

**KENYA STANDARD**

**DKS 3047:  
2026**

**ICS ##.###**

**First Edition**

**National qualification framework — Kenya Credit  
Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) —  
Requirements and guidelines**

Public Review Draft

**DKS 3047: 2026**

## **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION**

The following organizations were represented on the Technical Committee:

Ministry of Education

Kenya National Qualification Authority

Commission for University Education

Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

University of Nairobi

Kenyatta University

Maseno University

Karatina University

Technical University of Kenya

Technical University of Mombasa

United States International University

Riara University

Daystar University

Pan Africa Christian University

Strathmore University

Africa Nazarene University, Kenya

Kiriri Women's University of Science and Technology

Zetech University

Kenya Association of Manufacturers

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Kenya Bureau of Standards — Secretariat

## **REVISION OF KENYA STANDARDS**

In order to keep abreast of progress in industry, Kenya Standards shall be regularly reviewed. Suggestions for improvements to published standards, addressed to the Managing Director, Kenya Bureau of Standards, are welcome.

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**National qualification framework — Kenya Credit  
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Requirements and guidelines**

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## **Foreword**

This Kenya Standard was prepared by the Education Services Technical Committee under the guidance of the Standards Projects Committee, and it is in accordance with the procedures of the Kenya Bureau of Standards.

Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) has established Technical Committees (TCs) mandated to develop Kenya Standards (KS). The Committees are composed of representatives from the public and private sector organizations in Kenya.

Kenya Standards are developed through Technical Committees that are representative of key stakeholders including government, academia, consumer groups, private sector and other interested parties. Draft Kenya Standards are circulated to stakeholders through the KEBS website and notifications to World Trade Organization (WTO). The comments received are discussed and incorporated before finalization of the standards, in accordance with the Procedures for Development of Kenya Standards.

Kenya's education and training system comprises diverse learning pathways across multiple institutions, programmes and qualification levels. As learners increasingly transition across institutions, sectors and modes of learning, there is a growing need for a harmonized national mechanism to support the accumulation, transfer and recognition of learning in a transparent and consistent manner. The Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) provides such a mechanism, enabling structured learner mobility, articulation and progression without unnecessary duplication of learning.

In developing this Kenya Standard, the Ministry of Education, through the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA), played a central role by facilitating the establishment of a National Working Group to draft the initial standard and coordinate extensive stakeholder engagement. This inclusive and consultative process strengthened national ownership of the Standard and ensured its alignment with the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF), relevant sectoral regulations, and international best practice.

This document sets out the requirements and guidelines for the consistent implementation of KCATS across the education and training system. It promotes coherence, transparency, and quality assurance in credit allocation, accumulation, transfer, and exemptions, and strengthens confidence in the recognition of qualifications within Kenya and beyond.

Kenya Standards are subject to review, to keep pace with technological advances. Users of the Kenya Standards are therefore expected to ensure that they always have the latest versions of the standards they are implementing.

During the preparation of this standard, reference was made to the following document (s):

- a) The Constitution of Kenya 2010;
- b) The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) Act, Cap. 214;
- c) The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (General) Regulations, 2025;
- d) Basic Education Act, Cap. 211
- e) Technical and Vocational Education and Training Act Cap. 210 A
- f) Industrial Training Act Cap. 237
- g) Universities Act, Cap. 210

Acknowledgement is hereby made for the assistance derived from this (these) source (s).

Public Review Draft

# Introduction

## 0.1 General

Kenya's education and training system is characterized by multiple learning pathways spanning basic education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education, professional qualifications and industrial training. As learners increasingly move between institutions, programmes and qualification levels, the absence of a harmonized credit system can result in duplication of learning, limited progression opportunities and reduced efficiency within the system.

A nationally coordinated credit accumulation and transfer system is therefore essential to support learner mobility, articulation and lifelong learning while safeguarding the integrity and quality of qualifications.

## 0.2 National, regional and international context

At the national level, Kenya's development priorities emphasize the need for a skilled, adaptable and mobile workforce capable of responding to changing socio-economic and technological demands. The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) provides the overarching structure for coordinating, classifying and recognizing qualifications, while KCATS operationalizes learner mobility within the KNQF.

Regionally and globally, education and training systems are increasingly aligning to standardized frameworks that promote the comparability, portability, and mutual recognition of learning. Global and regional initiatives including Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA), the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), underscore the importance of transparent and coherent credit systems and articulation mechanisms. These instruments emphasise credit transfer and accumulation as key enablers of inclusive education, workforce mobility, recognition of prior learning, and lifelong learning across borders and learning pathways.

These developments highlight the need for harmonized standards that enable credit accumulation and transfer while maintaining quality assurance and public confidence.

## 0.3 Purpose and rationale of this Kenya Standard

This Kenya Standard specifies requirements and provides requirements and guidelines for the effective implementation of the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS). It establishes a common reference framework for regulatory bodies, qualification awarding bodies, education and training institutions, curriculum developers, assessment bodies, employers and other stakeholders involved in the recognition of learning.

The standard is intended to promote consistency, fairness and transparency in the allocation, accumulation and transfer of credits, as well as in the granting of exemptions. By doing so, it supports learner progression, articulation across pathways, and recognition of prior learning, while ensuring alignment with the KNQF and applicable regulatory requirements.

## 0.4 Development of the standard

This Kenya Standard was developed in accordance with the Procedures for the Development of Kenya Standards. The drafting process involved technical input from a National Working Group coordinated by the Ministry of Education through the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA), followed by consultation with a broad range of stakeholders including:

- a) Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA)
- b) Commission for University Education (CUE)
- c) Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA)
- d) National Industrial Training Authority (NITA)

- e) State Department for Higher Education
- f) State Department for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (SDTVET)
- g) State Department for Basic Education, Directorate for Quality Assurance and Standards (DQAS)
- h) University of Nairobi
- i) University of Embu
- j) Egerton University
- k) Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
- l) Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC)
- m) Technical and Vocational Education and Training Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council (TVET CDACC)
- n) Human Resource Management Professionals Examinations Board (HRMPEB)
- o) Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS)
- p) International Labour Organization (ILO)
- q) Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE)

Extensive consultations were conducted to gather technical input and stakeholder feedback. Comments received during the development process were reviewed through established KEBS consensus mechanisms to ensure that the standard reflects national priorities, aligns with existing legal and policy frameworks, and is consistent with international good practices in credit systems.



# National Qualification framework — Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS) — Requirements and guidelines

## 1 Scope

This Standard give requirements and guidelines on the implementation of the Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (KCATS), credit allocation, credit accumulation, credit transfer, and exemptions across Kenya's education and training system.

This Standard applies to qualifications from KNQF at Levels 1 to 10 and is binding on regulatory bodies, Qualifications Awarding Bodies, assessment bodies, curriculum developers, education and training institutions, professional bodies, placement agency, employers, and other implementing stakeholders.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

KS 3048, Kenya Standard; National qualifications framework — Quality assurance of qualifications — Requirements and guidelines

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

### 3.1 accreditation

procedures by which institutions offering education and training are formally recognised as having met the standards set out in various laws of Kenya.

### 3.2 articulation

process of facilitating learners' progression between different qualifications and institutions, ensuring smooth progression through education and training levels and transition into the workforce by interconnecting various levels or types of qualifications and allowing credits earned in one course to be exchanged for another.

### 3.3 credits allocation

process of assigning credits to qualifications, degree programs, or individual educational components based on national legislation or practice, typically referencing 120 credits per full-time academic year. Credits are allocated according to the workload required to achieve specific learning outcomes.

### 3.4 assessment

evaluation of learning outcomes to determine whether a learner has achieved the competency specified in a programme or a course.

### 3.5 assessment body

body accredited under the various laws of Kenya to develop and conduct assessment, and award qualifications

### **3.6**

#### **assessment methods**

Various techniques such as tests, examinations, projects, presentations, and portfolios used to evaluate a learner's progress and determine if learning outcomes have been achieved for an educational component.

### **3.7**

#### **assessment criteria**

descriptions specifying what learners are expected to do and to what standard to demonstrate achievement of a learning outcome. Assessment methods and criteria must align with defined learning outcomes and activities.

### **3.8**

#### **award of credits**

act formally grants learners the credits assigned to the qualification and/or its components if they achieve the defined learning outcomes.

### **3.9**

#### **comparability**

The degree of similarity between two qualifications in terms of purpose, level, credits and learning outcomes or level descriptors to determine the extent of credit accumulation and/or transfer within or between institutions.

### **3.10**

#### **credits**

credits serve as a standardised unit of measurement in education and training, quantifying the educational value of learning experiences.

### **3.11**

#### **credit accumulation**

Credit accumulation refers to the process of acquiring the necessary credits to fulfil the requirements for completing a qualification or a part qualification.

### **3.12**

#### **credit system**

process that allows credit awarded by one higher education awarding body to be recognised and count towards the requirements of a programme at another institution; or that allows credit gained on a particular programme to contribute towards the requirements of a different one.

### **3.13**

#### **credit transfer**

process by which credits previously earned from an accredited qualification, part-qualification, course, module, or unit are recognised and applied towards the requirements of a new or target programme. Credit transfer reduces the total credit load a learner must complete in the receiving programme. Recognised credits are recorded on the transcript as CT.

### **3.14**

#### **credit accumulation and transfer (CAT)**

a systemic way of validating, recognising and transferring prior learning achievements or accumulated credits towards the attainment of a qualification or part qualification across and within different KNQF levels, educational institutions or programmes.

### **3.15**

#### **course**

planned and delivered learning experience consisting of one or more units or modules, with defined learning outcomes, content, assessment methods, and workload. a course may form part of a larger programme or, in some cases, may be offered as a standalone component that contributes credits toward a qualification.

**3.16  
curriculum**

systematic and structured framework for learning that defines the purpose, content, learning outcomes, teaching and learning approaches, assessment methods, credit or workload requirements, and progression arrangements of a programme, course, module, or unit. It provides the basis for the design, delivery, assessment, and certification of learning and ensures alignment with the relevant qualification framework level descriptors, quality assurance standards, and labour-market requirements.

**3.17  
exemption**

a decision by a qualification awarding body (QAB) to waive a learner's requirement to complete a specific course, unit, or module of a programme because the learner has already demonstrated achievement of the equivalent learning outcomes through prior study or validated experience. An exemption does not award credits, does not reduce the total credit requirements of the qualification, and must be recorded on the transcript as EX.

**3.18  
diagonal mobility**

the ability of learners to progress across different educational and training pathways, often moving between related fields or disciplines.

**3.19  
external quality assurance**

the independent evaluation, oversight, and validation of an institution's programmes, systems, and qualifications by a regulatory or quality assurance body to ensure they comply with the knqf qualifications standards and other regulatory requirements.

**3.20  
formal learning**

this means instructions given in education and training institutions or specially designed training areas, including in enterprises in formal apprenticeship systems.

**3.21  
graduate**

a person who has been awarded a statement of attainment or a certificate by a qualification awarding body.

**3.22  
graduate record**

details of a qualification awarded to a graduate.

**3.23  
horizontal mobility**

ability of learners to progress within the same level of education or training, often across different institutions or programmes.

**3.24  
institution**

public or private establishment which provides education and training services on the following areas:

- a) university education;
- b) technical and vocational education training;
- c) industrial training and skills development;
- d) basic education; or
- e) award of professional qualifications.

### 3.25

#### **internal quality assurance**

systematic processes, structures, and mechanisms established and implemented by an education and training institution or qualification awarding body (QAB) to ensure that all aspects of its programmes, operations, and qualifications consistently meet defined quality standards.

### 3.26

#### **industry**

sectors of the economy involved in the production of goods and services. they play a crucial role in providing input on skill requirements, participating in curriculum development, offering work-based learning opportunities, and collaborating with educational institutions to ensure that graduates possess the skills needed for employment in their respective fields.

### 3.27

#### **Kenya credit accumulation and transfer system (KCATS)**

a national framework, inclusive of the National Policy Framework for KCATS and this Standard, established to standardise the accumulation and transfer of credits across programmes, institutions, and qualification levels in Kenya. KCATS enables learners to earn and carry forward credits gained through the achievement of defined learning outcomes, thereby supporting mobility, articulation, progression, and lifelong learning. It provides transparent rules for recognising prior credits, granting exemptions, and applying accumulated credits towards full or partial qualifications within the KNQF and, where applicable, in alignment with international frameworks.

### 3.28

#### **Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF)**

the national system for the articulation, classification, registration, quality assurance, and the monitoring and evaluation of national qualifications as developed in accordance with KNQF Cap 214.

### 3.29

#### **learning outcomes**

description of the ability of a learner or individual in terms of specific knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes attained as a result of learning.

### 3.30

#### **level**

indication of the relative demand, complexity and or depth of achievement.

### 3.31

#### **level descriptor**

set of skills, knowledge, and competencies describing the learning outcome used for determining the level of a qualification.

### 3.32

#### **lifelong learning**

all learning activities undertaken throughout life for the development of knowledge, competencies or qualifications.

### 3.33

#### **micro-credential**

a small, specialized certification that demonstrates the attainment of a specific set of skills or knowledge in a particular subject area.

### 3.34

#### **mobility**

ability of learners to move smoothly and effectively between different levels of education or training, as well as across various sectors or fields. it encompasses vertical mobility, horizontal and diagonal mobility.

**3.35****module**

structured grouping of related units or learning components designed to achieve specific learning outcomes within a programme. modules are typically credit-bearing, may be compulsory or elective, and represent a distinct area of learning or competence within a qualification. completion of modules contributes to progression within a programme and towards the award of a qualification.

**3.36****national qualification**

a programme or a course that has met the requirements set out in the knqf and entered into the database.

**3.37****notional hours of learning**

the total amount of time that would take an average learner to meet the defined learning outcomes including, inter alia, face-to-face contact time, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, time for completing assignments and research, and time spent in assessment processes.

**3.38****part qualification**

the partial completion of a full qualification, typically comprising a subset of the required units, modules, or courses.

**3.39****professional body**

includes a body of expert practitioners in an occupational field.

**3.40****programme**

a purposeful and structured set of learning experience and competence that leads to the award of a qualification by a qualification awarding body.

**3.41****progression pathway**

a flexible route that a learner takes to acquire skills and qualifications, facilitating transitions between different types and levels of education and training.

**3.42****programme**

coherent and structured set of courses, modules, or units designed to enable a learner to achieve the learning outcomes required for the award of a qualification at a specified knqf level. a programme defines entry requirements, progression rules, credit requirements, assessment and certification arrangements, and is subject to approval, accreditation, and quality assurance by the relevant regulatory and awarding authorities.

**3.43****professional regulatory bodies**

statutory bodies established by law or an Act of Parliament and mandated to regulate professional practice within specific occupations or professions. They set professional standards, approve or recognise qualifications for professional practice, register and license practitioners, and ensure compliance with ethical and competency requirements in accordance with their governing legislation.

**3.44****qualification**

an official recognition or certification awarded to individuals upon successful completion of a programme, course, or series of studies, indicating that they have achieved specified learning outcomes or competencies.

### **3.48**

#### **qualification awarding body (QAB)**

an education and training institution with a statutory mandate to develop, examine or assess and award qualifications.

### **3.49**

#### **quality**

the degree to which education and training processes, programmes, qualifications, and outcomes consistently meet defined standards, stakeholder expectations, and intended objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, credibility, equity, and continuous improvement.

### **3.50**

#### **recognition of prior learning (RPL)**

a process used to identify, assess and certify a candidate's competencies regardless of when, where and how they were acquired against prescribed standards or learning outcomes.

### **3.51**

#### **registration**

knqa's recognition of an institution as a qualification awarding body and includes recognition of the institution's qualifications.

### **3.52**

#### **regulatory body**

a body legally mandated with overseeing and enforcing rules, regulations and standards within a particular industry or sector to ensure compliance in education and training.

### **3.53**

#### **vertical mobility**

the ability of learners to progress through different levels of education and training. it involves moving from one qualification level to another one within the same field of study or across related fields.

### **3.54**

#### **volume of learning**

the amount of training, learning and assessment activities that a typical student must undertake to achieve all of the competencies packaged in a qualification. it is a notional duration and subject to variance in some circumstances.

### **3.55**

#### **validation**

the process applied by the authority to ascertain whether a qualification awarded by a qualification awarding body meets the requirements set out in the act and these regulations.

### **3.55**

#### **workload**

an estimate of the time learners typically needs to complete all learning activities required to achieve defined learning outcomes in formal settings. a full-time workload for an academic year equals 120 credits, with one credit representing approximately 10 hours of work. while this workload reflects average expectations, individual learners may require more or less time based on their unique circumstances and learning abilities.

### **3.57**

#### **transcript**

transcript provides an up-to-date record of students' progress in their studies, the educational components they have taken, the number of credits they have achieved, and the grades they have been awarded.

#### 4 Symbols and abbreviated terms

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
CT	Credit Transfer
CUE	Commission for University Education
EX	Exemptions
KCATS	Kenya Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
KNQF	Kenya National Qualifications Framework
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
QAI	Qualifications Awarding Institutions
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVETA	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority

## 5. Requirements and guidelines

### 5.1 Integration of KCATS into legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks

**5.1.1** Regulatory bodies, Qualifications Awarding Bodies (QABs), assessment bodies, professional examination boards, curriculum developers, education and training institutions, learners placement bodies, professional bodies, employers and other institutions shall:

- a) Review and align their legal and policy frameworks to include KCATS provisions within 2 years of these standards approval.
- b) Align their regulations, policies and frameworks with KCATS, as per institutional mandate, in:
  - i. Curriculum development and review to conform with the respective KNQF level descriptors.
  - ii. Credit allocation based on the provisions of KNQF, with ten (10) notional hours equating to one (1) credit.
  - iii. Establishment of articulation frameworks or mechanisms within programmes to facilitate horizontal, vertical, and diagonal learner mobility within and across qualifications, and education and training providers (Refer to Annex II).
  - iv. Establishment and communication of mobility and progression policies in line with KCATS.
  - v. Development and implementation of Assessment and Certification frameworks to provide CAT and exemptions.
  - vi. Integration of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) into admission, progression, and credit recognition policies.
  - vii. Demonstration of integration of KCATS in accreditation of institutions and programmes as part of quality assurance and compliance requirements.
  - viii. Governance of KCATS through an institutional policy and establishment of a coordination unit.
  - ix. Mainstreaming of KCATS in internal and external quality assurance systems.
  - x. Submission of KCATS uptake data including, applications, approvals and appeals, for national reporting.
  - xi. Incorporation of KCATS in Admission policies
  - xii. Mutual recognition of accumulated credits.
  - xiii. Capacity building of KCATS implementors and stakeholders.
  - xiv. Dissemination of KCATS information through communication materials, digital platforms, and learner support services.
  - xv. Provision of appeals mechanism for KCATS decisions.
  - xvi. Recognition of KNQF progression pathways (Appendix II: Education and Training Pathways).

### 5.2 Basic parameters for KCATS

**5.2.1** Regulatory bodies, QABs, curriculum developers, education and training institutions shall establish, implement, and enforce mechanisms to ensure that the design, delivery, assessment and recognition of programmes and qualifications are guided by the basic parameters for KCATS.

**5.2.2** The basic parameters for KCATS shall include: learner workload measured in notional hours and or credits; learning outcomes; credits allocation; credits award; credit accumulation; credit transfer and exemptions.

#### (a) Workload

- i. A programme's workload refers to time learners typically need to complete all learning activities required to attain the learning outcomes of a qualification, module, or unit.
- ii. The workload of each programme shall be defined in accordance with the KNQF, specifying the corresponding credits and minimum duration at each level as outlined in Annex III, Volume of Learning in Notional Hours.
- iii. An academic year shall cover a minimum of 1,200 notional hours, equivalent to 120 credits.
- iv. Workload shall be measured in:
  - **Notional hours of learning**
    - i. Notional hours shall represent the estimated learning time a typical learner requires to complete all activities necessary to achieve specified learning outcomes.
    - ii. Notional hours shall include:

- Contact hours, including lectures, tutorials, supervision;
  - Self-study, including self-practice, reading, research, seminars;
  - Practical sessions, including laboratories, workshops, field practice, attachments;
  - Co-curricular activities;
  - Assessment, including tests, assignments, examinations.
- iii. Distribution of hours shall be prescribed by sector regulators, subject matter experts and curriculum developers in line with programme requirements.

- **Credit**

- i. A credit shall represent a quantitative unit of value awarded for the achievement of specific learning outcomes, based on the associated notional hours of workload.
- ii. Credits shall serve as the “currency of learning”, enabling accumulation, transfer, and recognition of qualifications within and across systems.
- iii. One (1) credit shall be equivalent to ten (10) notional hours of learning.

**(b) Learning outcomes**

Programmes shall be designed based on defined learning outcomes aligned with respective KNQF level descriptors (Refer to Annex V: KNQF Level Descriptors).

**(c) Credit allocation**

- i. Credits shall be allocated to programmes, courses, units, or modules in proportion to total notional learning time required to achieve the prescribed learning outcome.
- ii. Credit allocation shall be consistent with respective KNQF level of the respective programmes and scoped workload (Refer to Annex III, Volume of Learning).
- iii. Credit allocation shall depend on the nature of the programme as guided by relevant regulators, industry, curriculum developers and subject matter experts.

**(d) Credit awarding**

- i. Credits shall be awarded for a unit when a learner has demonstrated achievement of learning outcomes of the respective unit.
- ii. Awarding shall be based on assessment processes that are fair, valid and reliable.
- iii. Awarded credits shall be recorded in the learner’s transcript or learner record system.

**(e) Credit accumulation**

- i. QABs and Institutions shall ensure that learners progressively accumulate credits towards the completion of a qualification or part-qualification.
- ii. QABs and Institutions shall maintain up-to-date transcripts/results slips capturing accumulated credits.
- iii. QABs and Institutions shall prevent double-counting across transferred credits and internally earned credits.
- iv. Credits accumulated for a programme shall align with the minimum volume of learning specified for the respective KNQF level.

**(f) Credit transfer and exemptions**

- i. Credits awarded by one QAB and institutions shall be recognised and included towards the requirements of another programme within the same or different QAB, subject to KCATS thresholds.
- ii. Credit transfer and exemptions decisions shall be based on comparability, compatibility, and complementarity of learning outcomes.
- iii. Recognition shall only be granted where the prior unit and or module demonstrates at least eighty percent ( $\geq 80\%$ ) equivalence in learning outcomes and content with the target unit/module, at the same or higher KNQF level. Such equivalence shall be evidenced and recorded using the prescribed Course/Unit Comparability Matrix (Annex VI, Unit/ Module/ Course Comparability Matrix).
- iv. Credit transfer shall apply where the prior unit/module demonstrates at least eighty percent ( $\geq 80\%$ ) equivalence in learning outcomes and content, the credit value or volume of learning is comparable to that of the target unit/module, and the KNQF level of the prior unit/module is the same as or higher than that of the target unit/module. In such cases, the credits shall be directly counted toward the total credit load of the target qualification.

- v. Exemption shall apply where the prior learning demonstrates at least eighty percent ( $\geq 80\%$ ) equivalence in outcomes and content, but the credit value/volume of learning is lower than that of the target unit/module. In such cases, the learner shall be exempted from repeating the unit, but no credits shall be carried forward.
- vi. Credit transfer and exemptions shall not exceed forty-nine percent (49%) of the total credit load/workload required for the target qualification; at least fifty-one percent (51%) must be completed within the awarding programme;
- vii. For KNQF level 7, 8 and 9 Credits for thesis/dissertation, industrial attachment, project work, proposal development, defence and teaching practice shall not be transferable;
- viii. For KNQF level 9 programmes, not more than one-third ( $1/3$ ) of prior credits may be transferred, with the remaining two-thirds, including dissertation/thesis, completed at the awarding university;
- ix. Prior studies older than six (6) years shall not be recognized for credit transfer or exemptions
- x. Units that have been granted credit transfer or exemption shall not be reused for transfer or exemption in any other qualification.
- xi. Credit transfer shall be processed for prior units, modules, or courses that form part of a qualification, provided that such prior learning was formally assessed and successfully completed with a minimum grade of Credit, Competent, or an equivalent. This requirement applies to both the overall qualification and each individual unit, module, or course presented for recognition.
- xii. Credit transfer or exemption shall only apply where the learner met the prescribed entry requirements for the prior qualification. (Refer to Annex IV, Minimum Entry Requirements)
- xiii. Where the required equivalence is established, the learner shall be accorded recognition through either credit transfer or exemption, as appropriate.
- xiv. Credit transfer shall be indicated on transcripts or result slips using the notation CT\*.
- xv. Exemptions shall be indicated on transcripts or result slips using the notation EX.

### 5.3 Programme designing, articulation and progression

5.3.1 Regulatory bodies & QABs shall establish, implement, and enforce mechanisms that ensure programme design, articulation, and progression are aligned with the KNQF and the provisions of the KCATS.

5.3.2 Curriculum developers and QABs shall ensure that programme designs, development, implementation, and review incorporate provisions for learner articulation and progression by adhering to the following requirements:

#### (a) Alignment with KNQF

- i. Programmes shall specify progression routes for learners, including vertical, horizontal, and diagonal mobility in line with education and training pathways (Refer Appendix II, Progression Pathways).
- ii. Content and learning outcomes shall be sequenced progressively as prescribed by the respective KNQF level descriptors (Refer Appendix V, KNQF Level Descriptors).

#### (b) Articulation through exemptions and credit transfer

- i. Programmes shall be designed to incorporate rules on exemptions and credit transfer to guide learner progression.
- ii. Programmes shall outline entry requirements in line with the KNQF and where applicable, sector-specific regulatory requirements (Refer to Annex IV Minimum Entry Requirements)
- iii. Where related or similar programmes offered at different KNQF levels, are designed to support learner progression, the programmes shall clearly indicate which units or modules qualify for exemption or credit transfer, in line with KCATS and any applicable sector-specific regulatory requirements.

**(c) Minimum Body of Knowledge (MBK)**

- i. Regulatory bodies and professional bodies shall define a Minimum Body of Knowledge (MBK), specifying essential knowledge, skills and competencies for a particular KNQF level.
- i. MBKs shall be periodically updated to reflect industry, professional, and sectoral needs.
- ii. Core units/modules/courses shall be derived from the approved MBK and collectively cover all MBK outcomes at the mapped KNQF level.
- iii. Core units/modules/courses shall safeguard the integrity of the qualification, while electives and non-core units may extend core units without substituting them.
- iv. QAB and curriculum developers shall demonstrate MBK coverage in the programme for a particular KNQF level.

**(d) Progression**

- i. Recognition decisions shall be based on achievement of learning outcomes verified through fair, valid and reliable assessments.
- ii. Institutions shall document and apply progression criteria as per the KNQF Progression Pathway (Refer to Annex II, Progression Pathways).

**(e) Staff capacity and development**

QABs and institutions shall provide continuous training of relevant staff on curriculum development, articulation, assessment, credit transfer and exemption, and progression pathways.

**5.4 Recognition of qualifications for learner mobility****5.4.1 Regulators obligations in recognition of qualifications**

Regulators shall:

- a) Develop and implement systems for accreditation of institutions and programmes, registration of QABs and programmes, and recognition and equation of qualifications in line with relevant regulatory mandates;
- b) Coordinate implementation of credit transfer and exemptions in line with the KCATS;
- c) Monitor implementation and compliance to KCATS;

**5.4.2 Scope and validity of recognition of qualifications for credit transfers and exemptions**

- a) Qualifications and programmes shall be valid for credit transfer and exemptions provided:
  - i. The awarding QAB is duly registered by KNQA;
  - ii. The programme is registered as a National Qualification on the NQD;
  - iii. The examining/assessment body is legally mandated;
  - iv. The education and training institution is duly licensed;
  - v. Learner meets prescribed KNQF entry requirements for the prior qualification; and
  - vi. Prior studies formally assessed and successfully completed with at least a 'Credit' or 'Competent', or an equivalent.

**5.4.3 QABs obligations in recognition of qualifications**

QABs shall:

- a) Recognise qualifications for credit transfer or exemptions only from qualifications registered by the KNQA on the National Qualifications Database (NQD).
- b) Implement credit transfers and exemptions in accordance with the provisions of the KCATS.
- c) Consider, in every recognition decision:
  - i. Comparability of prior formal learning, ensuring at least eighty percent ( $\geq 80\%$ ) equivalence in learning outcomes and content.
  - ii. Learner's achievement in the prior qualification and its units presented for recognition, with at least a 'Credit' or 'Competent' grade, or an equivalent;
  - iii. The duration of the programme and the associated credit value or volume of learning shall be considered to determine the learner's eligibility for credit transfer or exemption.
  - iv. Transcript and or results slip and curriculum content of the prior studies, to verify alignment of learning outcomes with those of the target programme.

- d) Operationalise the following forms of credit transfer, in accordance with prescribed progression pathways (Annex II):
  - i. Horizontal credit transfer – between similar or related learning programmes offered at the same KNQF level, either within a single institution or across different institutions.;
  - ii. Vertical credit transfer – from a qualification at one KNQF level to a similar or related programme at a higher KNQF level; and
  - iii. Diagonal credit transfer – between different KNQF pathways at successive KNQF levels for similar or related programmes (e.g., TVET Level 6 to University Level 7).
- e) Provide for the fulfilment of award of qualifications using KCATS for: -
  - i. Successive KNQF level for related qualification fields in the same or a different institution;
  - ii. The same qualification or part-qualification in a different institution; and,
  - iii. Cognate qualifications or part qualifications in the same or a different institution.
- f) Build staff capacity on recognition, comparability analysis, and documentation of learner mobility decisions.

#### 5.4.4 Recognition procedure and instruments for credit transfer and exemptions

##### (a) Application

- i. Learners shall submit applications using the prescribed format at admission or registration.
- ii. Applications shall specify the units/modules for recognition and be accompanied by evidence.

##### (b) Submission of evidence

- i. Learners shall provide:
  - Official transcripts and or results slips
  - Certificates of awards
- ii. QABs shall provide:
  - Course outlines, syllabi or curricula
  - Grading and credit details

##### (c) Eligibility screening

- i. Receiving institutions shall confirm:
  - Relevant approvals of programme, the QAB and the training institution;
  - Prior study is within 6-year currency period;
  - Minimum grade (Credit/Competent) of both the prior programme and units achieved.
  - Relevant regulatory requirements in the field of education and industry.

##### (d) Mapping and comparison

- i. Prior learning shall be mapped against target units/modules using the Course/Unit Comparability Matrix template (Refer to Annex VI, Unit/Module/Course Comparability Matrix), assessing:
  - Learning outcomes alignment (≥80%);
  - Content alignment (≥80%);
  - KNQF level equivalence;
  - Credit value and volume of learning;
  - Assessment methods.

##### (e) Decision-making

- i. Recognition decisions shall be recorded as follows:
  - CT\* for Credit Transfer.
  - EX for Exemption.
  - No recognition: Applied where comparability is <80%, prior study is incomplete, evidence is insufficient/inauthentic, other provisions of KCATS are not met, or where the relevant regulator prohibits recognition.

##### (f) Approval

- i. Decisions shall be endorsed by:

- Evaluator;
- Head of Department/Faculty of the target programme; and
- Academic Board/Senate.

**(g) Communication & Appeals**

- i. QAB shall formally communicate the decision to the learner.
- ii. An applicant and or the sending QAB reserves the right to appeal against the credit transfer or exemptions decision.
- iii. Appeals shall be evaluated by an independent committee.
- iv. An appellant or the sending QAB who is dissatisfied with the institutional appeal outcome may escalate the matter to KNQA for further review.

**(h) Credit transfers and exemptions data management**

- i. QABs shall maintain records on all applications and decisions on credit transfers and exemptions.
- ii. QABs shall periodically submit reports on recognition decisions to regulators.

## 5.5 Quality assurance of KCATS

5.5.1 Regulatory agencies, QABs, curriculum developers, industry and training institutions shall establish and implement quality assurance mechanisms for credit transfer and exemptions.

5.5.2 The regulators shall:

- a) Develop and implement mechanisms for External Quality Assurance for KCATS;
- b) Develop and implement quality assurance mechanisms to harmonise curriculum development, assessment and certification;
- c) Disseminate quality assurance reports to the institution and relevant stakeholders;
- d) Embed KCATS in their Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks;
- e) Establish mechanisms of getting feedback on credit transfer and exemptions
- f) Build capacity of implementors on KCATS, quality assurance principles, assessment and compliance.
- g) Create public awareness on KCATS.

5.5.3 The QABs, curriculum developers, assessment bodies and education and training institutions shall:

- a) Document procedures and guidelines for KCATS;
- b) Verify the authenticity of the academic certificates and transcripts before initiating KCATS;
- c) Provide regular capacity building opportunities for staff on KCATS implementation;
- d) Conduct periodic internal quality audits on KCATS implementation and disseminate audit findings;
- e) Communicate the criteria for credit allocation and transfer to learners, staff and other stakeholders;
- f) Establish mechanisms for timely feedback on credit transfer and exemptions;
- g) Establish and implement quality assurance mechanism for the qualifications awarding value chain (Refer to the KS 3048)
- h) Provide reports on implementation KCATS to the relevant regulatory body.

## 5.6 KCATS Implementation process

### 5.6.1 Governance and institutional framework

5.6.1.1 Regulatory bodies shall develop and enforce framework for implementation of KCATS.

5.6.1.2 QABs, curriculum developers, assessment bodies and education and training institutions shall:

- a) Establish and implement structures for the implementation of KCATS.
- b) Define the roles and responsibilities of staff involved in implementation of KCATS.
- c) Provide information on KCATS to learner and other relevant stakeholders.
- d) Document Credit transfer and exemptions decisions and justifications
- e) Establish and implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on implementation of KCATS

### 5.6.2 Appeals in KCATS

5.6.2.1 The learner or sending QAB shall have the right to appeal a CAT decision to the receiving QAB;

5.6.2.2 Where dissatisfied with the receiving QAB's appeal outcome, the learner or sending QAB should escalate the appeal to KNQA within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of the outcome.

5.6.2.3 QABs shall develop and implement appeal frameworks for KCATS outlining procedures and timelines for evaluation of an appeal.

5.6.2.4 The QAB shall:

- a) Provide guidelines on submission and documentation of appeals to learners and institutions;
- b) Define the criteria for evaluation of appeals
- c) Define a timeframe for acknowledging, reviewing, resolving appeals and giving feedback;
- d) Provide mechanisms for communicating appeal outcomes to applicants;
- e) Maintain records of appeals and appeal outcomes;
- f) Provide mechanisms for tracking the progress of appeal. (For application)
- g) Document and communicate the provision on escalation of an appeal to KNQA where dissatisfied with the receiving QAB's appeal outcome.

### **5.6.3 Escalation of appeals**

5.6.3.1 KNQA shall review, and determine escalated appeals.

5.6.3.2 An escalated appeal to KNQA shall be submitted in the prescribed format and be accompanied by the following supporting documentation, as applicable:

- a) QAB appeal decision letters;
- b) the full credit transfer and exemptions application dossier;
- c) programme/course curricula/syllabus outlining the learning outcomes;
- d) mapping/equivalency matrices; transcripts/statements of results;
- e) any other means of verification relied upon in the process; and
- f) certified translations where applicable.

5.6.3.3 State one or more grounds for the escalation of the appeal, including but not limited to:

- a) non-compliance with provisions of the KCATS;
- b) procedural unfairness;
- c) misaligned of equivalence/credit mapping;
- d) conflict of interest; or
- e) material new evidence not reasonably available earlier.

5.6.3.4 Receiving QABs shall provide records, mappings and any other means of verification within the prescribed timelines.

5.6.3.5 KNQA shall develop and implement mechanisms for review of escalated appeals.

5.6.3.6 KNQA shall communicate the outcome of an escalated appeal in writing.

5.6.3.7 The receiving QAB shall implement KNQA's appeal decision.

5.6.3.8 QABs and KNQA shall maintain up-to-date appeal registers.

5.6.3.9 The main stages involved in the implementation of a KCATS are depicted in Annex VIII: KCATS Process

## **5.7 Supporting documents for KCATS**

5.7.1 QABs, assessment bodies, and educations and training institutions shall:

- a) uphold the principles of transparency and accuracy in documenting and maintaining records of learner achievements;
- b) develop and implement channels for disseminating information on learners' achievements to relevant stakeholders.

### 5.7.2 Transcripts/Results slip

5.7.2.1 QAB shall issue certified transcripts or credit statements to learners, detailing:

- a) Name and registration number of the learner;
- b) Name, contact and official logo of the QAB;
- c) Name of the Qualification and Corresponding KNQF Level;
- d) Academic Year, Year of study and Semester;
- e) Educational components pursued (courses, modules, units) with credits earned, and grades/assessment results or competency decisions for each module/unit ;
- f) Description of the institutional grading system;
- g) Date of issuance of the transcript;
- h) Date of admission;

5.7.2.2 The receiving institution shall ensure units of learning awarded credit transfer or exemptions are marked using (CT\*) for credit transfers or (EX) for exemptions on the transcript.

### 5.7.3 Curriculum

5.7.3.1 Curriculum shall:

- a) Clearly state the course, minimum entry requirements, module/units and their codes, and any relevant course identifiers to assist the receiving institution match the curriculum;
- b) Provide a brief overview of the course/module, including its purpose, objectives, and learning outcomes;
- c) Provide details on assessment used to evaluate learner performance, including examinations, assignments, projects, presentations, and any other forms of evaluation.
- d) Include information about the grading criteria and grading scale used in the course;
- e) Specify the duration of the course/module, including the number of weeks, semesters/terms, or volume of learning; and,
- f) Entail information on the prerequisite knowledge or skills required for successful participation in the course or module.

## 5.8 ICT Integration in data management

5.8.2 Regulatory bodies, QABs, curriculum developers, and education and training institutions may:

- a. Utilise digital platforms and software applications to implement the credit transfer;
- b) Establish and implement data management protocols for the KCATS;
- c) Maintain information related to KCATS processes and;
- d) Build capacities of relevant stakeholders on the effective use of technology for managing credit-related data.

5.8.3 Regulatory bodies, QABs, curriculum developers, and education and training institutions shall comply with data protections standard and laws.

## 5.9 Linkages, collaborations and partnerships

5.9.1 Regulatory bodies, QABs, curriculum developers, and education and training institutions shall:

- a) Develop and implement strategies to foster linkages and collaborations amongst stakeholders to facilitate implementation of KCATS through collaboration and partnerships in curriculum development and articulation agreements;
- b) Promoting linkages and collaborations in curriculum development, assessment and certification.

## 5.10 Awareness creation and publicity

5.10.1 Regulatory bodies, QABs, curriculum developers, and education and training institutions shall create public awareness on KCATS by:

- a) Developing and implementing an awareness creation plan for KCATS;
- b) Identifying and engaging relevant stakeholders;
- c) Developing and disseminating communication materials for KCATS.

### **5.11 Capacity building**

5.11.1 Regulatory bodies, QABs, Assessment Bodies, curriculum developers, and education and training institutions shall continuously build capacities of stakeholders in KCATS through:

- a) Development and implementation of a KCATS capacity building framework and;
- b) Development and dissemination the KCATS User Manuals.
- c) Development and implementation of monitoring mechanisms for the capacity building outcomes.

### **5.12 Monitoring and quality assurance**

5.12.1 Regulators shall monitor compliance with this section through:

- a) Review of articulation frameworks during programme development and accreditation;
- b) Verification of exemptions and credit transfers integration into programmes;
- c) Audits of learner progression records, comparability matrices, and transcripts;
- d) Periodic checks that MBKs are updated and applied consistently;
- e) Confirmation that relevant staff training and capacity building have been undertaken and documented.

5.12.2 QABs, Assessment Bodies, curriculum developers, and education and training institutions shall periodically monitor processing of credit transfer and exemptions to ensure compliance with the provisions of KCATS and to support national reporting requirements.

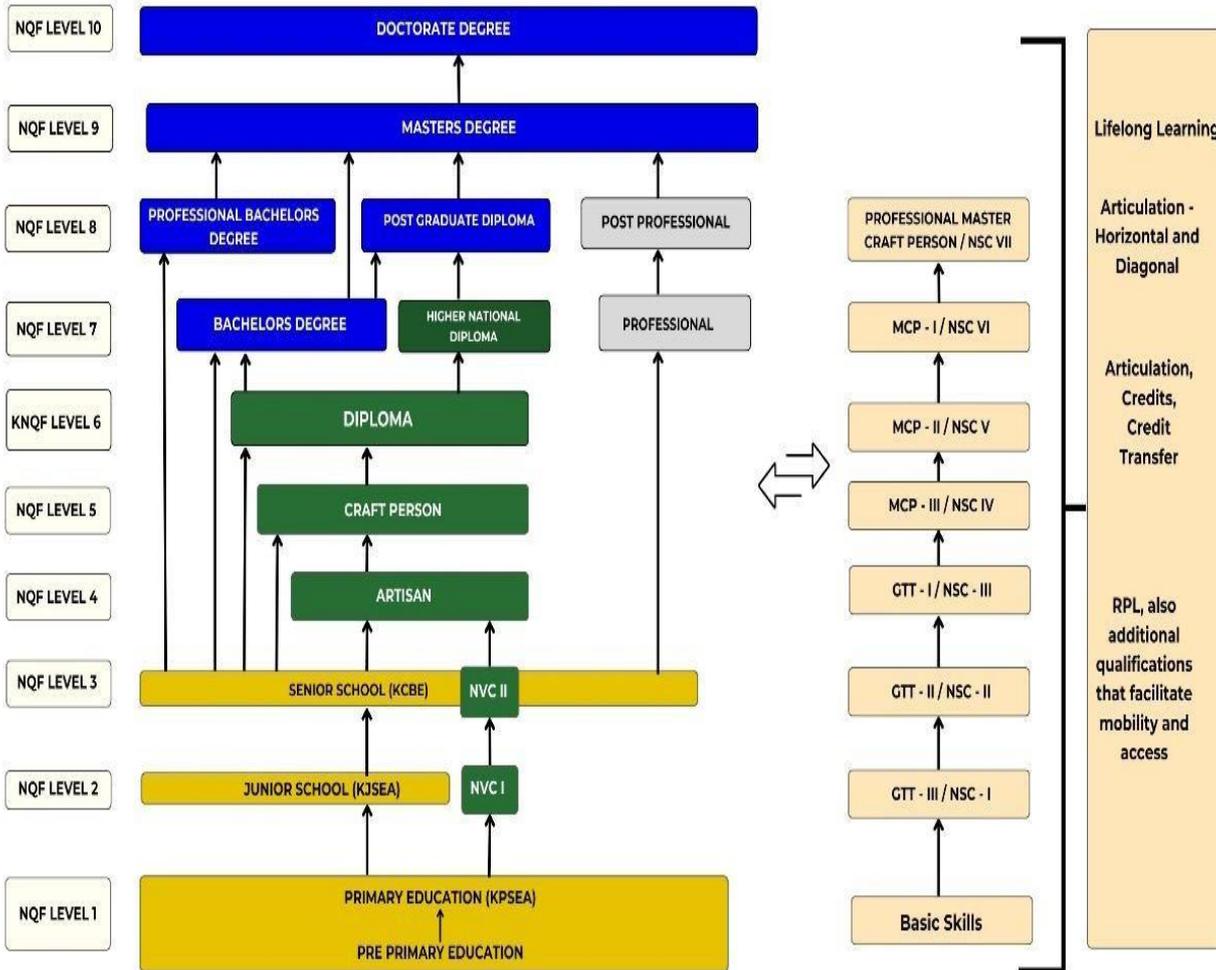
## Annex I (normative) KNQF STRUCTURE

NQF LEVELS	EDUCATION AND TRAINING SUB-FRAMEWORK		
10	Doctorate Degree		
9	Masters Degree		
8	Professional Bachelors Degree	Post Professional	Professional Master Crafts Person / NSC VII
7	Bachelors	Higher National Diploma	MCP I / NSC VI
6	Diploma		MCP II / NSC V
5	Craft Person		MCP III / NSC IV
4	Artisan		GTT I / NSC III
3	Senior School	NVC II	GTT II / NSC II
2	Junior School	NVC I	GTT III / NSC I
1	Primary Education Pre-primary education		Basic Skills



# Annex II (normative) PROGRESSION PATHWAY

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRESSION PATHWAYS IN KENYA



**MCP** - Master Crafts Person, **NVC** - National Vocational Certificate, **GTT** - Government Trade Test, **NSC** - National Skills Certificate, **KPSEA** - Kenya Primary School Education Assessment, **KJSEA** - Kenya Junior School Education Assessment, **KCBE** - Kenya Certificate of Basic Education

- Gold - Basic Education
- Green - TVET Pathway
- Beige - Industrial Training Pathway
- Blue - Academic Pathway
- Grey - Professional Training Pathway

## Annex III (normative) Volume of learning in Notional Hours

NQF LEVEL	NQF NAME	MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENT	NOTIONAL HOURS	CREDITS	DURATION
NQF Level 1	Pre-Primary	Birth Certificate	-	-	Two Years
	Primary Education	Pre-Primary			Six Years
NQF Level 2	Junior School	KPSEA	-	-	Three Years
	National Vocational Certificate I	KCPE / Level 1	-	-	Three Months
	National Skills Certificate I				
GTT III	Basic Skills				
NQF Level 3	Senior Secondary Certificate	KJSEA	-	-	Three Years
	National Vocational Certificate II	Level 2 Qualification/ KCPE(Level 1) / KCSE Mean Grade E	300 - 599	30 -59	Three Months
	GTT II				
National Skills Certificate II					
NQF Level 4	Artisan Certificate	KCBE / Level 3 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade E	600 - 1199	60 - 119	Six Months
	GTT I				
	National Skills Certificate III				
NQF Level 5	Craft Certificate	KCBE / Level 4 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade D	1200 - 2399	120 - 239	One Year
	Master Crafts Person III				
	National Skills Certificate IV				
NQF Level 6	National Diploma	KCBE / Level 5 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade C-	2400 - 3599	240 - 359	Two - Three Years
	Master Crafts Person II				
	National Skills Certificate V				
NQF Level 7	Bachelors Degree	KCBE / Level 6 Qualification / KCSE Mean Grade C+	3600 - 4800	360 - 480	Three - Four Years
	Master Crafts Person I				
	Professional				
	National Skills Certificate VI				
	Higher National Diploma	Level 6 Qualification	2400	240	Two Years
NQF Level 8	Professional Bachelors Degree	KCBE / KCSE Mean Grade C+	6000	600	Five Years
	Post Graduate Diploma	Level 7 Qualification	1200	120	One Year
	Post Professional				
	Professional Master Crafts Person				
	National Skills Certificate VII				
NQF Level 9	Masters Degree	Level 7 or 8 Qualifications	2400	240	Two Years
NQF Level 10	Doctorate Degree	Masters Degree	3600	360	Three Years

GTT - Government Trade Test, KCBE - Kenya Certificate of Basic Education, KJSEA - Kenya Junior School Education Assessment, KPSEA - Kenya Primary School Education Assessment

\* 1 Credit = 10 Notional Hours

Summary of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework Requirements

**Annex IV  
(normative)  
MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

<b>KNQF Level</b>	<b>Qualification type</b>	<b>Minimum Entry Requirements</b>
10	Doctorate Degree	Masters' degree
9	Masters' Degree	Bachelor degree with at least 360 - 480 credits in a qualification of National Qualification Framework level 7 or a level 8 qualification in relevant study area
8	Professional Bachelors' Degree	Kenya Certificate of Basic Education or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Mean Grade C+
	Post Graduate Diploma or Post Professional or Professional Master Craft Person or National Skills Certificate VII	Bachelor degree or Higher National Diploma or Professional Qualification with 360 - 480 credits in relevant subjects' area or a qualification in relevant subject area, or completion of National Qualification Framework level 7
7	Bachelors' Degree or Professional or National Skills Certificate VI (NSC VI)/ Master Craft Person I	Kenya Certificate of Basic Education, or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Mean Grade C+ equivalent, or Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education (A level) two principals and 1 subsidiary or equivalent in relevant subjects
	Higher National Diploma	National Qualification Framework level 6
6	National Diploma or National Skills Certificate V or Master Craft Person II	Kenya Certificate of Basic Education, or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Mean Grade C-, or Kenya Certificate of Education division II, or Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education one Principal, or an equivalent qualification or completion of National Qualification Framework level 5
5	Craft Certificate or National Skills Certificate IV or Master Craft Person III (MCP III)	Kenya Certificate of Basic Education, or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education D, or Kenya Certificate of Education division III, or equivalent qualifications or completion of National Qualification Framework level 4
4	Artisan Certificate or National Skills Certificate III or Government Trade Test I	Kenya Certificate of Basic Education, or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education E, or Kenya Certificate of Education division IV, or completion of National Qualification Framework level 3.
3	Senior School	Kenya Junior School Education Assessment
	National Skills Certificate II or National Vocational	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Certificate, or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education mean grade E, or completion of National Qualification Framework level 1 or 2
2	Junior School	Kenya Primary School Education Assessment
	National Skills Certificate I or National Vocational Certificate I or pre-vocational	National Qualification Framework level 1, or Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
	Government Trade Test III	Basic Skills
1	Primary Education	Pre – Primary
	Pre-primary Education or Basic Skills or Skills for Life	Birth certificate

## Annex V (normative) KNQF LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

<b>National Qualification Framework level 10</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have— (a) a substantial body of knowledge at the frontier of a field of work or learning, including knowledge that constitutes an original contribution; and (b) substantial knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to the field of work or learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) cognitive skills to demonstrate an expert understanding of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on that theory and practice; (b) cognitive skills and use of intellectual independence to think critically, evaluate existing knowledge and ideas, undertake systematic investigation and reflect on theory and practice to generate original knowledge; (c) expert technical and creative skills applicable to the field of work or learning; (d) the communication skills to explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions; (e) the communication skills to present cogently a complex investigation of originality or original research for external examination against international standards and to communicate results to peers and the community; and (f) expert skills to design, implement, analyse, theorize and communicate research that makes a significant and original contribution to knowledge or professional practice.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills — (a) for intellectual independence; (b) for initiative and creativity in new situations or for further learning; (c) for full responsibility and accountability for personal outputs; (d) to plan and execute original research; and (e) to have an ongoing capacity to generate new knowledge, including in the context of professional practice.
Minimum number of credits.	Three hundred and sixty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 9</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research and scholarship and as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have— (a) a body of knowledge that includes the understanding of recent developments in a discipline or area of professional practice; and (b) knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to a field of work or learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) cognitive skills to demonstrate mastery of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on theory and professional practice or scholarship; (b) cognitive, technical and creative skills to investigate, analyse and synthesize complex information, problems, concepts and theories and to apply established theories to different bodies of knowledge or practice; (c) cognitive, technical and creative skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract level; (d) communication and technical research skills to justify and interpret theoretical propositions, methodologies, conclusions and professional decisions to specialist and non-specialist audiences; and (e) technical and communication skills to design, evaluate, implement, analyse and theorize about developments that contribute to professional practice or scholarship.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills — (a) for creativity and initiative to new situations in professional practice or for further learning; (b) for high level personal autonomy and accountability; and (c) to plan and execute a substantial research-based project, capstone experience or piece of scholarship.

Minimum number of credits.	Two hundred and forty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 8</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply a body of knowledge in a range of contexts to undertake professional or highly skilled work and as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have advanced knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge that may include the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills in a new or existing discipline or professional area.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have — (a) cognitive skills to review, analyse, consolidate and synthesize knowledge and identify and provide solutions to complex problems; (b) cognitive skills to think critically and to generate and evaluate complex ideas; (c) specialized technical and creative skills in a field of highly skilled or professional practice; (d) communication skills to demonstrate an understanding of theoretical concepts; and (e) communication skills to transfer complex knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) to make high level, independent judgements in a range of technical or management functions in varied specialized contexts; (b) to initiate, plan, implement and evaluate broad functions within varied specialized technical or creative contexts; and (c) for responsibility and accountability for personal outputs and all aspects of the work or function of others within broad parameters.
Minimum number of credits	One hundred and twenty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 7</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply a body of knowledge in a specific context to undertake professional work and as a pathway for research and further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have coherent and advanced knowledge of the underlying principles and concepts in one or more disciplines and knowledge of research principles and methods.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have — (a) cognitive skills to review, analyse, consolidate and synthesize knowledge to identify and provide solutions to complex problems with intellectual independence; (b) cognitive and technical skills to demonstrate a broad understanding of a body of knowledge and theoretical concepts with advanced understanding in some areas; (c) cognitive skills to exercise critical thinking and judgment in developing new understanding; (d) technical skills to design and use research in a project; and (e) communication skills to present a clear and coherent exposition of knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) for initiative and judgment in professional practice or scholarship; (b) to adapt knowledge and skills in diverse contexts; (c) for responsibility and accountability for own learning and practice and in collaboration with others within broad parameters; (d) to plan and execute project work or a piece of research and scholarship with some independence.
Minimum number of credits.	Three hundred and sixty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 6</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply specialized knowledge in a range of contexts to undertake advanced skilled or paraprofessional work and as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have specialized and integrated technical and theoretical knowledge with depth within one or more fields of work and learning.

Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) cognitive and communication skills to identify, analyse, synthesize and act on information from a range of sources; (b) cognitive and communication skills to transfer knowledge and skills to others and to demonstrate understanding of specialized knowledge with depth in some areas; (c) cognitive and communication skills to formulate responses to complex problems; and (d) wide-ranging specialized technical, creative or conceptual skills to express ideas and perspectives.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) for depth in areas of specialization, in contexts subject to change; (b) for initiative and judgment in planning, design, technical or management functions with some direction; (c) to adapt a range of fundamental principles and complex techniques to known and unknown situations; and (d) across a broad range of technical or management functions with accountability for personal outputs and personal and team outcomes within broad parameters.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (e) cognitive and communication skills to identify, analyse, synthesize and act on information from a range of sources; (f) cognitive and communication skills to transfer knowledge and skills to others and to demonstrate understanding of specialized knowledge with depth in some areas; (g) cognitive and communication skills to formulate responses to complex problems; and (h) wide-ranging specialized technical, creative or conceptual skills to express ideas and perspectives.
Minimum number of credits	Two hundred and forty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 5</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply integrated technical and theoretical concepts in a broad range of contexts to undertake advanced skilled or paraprofessional work and as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have technical and theoretical knowledge and concepts, with depth in some areas within a field of work and learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) cognitive and communication skills to identify, analyse, synthesize and act on information from a range of sources; (b) cognitive, technical and communication skills to analyst, plan, design and evaluate approaches to unpredictable problems and/or management requirements; (c) specialist technical and creative skills to express ideas and perspectives; and (d) communication skills to transfer knowledge and specialized skills to others and demonstrate understanding of knowledge.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) to transfer and apply theoretical concepts, technical or creative skills in a range of situations; (b) for personal responsibility and autonomy in performing complex technical operations with responsibility for own outputs in relation to broad parameters for quantity and quality; and (c) for initiative and judgment to organize the work of self and others and plan, coordinate and evaluate the work of teams within broad but generally well-defined parameter.
Minimum number of credits.	One hundred and twenty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 4</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply a broad range of specialized knowledge and skills in varied contexts to undertake skilled work and as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have broad factual, technical and theoretical knowledge in a specialized field of work and learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) cognitive skills to identify, analyse, compare and act on information from a range of sources; (b) cognitive, technical and communication skills to apply and communicate technical; (c) solutions of a non-routine or contingency nature to a defined range of predictable and unpredictable problems; (d) specialist technical skills to complete routine and non-routine tasks and functions; and (e) communication skills to guide activities and provide technical advice in work and learning.

Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) to specialized tasks or functions in known or changing contexts; (b) for responsibility for own functions and outputs, and may have limited responsibility for organization of others; and (c) for limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others in a team within limited parameters
Minimum number of credits.	Sixty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 3</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to apply a broad range of knowledge and skills in varied contexts to undertake skilled work and as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have factual, technical, procedural and theoretical knowledge in an area of work and learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have — (a) cognitive, technical and communication skills to interpret and act on available information; (b) cognitive and communication skills to apply and communicate known solutions to a variety of predictable problems and to deal with unforeseen contingencies using known solutions; (c) technical and communication skills to provide technical information to a variety of specialist and non-specialist audiences; and (d) technical skills to undertake routine and some non-routine tasks in a range of skilled operations.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) for discretion and judgment in the selection of equipment, services or contingency measures; (b) to adapt and transfer skills and knowledge within known routines, methods, procedures and time constraints; and (c) in contexts that include taking responsibility for own outputs in work and learning including participation in teams and taking limited responsibility for the output of others within established parameters.
Minimum number of credits	Thirty credits.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 2</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to undertake mainly routine work and as a pathway
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have basic factual, technical and procedural knowledge in a defined area of work and learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) cognitive skills to access, record and act on a defined range of information from a range of sources; (b) cognitive and communication skills to apply and communicate known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems; and (c) technical skills to use a limited range of equipment to complete tasks involving known routines and procedures with a limited range of options.
Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) for some accountability for the quality of own outcomes and some responsibility for own outputs in work and learning; (b) for limited autonomy and judgment in the completion of own defined and routine tasks in known and stable contexts; and (c) for limited autonomy and judgment to complete routine but variable tasks in collaboration with others in a team environment.
<b>National Qualification Framework level 1</b>	
Purpose	The level qualifies a graduate to have basic functional knowledge and skills to undertake work, further learning and community involvement.
Knowledge	A graduate at this level should have basic fundamental knowledge and understanding in a narrow area of work and learning.
Skills	A graduate at this level should have— (a) basic skills to participate in everyday life and further learning; (b) cognitive and communication skills to receive, pass on and recall information in a narrow range of areas; and (c) (c) technical skills involving the use of tools appropriate to the activity and use of basic communication technologies.

Competence	A graduate at this level should demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills— (a) for some autonomy in defined contexts and within established parameters; and (b) communication in contexts that may include preparation for further learning, life activities or a variety of initial routine and predictable work-related activities including participation in a team or work group.
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## Annex VI (informative) UNIT/MODULE/COURSE COMPARABILITY MATRIX

**Purpose:** To systematically compare prior learning with the targeted unit/module, assessing *compatibility, comparability, and complementarity* in terms of content, level, learning outcomes, and volume of learning. Recognition is granted only where there is **at least 80% comparability** between prior and targeted learning outcomes and content.

### SECTION A: LEARNER AND APPLICATION DETAILS

Item	Details
Learner Name	
Target QAB	
Target Programme	
Target Qualification KNQF Level	
Unit/Module/Course Applied For	
Application Reference No.	

### SECTION B: PRIOR STUDIES INFORMATION

Item	Details
Name of Prior QAB	
Programme Title	
Qualification KNQF Level	
Unit/Module/Course Title	
Year Completed	
Grade/Result Attained	

### SECTION C: MAPPING AND SCORING OF LEARNING EQUIVALENCE

Criteria	Target Unit/Module/Course	Prior Unit/Module/Course	Assessor Notes	%/Score
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	List outcomes	List outcomes	Match each outcome (✓ or X)	% outcomes aligned (≥80% required)
<b>Content/Themes</b>	List key topics	List key topics	Note gaps/overlaps	% content aligned (≥80% required)
<b>Level of Study</b>	KNQF Level (e.g., 6)	KNQF Level	Equivalent / Higher / Lower	–
<b>Volume of Learning</b>	Credits / Hours	Credits / Hours	Comparable / Not comparable	–
<b>Assessment Methods</b>	Exams, projects, practicals	Exams, projects, practicals	Comparable / Not comparable	–
<b>Regulatory Requirements, Where applicable</b>	Core/non-core, regulator rule	Recognition/accreditation	Meets regulator standards?	–

**SECTION D: CALCULATION OF COMPARABILITY**Learning Outcomes Alignment: \_\_\_\_% (shall be  $\geq 80\%$ )Content Alignment: \_\_\_\_% (shall be  $\geq 80\%$ )

Final Equivalence Decision:

Meets threshold Does not meet threshold **SECTION E: RECOGNITION DECISION**

Option	Decision (Tick)	Remarks
Credit Transfer (TC*)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit value awarded: ____
Exemption (EX)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unit/Module/Course exempted, no credit value
Not Comparable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reason: <80% comparability / Level mismatch / Regulator restriction

**SECTION F: APPROVAL AND ENDORSEMENT**

Role	Name & Signature	Date
Assessor (Academic Unit)		
Head of Department/Faculty		
Academic Board/Senate Approval		

## **Annex VII (normative) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KCATS STAKEHOLDERS**

The roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders are as given below:

### **a) Ministry of Education (MoE)**

- i. Development and review of the National Policy Framework for KCATS;
- ii. Oversight the implementation of the National Policy Framework for KCATS;
- iii. Foster linkages, collaborations, and partnerships among KCATS stakeholders;
- iv. Provide a financing mechanism for successful implementation of KCATS; and
- v. Ensure integration of the KCATS Management Information System into the existing National Qualifications Database.

### **b) Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA)**

- i. Coordinate development, review and implementation of the KCATS;
- ii. Develop and implement KCATS Monitoring & Evaluation framework;
- iii. Conduct capacity building and awareness creation on KNQF and KCATS;
- iv. Undertake research on implementation of KCATS;
- v. Mobilize resources for KCATS development and implementation;
- vi. Establish and maintain the National Qualifications Database to facilitate implementation of KCATS;
- vii. Develop a framework for fostering linkages, collaborations, and partnerships within the KCATS; and;  
Convene summits on KCATS.

### **c) Sub- Sector Regulatory Bodies**

- i. Check Compliance and enforce implementation of KCATS;
- ii. Assure quality implementation of the KCATS within their subsector;
- iii. Institutionalize the National Policy Framework for KCATS into their standards and programme placement criteria;
- iv. Sensitize and capacity-build their respective stakeholders on KCATS;
- v. Mobilize resources for KCATS implementation;
- vi. Recognize and ensure that accredited programmes provide for clear articulation, flexible learning pathways through the KCATS and support lifelong learning; and
- vii. Accredite programmes in line with KNQF standards and principles of KCATS.

### **d) Professional Bodies**

- i. Institutionalise the KCATS; and
- ii. Advocate for KCATS.

### **e) Curriculum Developer and Qualification Awarding Bodies (QABs)**

- i. Institutionalize KCATS;
- ii. Implement National Policy Framework and Standard for KCATS;
- iii. Submit the required documentation and information to the receiving institution, as prescribed by the KCATS Standards and Guidelines, to ensure effective evaluation of the prior learning outcomes;
- iv. Collect, retain and provide KCATS data;
- v. Align curriculum development with provisions of KNQF;
- vi. Create awareness on institutional credit transfer system;
- vii. Authenticate qualifications or part qualifications on a need basis to facilitate credit transfers and exemptions;
- viii. Mobilize resources for KCATS implementation;
  - ix. Integrate the KCATS into their admission criteria: and

- x. Incorporate the principles and objectives of the KCATS into curriculum development and design processes.

**f) Education and Training Institutions**

- i. Collect, retain and provide KCATS data;
- ii. Submit the required documentation and information to the receiving institution, as prescribed by the KCATS Standards and Guidelines, to ensure effective evaluation of the prior learning outcomes;
- iii. Create awareness on institutional credit transfer system; and
- iv. Integrate KCATS into their admission process and policy.

**j) Industry**

- i. Develop occupational standards; and
- ii. Incorporate the KCATS into institutional frameworks.

**k) Learners' Placement Bodies**

- i. Institutionalize and implement the KCATS in learner placement procedures; and
- iii. Provide guidance and support to learners on the KCATS.

**l) Learners**

- i. Initiate the request for credit transfers in line with the KCATS and any other relevant guidelines; and,
- ii. Maintain their records, portfolio of evidence and transcripts.

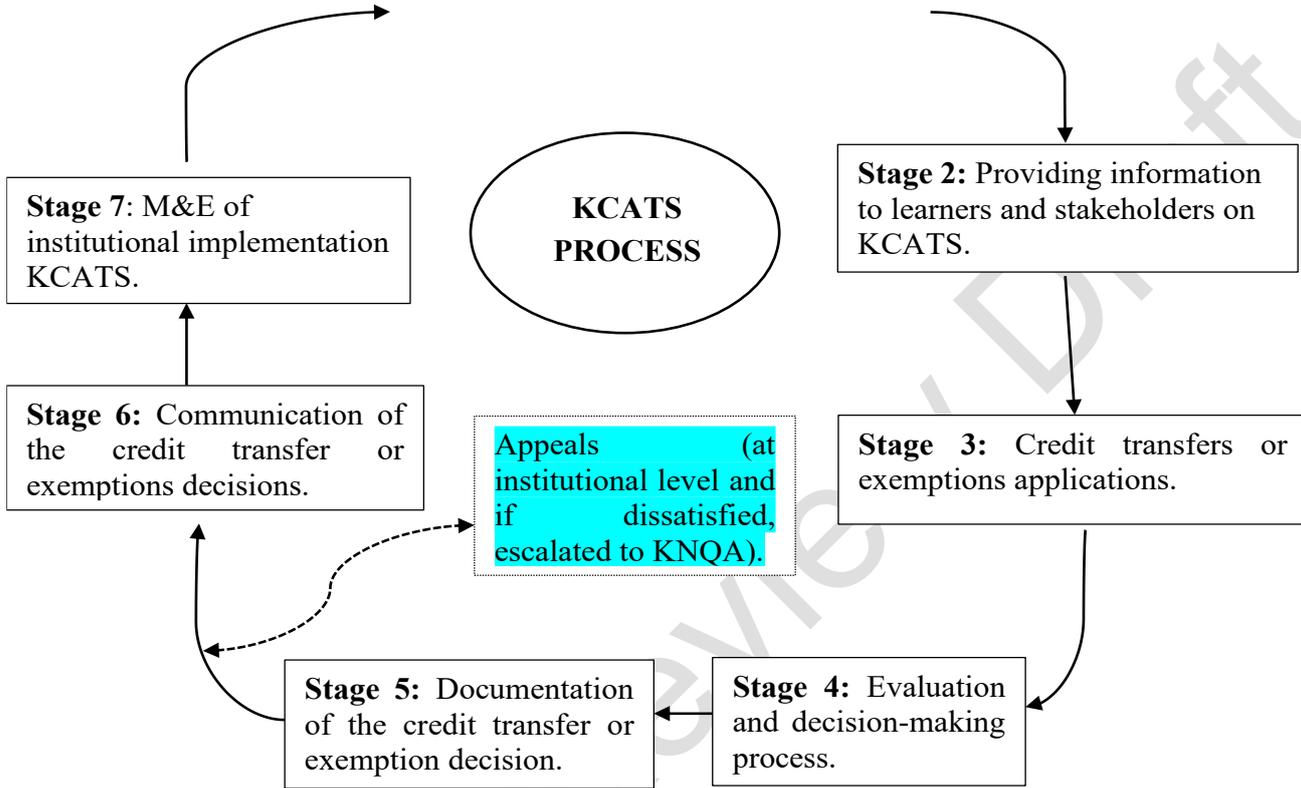
**m) Development Partners**

- i. Support in mobilization of resources for development, implementation and review of KCATS; and
- ii. Provide technical support in development, implementation and review of KCATS.

**n) Media**

Create awareness and publicity on KCATS

**Annex VIII  
(normative)  
KCATS PROCESS FLOW**



**Diagram I: KCATS PROCESS FLOW**

## Bibliography

- [1] ISO #####-#, *General title — Part #: Title of part*
- [2] ISO #####-##:20##, *General title — Part ##: Title of part*

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