



The main administrative block at Uganda Petroleum Institute Kigumba (UPIK), in Kiryandongo district. UPIK expects to introduce new oil and gas-related courses in the 2019/2020 academic year.

BACKGROUND

UPIK is situated about 5km off the Kiryandongo-Kampala road in Baeyala. UPIK was established in 2009, as a result of Presidential Assentment called for the establishment of an institution offering it was established as an oil and gas courses, regional competence excellence for training in the petroleum sector.

UPIK was set up to provide a world class education in petroleum geosciences and petroleum engineering.

In July 2019, following the Statute Instrument No. 31 of 2011 titled: The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Establishment) of Uganda, 2011.

UPIK started its training in diploma in petroleum studies, a programme which was later amended to form the diploma in petroleum engineering course, which was accredited by the National Council for Higher Education.



Journalists inspecting some of the welding and fabrication equipment at the Uganda Petroleum Institute Kigumba recently. Photo by Ngonzi Mubiru

UPIK introduces new courses, targets 200 students annually

The Uganda Petroleum Institute Kigumba (UPIK) is the best known oil and gas training institution in the country. The institute is equipped with modern facilities for welding, metal fabrication, joinery, moulding and electrical courses, among others. However, since inception (2009), the institution has been admitting a maximum of 35 students annually. Currently, the institute only runs two courses: Diploma in Downstream Petroleum Operations (DDPO) and Diploma in Upstream Petroleum Operations (DUPO), both running for two years. This is set to change, writes Martin Kitubi.

Starting academic year 2019/2020, UPIK will run new oil and gas courses and increase enrolment at the institute from 35 to 200 students annually. Huzar Dr. Sadiq Musingu, the commissioner in charge of Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVEET), confirmed the development last week.

"The institution is ready for the new courses. We urge people to apply," he said.

As an international practice, we will use blended classrooms, where the lecturer-students ratio is big," he said.

The limited numbers will enable all students to have a hands-on experience during training and each having access to lecturers.

Ongadia and Musene made the remarks during an interview with New Vision last Monday, at the opening of the Joint Admission Board (JAB) national selection exercise for BTVEET institutions.



Some of the UPIK administrators and lecturers during UPIK's first graduation ceremony in December last year, at Kiryandongo. The managers and lecturers will undergo fresh training abroad.

NEW COURSES

The new courses include International Vocational Qualification (IVQ) in Downstream Petroleum Operations, IVQ in Upstream Petroleum Operations and IVQ in mechanical maintenance.

Others are IVQ in Electrical Maintenance, IVQ in Instrumentation Maintenance, IVQ in Health Safety and Environment, IVQ in Welding, Fabrication and Pipeworks.

The selection exercise was held at Makerere University in Kampala and it ended on Friday. UPIK was also selecting students for the next academic year 2019/2020.

HOW TO ENROL. Eligible candidates are required to have at least two principal passes in physics and mathematics at a single sitting of the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education examinations.

Eighteen students are also required to have a subsidiary pass in either Chemistry, technical drawing, fine art or information and communications technology.



Bernard Ongadia, the academic registrar of UPIK, said applications are not limited to former STs learners, but also vocational students.

Under the vocational qualifications, students who served at least a credit in the national certificate in any related engineering field through BTVEET are eligible.

However, the awards and training must be from a recognised training institution or its equivalent in the country or abroad.

Under the International Vocational Qualification, one of the new courses at UPIK, you'll be working in a relevant field

As an international practice, we will not have bloated classrooms, where the lecturer-students ratio is big. The limited numbers will enable all students to have a hands-on experience during training, and each having access to lecturers.

Students from the rest of Africa and beyond will be charged in dollars ranging from \$200 (about 190,000) to \$1,099 (about 1,040,000). "We will select the best applicants. We admit people from all regions in the world," Ongadia said.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED? At the moment, Ongadia said UPIK does not have lecturers to conduct the new courses. However, the lecturers will come from EPF School French Petroleum Institute in France, to train the few cohort of students at UPIK.

"EPF will send experienced and qualified academics staff," Ongadia said.

Under the same arrangement, lecturers from UPIK will be sent to EPF School for training on how to conduct the course.

Recently, the education ministry entered an agreement with EPF School to conduct accreditation, curriculum adaptation and improvement of UPIK facilities.

The EPF School provides public and to-house oil and gas courses in exploration, production, refining, chemicals, economics, management, IT, logistics and subsurface.

The institute also has a graduate engineering school and is a part of the French Institute of Petroleum.

The partnership is part of the World Bank funding to the education industry.

In 2016, the World Bank, through the Uganda Skills Development Programme, offered funding worth \$100m (about 95,000) to, among others, support the design of centres that would trainees' skills development.

The Government also received \$25m funding (about 24,400) from the World Bank through the Alternative Region Sustainable Development Project (ARSDP) to finance accreditation, certification

of training institutions, train lecturers and staff.

Judith Auma, the communications officer for ARSDP/USDF at the education ministry said they anticipated the expansion of

institutions who will be trained annually.

"In total, we will train 100 lecturers for different training institutions including UPIK, with the training. There are additional 100 staff to be recruited," she said.

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