

The new admission policy at university

By Conan Businge

A couple of years ago, the education ministry issued a policy guideline requiring all students to reduce the principal subjects from four to three. This is on top of one subsidiary, and General Paper (GP). This forms a basis for admission in universities; at a maximum of 20 points, instead of 25 points.

The new policy originated from the A'level change subject combinations, a few of years prior.

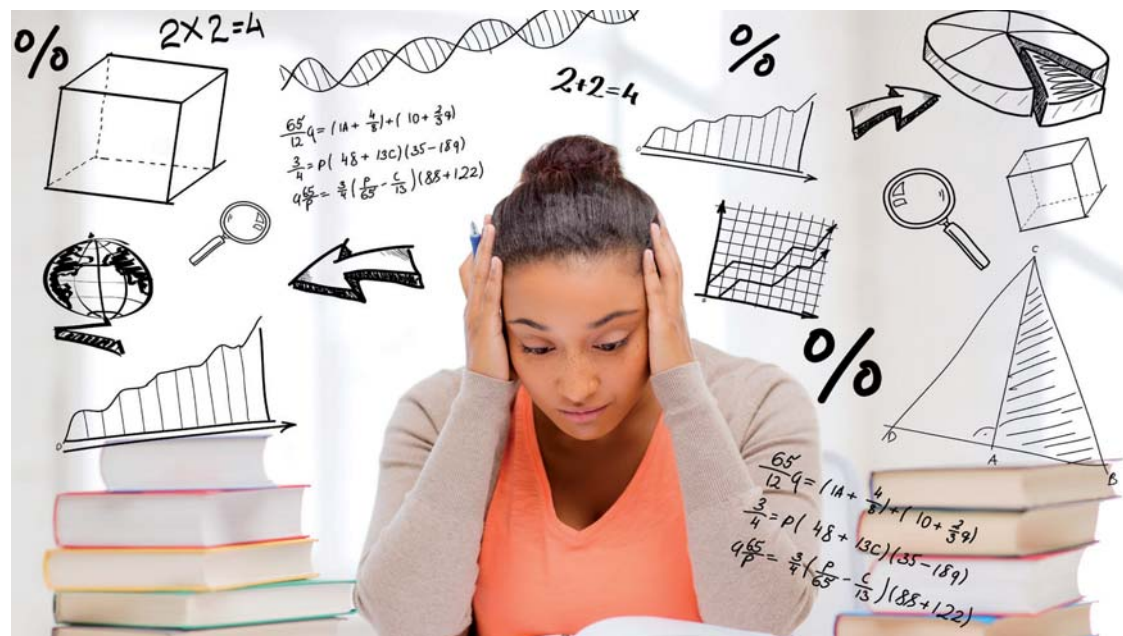
Unlike in the past where subjects taken at A'level were grouped into four categories, universities now group them in three categories during the admissions time.

In the past, the admissions board considered essential, relevant, desirable and other categories when weighting students for admission into public universities. The 'others' category has been dropped in the new public universities admission guidelines.

University students will be admitted on the basis of a maximum score of 20 points. That includes a maximum six points for each of the three subjects, one point for GP and one point for sub-maths or computer studies, as a subsidiary.

In the past, students were admitted on the basis of the maximum 25 points. This included a maximum of six points for each of the four subjects, and one for General Paper.

For one to be admitted at the university, they must have done a combination of three subjects and GP,



in addition to sub-maths or computer studies as a subsidiary. Sub-maths and computer studies replaced what used to be the fourth subject in the combination.

WEIGHTING CRITERIA

All subjects taken at A'level are grouped into three categories and weighted as follows for purposes of admission to any programme of undergraduate study at university. The essential subject weighs three points; the relevant, two points and

CONVERSION SCALE

For A' Level grades, the conversion scale is **A=6, B=5, C=4, D=3, E=2, O=1, F=0**

desirable one point.

- The essential A'level subjects for university programmes must be passed with a principal pass.
- For a given candidate, not more than

three subjects taken at the principal level shall be considered in weighing to get cut-off points.

- Not more than two subjects shall be designated as "essential".
- A pass with a distinction or credit in a subject taken at subsidiary level such as GP, sub-maths or computer studies shall carry one point. A subsidiary pass ranges from grades one to six.
- In case of programmes where essential subjects may be three or more, an essential set of subjects is

defined. The best-performed two subjects of the essential set shall be designated as essential subjects and weighted three. The third best subject from the essential set shall be designated as the relevant subject and weighted two.

• For O'level grades, distinctions one and two carry 0.3 points, credits three to six carry 0.2, passes seven and eight carry 0.1 and fail (9) carries 0.0.

TOTALLING POINTS

The O'level weight of a candidate for any programme in the university, is obtained by multiplying the numbers of distinctions, credits and passes, by the relevant weights and adding up for the distinctions, credits and passes actually obtained by the candidate.

• The A'level weight, for a given programme, of a candidate is obtained by multiplying each subject grade point by the relevant weighting factor and adding up for all the subjects taken and passed.

• The combined weight of a candidate for a given programme is obtained by adding the O'level weight obtained, to the A'level weight obtained. The best candidate for each programme is the one with the highest combined weight.

• Candidates are selected on merit from those who apply for a programme as their first choice followed by those who apply for the programme as second, third, fourth choice; if they have not been admitted to programmes of their earlier choices, all choices are considered.