



# VICE CHANCELLORS GHANA

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To All Media Houses

The President

Ghana Journalist Association, (GJA)

Ghana International Press Centre

Accra

Dear Sir/Madam,

**PRESS RELEASE BY VICECHANCELLORS GHANA ON SAFEGUARDING  
UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN GHANA**

Please find attached a press release by Vice Chancellors Ghana calling for urgent reset of university regulation to safeguard autonomy and Academic Freedom. This is submitted for your necessary action and release.

We count on your usual support and urgent action. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Cynthia Sena Kpeglo-Freiku  
Executive Secretary VCG.



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Vice Chancellors Call for Urgent Reset of University Regulation to Safeguard Autonomy and Academic Freedom**

Vice Chancellors Ghana (VCG) has issued a policy white paper calling for targeted legislative and regulatory reforms to restore clarity, balance, and constitutional alignment in the governance of public universities, following growing tensions between universities and the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC).

The white paper, titled *Safeguarding University Autonomy and Academic Freedom in Ghana: A Policy White Paper on the Regulatory Role of GTEC*, presents a unified position by public university Vice-Chancellors on the need to recalibrate, rather than weaken, regulatory oversight in Ghana's higher education system

According to VCG, recent regulatory practices under the Education Regulatory Bodies Act, 2020 (Act 1023) have generated governance uncertainty, disrupted internal university operations, and raised constitutional concerns regarding institutional autonomy and academic freedom. The paper emphasises that while regulation is essential for quality assurance and accountability, it must operate within clear constitutional and statutory boundaries.

#### **Core Recommendations**

The white paper advances a set of practical, reform-oriented recommendations aimed at restoring trust, legal coherence, and effective collaboration between public universities and the national regulator.

#### **1. Reaffirm Council-Led University Governance**

VCG calls for explicit recognition of Governing Councils as the apex authorities for institutional governance, as provided under the 1992 Constitution and individual university Acts. The paper recommends introducing a non-derogation clause into Act 1023 to ensure that GTEC's regulatory powers do not override or diminish the lawful authority of university councils.

#### **2. Reposition GTEC's Role Toward System-Level Oversight**

The white paper urges a clear shift in GTEC's mandate away from direct involvement in internal university management toward system-level coordination, policy oversight, and external quality assurance. Regulation, it argues, should set national benchmarks and standards without substituting itself for internal decision-making structures.

#### **3. Restore the Authority of Academic Boards**

VCG recommends legislative reforms to reaffirm Academic Boards as the primary custodians of academic policy, curricula, and programme development. Under the proposed framework:

- Universities would initiate and approve academic programmes internally through their Academic Boards and Councils.
- GTEC would validate compliance with national minimum standards, without re-evaluating academic substance.
- Existing academic programmes and governance structures approved before Act 1023 should be statutorily grandfathered to preserve stability and legal certainty.

#### **4. Replace “Exclusive Authority” with a Concurrence Framework**

To reduce regulatory conflict, the paper proposes replacing provisions that grant GTEC “exclusive authority” with a concurrence-based model, promoting shared responsibility, proportionality, and mutual accountability between regulators and institutions.

#### **5. Reject Mandatory Uniform Governance Structures**

VCG strongly opposes the imposition of uniform national organograms across universities, noting that Ghana’s public universities differ in age, mandate, scale, and strategic focus. Instead, the paper advances the principle of “Minimum Standards, Maximum Flexibility,” allowing institutions to design governance and staffing structures aligned with their unique missions, provided national standards are met.

#### **6. Introduce Formal Dispute-Resolution Mechanisms**

To prevent escalation of governance conflicts, the white paper calls for the establishment of formal inter-institutional dispute-resolution mechanisms. It further recommends that all GTEC directives be subject to tests of reasonableness, proportionality, and consultation.

#### **7. Strengthen Engagement and Representation**

VCG proposes structured, regular engagement between GTEC and Vice Chancellors Ghana, including the restoration of direct representation of public universities on the GTEC Board, to ensure informed decision-making and shared ownership of system-wide reforms.

#### **A Call for Collaborative Reform**

The white paper stresses that its proposals do not advocate deregulation or the weakening of public accountability. Rather, they seek a cooperative reset agenda that aligns Act 1023 with the Constitution, respects existing university legislation, and reinforces Ghana’s commitment to academic freedom, innovation, and global competitiveness.

VCG urges Parliament, the Ministry of Education, GTEC, and all higher-education stakeholders to act decisively to implement these reforms, warning that prolonged governance ambiguity risks undermining institutional effectiveness, research productivity, and national development goals.

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