



# News

## Lapses in lecturers' qualifications exposed

### — National Council for Tertiary Education audit report

By Samuel Duodu, TAMALE

**A** STAFF audit of the technical universities conducted by the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) has exposed anomalies in the teaching and administrative procedures in the institutions.

The audit was carried out with the objective of facilitating the effective migration of staff of the universities onto the Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS).

The report, dated December 21, 2018, a copy of which is available to the *Daily Graphic*, revealed, for instance, that most lecturers, especially those in the schools of Business, had been teaching without relevant background, with some holding Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees acquired through online, which is against the regulations of the NCTE.

"Some lecturers have either Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) from the Universidad Empresarial de Costa Rica or doctorate in Finance from the Swiss Management Centre (SMC) University and the University of Central Nicaragua. These are non-research doctorates and are not acceptable for teaching.

"Some lecturers also have PhDs awarded by the University

of Central Nicaragua on the basis of the DBA awarded by the SMC. This arrangement for the award of PhDs is not acceptable and such qualifications should not be accepted for teaching as well," the report stated.

It further indicated that some lecturers were teaching with mismatched first, second and terminal degrees, referred to as "skirt and blouse", a practice the NCTE found unacceptable.

It made it clear that lecturers with master's degrees and PhDs acquired online should not be recognised and that affected lecturers should go back to school to acquire relevant degrees before they would be migrated onto the SSSS.

The report further stated that only lecturers with relevant background should teach courses in their areas of specialisation.

#### Education Minister's word

A strongly worded transmission letter accompanying the report, signed by the Minister of Education, Dr Matthew Opoku Prempeh, stressed that only lecturers with researched master's and terminal degrees from recognised universities, both local and abroad, would be migrated onto the Traditional University Salary Scale.

The unqualified lecturers have, however, been given up to between two and three years to upgrade themselves before they could be migrated onto the university salary scale.

#### Administrative staff

Also contained in the audit report are discrepancies in administrative procedures.

For instance, it said senior members of the professional class (accountants, auditors, works and physical development) were, by the old polytechnic and current technical universities statutes, required to be appointed with master's degrees and membership of relevant professional association.

However, the audit revealed that many officers did not qualify under the laws

"There are several staff of the senior member cadres of the Finance, Audit and Procurement departments/units who do not have the professional qualifications, in addition to the required master's degrees and, therefore, do not qualify to encumber their professional positions," it said.

Besides, the report said, most of the directors of works and development at the technical universities, in addition to their professional qualification, only held first degrees in their respective fields and would be required to acquire master's degrees.

On the use of Executive Master's degrees, the audit report said they were designed for officers who were already in executive positions but needed advanced degrees to formalise their positions.

"It is, therefore, not a degree that should be considered for the appointment of persons with no work experience who are seeking fresh employment. Some of the administrative staff (senior member category) have Executive Master's degrees which are meant for staff in top management positions and not for those at the starting points in their career," it said.

#### Promotions

On the issue of promotions, the audit indicated that by the provisions of the then polytechnic scheme of service, all senior members (academic and administrative/professionals) were expected to be promoted based on at least positive assessment reports by qualified external assessors.

However, it said "councils of the technical universities bend over backwards to promote candidates, even when the candidates do not appear to satisfy their own set of minimum criteria for such promotions".

#### Registrar's response

When contacted, the Registrar of the Tamale Technical University (TaTU), Alhaji Yakubu Iddrisu, told the *Daily Graphic* that after the exercise, the NCTE gave the university a copy of the report.

He said query letters had been issued to those who were cited by the report and they had since responded with the necessary

### Fact Sheet

The polytechnics that were converted to technical universities are the Accra, Kumasi, Sunyani, Koforidua, Ho, Takoradi, Tamale and Cape Coast polytechnics.

The Wa and Bolgatanga polytechnics are next to be converted.

The Technical Universities Act, 2016 (Act 922) provides for the subsequent conversion of four other polytechnics into fully fledged technical universities.

Per their conversion, the technical universities become part of public universities.