

The 2025 PLE results indicate a steady improvement in performance despite lingering challenges in certain subjects.

# More pupils pass PLE in 2025 compared to 2024

BY DAMALI MUKHAYE

**M**ore pupils who sat for the 2025 Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) have passed and are eligible to progress to the next level of education compared to those who sat for the similar examinations in 2024.

The 2025 PLE results indicate a steady improvement in performance, despite lingering challenges in certain subjects.

According to the results released yesterday at State Lodge Nakasero, at least 730,233 pupils qualified to join secondary education or Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, compared to 722,730 pupils who qualified in 2024. This represents an increase of 7,503 learners who passed the examinations in 2025, highlighting a gradual yet significant improvement in overall national education outcomes.

While releasing the results, Mr Daniel Odongo, the Executive Director of Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb), reported an overall improvement in performance compared to 2024, noting that more candidates attained better aggregate than in the previous year.

"More candidates passed in Division One in 2025 than in 2024, an increase of 7,689. In terms of numbers, more candidates, 7,503, passed the 2025 PLE compared to 2024," Mr Odongo said.

## Gradual improvement

A total of 817,883 candidates registered for the 2025 PLE from 15,388 examination centres, compared to 797,444 candidates in 2024. Out of those registered, 807,313 candidates turned up to sit for the examinations, while 10,570 were absent. Out of those who sat for the examinations, 730,233 passed, attaining the required grades from Division One to Division Four.

The detailed breakdown indicates that 91,990 candidates passed in Division One compared to 84,310 in 2024.

In Division Two, 388,293 candidates passed compared to 397,589 in 2024, while 165,226 candidates passed in Division Three compared to 165,284 in 2024. Division Four had 84,724 candidates passing, an increase from 75,556 in 2024. Overall, this indicates that 7,503 more candidates passed in 2025 compared to 2024.

Despite the increase in the number of candidates passing, 77,080 candidates failed the examinations, compared to 64,251 who completely failed in 2024.



Dauson Muzaale (Agg 6) at Victorious Junior School Kamuli, celebrates with his teachers. PHOTO/SAM CALEB OPIO

The increase in failures signals the ongoing challenges in ensuring equitable learning outcomes across all schools, particularly those in rural and underserved areas.

Uneb attributed the improved performance overall to enhanced supervision during examinations, better teaching practices, and the gradual recovery from learning disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Uneb Chairperson, Prof Celestino Obua, noted that the improvement in the number of candidates qualifying to progress to the next level is a positive sign.

"Performance at the Grade One pass level has improved over the 2024 examination. Overall, more candidates have qualified to proceed to the next level or cycle of education than in 2024. I do not doubt that with the Government's efforts in expanding access to post-primary education, all 730,000 learners who passed will find places in secondary and vocational schools," Prof Obua said.

The Minister of Education, Ms Janet Kataha Museveni, also welcomed the results, highlighting that more learners passing in Division One is a positive development for the education sector.

"Although the overall proportion of learners that passed slightly declined compared to the previous PLE results of 2024, what is of essence is that in absolute numbers, more children passed their PLE in 2025," Ms Museveni, who is also the First Lady, said.

She noted that the government's investments in establishing additional Seed Secondary Schools in recent years have created room to absorb more learners transitioning from Primary

Education to O-Level.

## Success in English and Science

Analysis of subject performance shows that pupils performed best in English Language and Integrated Science.

Mr Odongo said English emerged as the best-performed subject, followed by Integrated Science and Mathematics. Social Studies with Religious Education (SST) was the worst-performing subject

among the four examinable areas.

Compared to 2024, English recorded a noticeable improvement in performance, while Social Studies showed a significant decline.

The results further reveal that fewer than 20 percent of candidates demonstrated higher ability levels in any of the subjects, a trend consistent with previous years.

English had the highest proportion of candidates at the higher ability level, standing at 18.5 percent, followed by Mathematics at 16.4 percent and Social Studies with Religious Education at 15.9 percent.

Integrated Science displayed a similar pattern in higher-level achievement.

## Special needs learners excel

Learners with special needs also recorded impressive results in the 2025 PLE. More candidates in this category passed, with the majority attaining Division Two.

Mr Odongo further disclosed that the Board registered 3,636 candidates with special needs in 2025, an increase from 3,328 candidates in 2024. These included learners who are blind, deaf, physically handicapped, and dyslexia.

Of the 3,636 candidates, 3,170 passed the examinations. Of these, 194 attained Division One, 1,761 were placed in Division Two, 779 in Division Three, and 436 in Division Four.

Meanwhile, 431 candidates failed after not being graded, and 35 were absent.

Mr Odongo attributed the improved performance to increased support for learners with special needs, including tailored assessment methods, specialised learning materials, and enhanced teacher training.

Uneb reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive education and stressed the need for continued investment in special needs education to improve learning outcomes and ensure fair participation across all levels of education.

Mr Odongo noted that many candidates faced significant challenges in applying knowledge and skills during the 2025 PLE. Despite well-prepared papers reflecting the shift to competency-based learning, learners, particularly in Social Studies and Religious Education, struggled with questions requiring critical thinking and application in real-life situations.

Slow adoption of new teaching methods by some teachers contributed to the decline in performance in these subjects compared to 2024.

## S.1 SELECTION

Selection for over 730,000 pupils who passed the 2025 PLE will take place next month. The exercise is scheduled for February 12 and 13, with further details to be communicated by the Ministry of Education.

Ms Museveni said the first term for the 2026 Senior One cohort will begin on Monday, March 2, and urged parents and learners to prepare for a smooth transition.

She highlighted alternative pathways for Primary Seven

completers, following the enactment of the TVET Act 2025. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training system, regulated by the TVET Council, now operates alongside the general education system.

Learners can enroll in 42 government-owned and about 100 privately owned community polytechnics. Training in community polytechnics takes three years, and successful trainees are awarded certificates equivalent to O-Level.