricula facilities such as sports and drama, links with other international organisations and foreign universities, students' freedom, hostels, accredited programmes by regulatory bodies and the Commission for University Education (CUE) and the marketability of courses on offer.

They also rely on global university rankings by webometrics which takes into account param-

eters such as Web presence, visibility, transparency and excellence. It ranks more than 17,000 universities worldwide.

Universities have been embracing ranking as they move to attract international students due to the shrinking population of local ones.

CUE, which regulates higher education in the country, has been on record asking universities to improve the quality of education in order to attract more students.

The data indicates that Dedan Kimathi University, a public institution, managed to fill 92.3 per cent of its capacity admitting 1,301 students for its 1,410 slots. A total of 1,207 students joined Multimedia University

against its capacity of 1,307 which also translates to 92.3 per cent.

Technical University, with a capacity of 1,728, received 1,586 students which translates to 91.8 per cent while Kenyatta filled 4,667 out of its 5,513 slots, translating to 84.7 per cent. Jomo Kenyatta, with a capacity of 5,868 managed to get 4,866 students which is 82.9 per cent as 4,540 students joined University of Nairobi against its establishment of 5,617 which is 80.8 per cent. Moi, which enrolls 5,268 got 3,865 students.

All these universities have a rich and diversified academic programme capacity, ranging from 24 to 85 different courses.

In private universities, Riara University with a capacity of 100 students enrolled 101 while Daystar with a 200 establishment received 169.

MKU received the highest number of students in the private universities category at 2,247 against its capacity of 4,995 while Kabarak which enrolls 3,300 received 2,181 as the Catholic University of Eastern Africa which holds 1980 students got 867.

A study on graduate employability commissioned by the British Council in four African countries in 2016 showed that most students favoured public universities because of their perceived reputation, long history of training and performance of past students in the job market. However, a few elite private universities proved attractive, said the report.

University of Nairobi, followed by Kenyatta and Moi were among 10 universities where employers prefer to recruit, according to the study.

Employers also prefer students from business and social



FILE | NATION
Graduands during Moi University's 35th graduation ceremony held in December last year in Uasin Gishu County. The university is one of the most sought after by students across the country.

Top 10 most competitive degree programmes

UNIV.	PROGRAMME NAME	APPLICANTS	PLACED	MALE	FEMALE
JKUAT	Bsc In Electrical And Electronic Engineering	2,384	59	42 (71.19%)	17 (28.81%)
UON	Bsc (Civil Engineering)	1,902	66	47 (71.21%)	19 (28.79%)
UON	Bsc (Electrical And Electronic Engineering)	1,649	70	61 (87.14%)	9 (12.86%)
UON	Medicine And Bachelor Of Surgery	318	151	89 (67.34%)	42 (32.06%)
KU	Bsc (Electrical & Electronics Engineering)	1,805	31	22 (70.97%)	9 (29.03%)
KU	Bsc (Civil Engineering)	1,886	31	23 (74.19%)	8 (25.81%)
UON	Bsc (Computer Science)	1,107	40	33 (82.5%)	7 (17.5%)
KU	Bachelor Of Architecture	1,527	30	20 (66.67%)	10 (33.33%)
KU	Bachelor Of Medicine & Bachelor Of Surgery (M.b.ch.b.)	321	50	32 (64%)	18 (36%)
MOI	Bachelor Of Medicine And Bachelor Of Surgery (Mochb)	272	55	31 (56.36%)	24 (43.64%)

sciences compared to those from the natural sciences.

Data by KUCCPS also shows the 10 most preferred technical institutes, which achieved almost 100 per cent enrolment are Bondo Technical training institute which received 260 students, Coast Institute of Technology with 747 and the East Africa School of Aviation which got 380 students.

Others are Eldoret Polytechnic, 1563, Kenya Institute of Highway and Building Technology, 283; the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication, 90; Kenya School of Revenue Administration 200, Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute, 485 and the Nairobi Technical Training Institute with 1,140 students.

Currently there are 99 registered Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions with 17, 000 students.

Education Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed said she is working on a qualification system which will spell out a clear path for learners who don't qualify for university education directly.

Develop criteria

She added that already the Ministry has asked the placement board to develop a criteria for placing applicants with diploma qualifications into degree courses. "This will actualise the alternative TVET pathway to university education. These efforts will contribute to

the national goal of producing adequate skilled labour to spur industrial growth envisioned in Vision 2030 and the Big Four Agenda," added Ms Mohamed.

In this year's selection, 553 students who qualified for degree courses opted for diploma courses and were placed in their programmes of choice.

A further, 5,747 students out of the 69,151 candidates who scored C+ and above have not secured placement. Of these, 2,128 did not apply at all, while 3,619 applied but could not competitively secure placement.

In last year's KCSE, 100,906 students scored between C plain and C-, making them eligible for diploma courses.

"More than 600,000 students sat for the KCSE examination.

4,540 Students who have been enrolled at the University of Nairobi

4,667 Those who got admission to Kenyatta University

4,866 Those joining Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

These efforts will contribute to the national goal of producing adequate skilled labour to spur industrial growth." Amina Mohammed Education CS