



GUIDELINES FOR ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONS INTO THE KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The KNQF is regulated through mechanisms intended to ensure compliance with the arrangements and requirements laid down for the qualifications system and to ensure that the system delivers qualifications of an acceptable quality. The mechanisms for achieving these objectives are focused on:

1. Validation and approval of qualifications proposed for inclusion in the KNQF;
2. Accreditation of institutions responsible for awarding, assessment and certification of KNQF-approved qualifications;
3. Quality assurance of accredited institutions and the delivery of validated qualifications;
4. Accreditation of qualifications awarding and Assessment Institutions;
5. Accreditation is a formal and transparent process providing internationally compatible standards to examine whether institutions comply with minimum quality requirements to operate as a qualification awarding and assessment institution for qualifications and modules in the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF).
6. The accreditation process shall decide on the recognition of institutions for a defined period.
7. Accreditation shall relate specifically to the delivery and assessment of identified qualifications which the institution shall be authorized to provide.
8. Accreditation of institutions to award and/or assess and award qualifications in the KNQF shall inform the stakeholders that the quality of the assessment and certification carried out in the institution meets the criteria and standards set by the Kenya National Qualifications Authority. At the same time accreditation increases the transparency in a complex market of national and international certificates.
9. The core functions of accreditation shall be to:
 - a. Give assurance to employers and learning institutions; for work and further education and training that the quality and assessment and certification meets national standards;
 - b. Protect students against assessments that do not meet the national standards or other requirements of the qualification;
 - c. Provide transparency, comparability and therefore increased opportunities in the educational and the labour market both at home and abroad;
 - d. Facilitate international mobility through a robust quality assurance system for the certificates issued; and
 - e. Provide fair conditions between educational institutions competing for students as well as for public and private funds.

10. Who may apply for accreditation?

- i. The KNQF act requires that all institutions offering qualifications in Kenya be accredited by the KNQA; and that it is an offence to award qualifications in Kenya without being accredited by KNQA;
- ii. Any institution providing qualifications, which considers that it can demonstrate that it meets the criteria for accreditation as an KNQF assessment and qualifications awarding institution;
- iii. According to the KNQF act, 2017; for a qualifications awarding institution to be accredited into the KNQF, it is required that it be a University; or an institution that is accredited by an ETQAs or professional body to award qualifications (for TVET institutions, by TVETA) and basic qualifications (by ESQAC); or have industry standards;
- iv. An already accredited assessment and qualifications awarding institution planning to assess and award qualifications to learners for existing or new qualifications;
- v. An already accredited assessment and qualifications awarding institution seeking to extend its accreditation for another period (re-accreditation);
- vi. Within the Kenyan context, the following institutions are required to seek for and received accreditation by KNQA to award qualifications;
 - a. Qualification awarding Institutions;
 - i. Universities;
 - ii. TVET training Colleges that offer and award their own qualifications (have no externally examination and assessment agencies);
 - b. External Quality Assurance Agencies
 - i. Commission for University Education;
 - ii. Technical and Vocational Training Authority (TVETA);
 - iii. Education Standards and quality assurance Council;
 - c. Local Assessment and Examination Bodies
 - i. Kenya National Examination Council;
 - ii. Kenya Accountant and Secretaries National examination Board;
 - d. Foreign Assessment and Examination bodies
 - i. All foreign assessment and examination bodies awarding qualifications in Kenya;
 - e. Professional Bodies
 - i. All professional Bodies offering and awarding qualifications in Kenya

11. Accreditation Principles

shall follow several principles such as the following:

- a. Accreditation shall be given for specified qualifications;

- b. Each institution or organization wishing to be accredited to offer or award a qualification in the KNQF shall apply for the type of qualification which it wishes to offer;
- c. Accreditation shall be given for a defined period, after which the institution or organization can seek re-accreditation;
- d. Accredited assessment and qualifications awarding institutions shall meet the responsibilities and obligations that are placed on them through the KNQF act for accreditation. Failure to meet these obligations may result in the withdrawal of accreditation;
- e. All aspects of the accreditation process shall be fair and transparent and lead to valid judgments by capable personnel;
- f. The applicant institution shall have a responsibility to demonstrate, through a process including self-assessment against objectively defined criteria, its competence to deliver and assess and award the qualification(s) which it wishes to offer;
- g. Accreditation decisions shall be taken following a rigorous evaluation of the information and supporting documentation provided by the applicant institution. The process of evaluating the accreditation application will include a visit to the institution to validate the information provided;
- h. Accreditation as an assessment or qualification awarding institution shall give the institution the right to assess candidates for the qualification and/or award the qualification;
- i. Institutions which are not accredited shall not be permitted to award qualifications in the KNQF;
- j. Where an institution is already accredited, the process of accreditation for further qualification(s) shall consider the previous accreditation and focus on evidence regarding the new qualification(s);
- k. Appeals may be made against disputed accreditation decisions.

12. The Procedure of Accreditation

12.1 The following stages shall be used for all accreditation to offer qualifications in the KNQF. However, the detailed application of these stages may be different in different areas of the framework. For example, it is likely that the accreditation of institutions and the validation of qualifications will be combined in higher education. For TVET qualifications, however, it is likely that there may be multiple providers and the two procedures are likely to be separated. It is incumbent on accrediting bodies to operate fair and transparent procedures, including setting and following deadlines for the completion of each stage;

12.2 Where a qualification is awarded by a national assessment and examination body, only the examination body shall be accredited to award such qualifications and not the institutions teaching them; The examination body must however provide details of all institutions permitted to teach the qualifications as prescribed by KNQA;

12.3 It will be incumbent upon the assessment and examination body to ensure that all institutions permitted to teach the qualifications, adhere to and meet KNQF requirements;

12.4 The Examination and/or quality assurance body; together with the institutions that it has will accredited to teach and/or award qualifications will be required to adhere to KNQA Assessment and quality assurance standards, guidelines and protocols;

12.5 Accreditation decisions shall be made within a maximum of six months from the time of application;

12.6 The following is a summary of the procedures shall be operated:

STAGE 1:

12.6.1 The institution shall get advice and documentation from the KNQA and undertakes a self-assessment against the criteria provided;

12.6.2 The institution shall submit this, in the appropriate format and together with supporting evidence, to the KNQA;

STAGE 2:

12.6.3 The KNQA shall appoint and brief an expert panel to validate the application for accreditation;

12.6.4 The panel shall consist of one or more experts from the Authority, together with one or more sector or subject experts appointed for this purpose by the KNQA Board.

The expert panel shall:

- Evaluate the self-assessment report provided by the applicant institution;
- Visit the applicant institution;
- Complete a report and makes recommendations;
- Submit the report to KNQA and copies it to the institution.

STAGE 3:

12.6.5 The KNQA shall decide on the panel's recommendations and inform the applicant institution;

STAGE 4:

12.6.7 The KNQA shall publish and gazette the accredited Institution, and issue the necessary documentation confirming the institution's status as an accredited qualification awarding and/or assessment institution.

13. Appeals against Accreditation Decisions

- i. The applicant institution shall have a right of appeal against a disputed decision by the KNQA. The applicant institution may ask the KNQA Council to reconsider its decision, citing specific grounds in support of its case. The KNQA Council shall refer all appeals for adjudication by the Technical Committee of the Council;
- ii. The decision of the Technical Committee shall be final;
- iii. New evidence shall not be used to appeal an accreditation decision;
- iv. If there is new information or evidence to be considered that was not previously presented, the applicant institution shall be required to submit a new application for accreditation.

For enquiries or to register your organization or qualification(s) into the KNQF visit or write to us;

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