

# NUC Welcomes More Specialised Varsities

## –Prof. Rasheed

The Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission (NUC), Prof. Abubakar Rasheed mni, MFR, has assured that the Commission would continue to encourage and support the establishment of specialised universities and programmes to further enrich the Nigerian University System (NUS), towards moving Nigeria to a knowledge-based economy.

The Executive Secretary said this when the Commandant of the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Maj. Gen. Adeniyi Oyebade and other principal officers of the Academy paid a courtesy visit to the Commission last week Wednesday.

Prof. Rasheed pledged that NUC would be flexible and willing to work closely with specialised universities to understand their



Executive Secretary, NUC, Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, *mni, MFR, FNAL*, receiving a plaque from the Commandant, Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Maj. Gen. Adeniyi Oyebade

needs. He said further that NDA has made the NUS proud by its remarkable feats, especially with the recent introduction of Cyber Security studies among its specialised programmes.

He stated that it was at the instance of NDA that the NUS has developed a Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS), for Cyber security, adding that very soon NDA

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Prof. Rasheed welcoming the delegation to his office

professors would be invited to contribute to the development of the curriculum.

While explaining the structure of the NUS, Prof. Rasheed noted that apart from being the only Military University in Nigeria, NDA, was also one of the topmost universities, due to its unique and specialised programmes and strict compliance to regulatory requirements for quality and standards.

He said that NDA's commitment to discipline and dedication had also contributed in making it top the list in producing graduates fully trained in character and learning, which are basic requirements for graduates of the Ivory tower.

He further stated that the Commission was proud to associate with NDA for playing

the big brother and significant role in providing some universities with lecturers in certain programmes and supporting the NUS with experts in some critical fields.

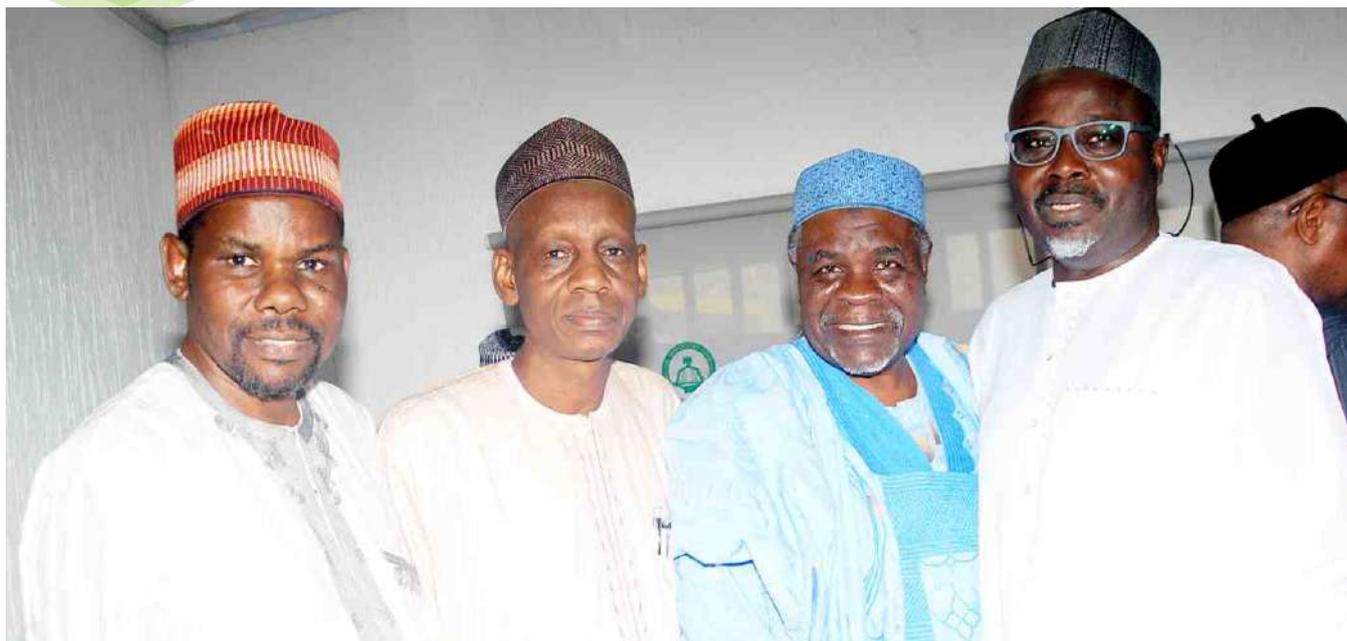
He encouraged universities not to be skeptical on being the first to mount certain programmes even if they were globally unique to the NUS and as long as they complied with regulatory requirements. He further reiterated NUC's commitment towards ensuring best practices in the NUS.

On the issue of mass emigration of Nigerian students to neighbouring Countries seeking for university education, the Executive Secretary pointed out that though access had been a major challenge, the NUS was highly standardised, stressing that most of those who go to those foreign sub standard institutions

were students who were desperate to obtain degree certificates by all means not minding the standard, which he warned that it would be at their own risks, as NUS would not compromise on standards.

In his remarks, Maj. Gen. Oyebade, disclosed that he was on a familiarisation visit to the Commission following his assumption of duty as the Commandant of the Academy in October, 2017.

He stated that being a Military university, NDA would like to focus more on some core courses such as the newly introduced Cyber Security studies, noting that Cyber war had become a dimensional security threat that more youth needed to be trained in that aspect. He expressed that 'the future is now' and therefore, there was the urgent need to include security studies in the NUS in line with global trends.



L-R: NUC Directors; Directorate, Establishment of Private Universities (DEPU), Alh. Abdullahi Hamza; Directorate of Academic Planning (DAP), Dr. Gidado Bello Kumo and Directorate, Corporate Communications (DCC), Ibrahim Usman Yakasai (1st right) in a photograph with Former Executive Secretary NUC, former Academy Provost NDA and currently Pro-chancellor and Chairman Governing Council, FU, Lafiya, Prof. Munzali Jibril (2nd right)

Maj. Gen. Oyebade further intimated that NDA intended to mount a new programme by updating its department of Logistics and Supply to a degree programme, saying that the Postgraduate school of the Academy was a model worth emulating. On discipline, he reiterated that knowledge was nothing without character and therefore, NDA would not bend the rules or compromise on discipline, as it was part of the training and also basic requirement in the Academy.

The Commandant also assured that NDA would work tirelessly towards the development of the NUS by standing in the gap and providing access to quality university education in Nigeria. He lamented that due to lack of access to university education as

a result of limited space in Nigerian Universities, most students were forced to go to neighbouring African countries, thereby boosting their economies, He therefore, called for the continuous establishment of small mono universities that would help remedy the situation, urging NUC to proffer ways of attracting foreign students into the NUS to ensure global competitiveness.

He thanked the Commission for its support and guidance to the NDA which he said, had tremendously uplifted the Academy. He then solicited the Commission's technical and regulatory assistance.

Also in the NDA team were the Provost, Prof. S. Nwankwo, Registrar, Brig. Gen. I. M. Jallo, Director, Academic Planning,

Col. S. S. Ibrahim.

Other NUC members in attendance were Deputy Executive Secretary (Academics), Prof. Chiedu Mafiana; Directors, Finance and Accounts, Mr. Sam Onazi; Management Support Services, Barr. Victor Unuoha; Academic Planning, Dr. Gidado Kumo; Open and Distance Education, Dr. Esther Adeshina; International Cooperation and Liaison Services, Mrs. Constance Goddy-Nnadi; Corporate Communications, Mr. Ibrahim Yakasai; Executive Secretary's Office, Mr. Chris Maiyaki, Inspection and Monitoring, Mrs. Usendia Essien; Ag. Directors, Establishment of Private Universities, Mr. Ibrahim Hamza and Student Support Services, Dr. Maryam Sali.



Prof. Rasheed and Oyejade (7th and 8th left) in a photo with NUC Management and other principal officers of NDA

## Prof. Rasheed Lauds Physiotherapists for Innovations in Programme Delivery

The Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, *nni*, *MFR*, *FNAL*, last Wednesday, received a delegation of Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy (NSP) led by its president, Dr. Rufa'i Yusuf Ahmed in his office.

Expressing his delight, the Executive Secretary commended the NSP for its passion at ensuring that quality was maintained in the Physiotherapy profession by introducing innovations that would ensure better quality in the delivery of the programme and accountability on the part of the lecturers.



Executive Secretary, NUC, Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, *nni*, *MFR*, *FNAL*, presenting some copy of journal of the commission to the President, Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy Dr. Rufa'i Yusuf Ahmed



He informed the team that NUC was already in the process of reviewing the entire existing curricula of all the programmes taught in Nigerian Universities and 400 copies of the Curricula had been produced, 2 copies each would be distributed to Vice Chancellors of all Universities to present before the University Senate committees for review and possible amendments to revert to the Commission for final consideration.

He also acknowledged that the Directorate of Academic Planning of the Commission had earlier met with the officials of the Physiotherapy Board and payment had been made for work to start on the development of the curriculum for the proposed Doctorate of Physiotherapy (DPT) programme. It was agreed that the curriculum experts were billed to meet from 19 – 21 of March to produce a BMAS for the programme by the end of the month.

The Executive Secretary advised members of the Association to fully participate in the review of the current Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT) programme in order to draw up clear distinctions between the two programmes. He explained that even though the two programmes were similar, except for the focus at 500 and 600 levels on more practical courses, their curriculum must state clearly its difference.

The Curriculum of the DPT should contain sufficient

academic as well as practical courses and sent as an addendum to all Universities that offer Physiotherapy to make their input, which would be merged with the curriculum of basic medicals. He said that it was his wish to approve the running of the two programmes without abrogating the BPT as was the case of Pharm D and B. Pharm, if the University meets the requirements through provision of appropriate resources to run the programmes together.

He added that henceforth, the Commission would develop curricula that outlined the courses to be taught as well as a specific learning outcome that should greatly assist the students to research, study and make useful contributions during interactions with their lecturers.

He also promised to call the attention of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation to consider graduates of physiotherapy at the point of employment as the additional year to the programme would affect the condition of service of the worker and put them at a disadvantage over their peers.

In his address, the President, Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy, Dr Rufa'i Yusuf Ahmed informed the Executive Secretary that the World Confederation for Physical Therapy deemed it necessary to introduce the DPT programme into the curriculum of all its member countries, due to the lack of expertise it had observed in service delivery over the years.

He said it was observed that communities in rural areas had no access to the services of physiotherapists at the primary healthcare level, which thwarted the mandate of the health sector to get healthcare delivered to every citizen irrespective of their location.

He further explained that the Bachelor of Physiotherapy curriculum equipped students to treat patients mostly in the less accident prone urban centers, but lacked the patient practical component which could help physiotherapists function in the rural areas where those services were mostly needed to survive.

The president mentioned that the old curriculum did not sufficiently cover the required content and therefore could not equip the physiotherapist with the expertise to identify a problem within his/her scope of practice. Other issues bedeviling the curriculum were in the area of specialties, saying that Physiotherapy with about 8 branches among which included; orthopedic, neurological, pediatric and geriatric physiotherapists, proposed that each specialty should be assessed independently in the new curriculum to give the student a complete assessment.

He stressed that the areas that set DPT apart from BPT were in the areas of easy access to healthcare services, cost reduction, satisfaction on the part of the patient and satisfaction on the part of the physiotherapist.





Present at the meeting on the NUC team were the Deputy Executive Secretary, Academics, Directors of Management Support Services, Academic Planning, Executive Secretary's Office, Open and Distance

Education, International Cooperation and Liaison Services, Corporate Communications and Acting Director Student Support Services.

The NSP team included Prof. Adetoyeje Y. Oyeyemi, Prof. Ganiyu Sokunbi, Dr. Adamu Ahmad Rufa'i, Dr. Sylvester E. Igwe, Dr. Fatai Adeniyi, Dr. Charles I. Ezema and Dr. Uthman O. Anjorin.



Prof. Rasheed and Dr. Ahmed (9th and 10th left) in a group photo with the NUC Management and NSP delegation

## Biotechnologists Propose New Curriculum



Executive Secretary, NUC, Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, *mni, MFR, FNAL* (right), and President, BSN, Prof. Benjamin Ubi

The Biotechnology Society of Nigeria (BSN), led by its President, Professor Benjamin Ubi, last wednesday presented a proposed curriculum for the teaching of Biotechnology in Nigerian universities to the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission (NUC), Professor Abubakar A. Rasheed.

The proposed curriculum, which was developed by BSN, integrates elements of engineering as well as



agricultural, medical and environmental sciences, among other sciences, to produce a well-rounded graduate.

Presenting the document, Professor Ubi informed the Executive Secretary that the curriculum covered all aspects of Biotechnology, without bias to any particular field. This would ensure the production of an all-round graduate, with an option of specialising in any of the major components, at postgraduate level.

The BSN President commended the Commission's efforts at ensuring quality in the NUS, through the accreditation process, saying the process would continue to guarantee equity, quality and fairness in

administration of university education in Nigeria. He, however, advocated for an inclusion of members of the society on accreditation panels for the Biotechnology programme in Nigerian universities.

Welcoming the delegation, the Executive Secretary disclosed that the Commission was in the process of reviewing curricula in the Nigerian University System (NUS) which would incorporate inputs from all universities and other stakeholders.

He noted that biotechnology was a by-product of the biological sciences and recalled that NUC was far ahead of the BSN as it had, in the recent past, consulted renowned Biotechnologists, such

as late Professors Andrew Nok and Muyideen, with a view to reviewing the existing curriculum on Biotechnology.

He noted that Professor Muyideen had recommended an integration of critical components of science into the curriculum, considering the fact that Biotechnology had been an interdisciplinary subject.

Professor Rasheed informed the Society that it was impractical for the Commission to engage only members of professional bodies for the accreditation of academic programmes in the NUS and assured BSN of NUC's commitment in deploying only competent persons to do accreditation.



Prof. Rasheed presenting copies of the Commission's editorials to the leader of the BSN delegation Prof. Ubi



He however, requested the Society to compile a list of credible Professors from BSN, indicating their universities, year of promotion, as well as areas of specialisation and forward same to the NUC, for inclusion in the Commission's database.

The Executive Secretary commended BSN for the development of the curriculum, adding that, for objectivity, the document would be subjected to further review by a group of independent professionals, prior to adoption by the NUS.

Earlier in his remarks, immediate past President of the Society, Professor M. B. Yerima, commended the Executive

Secretary's efforts at establishing the Institute of Biotechnology at Bayero University, Kano (BUK) while he was its Vice-Chancellor. He noted the need for Nigerian universities to embrace Biotechnology, because of its potential to address a myriad of health challenges facing the nation.

Other members of the BSN delegation were the Vice-President, Dr. Andrew Iloh; Public Relations Officer, Dr. J. C. Igwe; Treasurer, Mrs. H. O. Yusuf and the immediate past Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Professor Oye Ibidapo-Obe.

The meeting was also attended by NUC Directors of Management Support Services, Barr. Victor Onuoha; International Cooperation and Liaison Service, Mrs. Constance Goddy-Nnadi; Executive Secretary's Office, Mr. Chris Maiyaki as well as Open and Distance Education, Dr. Olamide Adesina. Others were the Directors of Corporate Communications, Alh. Ibrahim Yakasai; Inspection and Monitoring, Mrs. Essien Usendiah; Establishment of Private Universities, Alh. Hamza Abdullahi and the Acting Director, Student Support Services, Dr. Maryam Sali.



Prof. Rasheed and Prof. Ubi (8th and 9th right) in a group photo with some NUC Management and BSN delegation