



PRESS RELEASE [7th June 2010]

UB Council approves the third Modular Master Programme within twelve Months

Specialisations in Science, Research, and Educational Management (SREM) support transformation into Knowledge Society

GABORONE, June 4 – The Council of the University of Botswana (UB) has approved a range of modular Graduate Programmes in order to contribute to the further professionalisation of the academic and scientific community in Botswana and the region. After the modular Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Master's in Development Practice (MDP), the Master's in Science, Research, and Educational Management (SREM) is the third graduate qualification in a new category of modular programmes. These innovative offerings extend graduate education to employed professionals outside the catchment areas of Gaborone and offer opportunities to organisations wishing to strengthen their staff recruitment, development, and retention.

Whereas the MBA - according to international standards - addresses the main functional areas of management, the MDP adopted key recommendations of the International Commission on Education for Development Professionals in order to help prepare graduates to confront multi-disciplinary complex sustainable development challenges in the private or public sector. The latter also attracted competitive funding in support of the MacArthur Foundation's aim to establish a global MDP network of 20 universities. The introduction of these two modular programmes triggered considerable interest and sufficient admissions are being sent out to start later in the year at full capacity with 24 participants each. The SREM as the third modular 'kid on the block' will commence in the second half of 2011 and aims to support organisations operating within the Knowledge, Science and Research System of Botswana and the wider region.

Science, technology, research, and innovation are considered as crucial areas of development in Botswana's drive towards achieving the national Vision 2016 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as well as the further transformation into a knowledge-based economy. All of this in the context of an increasingly regional and global setting where the movement of people, goods and services are international, highly competitive, and require innovation based on improved national research capability.

According to Botswana's Tertiary Education Council (TEC), a comprehensive and holistic transformational approach will have to recognise not only "the different but important contributions of scientific and technological research as a driver of national advancement and wealth creation", but also "business knowledge as the source of economic power, and Humanities and Social Science research as the key to social, cultural, and personal transformation and development". Consequently, the Tertiary Education Policy urges enhancing relevance, ensuring quality, maintaining diversity of choice and increasing access; and the new Draft Policy on Science, Technology, & Innovation calls for "local university training offering programmes that are flexible and allow a mix of modules from different disciplines that enrich learning and provide multi-skills". "UB is fully aware of its significant importance in the country's ability to achieve these national goals and priorities", reaffirms Prof. B. K. Othogile, Vice Chancellor of UB, "and – with its School of Graduate Studies and Faculties - has positioned itself accordingly".

To provide relevant capacity development to the widest range of stakeholders, the proposed graduate programmes in 'Science, Research and Educational Management (SREM)' will utilise individual and institutional performance indicators as point of departure and focus on Public and Private Management of Science, Research, Technology, Innovation and Education accordingly. Focal points would be, for example: the repertoire of state interventions, international best practices and global opportunities, public-private partnerships, (inter)national actors and networks and their abilities to interact, manage, adapt and be financed. Three specialisations ('Higher Education for a Knowledge Society', 'Educational Management', 'Research Methodologies for Development') have been approved and a further three ('Science & Research Administration', 'Science & Technology Transfer', 'Science & Research Quality Systems') are planned to allow for expansion at a later stage.

Each specialisation leads to an award of a Postgraduate Certificate, requires 600 hours of learning off-campus as well as residential periods (3-week module, 2-week module, 4-day workshop). Participants can add modules to their PG Cert specialisation from the other specialisations to best suit their professional context and ambitions and to fulfil the requirement of a Postgraduate Diploma, and a further research project/thesis to qualify for the Master degree. Accreditations of all three modular programmes (MBA, MDP, SREM) are being set-up with a European accreditation agency in 2011.

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