COMPETENCE OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IS A ROAD MAP TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AN OVERVIEW.

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ABSTRACT

The Kenya National Qualification Framework is a learning outcome-based qualifications framework, encompassing of all educational and training sectors and all types of learning; recognized, non-formal and informal training. The Kenya National Qualifications Framework comprises of levels; each being identified by a unique set of Level Descriptors. The National Qualifications Framework is the fundamental tools through which National Education and Training Qualifications are registered and accredited. The Kenya National Qualifications Framework is constituted of principles and guidelines by which data of student's achievements are enumerated to facilitate National acknowledgement and appreciation of skills attained and expertise, where by guaranteeing an integrated, robust and vibrant system that inspires life-long training. The modern advancement in national productivity can be achieved through updated technologies and skilled workforce. There is need to contextualize the upsurge ambitions of youth and intensifying aspiration for advanced skills to match with market demand and aspirations of labour Market needs. The Recognition of Prior Learning is the process used to identify, assess and certify an RPR candidate's level of understanding, skills attainment and competencies assimilated in 'Jua-kali' sector or formal training, similarly as work or life experiences, against prescribed standards or learning outcomes.

Keywords: Kenya National Qualifications Framework, Level Descriptors, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Jua-Kali sector (Informal sector in Kenya)

Introduction

The Kenya National Qualification Framework [thereafter referred to as KNQF] is a training output-established on qualifications structure, encompassing of training and educational sectors and inclusive of manner of knowledge acquisition; informal and formal training. The KNQF incorporates of levels, every level is recognized by a unique set of Level Descriptors. Personnel certification has been and will continue to remain a desirable asset for any modern professional. In attainment of certification, this habitually represents a significant investment in time, effort and expense. Normally, candidates have to choose between a "competence-based" or a "qualification-based" type of certification program. majorly, qualification-based personnel certification is easier and less expensive to accomplish. The real difference between a competence-based versus 'qualification-based' personnel certification program is as follows. Competence is a distinct "the ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results." Competence-based certification means that the personnel certification body [Thereafter referred to as PCB] is projected to evaluate a candidate's understanding, individual expertise, personal qualities and certificates of explicit training and scope of qualification. Whilst, certification-based accreditation relies on the learners' qualifications and training, unlike on the centering around of measurable competence.

The Kenya National Qualifications Authority has already designed and formulated the Recognition Prior Learning Policy [thereafter referred to as RPL) which gives an implementation road map in Kenya. The RPL policy is the process used to identify, assess and certify an RPL candidate's competencies, skills and knowledge obtained in-formal otherwise informal training, such as work or life experiences, such as work or life experiences, against prearranged standards or learning outcomes. The RPL policy prescribes the methodology of direct and indirect mobilization of physical, infrastructural, human and financial capacity required to build, mainstream and maintain a sustainable RPL structure of both the countrywide and county government levels of administration.

The National Qualifications Framework is the chief tool in which National Training and Education Qualifications is Accredited, Quality-Guaranteed and Registered. The KNQF is instituted of guidelines and principles of records of student's accomplishments and attainment are enlisted as an enabler of National Acknowledgment of attained knowledge and skills therefore safe guarding a cohesive, robust and vibrant system that emboldens life-long learning. The ideologies underlining the formation of KNQF is to stimulate access, quality and equity in training.

Importance of a National Qualifications.

KNQA is committed to ensure that qualifications churned in Kenya are globally competitive and met the national aspirations. The importance of Qualifications frameworks are as follows;

1. It promotes career progression, employment placement, guidance and information orientation inclusive of occupational mobility (demand side);

2. It provides of education system, qualification development arrangements and training system that meets demands of the labour market.

3. The intercontinental, mutual transparency, international cooperation and transnational aspect is enriched.

4. The legislation, guidelines and established arrangements are defined as well as responsibilities of stakeholders.

5. It moderates complexity, transparency and facilitates coherence and integration notwithstanding the accumulative regionalization, decentralization and individualization of endowment.

6. It increases access and supports progression for advanced credentials, sovereign of whether they are preliminary, upper or vocational training [Thereafter referred to as VET]/Life Long Learning qualifications

7. It enables trainers and learners to be guided and expedites them to identify suitable training pathways.

8. It enables setting of objectives, considering the labour market factors, societal norms, enterprises and citizens' or training needs, preferences and attitudes requirements.

9. It provides sustenance for development of standards and quality assurance criterions for systems of credit accumulation and transfer and further boosts comparability and transferability of qualifications.

Rationale for RPL policy in Kenya

Recognition of prior learning (RPR) is a process used to identify, assess and certify an RPL candidate's competences, knowledge and skills acquired in formal or informal training, such as work   or alternatively life experience, against prescribed standards or outcomes. The justification for RPL are as follows;

i.   RPL is a key enabler for escalation of accessibility, equity and quality of training and education.

ii. Inform prospective RPL candidates on the expectations of RPL policy and how they can enthusiastically participate in the RPL process.

iii. RPL is the key drivers and a mechanism for social inclusion for those who have not had the prospect to partake in formal in training and education.

iv. The RPL policy generally recognizes learning acquired informally, non-formally, experientially and formally.

v.   This policy pursues to recognize informal education and training undertaken regardless of how it was realized.

vi. The purposes of this policy is to enable learners to access to up skilling opportunities in the formal set ups.

vii. The RPL policy mitigates barriers and formalizes credit transfer structure for recognition of knowledge, competences and skills and acts as means of stimulating lifelong learning.

The formulation RPL policy has now earthed and opened an avenue for those in possession of skills and competencies, nevertheless without qualifications. The RPL policy has also unlocked the potentiality of upwards progression in TVET and University education in Kenya.

Importance of qualifications to the economy

Qualifications are key enablers for achievement of high national productivity and their significance are as follows;

1. Qualifications is one of the key enablers of advance performance, affluence, and competitiveness in multinational and global economies.

2. Vocational Education and Training and skills training provides a high level research ecosystem that provides technology and innovations which is treasured, mass production and solicitations.

3. The current workforce is consistently undergoing innovation which is driven by skills and technological improvements.

4. The Human Resource requires to constantly appraise their skills and competences exploited the advantages of unrelenting learning experiences, which ought to be backed by productivity.

5. The advanced training and education segment is fundamental in provision training the citizens all the progression their job opportunities with a key focus to export ventures.

The vitality of education and competent qualifications cannot be overemphasized, however there is need to authenticate and establish whether qualifications attained globally are from registered and recognized institutions from countries of origin.

Conclusion

The modern advancement in national productivity can be achieved through updated technologies and skilled workforce. There is need to contextualize the intensifying ambitions of youth and the growing requirement for innovative skills to the match with market demand and needs of labour market. The impending modern times technological revolution and inventions are essentially volatile and therefore, consequences and interfaces are multifaceted. The investment in advanced and efficient data processing system is highly required.

A vibrate organization require a robust application for analyzing information and multidisciplinary research is critical for effective and efficient production. Therefore, KNQA is committed to ushering qualifications that are internationally competitive and meets global standards. In view of the foregoing, KNQA has put in place an on line client application system for easy access of services by the customers.

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