**EDUCATION**

Ministry working with engineers' body to ensure those affected by closure of universities graduate, says Kaimenyi

**Engineering students to repeat courses**

**Tough times for learners as regulator moves to ensure quality training**

**BY BENJAMIN MUNIDI**

Engineering students in public universities will have to repeat some subjects the industry regulator is dissatisfied with before they can graduate.

This is among the "mitigation measures" the Engineering Board of Kenya (EBK) and the universities are discussing to ensure the gaps in training as identified by the regulator are addressed.

The board had declined to approve some courses due to what it termed as universities' lack of capacity to train, thereby putting careers of thousands of engineering students, some of them awaiting graduation, in jeopardy.

This effectively means that the students will take longer to complete their degree programmes, which in turn translates to additional costs. An engineering degree course takes up to five years.

Yesterday, both Education Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang' and EBK registrar Nicholas Mulinge said talks were on to determine how well the quality of training of the engineers will be improved.

"We've looked at the areas that need improvement and the universities have given a timeline when they can meet the demands," Mr Mulinge said.

"Students will have to redo certain units before we can accredit those degree programmes to ensure they are fully prepared for the industry." He emphasised: "Public safety must be prioritised in training and the re-evaluation is not to hurt the students. It is not our intention to keep the students in the universities longer than they expected but it is important that we remain firm to ensure our graduates are properly trained."

Several universities, among them Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), University of Nairobi, University of Mombasa, Dedan Kimathi, Kenyatta and Maseno said all been closed following students protest after EBK declined to approve some engineering courses.

Prof Kaimenyi (Left) said his ministry was working with the engineers' board to ensure students affected by the closures graduate once the matter is resolved.

He said Higher Education Principal Secretary Collets Sida was chairing a technical committee of public universities vice-chancellors to find more ways on how the issues raised will be addressed.

The Engineers Act (2011) mandates EBK to approve and accredit all programmes offered by public and private universities and other tertiary level institutions.

Only four public universities — Nairobi, Moi, JUET and Egerton — have been cleared to offer some courses in engineering.

At the Univesity of Nairobi engineering students outside their lecture halls after refusing to take their end of semester exams on April 14 citing lack of preparedness.

University of Nairobi engineering students outside their lecture halls after refusing to take their end of semester exams on April 14 citing lack of preparedness.

**BACKGROUND**

Origin of training crisis in universities

The Engineering Board of Kenya refused to accredit some courses in public universities citing the institutions' lack of capacity to train. However, after talks with the Education ministry and universities officials, the board has agreed to accredit the courses but the students must redo certain units the regulator is unhappy with before they graduate. The accreditation of engineering courses controversy led to student unrest and closure of some universities.

**KURUWITU**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Kuruwitu Ventures Limited (Kuruwitu) is pleased to announce that the Board of Directors of the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) under the Growth : Enterprise Market Segment (GEMS) has approved the listing of its 102,272 ordinary issued shares on the official list of the NSE under the Growth : Enterprise Market Segment (GEMS). The listing and commencement of trading in Kurutu shares at the NSE will be on 13 November 2014.

**VCs deny offering sub-standard degrees**

"The engineering council should know that there is something called developed mental approach in which schools should be given time, to steadily grow their ability as they monitor the courses."

He called on the board to give schools provisional accreditation for a certain period and a deadline to achieve all the given requirements to offer a programme.

Borrow the trick

"The government should find a way of streamlining the accreditation council in the international accord, I have been an adviser with the Engineering Council in South Africa and they are doing much better than we are in Kenya. We should borrow the trick," Prof Otieno said.

Mahmoud and Gitau Advocates

Legal Advisor

Nomination Advisor

As amended