



UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

INFORMATION ON REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS/DISABILITIES SITTING NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS AND RELATED PROVISIONS

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CIRCULAR TO ALL:

Head teachers Primary and Secondary Schools
Area Supervisors
District Inspectors of Schools
Municipal Inspectors of Schools

Information on Registration of candidates with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities sitting national examinations and other related provisions.

The registration of candidates with special educational needs/disabilities in the past has not been very systematic. Some Centre Heads/District Inspectors of Schools have not been very helpful during the process of registration possibly as a result of lack of relevant information. This resulted to some Centres/Districts not registering/declaring their genuine candidates with Special Educational Needs in time, only to make them known at the time of sitting examinations, or not at all. This in turn affects UNEB's planning sessions for these candidates since many of their examinations - related needs require advance planning.

The Board therefore wishes to give guidance on how best this process could be handled. Please, find attached detailed information about what Special Needs Education/Disabilities is all about and the general procedure to be followed to register candidates that may fall under this category.


Dan N Odongo
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- c. c. The Hon. Minister of Education and Sports
The Permanent Secretary, MOES
The Director of Education, MOES
The Commissioner, SNE, CGC, MOES
The Commissioner, Secondary, MOES
The Commissioner, Primary, MOES

1.0 Concerns regarding registration of candidates with Special Educational Needs in schools sitting UNEB Examinations

1.1 What are Special Needs?

These are conditions or factors that hinder normal learning, development and participation of individuals. The special needs can be temporary or life-long conditions that do not allow proper progress of an individual because of causes like; disabilities, social, emotional, economic, political, or even being over gifted and talented. Therefore, when we talk of special needs we talk of not only disabilities like Blind, Deaf, Physical Impairments, Mental Retardation/Learning Difficulties, Dyslexia, etc but also other needs like epilepsy, asthma, orphans, street children, HIV/AIDS orphaned children, physically and emotionally abused children, traumatised children, neglected children, children in war affected areas, etc. Every one of us has needs but not all needs are special needs. Special needs are extremely unique cases and may require a long term intervention strategy.

1.2 What are Special Educational Needs?

Individuals have different abilities and potentials in performing educational tasks. In education there are individuals who do not perform like the rest of other learners. These learners have special learning or educational needs which is not the same as of others. For example, the Blind will require Braille, the Deaf will require Sign Language Interpreters, and the Dyslexic will require tape recording support during examinations. Other cases may be extreme physical conditions that affect handwriting, in which case a Transcriber will be sought for such a candidate. However, UNEB will require medical documentation to ascertain the candidate's state of affair.

1.3 What is Special Needs Education?

This is a system of education, which provides appropriate modifications in curriculum, teaching methods, teaching/learning materials, medium of communication or to the environment that may be needed in order to meet special educational needs in an individual. It is learner centered, flexible and adjustable to individual needs and potentials.

2.0 UNEB's concern with special educational needs

UNEB places great emphasis in ensuring continued improvement in quality, validity and reliability of assessment in schools. Learners with special needs follow the national curricular as much as possible, albeit with exceptional modifications where appropriate. All learners with special educational needs are believed to be educable; and with the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE), a number of children with special needs has been enrolled. For example, in 2002, a number of pupils with special needs in schools had increased from 26,429 in 1997 to 218,286. This dramatic increase could be attributed to five significant factors named below;

- Education is a basic human right that must be enjoyed by all including persons with special needs. This is in reference to the World Conference's declaration in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 that gave birth to the Education For All (EFA) Flagships on Disability.



- Special Needs schools benefit significantly from the UPE funds that government gives to all UPE schools.
- Children with Special Needs have been included into ordinary schools through the inclusion approach and they follow the national curriculum. This is supported by the international acknowledgement of the right to education through inclusion, in the *World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality*, held in Salamanca, Spain in 1994. The core aspect of this document is the principle that all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions, have the right to education, preferably in the ordinary school system.
- Government of Uganda has invested a lot of awareness campaigns to enlighten the community and society at large about the plight of children with special needs, thus promoting coexistence in society.
- Policy statements (National and International) have been adopted by the Government of Uganda, and have helped form a basis for practical involvement in meeting the educational needs of learners with special needs.

3.0 The role of the Head of Examination Centre during registration of candidates with special educational needs.

The registration process is basically the responsibility of the Head of the UNEB examination sitting Centre. Candidates with special educational needs are free to register from any examination Centre. The Head of the Centre, in conjunction with the parents (family) of the child with a special need, should be ready to accommodate his/her educational needs. The Centre should provide appropriate assistive devices accordingly during the learning process. UNEB only provides assessment/examinations - related support. The support UNEB provides is in view of the candidate's educational challenge as outlined in 1.2 above.

3.1 The Identification of SEN Candidates

UNEB shall endeavor to offer its services to all learners with special educational needs/disabilities as far as assessment and examination is concerned. The categories of candidates with special educational needs/disabilities identified include but not limited to the following:

Category	Code
Blind	A
Low Vision	B
Deaf and Hard of hearing	C
Physical Disabilities and Orthopedic problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Amputees ▪ Spina Bifida (hunch back) ▪ Severe polio cases ▪ No limbs or limited limbs ▪ Missing fingers ▪ Serious physical deformities in the body ▪ Cerebral palsy 	D

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Muscular Dystrophy Etc. 	
Dyslexia	E
Other Special Needs Intellectual Impairments Speech and Language Disorders Socio-emotional and/or Behavioural Problems Autism Health Problems e.g. Candidates with Epilepsy, Asthma etc	F

3.2 The Registration Process

- (i) The Centre management is required to study critically the registration procedure provided by the Board in order to understand all the categories requiring attention.
- (ii) For e-registration of candidates with special educational needs (and their categorization), you will observe (at the bottom left corner) of the e-registration template a provision marked Special Needs/Disability, then follow the procedure below:
- Click on the drop down arrow.
 - The interface that opens has SNE Categories/specifications coded A – F.
 - Select (by checking) the option/specification that applies to the candidate.
 - (Before you close the interface) a new window opens demanding explanation (i.e. special needs explanation).
 - *Note: You are required to provide an explanation as to the specific nature of disability/special educational need(s) of a given candidate.
 - Then click save to have the candidate registered accordingly.
- (iii) The Centres are continually required to update the Board on emerging matters related to special needs candidates even after registration. This will help the Board to adequately prepare for the candidates' examination needs. For example, some candidates that were originally registered as "normal" may develop special needs/disabilities after registration such as accident victims leading to loss of limbs or other senses, pregnant student mothers.
- (iv) The Head of Centre is required to download and fill in **Access arrangement form for candidates with Special Educational Needs**, outlining the details of the nature of the Disability/Special Educational Need of the candidate(s). A medical report from a reputable medical facility/Practitioner should be attached to this form. For the case of the severe physical impairments, a photograph should be attached.

After filling- in the form(s), the Head of Centre (UCE/UACE) is required to submit the form(s) to UNEB-Special Needs Education Section (SNE) at UNEB-Kyambogo , or UNEB-Ntinda, Secondary Department before the end of May. For Primary schools, the Head of Centre is required to submit the forms to the D.I.S/M.I.S who



will later bring them to UNEB-Ntinda, Primary Department or UNEB-SNE Section at UNEB-Kyambogo office before the end of May.

N.B. Each form is for one Special Educational Needs candidate.

3.3 Psycho-educational Assessment.

After the closure of registration, the board prepares a comprehensive list of all declared SEN candidates for all levels and conducts Psycho-Educational Assessment (PEA) for to ascertain the nature of their special needs vs their examination related needs. The purpose of this assessment is not to eliminate potential candidates from registering to sit specific papers/subjects. Rather, it is a basis through which the candidate, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), centre management, and relevant stakeholders will recognize the potential challenges that would impact on the general educational service delivery and thus arrange/prepare for corresponding interventions. The Board shall not be held responsible for any omissions and commissions arising from failure to formally declare or wrong declarations of candidates with special needs.

4.0 Collection of Stationery

- (i) When collecting examination related stationery from the Board, Centre Heads with special needs candidates (**specifically the blind candidates**) are reminded that the Braille answer sheets will be delivered together with examinations. The Inspectors of Schools/Area Supervisors are required to ensure safe and prompt delivery of this paper to the respective sitting Centres where blind candidates are **at the start of the first Paper**.
- (ii) At all levels (PLE, UCE and UACE) all SNE candidates that require to be tape recorded (e.g. the Dyslexic) will receive tapes on the day of delivery of examinations.

4.1 Other related SNE examination materials

Centres that will register candidates with dyslexia and those with other specific special needs conditions, like profound physical impairments that require candidates to be tape recorded during examinations need to bear the following in mind:

- (i) These candidates must be brought to the attention of the Board during registration period.
- (ii) The Head of Centre is required to provide a tape recorder for the candidate.
- (iii) The Board only provides tapes and a Recording Assistant to do the recordings during examination period. Under no circumstances should a Centre provide its own Tape Recording Assistant unless otherwise prior permission is obtained from the Board.
- (iv) After an examination is conducted involving the use of tapes, the tapes should be clearly marked "**Tape(s) for Special Needs Candidate(s)**" indicating the candidate's Name, Random/personal Number of candidate, Subject/Paper done



and name of Tape Recording Assistant. It is the responsibility of the Centre head to ensure that there is ultimate security and care given to these tapes and submit them to the Area Supervisor for storage (for the case of UCE, & UACE). For PLE, the D.I.S. will be responsible.

- (v) The Invigilators should pack the script(s) separately in a special envelope provided (in case it is not provided please improvise one so long as it does not bear the school logo) and fasten it onto the main envelope. **At no point should the envelope containing scripts of special needs candidates be left unattached to the main envelope.**

5.0 Access arrangement strategies for candidates with special needs.

5.1 Extra time:

All approved registered candidates with special needs are entitled to extra time of **45 minutes** per paper sat. Most SEN candidates only benefit from this provision as opposed to other unique provisions, however, this extra time is not obligatory. All Centre Heads, Scouts, Supervisors and Invigilators are required to take note of this. The Access arrangement strategies should not adversely affect or lead to the lowering of the established UNEB'S academic certification standards. They are basically a bare minimum that the Board can afford bearing in mind the scarcity of resources (human, financial and material). Besides extra time, the other strategies proposed are matched against the special educational need/disability identified. These are shown in the table below:



No.	Special Educational Need/ Disability	Access Arrangement Strategy
1	Blind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use Braille/adaptable ICT software ▪ Use Audio Recorders ▪ .Provide alternative questions or modify existing questions involving drawings, graphs etc.
2	Low Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide large print (preferably Arial font) while enhancing contrast, colour. ▪ Use Braille following Eye Doctor's/ Vision Specialist's diagnostic assessment if residual sight is severe.
3	Deaf and hard of hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of proficient Sign Language Interpreters
4	Physical Disabilities and Orthopedic problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amputees ▪ Spina Bifida (hunch back) ▪ Severe polio cases ▪ No limbs or limited limbs ▪ Missing fingers ▪ Serious physical deformities in the body ▪ Cerebral palsy ▪ Muscular Dystrophy ▪ Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of audio tapes for recording. ▪ Read examination verbatim to candidate in person. ▪ Provide Supervised Aide or use of Amanuensis where necessary. ▪ Allow short breaks in between but maintain allotted time (where necessary).
5	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use recorded tapes/video clips ▪ Audio-visual. ▪ Use transcribers.
6	Other Special Needs Intellectual Impairments Speech and Language Disorders Socio-emotional and/or Behavioural Problems Autism Health Problems e.g. Candidates with Epilepsy, Asthma etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow short breaks if so desired but maintain allotted time. ▪ Only 45 minutes extra



5.2 Use of Support Personnel

Some candidates with unique special educational needs require the use of Support Personnel. Their involvement is dully recommended by the Board after thorough investigations and psycho-educational assessment has been conducted prior to sitting examinations. However, the Support Personnel will only be appointed by the Board and normally carry with them appointment letters. They Include:

(i) **Sign Language Interpreters**

These are appointed by the Board to support candidates who are Deaf by providing interpreter services during examinations process.

(ii) **Tape Recording Assistants**

As mentioned earlier in 4.1 (iii) above, their role is to carry out tape recordings of the candidates work during examinations.

(iii) **Amanuensis**

These personnel normally offer physical support services to candidates with very severe special needs during examinations. Such candidates may be those with severe polio cases, missing arms/limbs etc. An Amanuensis is particularly very helpful during practical examinations.

(iv) **Transcribers/Readers**

These are persons who normally take dictations from the special needs candidate. These special needs candidates normally have a special need impinging upon their ability to write/read independently.

N.B These Support Personnel are all well trained in the field of Special Needs and Rehabilitation.

6.0 Enquiries:

For further information about Special Needs Education at UNEB, please contact the following:

- The **Executive Secretary** on 0312 260 752, 0414 345 609 or
- Mr. Daniel Alenyo, Senior Examinations Officer, Special Needs Education on 0772 570 860.
- Ms. Edna Niyibizi, Examinations Officer, SNE/Braille on 0772 570 282

