

EXAM BODIES AND UNIVERSITIES IN A RACE TO REGISTER THEIR QUALIFICATIONS

Examination bodies, Universities and TVET Institutions stand to lose their power to award National Qualifications if they do not accredit themselves and register their qualifications with the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA). Section 5 (1) of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) act states that an institution shall not award National Qualifications unless it is accredited and recognized by the KNQA. Section 5 (2) says that any person who contravenes the provisions of this acts is liable to 6 months imprisonment or a fine of ksh 500,000 or both. The law in section 30 had given all examination, assessment and qualification awarding institutions in Kenya a two years transition window to comply with the law which has now lapsed.

The KNQA Director General, Dr Juma Mukhwana says that the Authority has written to all Universities, examination bodies and TVET institutions in Kenya to comply with the law, by the end of the first quarter of 2019. Sections 5 and 8 of the law gives the functions of the KNQF act which among other things include developing National policies on accreditation and award of qualifications, developing policies and systems for assessment and examination of national qualifications, maintaining a database of National Qualifications and developing and maintaining a national quality assurance system for National Qualifications.

When fully developed the Authority stands to correct examinational malpractices that have been rampant in the country as it sets standards for the setting, marking and management of national examinations. The Authority's voice has also been missing on the current debate regarding implementation of the Competence based curriculum in both Primary and TVET sectors of our education system. The Authority is expected to develop and implement policies on national examination and assessment systems under the competence-based curriculum. Among the Institutions that need to register with the Authority include local and foreign examination bodies such as the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), KASNEB, Professional bodies that award various qualifications in the country, Quality assurance bodies and TVET institutions such as KMTC, Kenya Water institute among others (that have their own acts of parliament to award qualifications). The Authority does not accredit training institutions; it accredits owners of qualifications, so if you are training qualifications that are awarded by another institution, we register the awarding institution said Dr Mukhwana. He added that all systems are ready to commence accreditation of all institutions awarding qualifications in Kenya, their qualifications and all the learners that have been awarded qualifications starting from January 2019. He asked those that have not applied to the Authority to immediately do so, stating that the system will go a long way in addressing the menace of examination malpractices, existence of fake certificates and existence of low-quality qualifications within the Kenya Market. The Authority is working with employers and industry to ensure that all qualifications awarded in the country meet national and employer standards and expectations. Dr Mukhwana lauded the launching of Competence based education system in the country, but called for better planning, involvement of all stakeholders and enough funding to ensure a smooth and seamless transition to the new system. He said that KNQA is working on national policies to support assessment and examination under the system, as set out in the law.

The KNQF is part of Kenya's commitment to create an efficient, transparent and Quality National Qualifications awarding system with international comparability.