

AIT starts Open University degree programs

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The Accra Institute of Technology (AIT) has been given accreditation by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) to commerce online - open university degree programs.

It will run the programme in collaboration with the Open University of Malaysia (OUM) and the Banasthali University (BU), India, a statement from the University said on Monday.

It said under the partnership arrangement reached with its partners, AIT will be offering undergraduate - Bachelor's degree programs in Computer Science, Information Technology, Business Administration, Education and Management.

The postgraduate degree programs which will be offered under auspices of the newly established Professor Francis Allotey Graduate School at AIT include Masters and PhD (Doctoral) degree programs in Engineering, Computer Science, Business Administration, Science and Education.

AIT will be delivering the programs online to students in Ghana and in other West African countries with the partner universities awarding the degrees. (www.ait.edu.gh/open).

The Open University of Malaysia was set up by a consortium of 11 Malaysia public universities and it now has a student population of over 80,000 students; and close to 8,000 faculty members. The Banasthali University (BU), established in 1935 is an 'A' accredited premier university in India.

According to Professor Clement Dzidonu, the AIT President, "given that less than 30 per cent of qualified applicants get admission into our public universities, and the fact that the private universities in total do not have the capacity to absorb even five per cent of the qualified applicants, AIT has taken this bold step in collaboration with its international partner universities to broaden access to quality and affordable university education".

"In the emerging knowledge-age, everyone deserves to go to university, and open university is the way to go in the future, if we are to ensure that the vast majority of qualified applicants do get the chance to go to university," he noted. Open universities provide access to university education regardless of time and place.

The opportunity for "earning while learning" is one of the key contributing factors to the increasing numbers of students enrolling in Open Universities world-wide. It is therefore not surprising that the largest universities in the world are Open Universities.

The famous examples include the Open University of the UK with a student population of more than 220,000 spread over a number of countries; the University of South Africa (UNISA) - The South African Open University with a student population of about 200,000 and the Indira Gandhi National Open University of India, with a student population of close



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Professor Dzidonu said the AIT's decision to offer postgraduate degree programs in addition to the Bachelor's degree programs through its Open University system was directed at contributing to addressing the current crisis of shortage of lecturers with the requisite postgraduate degrees within our public and private university system.

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