



KENYA NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

CONFERENCE CONCEPT NOTE ON THE INAUGURAL NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS CONFERENCE

12TH TO 14TH May 2026 | Nairobi, Kenya

Brief outline of the National Qualifications Conference – Kenya, 2026

Conference Theme:	A Decade of Transformation and Reimagining Qualifications in Kenya: Advancing Quality, Relevance, Inclusion and Recognition in Kenya's Qualifications and Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employability
Methodology:	In-person— Nairobi
Proposed Dates:	12 th to 14 th May 2026
Venue:	Nairobi

1.0 Background

Across the globe, National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) are recognised as powerful tools for strengthening the quality, relevance, and comparability of qualifications. A centralised NQF defines the standards a qualification must meet to be considered credible, ensuring alignment with national development goals and international benchmarks.

The KNQF is maintained within the Kenya National Qualifications Authority and its governance is anchored in a coordinated system of sub-frameworks, each quality assured by regulatory bodies responsible for upholding standards within their respective education and training sub-frameworks. This structure ensures that qualifications developed and awarded across basic, technical, higher, professional, and industrial training are coherent, comparable and aligned to the National Qualifications Framework.

The Framework serves as a key instrument for promoting skills development, lifelong learning recognition of prior learning, and labour market relevance. As Kenya transitions toward a more skills-oriented economy, there is an urgent need to translate the KNQF into tangible outcomes that benefit learners, workers, and employers. It is through this view that the Authority is organising a Conference, to shape dialogues on translating skills into recognisable qualifications, exploring how the KNQF should drive meaningful change in qualifications landscape, skills development, recognition and lifelong learning for all Kenyans.

Therefore, the purpose of this concept note is to outline the structure of the Conference proposed to take place on 12th to 14th May, 2026 in Nairobi Kenya. This inaugural Conference is envisioned to set the precedence to a prestigious event that will be taking place on annual basis.

2.0 Rationale of the Conference

Over a decade of its implementation in the Country, the KNQF has come of age. The Framework has evolved and traversed the various phases of its development, institutionalization, and implementation, generating critical insights into its strengths, gaps and opportunities. This milestone presents an opportune moment to take stock of progress and to engage in a reflective and evidence-based dialogue on the Framework's functionality and impact. The proposed Conference thus provides a timely platform to hear directly from both the implementers and beneficiaries of the KNQF, those who apply and experience the Framework in practice. Through these shared perspectives, the Conference aims to distil lessons learned and co—create with stakeholder's actionable strategies to strengthen the KNQA's effectiveness in advancing skills development and lifelong learning in Kenya.

3.0 Objectives of the Conference

To strengthen Kenya's Qualifications landscape for enhanced quality, recognition, access and relevance.

3.1 Specific Objectives

- a) To promote a coherent, credible and robust qualifications landscape through reflection on progress, achievements, and lessons learnt over the past decade;
- b) To enhance national and regional recognition and mobility of qualifications through dialogue on comparability and mutual recognition;
- c) To strengthen partnerships and coordination among stakeholders for a more integrated and efficient qualifications system.
- d) To expand flexible and inclusive access to learning and qualifications through RPL, KCATS, UNESCO Qualifications Passport (UQP), modularisation, and micro-credentials; and
- e) To align qualifications and skills development with labour market demand and national development priorities.

4.0 Thematic Overview and Choice of Themes

The proposed Conference is anchored on the structure and the functional pillars of the KNQF, which provides an integrated system for the overall quality assurance of qualifications across all levels in the qualifications landscape. The thematic focus seeks to translate policy into action by examining how the KNQF can effectively strengthen skills development and lifelong learning within an evolving qualification and the labour market landscape.

The Conference will therefore be organised around key themes and sub-themes that mirror the qualifications awarding system and the KNQF while incorporating emerging global and national development priorities.

Main Theme: A Decade of Transformation and Reimagining Qualifications in Kenya: Advancing Quality, Relevance, Inclusion and Recognition in Kenya's Qualifications and Skills for Lifelong Learning and Employability

Conference Themes and Sub-themes

S/No.	Sub-Themes	Conference Sub Themes
1	KNQF Implementation – Governance, policy and practice	<p>a) KNQF architecture and strengthening a well-governed and globally aligned KNQF that supports attainment of SDG 4, mutual recognition, and a clear vision for the next decade</p> <p>b) Partnership, collaboration and coordination of implementation of in the KNQF</p> <p>c) The KNQF as a tool for Inclusivity: Integrating informal and non-formal learning</p>
2	Industry Linkages, Employability, and Skills Development	<p>a) Matching the demand and supply of skills</p> <p>b) Labour market intelligence and its role in shaping qualifications</p> <p>c) Shaping the future of qualifications through Competency-based education</p> <p>d) Role of Research, Innovation in Qualifications Awarding landscape</p> <p>e) Employer Perspectives: The Value of a KNQF-Aligned Qualifications</p> <p>f) The KNQF and Labour Migration: Facilitating Mobility for skilled Kenyan professionals</p>
3	Lifelong Learning Pathways and Recognition of Qualifications	<p>a) Flexible qualifications' pathways through KCATS, RPL, Micro credentials, UQP and Modularisation of curriculum</p> <p>b) Facilitating progression and portability of learners within and across sectors</p> <p>c) International comparability and mutual recognition of qualifications</p>
4	Emerging trends in the qualifications awarding system	<p>a) Digitalisation, Innovation, and the Future of Qualifications</p> <p>b) Integrating Qualifications MIS with the National Database, LMIS, E-learning, e-assessment</p> <p>c) Greening the Qualifications Framework</p> <p>d) Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Quality, Relevance and Global Competitiveness</p> <p>e) Building a Skilled Workforce for the Blue Economy</p>

S/No.	Sub-Themes	Conference Sub Themes
5	Digital Transformation, Data Systems, and the National Qualifications Register	a) Digital credentials, badges, e-certificates, and blockchain in qualification verification b) Digitalising qualification records for efficiency, transparency, and portability
6	Quality Assurance and Relevance	a) Standardisation and harmonisation of Qualifications Across all Sub-Frameworks/Sectors b) QA through Internal and External Quality Assurance. c) Stakeholder Engagement, Labour Market Alignment, and Continuous System Improvement for relevance d) Quality Assurance in RPL Processes and Assessment Standards

5.0 Expected Conference Outcomes

Overall, the outcomes from the Conference are expected as follows:

- a) Insights for enhancing the Qualifications landscape;
- b) Strengthened collaboration among actors in the Qualifications landscape;
- c) Enhanced recognition, mobility of qualifications and attainment of lifelong learning;
- d) KNQF positioned as a strategic tool for strengthening skills, lifelong learning, and employability;
- e) Built trust, stakeholder buy-in, and ownership of Kenyan qualifications.

6.0 Conference Organisation and Structure

The Conference will last for two and a half days. Events will include:

- a) Keynote speeches
- b) Panel Discussions
- c) Sessions in a range of formats to encourage broad participation
- d) Rapid fire Presentation sessions of latest research in the Qualifications landscape
- e) Poster displays and presentations during breaks
- f) Expo with booths
- g) Networking opportunities

6.1 Targeted Participants

The Conference will bring together representatives from:

1. Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies;
2. Qualifications Awarding Bodies and Education and Training Institutions
3. Quality Assurance and Regulatory Bodies
4. Industry, Employers and Private Sector
5. Professional Bodies and Associations
6. Education Funding Agencies
7. Development Partners and International Organisations
8. Researchers, Academics and Policy Experts
9. Trade Unions and Associations
10. Learners, Civil Society and Faith Based Educations related to Education and Training

6.2 Conference Output

Outputs from the Conference shall include:

- a) Book of Abstracts,
- b) Conference Report,
- c) Conference Video Footage and Pictorials, and
- d) Post Conference Newsletter

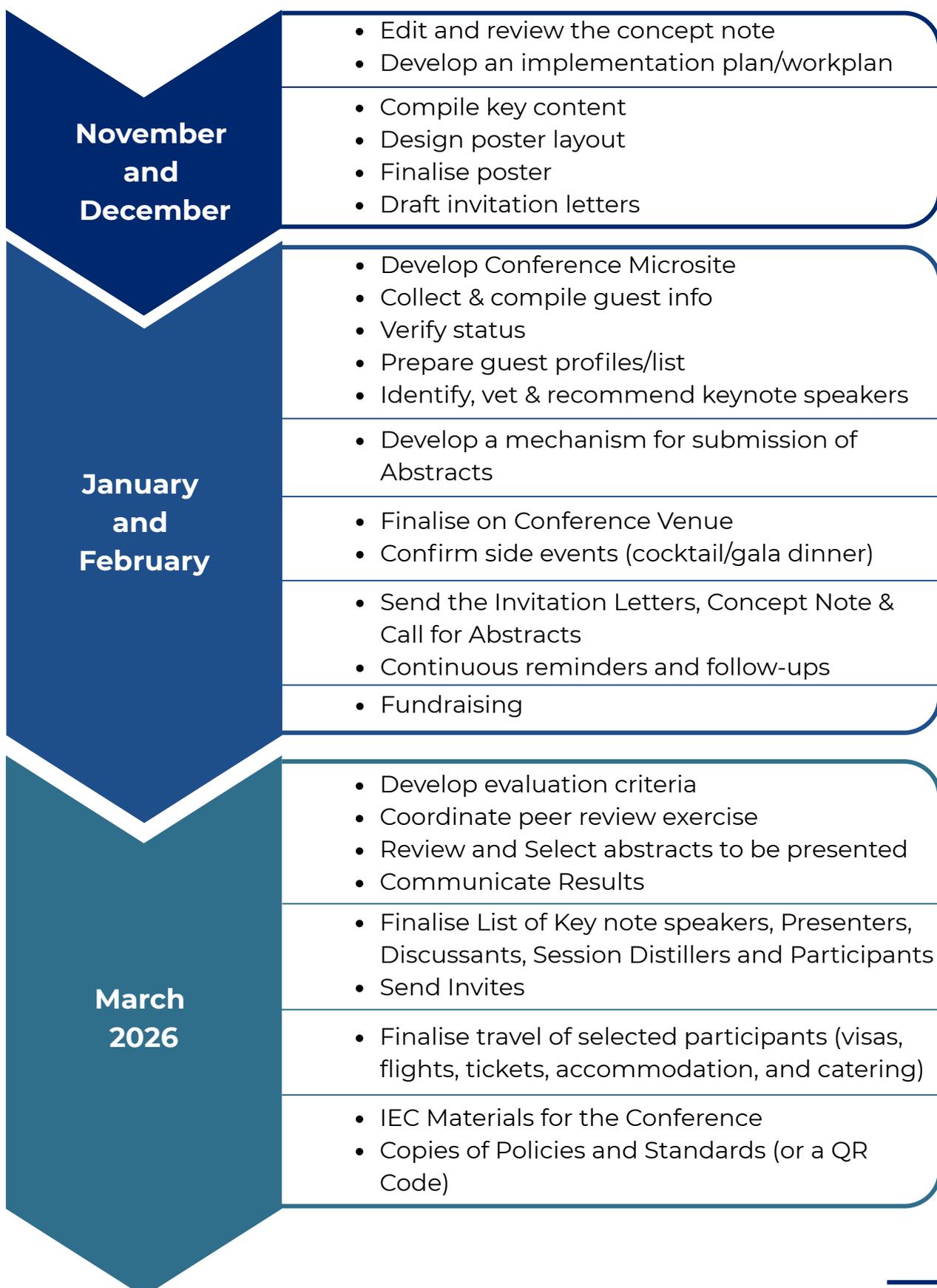
6.3 Conference Sponsorship

Sponsorship for the National Qualifications Conference shall be sought at multiple levels to support the successful delivery of the event and enhance stakeholder engagement. The sponsorship framework offers visibility, partnership opportunities, and recognition to institutions that share the vision of advancing skills development, quality assurance, and lifelong learning through the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF). Potential Funding Sources include:

- o **Government support:**
- o **Development partners:**
- o **Delegate registration fees**
- o **In-kind contributions**

6.4 Tentative Roadmap for the National Qualifications Conference

Table IV outlines the roadmap that shall guide the planning and execution of the National Qualifications Conference



**April
2026**

- Compile Accepted Content and Session Inputs
 - Design Session Structure and Scheduling
 - Draft and Refine the Technical Programme
- Entertainment on Opening Day and During Sessions
 - Ensure that the conference programme aligns with key priorities
 - Facilitate communication and coordination between presenters, reviewers, and session chair
 - Review and approve final presentations and ensure all sessions are coherent and technically sound

**May
2026**

- Conference takes Place (Share Session recordings, Videography and Photography, Thank you notes to session pannellists, sponsors, partners, speakers)
- Prepare key take aways, post conference survey and final conference report
- Compile & package conference materials
- Develop Dissemination Materials
- Disseminate Conference Participation Certificate
- Finalise conference expenses, payments to vendors, budget reconciliation

6.5 Conclusion

The Inaugural National Qualifications Conference represents a strategic national investment in Kenya's qualifications landscape and human capital development agenda. KNQA invites partner institutions to support and participate in this landmark event, contributing to a stronger, coherent, and future-ready qualifications and skills system.