GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF REGISTERED QUALIFICATIONS IN THE KNQF

Revised August 2018

A. Coverage and structure of the KNQF

1. The KNQF established under the provisions of KNQF Act, 2014 shall encompass all types and levels of qualifications and certification within a structure of levels;

2. Progression from level to level shall be defined in terms of increasingly complex and demanding outcomes of learning, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences;

3. Qualifications approved for inclusion in the framework shall have credit values and be designed to allow for the accumulation and transfer of credit;

4. KNQA will work through established and accredited external quality assurance agencies (ETQAs) to ensure that assessment and quality assurance of registered qualifications meet the KNQF;

5. Accredited ETQAs shall ensure that they adhere to assessment policies, standards, guidelines and protocols as developed and implemented by KNQA from time to time;

4. The KNQF shall include:

4.1 Qualifications awarded at all levels of the education and training system, including pre-university, university and training programmes, adult education and training and lifelong learning;

4.2 Certification of the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning, including the recognition of prior learning and achievements of candidates; and

4.3 Access to education and training programmes and qualifications for learners with disabilities and other special needs**. T**he KNQF will support the implementation of a policy and strategy for inclusion of learners with disabilities and other special needs through:

i. Requiring that accreditation as a qualification's provider /assessment institution includes procedures to ensure the continuous improvement of appropriate education and training, relevant qualifications and associated assessment strategies for young people and adults with disabilities and special needs;

ii. Evaluating the implementation of strategies for inclusion at school level through self-evaluation and re-accreditation processes;

iii. Supporting the development of qualifications at all levels of the framework, enabling access to relevant qualifications, particularly at levels 1 and 2 of the frameworks, for learners with intellectual disabilities;

iv. Implementing modular qualifications which ensure achievement of credits where learners can do so. Learners with disabilities and other special needs will be able to choose modules which maximize their strengths and eliminate their difficulties.

B. Allocating credit values to qualifications and modules

5. Credits are allocated to qualifications and modules based on the size of the qualification or module. A credit is a numerical value given to qualifications, or parts of qualifications, which represents the volume of learning required to achieve the qualification or part of the qualification. In other words, credit value is based on the time taken to achieve the learning outcomes to the standards required for the award of the qualification or module. The time taken includes all learning required to achieve the learning outcomes as well as assessment. It may include:

• Formal instruction (e.g. including general education and vocational education);
• Practical work;
• Self-directed learning activities
• On-the-job training
• Assessment tasks.

6. When thinking about a credit point convention for education and training (E and T) in Kenya, stakeholders identified the following priorities to inform their decision. The credit point convention should:

- Be a single credit point convention for the whole of the E & T sector;
- Enable a shared understanding of the convention;
- Be acceptable across all E & T institutions;
- Be appropriate to all forms of E & T including short courses for adults as well as longer programmes;
- Support learner mobility and transferability in the E & T system;
- Enable flexibility in E & T;
- Enable progression and help learners measure their progression in the system;
- Support partnerships between E & T institutions;
- Build on what already exists;
- Help with registering achievement;
- Be appropriate to certification;
- Facilitate the work of the NQA;
- Be comparable with regional and international credit systems

7. Allocating a credit value based on a year of full-time. This method is used to allocate credit points to whole qualifications that are delivered through full time programmes of education and training. Under KNQF, one year of study is allocated 120 KNQF credits. Therefore, using this

convention, a Four-year qualification delivered in an E & T institution is allocated 460 KNQF credits. 40 weeks per year, 5 days per week, 6 hours per day = 40x5x6= 1200 hours

C. Credit is allocated to the modules that make up the qualification.

The sum of the credit values of all modules should be very close to the value of the full qualification. Where the sum of all the modules is less than the full-time value of the qualification, attention will need to be paid to consider where time is being ''lost''. Possibly, the learning time for some modules will have been under-estimated. There may be significant portions of the school year that are spent on learning activities that are not credit bearing. If the programme leading to the qualification is very much shorter than other full time TVET programmes, a lower credit value may need to be considered.

8. Allocating a credit value to a module or short qualification. This second method is useful for:

- Qualifications that are smaller than a year of fulltime study;
- Qualifications that are not delivered through full time study;
- Individual modules within a qualification.

In this approach, the time taken is based on an estimate of how long it would take an average learner to achieve all the learning outcomes in the module. This estimate is called ''Notional time'' because it is an estimate, and it is relative; the actual time taken by real learners will of course vary with some learners taking more - or less time - than others. Once again, the time estimated includes all forms of learning to achieve the learning outcomes in the module as well as assessment, for example:

- Formal instruction;
- Practical work;
- Self-directed learning activities
- On-the-job training
- Assessment tasks.

9. Once the time taken to achieve the learning outcomes in the module has been estimated, the following convention is used to convert the learning hours into credit values: 1 credit for 10 hours of notional time. Recommended convention because:

- It would enable the inclusion of short courses for adults including modules offered through nonformal and informal learning;
- It would not undermine or interrupt current curricula developed and implemented by providers including formal providers;
- It would be relatively easy to communicate to users and be easy to understand;
- Conversions to ECTS would be straightforward.

10. What is ''one hour''?

In Kenya, an ''hour'' has different meanings in different E & T settings. Within formal E & T an ''hour'' of teaching time in schools is 40 minutes. However, in non-formal E & T and workplace

training, an hour usually means 60 minutes. This means ''an hour'' and the credit point conventions are at risk of being understood in different ways in different parts of the system. As we have noted, the calculation of learning time includes all the learning activities that are involved in achieving specific outcomes including homework. Therefore a ''notional hour'' in formal E & T can be 60 minutes, where 40 minutes of class time is assumed to be associated with 20 minutes of homework. This strategy allows guided learning through homework to be included within the calculation of time. This gives a ratio of 2:1 which probably realistic for Kenya at present.

11. Credit values as whole numbers.

The credit value is arrived at by dividing the learning time by 10, as one credit is allocated to ten notional hours. Where the estimated learning time cannot be divided exactly, it is rounded up or down (e.g. 4.3 becomes 4 credits, whereas 4.6 becomes 5 credits). This is because credits must be whole numbers. 'Rounding off'' is possible because notional learning time is an estimate of the time taken by a so-called average learner. It is not an exact calculation of actual time taken. There is no maximum value of credit that may be awarded to a module.

12. Assessment and certification in the KNQF

12.1 Assessment in the KNQF

"Assessment" refers to the processes … used to gather, interpret and evaluate evidence of an individual's learning achievements

Assessment for qualifications in the KNQF shall only be carried out by institutions or bodies approved by KNQA for this purpose and known as assessment bodies." Assessment is thus the process of evaluating evidence of a candidate's achievements (knowledge, understanding and skills) against qualification requirements. The purpose of an assessment strategy is to provide a means of gathering enough quantity of appropriate forms (or types) of evidence

The standards embodied in criterion-referenced qualifications are the benchmarks against which learners' achievements are judged. Assessment for qualifications in the KNQF shall be criterion-referenced, with assessment judgments made against objective standards rather than arbitrarily based on subjective comparisons of the performance of different candidates

Assessment carried out at various points during a learning programme to provide feedback on learners' progress is known as formative assessment. Good formative assessment is essential for effective learning and informs both learners and assessors on progress towards reaching the learning outcomes. Assessment that counts towards the result of the qualification (whether carried out during or at the end of the module or programme) is known as summative assessment.

12.2 Quality of Assessments

The quality of the assessment which students undertake to achieve a qualification is one of the most important factors contributing to public confidence. Users of qualifications have a right to

expect that assessment is rigorous and fair, and appropriate to the qualification. For this reason, assessment in the National Qualifications System will be subject to certain quality assurance measures applied or overseen by the KNQA.

12.3 Characteristics of assessment in the KNQF

To achieve its purpose, assessment in the KNQF must have characteristics which will give it credibility among national stakeholders and international users of the qualifications. To provide that credibility KNQF assessment shall always be valid and fair, reliable and transparent, practicable, cost-effective and flexible and, in selecting the most appropriate assessment methods to use, E & T institutions should be guided by these principles. Both the assessment and awarding processes must be:

• Fair and objective;
• Flexible;
• Valid;
• Reliable;
• Enough;
• Practicable and cost-effective;
• Transparent.

12.3.1 To be fair and objective

The assessment strategy and associated instruments of assessment shall be designed in a way that ensures that:

- The assessment process is completely free of bias and without either overtly or covertly discriminatory practices;
- All learners, whatever their background, have access to assessment with no unnecessary barriers put in their way of achieving the qualification. For example, assessment instruments should not introduce conditions or requirements that are irrelevant or unrelated to what is being assessed

12.3.2 To be flexible,

Assessment practices shall aim to:

- Reflect a candidate-centred approach which puts learners at the centre of the learning and assessment processes and adapts to individual learners' needs wherever possible;
- Utilize all available opportunities for learners to demonstrate the required achievements – for example by assessing them in the course of performing practical work activities at the time of learning or during work placements.

12.3.4 To be valid,

Being an appropriate means of measuring what it is supposed to measure, an instrument of assessment shall:

- Be appropriate to purpose – for instance a practical assessment should be used to assess practical skills;
- Ensure adequate coverage of all of the intended outcomes of learning;
- Allow learners to provide enough evidence of all the main skills and knowledge specified for the qualification;
- Produce evidence of learners' performance which can be measured against specified outcomes and standards defined for the qualification;
- Be accessible to all learners who are potentially able to achieve it.

12.3.5 To be reliable

Being applied consistently wherever and by whomever they are applied, assessment decisions shall be: Based on evidence which is the authenticated work of learners being assessed;

- Based on evidence generated by valid instruments of assessment and judged against clearly defined criteria under consistently applied conditions;
- Consistent: whether between different assessors and/or different groups of learners; whether made in different locations, situations or contexts; over time

12.3.6 To be enough

Assessment practices shall generate an adequate quantity of relevant evidence to enable assessors to reach valid and reliable assessment decisions.

12.3.7 To be practicable and cost-effective,

Assessment practices shall:

- Be not too onerous or place unnecessary burdens either on institutions or learners, for example by avoiding situations that require an over-elaborate arrangement of equipment, too many consumables or take too long to perform;
- Be geared to available resources, facilities and time;
- Avoid over-bureaucratic requirements or the provision of excessive quantities of documentation – which always should be appropriate and fit for purpose.

12.3.8 To be transparent,

The information provided about learners' achievements shall clearly show the outcomes achieved and enable the basis of the assessment decision to be clearly understood.

D. Carrying out assessment for qualifications in the KNQF

13. Assessors

- Assessors shall be responsible for assessing the work of learners in line with the requirements of the qualification and for submitting learners' results for certification, either for complete qualifications or as credits towards qualifications;
- Accredited assessment institutions shall be responsible for ensuring that all persons involved in assessing candidates for qualifications are competent – whether teachers, trainers or instructors or persons who are not their employees (e.g. social partner representatives involved in the assessment process); and
- Both assessors and their employers shall be responsible for ensuring that their occupational knowledge is kept up to date.

14. To be competent to conduct assessment for qualifications in the KNQF, assessors shall:

- Possess knowledge and experience of the vocational area in which they are working, and understand the standards and evidence requirements of the qualifications for which they are providing assessment;
- Understand the assessment procedures, documentation and evidence requirements;
- Be able to identify candidates' needs, carry out assessment in a fair and impartial way and provide the necessary support, guidance and feedback to candidates on their performance.

15. The assessment process

15.1 Accredited institutions and ETQAs shall be responsible for ensuring that assessment systems and instruments of assessment are applied correctly, and for recording and internally verifying assessment decisions.

15.2 Assessment shall measure learners' knowledge, understanding and skills against the standards set out in the specification for the qualification;

15.3 Assessment for Standards based qualifications shall include a specification of learning outcomes and performance criteria, from which the evidence requirements (forms and quantity of evidence) are derived.

15.4 Evidence requirements shall define the type, quality and quantity of evidence that needs to be provided, including any restrictions on the way that it should be generated.

15.5 Evidence requirements shall always make clear the conditions of assessment implied by the performance criteria, including such critical factors as whether observation of work practice is required or whether there are specific requirements for written documents.

15.6 To be judged to have achieved each learning outcome, learners must have demonstrated enough evidence that all the performance criteria associated with the learning outcome have been met. Evaluation of the evidence provided shall lead to a decision either that:

a. There is enough evidence showing that the standards have been met for the learner to pass the assessment; or

b. The evidence is not enough, in which case the candidate should be provided with feedback and, after an opportunity to generate new or additional evidence, an opportunity for re-assessment

16 Stages in the assessment process

Shall have key stages:

16.1 Assessment planning shall:

- be carefully planned and prepared. It shall be wrong and unfair to impose surprise tests on learners without prior notice.

- involve identifying the available opportunities for collecting evidence efficiently and developing appropriate assessment strategies and instruments for gathering the appropriate evidence in line with standards and other qualification requirements;

- involve learners in planning their own assessment process though a collaborative candidate-centred process;

16.2 Collecting evidence:

- collection of evidence shall use and apply appropriate assessment methods / instruments to gather the required evidence;

16.3 Judging evidence and making assessment decisions shall require:

- Checking that evidence collected meets the evidence requirements both quantitatively and qualitatively;

- Deciding whether the standard has been met;

- Providing feedback to learners;

16.4 Recording assessment results shall:

- Ensure that assessment decisions are recorded in the required way;

- Provide verifiable records for quality assurance purposes.

16.5 Methods of assessment

The intention of assessment is to provide as accurate a predictor as possible of the competence of the learner. The assessment methods or instruments selected shall provide the best available means of collecting the evidence required for achievement of the qualification

16.6 All assessment instruments shall involve one or more of these characteristics:

• Observation - observing the learners whilst they are carrying out an activity (whether real or simulated).

• Product examination - looking at something a learner has made or produced, either during or after the activity has been completed

• Questioning - asking the learner questions which can be answered either verbally or in writing. The questions may relate to the activities described in the learning outcome, or they could test the learners' ability to work within the other contexts (transfer of skills). Questioning is also an important means of establishing evidence of underpinning knowledge and understanding. It can also be used for authenticating material.

16.7 Different types of assessment instruments

Assessment Method	Description
Assertion (or reasoning) questions	questions This consists of an assertion and a supporting explanation. Learners have to decide whether the assertion and the explanation are individually true, and if true, whether the explanation is a valid reason for the assertion.
Assignment	This is a problem-solving task with clear guidelines, structure and length. An assignment is more structured and less open-ended than a project. Learners are given little choice of methodology or content
Aural test	This is a test of listening skills, for example in languages or music, using live or taped stimulus.
Case study	Learners are given a description of an event of a real-life or simulated nature, as a basis for an assessment of such skills as decision making, planning or verifying
Completion questions	Learners are required to supply the correct missing word(s) to complete a given statement
Comprehension	This is a set of questions based on a passage of text. The questions assess understanding of the meanings of words, phrases, technical terminology and of the passage overall.
Design activity	Learners are required to work from a design brief, to research and investigate a design problem, and to develop and verify a final solution
Discussion contribution	Learners are required to take part in a discussion which is observed by the assessor.

Extended response questions	This type of question has few restrictions on the content and form of response. Learners are required to provide a lengthy open-ended response. Limits may be placed on the length and/or time allowed
Grid questions	Learners are given a series of related questions, with a series of possible responses presented in an accompanying grid. They are required to select the correct response for each question. Two different questions may have the same answer. Some responses will be plausible but incorrect. Grid questions provide an alternative to matching questions (see below)
Investigation/ Research	This is an enquiry or exploration targeted on a particular issue, aspect or problem. Learners have some choice in methodology and content. The investigation usually culminates in a report of stated approximate length.
Logbook	Logbooks can provide a useful means of assessing the progress of learners' achievement or performance on a task such as a project, assignment or investigation. To be effective, learners should be given clear instructions on the essential information to be recorded.
Matching questions	Matching questions are a variant of multiple-choice (see below), in which learners are given two lists to match up: a set of words or statements and a set of responses.
Multiple choice questions	Learners are presented with questions or incomplete statements, followed by four or five plausible answers, from which they have to select the correct one.
Multiple response questions	Multiple-response questions are a variant of multiple-choice. Learners are required to select all the correct responses, generally from four or five plausible options.
Oral (or personal) interview	This is a structured conversation, generally on a one-to-one basis, eliciting information directly from learners. It is of use when evidence is required of process skills or experiential learning, and results may be recorded in questionnaire format.
Oral presentation	Learners are required to deliver a prepared talk, in the form of an address, a report or considered opinion. An oral presentation may be offered as an alternative to a written response of equivalent scope or may be used as an instrument of assessment.

Performance	Learners are required to demonstrate outcomes of study in a context, e.g. work practice, encapsulating the skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding.
Practical exercise	This requires learners to display a range of practical skills. The assessment may be based on the result of the activity (the product) or the carrying-out of the activity (the process) or a combination of both.
Project	This is a substantial piece of work in which learners are required to carry out research, planning, problem solving and verifying over an extended period. Some projects include a practical component. Projects are more comprehensive and open-ended than assignments and may be tackled individually or by a group of learners. Many projects will involve learners working without close supervision, but in the interests of authenticity, the levels of supervision required should be stated. A project generally culminates in a report, an artefact or a combination of these.
Questionnaire	This consists of a range of assessment items, which together assess a unit or outcome. Generally, a question paper is used to assess a combination of knowledge and understanding.
Restricted response questions	Restricted response questions are so called because the form and content of the response is limited by the way in which the question is asked. Learners' responses should be more discursive than in short answer questions (see below) but briefer than in extended response questions. Typically, they would vary between a few sentences and a paragraph in length. The approximate number of words should be indicated.
Role play	This is an open-ended exercise which provides opportunities to display behavioural or inter-personal skills in a simulated context.
Short answer questions	This type of question requires learners to provide a predetermined answer consisting of a few words. Such questions may also involve the use of numbers, diagrams and graphs as well as text. Although generally used to assess the recall of information, short answer questions can also be constructed to assess understanding and

	application of knowledge, for example numerical and mathematical concepts.
True-false questions (alternative response)	In this type of question learners are required to state whether a statement is true of false. They are generally used to assess the recall of information or the ability to discriminate.

17. Selecting and developing assessment instruments

17.1 Assessment instruments shall be selected and /or developed early enough to allow internal evaluation and approval prior to delivery.

17.2 The assessment instruments shall also be approved by the internal verifier(s) for the qualification.

17.3 Assessment instruments shall be designed in a way that optimizes use of available resources, supports effective learning, facilitates access and progression and encourages public confidence in the qualifications system.

18. Selection of the most appropriate instrument of assessment shall be based on:

a. Fitness for purpose – qualification requirements shall be checked carefully to see what type of assessment instrument is required or expected for each learning outcome. For example, where a practical skill is involved, a practical test or assignment should be used rather than a written question paper;
b. The need for learners to generate enough evidence of the required knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure adequate coverage of all learning outcomes, performance criteria and contexts specified;
c. Opportunities for using integrated assessment by combining assessment of different learning outcomes through related tasks;
d. The need to provide a reliable basis for assessment decisions, including measurable evidence of achievement of standards;
e. The need to avoid introducing unnecessary barriers for learners though the choice of assessment instrument. The demands placed on learners shall be appropriate both to what is being assessed and the level of qualification, and the requirements should be clear and transparent;
f. The need to maximize opportunities for team working on the part of all those involved in the assessment process.

g. **Considering accommodations to assessment for candidates with disabilities and special needs;**

h. Standards for assessing skills, knowledge and understanding shall not be changed for students with disabilities. Consideration shall be needed in terms of:
   i. Timing – changes to the length of assessment;
   ii. Scheduling – changes in when the assessment occurs;
   iii. Setting – changes in the place where an assessment is given;
   iv. Presentation – how an assessment is given to a candidate.

19. Certification

19.1 Certification shall be the responsibility of assessment institutions;

19.2 All certificates, diplomas, and degrees awarded for qualifications in the KNQF shall be endorsed by the KNQA. Endorsement shall be a signal that the qualification in question is in the KNQF and that the award of the qualification has been made by an approved assessment institution based on quality assured assessment.

- Assessment institutions shall submit certificates to KNQA for endorsement, in the form of a stamp, before issuing the certificates to successful learners;
- KNQA shall issue an additional document (a covering document) to accompany the certificate issued by the assessment institution;
- All certificates issued for qualifications in the KNQF shall include common data information identifying:
  a. the holder of the qualification
  b. the type of qualification
  c. the profile or area of study of the qualification
  d. the date of award/certification
  e. the level and credit value of the qualification
  f. the body awarding the qualification and/or issuing the certificate

19.3 Certificates shall be accompanied by transcripts giving details of the contents of the qualification which have been achieved by the holder of the qualification.

19.4 Certification records shall be maintained for periods specified by the KNQA in order that questions relating to the qualifications claimed by individuals may be resolved and in case it is necessary to issue replacement certificates, for example where the original has been lost or destroyed.

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

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