MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT
FOR VOCATIONAL AND
TECHNICAL TRAINING

Recognition of Prior Learning
**Guide for Qualification
Awarding Institutions**
2021

ABREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CUE	Commission for University Education
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVETA	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority
QAI	Qualification Awarding Institution
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
KNQF	Kenya National Qualifications Framework
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
KNLRD	Kenya National Learners' Records Database
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTP	Registered Training Providers
NRT	National Registered Training

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

The Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) developed the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy Framework in Kenya and Guidelines for its implementation in 2020. In order to launch RPL in Kenya, the Authority developed guides for use in the execution of RPL. The guides were developed based on international best practice; consultation and collaboration with organisations like International Labor Organization (ILO), Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) and International Rescue Committee (IRC).

This RPL guide for Qualification Awarding Institutions (QAIs) builds on the strengths of the existing policy, implementation guidelines as well as RPL Standards. The guide aims to facilitate and enhance the recognition of knowledge, skills and competencies by QAIs in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating quality assessment strategies and practices that meet requirements of the qualification.

2.0 WHO ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR?

These guidelines have been developed for Qualification Awarding Institutions (QAIs) seeking to award Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) qualifications.

3.0 WHO QUALIFIES TO BE A QAI IN KENYA?

The following can qualify as Qualification Awarding Institutions in Kenya if accredited by KNQA.

a) Any institution established by the University Act no 42 of 2012.

b) A National Polytechnic with a legal order to award qualifications.

c) Institutions in Government Ministries with a legal order to award qualifications.

d) Institutions established by an Act of Parliament to develop and award qualifications.

e) Foreign institutions accredited in their home countries as qualification awarding institutions.

4.0 HOW SHOULD QAIs COMPLY WITH POLICIES AND GUIDELINES?

QAIs should comply with KNQA policies and guidelines by:

a)   applying for accreditation by KNQA;

b)   accrediting (Registered Training Providers) RPL Assessment Centres;

c)   co-ordinating (Registered Training Providers) RPL processes in the respective assessment centres;

d)   ensuring that qualifications that they assess are registered in the KNQF;

e)   submitting lists of all RPL graduates to the KNQA; and

f)   abiding by the policies and standards set by the KNQA.

5.0 WHAT IS THE LEGAL POLICY GOVERNING THE QAIs?

QAIs are accredited in accordance with the KNQF Act no. 22 of 2014, a legal order to award qualifications or the Universities Act (No.42 of 2012).

6.0 HOW ARE QAIs ACCREDITED?

Accreditation of QAIs by KNQA is carried out in the following steps:

STEP 1:

a) The institution undertakes a self-assessment against a criterion provided by KNQA.

b) The institution submits the documents, in the appropriate format, together with supporting evidence, to the KNQA.

STEP 2:

The KNQA appoints a panel to validate the application for accreditation;

The expert panel performs the following functions.

a) Evaluates the self-assessment report provided by the applicant institution.

b) Visits the applicant institution to carry out a suitability assessment.

c) Completes a report and makes recommendations.

d) Submits the report to KNQA and send copies to the institution.

STEP 3:

The KNQA considers the panel's recommendations and informs the applicant institution.

STEP 4:

The KNQA publishes and gazettes the accredited institutions, and issues the necessary documentation confirming the institution's status as an accredited qualification awarding and/or assessment institution.

7.0 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF QAIs IN THE FOLLOWING RPL PROCESSES?

7.1 RPL ASSESSMENT

For effective RPL assessment, QAIs should ensure that:

a) assessors carry out the examination and make assessment results available;

b) necessary support for learners undertaking the training and assessment is available; and

c) facilities necessary to accommodate and support the number of learners undertaking the examination and assessment are in place.

7.2 VALIDATION

The QAIs should carry out systematic validation of RPL assessment processes for all qualifications by doing the following.

a) Planning for validation of RPL process.

b) Involving industry experts in the validation activities.

c) Carrying out systematic validation of a QAI's RPL processes.

d) Documenting the outcome of the validation.

e) Acting on the outcome of the validation appropriately.

7.3 RPL PRACTITIONERS

QAIs shall ensure that the RPL process is delivered and administered by RPL Practitioners who are;

a) Registered by the relevant regulatory bodies.
b) Have requisite competencies.

7.4 SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF RPL PROCESS

QAIs should ensure that supervision and monitoring of the RPL process is carried out as per the set requirements.

7.5 VALIDATION OF THE QAIs

The QAIs should undergo independent validation of the RPL process to ascertain whether they meet the set requirements.

7.6 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF QAIs

The QAIs should comply with RPL set standards and RPL Quality Assurance manual at all times, including where services are being delivered on their behalf. This applies to all operations of Registered Training Providers within their scope of registration.

The QAIs should ensure the following.

a) Systematically monitor the RTP's assessment processes to ensure compliance.
b) Systematically evaluate the RPL assessment processes for feedback and decision making.
c) Use the outcomes of the evaluation to continually improve the QAIs' assessment process.
d) Ensure that where services are provided on behalf of a third party, the provision of those services complies with set standards at all times.
e) Ensure the provision of sufficient resources to carry out monitoring and evaluation of the RPL assessment processes.

7.7 CERTIFICATION

The QAIs should ensure:

a) Certification is issued to a candidate who has met the requirements of the course.

b) Certification documentation issued by QAIs meets the set requirements.

c) Certification documentation is issued within the recommended time.

d) Maintenance of assessment records in accordance with the requirements.

e) Issuance of certificates is in accordance with the requirements.

f) That they accept and provide credit in accordance with the requirements.

7.8 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

The QAIs should have a complaints and appeals procedure to manage requests for review of decisions made during RPL processes.

The QAIs' complaints and appeals policy should:

a) ensure the principles of natural justice and fairness are adopted at every stage of the process;

b) ensure complaints and appeals are made public;

c) put complaints and appeals procedures in place;

d) provide for review of the complaint or appeal if necessary;

e) maintain secure records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes;

f) identify potential causes of complaints and appeals; and

g) take appropriate corrective action to mitigate the likelihood of recurrence of complaints or appeals.

7.9   ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES

a) QAIs should include the following information on statements of qualification attained.

   i)   The name of the QAI, the QAI Code and the logo of the issuing organisation.

   ii) National Registered Training logo (NRT) as a mark of quality.

   iii) A list of units of competency (or modules) showing their full title and the national code for each unit of competency.

   iv) The authorised signatory.

   v)   The issuing organisation's seal, corporate identifier or unique watermark.

   vi) The words "This Certificate is issued by Name of the QAI'' when an individual has completed one or more accredited units.

b) The following elements are to be included in the Certificate as applicable.

   i)   The words "These competencies form part of [code and title of qualification(s)/course(s)]''.

   ii)   The words, "'These competencies were attained in completion of [code] course in [full title]''.

   iii) Where relevant, the words, "These units/modules have been delivered and assessed in <insert language>'' followed by a listing of the relevant units/modules.

c) QAIs should:

   i)   maintain registers of all certificates issued;

   ii) retain records of certificates issued for a specified period; and

   iii) provide reports of certificates issued on a regular basis, as determined by the Regulator.
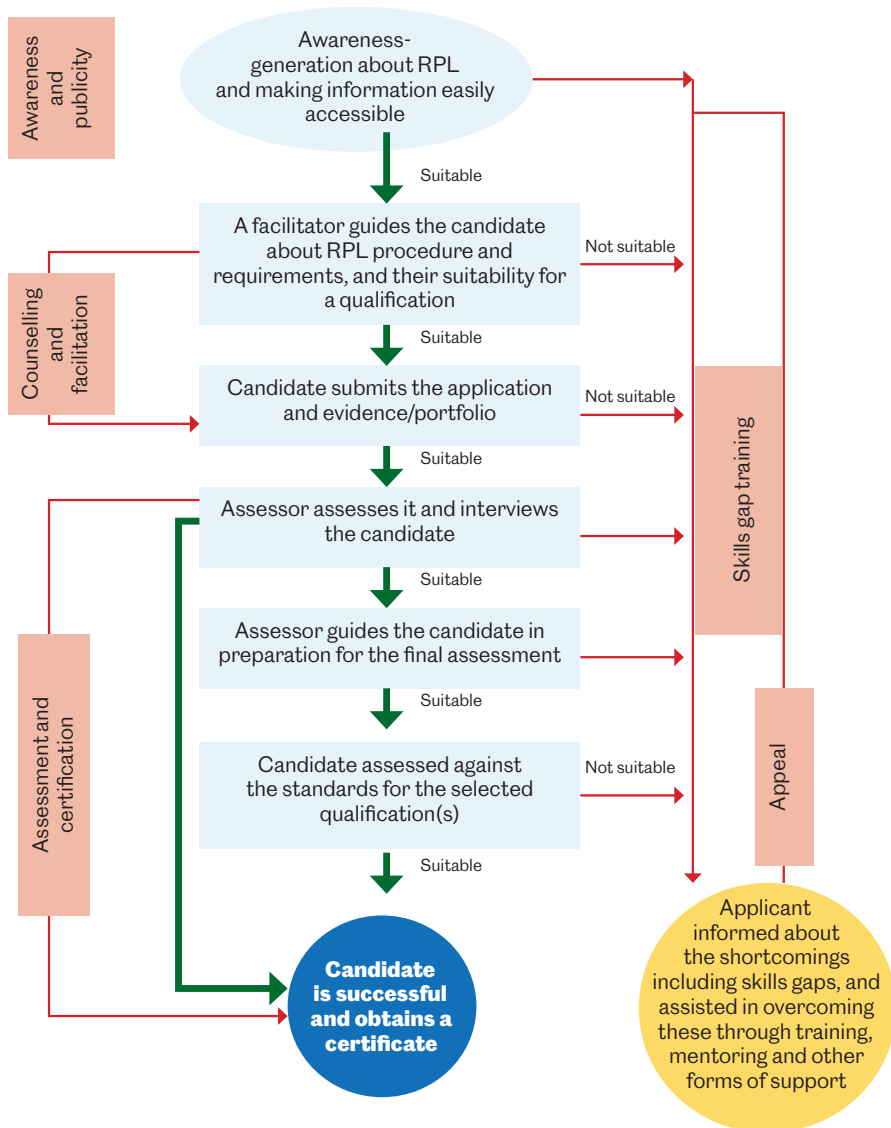
8.0 ROLE OF QAIs IN IMPLEMENTATION OF RPL PROCESSES

QAIs are required to carry out the following critical roles in the implementation of RPL processes.

a) Accredit, register and build capacity of RPL Practitioners.

b) Develop standardised RPL assessment tools.

c) Develop RPL assessment guidelines in line with RPL policy framework and regulator standards.

d) Organise validation of the RPL assessment tools and guidelines.

e) Develop, review and disseminate guidelines for preparation of assessment process and preparing the materials in liaison with other stakeholders.

f) Provide guidelines for RPL assessments and appeals.

g) Coordinate RPL assessment processes.

h) Update assessment data bank of trainees.

i)   Award certificates, partial or full qualification.

j) Develop and maintain an information management system that is compatible with the National Applicants Records Database (KNLRD) and other relevant government information management systems.

9.0 RPL PROCESS CHART

The chart below shows the steps to follow in the RPL process.

Awareness and publicity

Awareness-generation about RPL and making information easily accessible

Suitable ↓   Not suitable →

Counselling and facilitation

A facilitator guides the candidate about RPL procedure and requirements, and their suitability for a qualification

Suitable ↓   Not suitable →

Candidate submits the application and evidence/portfolio

Suitable ↓   Not suitable →

Assessment and certification

Assessor assesses it and interviews the candidate

Suitable ↓

Assessor guides the candidate in preparation for the final assessment

Suitable ↓

Candidate assessed against the standards for the selected qualification(s)

Suitable ↓   Not suitable →

Candidate is successful and obtains a certificate

Skills gap training

Appeal

Applicant informed about the shortcomings including skills gaps, and assisted in overcoming these through training, mentoring and other forms of support

REFERENCES

1) KNQF Act no. 22 of 2014.

2) KNQF Regulations 2018.

3) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy Framework (2020).

4) Guidelines for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning in Kenya, 2020.

5) National Standards for Assessing National Qualifications.

THE KNQF STRUCTURE

KNQF Level	General and Further Education and Training Sub-Framework			Notional hours (minimum)
10	Doctorate Degree			3600 after KNQA level 9
9	Master's degree			2400 after KNQA level 7
8	Post-Graduate Diploma	Professional Bachelor's Degree	Professional Master Craft Person	1200 after KNQA level 7 or 6000 after KNQA level 2
7	Bachelor's Degree		Master Crafts Person –I or Management Professional or HND or CPA III	4800 after KNQA 2 or 2400 after KNQA level 6
6		National Diploma	Master Crafts Person –II/ Professional Diploma or CPA II	2400 after level 2 or 1200 after KNQA level 5
5		National Craft Certificate National Vocational Certificate-IV	Master Craft Person III or CPA I	1200 after KNQA level 2 or 600 after level 4
4		National Vocational Certificate- III/Artisan Certificate	National Skills Certificate –I GTT-I	600 after KNQA level 2 or 300 after level 3
3		National Vocational Certificate-II	National Skills Certificate -II /(GTT – II)	300 after KNQA level 2
2	Secondary Certificate	National Vocational Certificate- I	National Skills Certificate -III /Government Trade Test (GTT-III)	Depending to skills acquisition or Level 1
1	Primary Certificate		Basic Skills/Skills for Life	Birth Certificate

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