NATIONAL BOARD FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Plot B, Bida Road, P. M. B. 2239, Kaduna

GUIDELINES AND STRUCTURE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (SDC) IN THE POLYTECHNICS

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INTRODUCTION

The perennial impact of poverty in Nigeria, especially among the youths is worrisome considering the high rate of unemployment which stem from lack of saleable skills that can guarantee the employability of the youths.

Many attempts have been made by both public institutions and private organizations towards reduction of unemployment rate by establishing skills development centres offering training in various occupational areas.

Despite these efforts these centres are confronted with numerous challenges that hamper their growth and progress. Among such challenges are the lack of nationally recognized occupational standards for unified training and assessment that can lead to award of national certification. Consequently, the contributions of these skills centres are yet to be felt significantly, not because skills acquisition is not taking place but because the recognition and certification of the skills acquired by the trainees could not be ascertained.

The Nigerian Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) is a system for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge, understanding and competencies acquired by individuals, irrespective of where and how the training or skill was acquired. Spearheaded by NBTE, the NSQF is the surest way of recognizing the competence level of trainees after acquiring the skills in their occupational areas.

The polytechnics are institutions with potentials to re-orient their training towards the National Skills Qualification award for both formal and informal candidates. Ironically, over the years the emphasis in our polytechnics is the technical 'T' aspect thus neglecting the vocational 'V' aspect of TVET. In its efforts to entrench the vocational training in the polytechnics, NBTE mandated all polytechnics to establish Skills Development Centres (SDCs) in their domain for the purpose of adopting the NSQ training. This will allow the polytechnics to open their doors for training of the informal sector, hence offering dual awards of National Diplomas and National Skills Qualifications (NSQ).

In order to harmonize the training delivery and assessment of trainees across Centres, minimum guidelines and structure of the Skills Development Centres to be adopted in the Polytechnics have been developed.

1. **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1.1 Purpose/Objectives of the Centre:
The purpose and objectives of Skills Development Centre (SDC) shall be clearly stated to keep both staff and trainees constantly reminded of the Centre's mission in the community and the country at large.   The statement shall provide guidance and direction for evolving the National Occupational Standards and other policies of the Centre.

1.2 Purpose of the Centre:
The main purpose of the Skills Development Centre (SDC) in the Polytechnic is to create opportunity for the institution and strengthen its capacity to offer dual training for formal and informal candidates towards achieving the national certification of the National Skills Qualifications (NSQ).

The objectives include:

1. To establish pathways and progression from the informal training offered to formal programme.
2. To narrow the skills gap that exist between what the skilled personnel know and can do and the requirements of the industry.
3. To recognise the competence level of skilled personnel by assessing skills, knowledge, and attitude.
4. To provide opportunities for the training of candidates from the informal sectors in the polytechnic environment towards formal certification of NSQ leading to enhanced capacity of the informal sector.
5. Provide opportunity for the Polytechnic to offer dual qualifications of NDs and NSQs.
6. To increase the enrolment figure for the Polytechnic (formal and informal) to pursue NSQ leading to rise in IGR.
7. To contribute to the reduction of unemployment due to skills gap in the immediate community and the nation.
8. To engage youths meaningfully to reduce restiveness and insecurity

1.3 Training Guide (National Occupational Standards):
For training towards achieving the NSQ, the Centre must adopt the National Occupational Standards (NOS) in its training for the various occupational areas it intends to offer. The standards, to be produced by the Sector Skill Council (SSC) and approved by NBTE must be available to the centre for the guide of the instructors, quality assurance managers as

well as the trainees. New occupational standards on relevant trade areas shall be developed according to demands by the industry and the economy.

The NOS are statements of performance or competence an individual must demonstrate when carrying out job functions in the workplace, together with specifications of the underpinning knowledge and understanding.

1.4   *Entry Requirements:*
There shall be clearly stated the Centre policies on the entry requirements and the target groups. The entry age limit is 12 years. There are no minimum academic entry criteria for enrolment into the NSQ programme. However, the following skills and attributes will serve as guide:
- Self-motivation to succeed within the industry
- Self-discipline and enthusiasm
- Ability to demonstrate the potential to complete the qualifications
- Willingness to learn and apply in the workplace
- Willingness to work with due regard to health and safety of self and others, etc.

1.5   *Target Groups:*
The Polytechnic shall target its immediate community, especially the informal sector. Thus, the target group for the NSQs are available to adults and young people alike including the existing students of the Polytechnic:
- Persons studying at Colleges/Polytechnics and have a part-time job or access to a work placement.
- Adults who wish to acquire skills or re-skill for life-long learning.
- Apprentice seeking for opportunity to re-skill and get certified.
- Unemployed school leavers wishing to acquire demonstrable practical competencies and get certified.
- Persons wishing to go into self-employment.
- Educated adults seeking for opportunity to re-skill or improve their competency
- Retired personnel who wish to acquire skills for life-long learning.

2.0   MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE

The Centre shall have in place an effective management structure, consisting of a Central Administration, Management Team, Centre-Based Training Committee and Sector Coordinators.

2.1   Centre Administration

The Centre shall have a Director or Centre Manager/Coordinator or both who will be the chief administrative and training officer. The Director or Centre Manager/Coordinator shall have power to exercise general authority over the staff and trainees on all issues relating to discipline and training matters. He should have relevant academic qualifications in addition to competency-based qualifications in at least one of the occupational trade areas offered at the Centre. He should also have versatile experiences in the industry/workplace and technical education in general and be a quality assurance manager (QAM) – QAA, IQAM or EQAM. The Director or Centre Manager/Coordinator is answerable to the Rector of the Polytechnic.

2.2   Management Team

The Management Team shall be constituted from among the principal officers of the Centre who shall assist the head of the centre in the day-to-day activities. They include:

1. Director, or
2. Centre Manager/Coordinator
3. Industry/Workplace Placement officer
4. Sector Coordinators
5. Finance officer
6. Internal Quality Assurance Manager (IQAM)
7. Centre Admin. officer
8. ICT Officer
9. Marketing Officer
10.   Public Relation Officer

2.3   Centre-Based Training Committee (CBTC)

The Centre shall have a Training Committee with the following members:
1. Director, or
2. Centre Manager/Coordinator
3. Sector Coordinators
4. Placement officer
5. Quality Assurance Assessor (QAA)
6. Internal Quality Assurance Manager (IQAM)

The Centre-Based Training Committee shall be responsible for:
   a. the direction and management of academic matters of the Centre including the regulation of enrolment of trainees, the conduct of
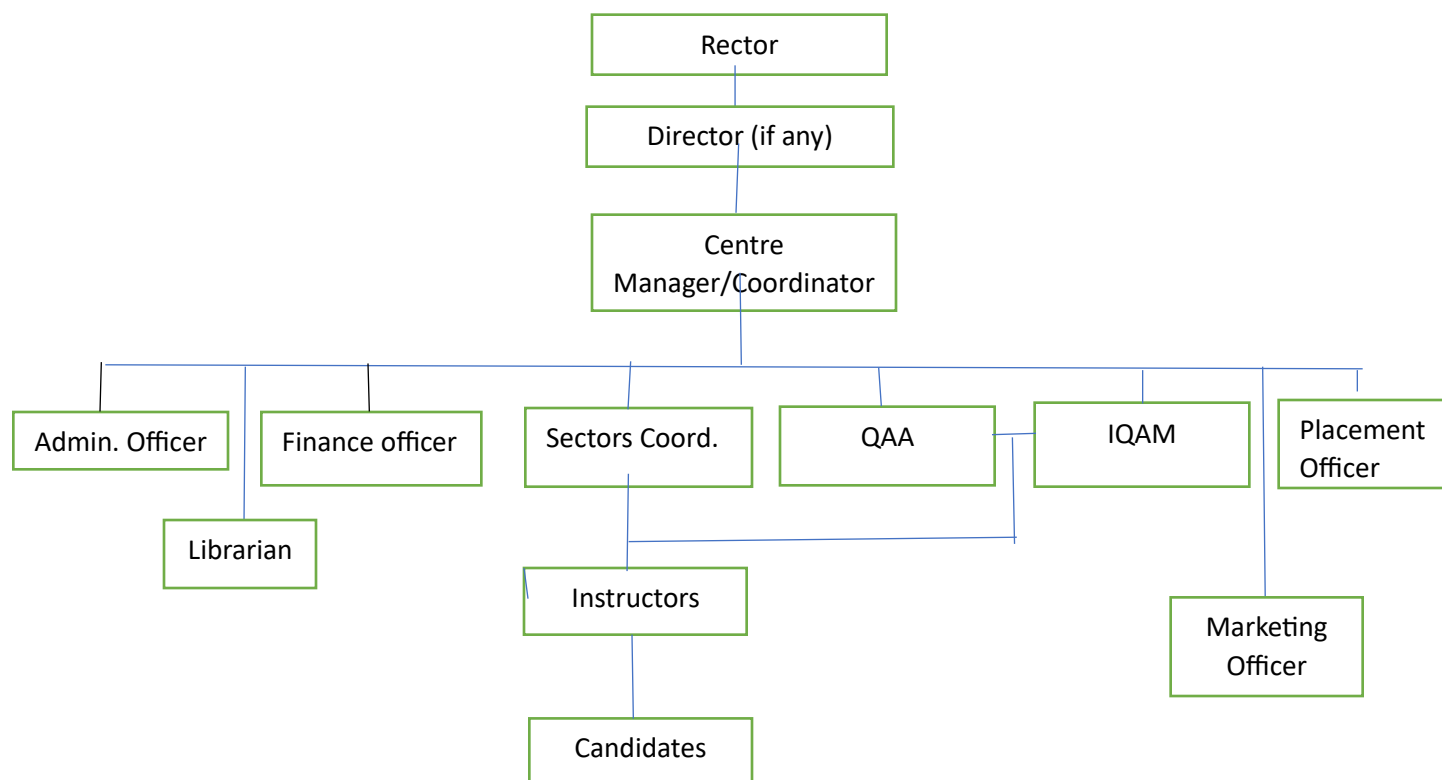
assessment and facilitate the award of certificates by Awarding Bodies.

b. presenting to the Rector such periodic reports on such matters relating to training and assessment as the Rector may think fit and from time-to-time direct.

c. the discharge of any other function which the Rector may delegate to committee.

2.4 *Sector Coordinators*

1. In the Skill Development Centre (SDC), the direct management of the trades shall rest on heads of coordinating sector according to sectors of occupational areas. They are like the Heads of Departments in the conventional settings.

2. There shall be a coordinator for each sector of the occupational areas, e.g., Building Construction, Power Sector, Engineering Services, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism, etc.

3. Instructors in each occupational area of the sector shall be answerable to the Sector Coordinator.

ORGANOGRAM OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Rector

Director (if any)

Centre Manager/Coordinator

Admin. Officer

Finance officer

Sectors Coord.

QAA

IQAM

Placement Officer

Librarian

Instructors

Marketing Officer

Candidates

2.5   Roles and Responsibilities:

2.5.1 Director/ Centre Manager/Coordinator:

A Director or manager of a centre is a specialist in developing, facilitating, and supervising training programmes for trainees aspiring to obtain the NSQ certificate. He assesses the needs of the Centre, implement training and development plans, and facilitate a wide variety of training programs that enhance the effectiveness of the centre. Some key roles include:

a. General administration of the Centre.
b. Will be responsible for the management of the Centre's development and delivery of services.
c. Advise and prepare regular reports to the Rector
d. Liaise with the Rector in accordance with agreed regulations.
e. Work with the Centre-Based Training Committee to plan, develop, and monitor the total skills delivery in the Skills Acquisition Centre to ensure the maximum utilization of resources, including staffing resources, physical resources, etc.
f. Develop a strategic development plan for the provision of skills delivery services to be approved by the CBTC.
g. Work with CBTC, centre staff to identify, develop and plan training needs in accordance with socioeconomic needs of the immediate community where the Polytechnic is located.
h. Work with CBTC staff to implement the quality assurance mechanism for the delivery of skills delivery services.
i. Demonstrate strong management and leadership skills to staff and learners
j. Identify staff development needs
k. Have industry specific experience and knowledge
l. Have experience of developing and effectively delivering and assessing learner workplace learning/apprenticeships
m. Be a qualified and experienced lecturer/assessor.

2.5.2 Placement Officer:

o Finding placement opportunities for trainees for their assessment.
o Identify and develop relationships with appropriate work places.
o Ensure that a learner has attained the assessment requirements prior to attendance at the work placement.
o Ensure that trainees become familiar with their responsibilities on work placement, including health and safety.

- Prepare relevant work placement/assessment documentation and maintain appropriate records on every student.
- Develop industrial links through the establishment of partnerships.
- Facilitate the signing of the MoU with the partners
- Act as an ambassador for the Centre.
- Fostering relationships with local placement providers.
- Negotiating terms of placements with providers
- Keep records of graduates and monitor their performance after the training

2.6 Qualifications of Centre Staff

SN	Designation	Qualifications	Experience	Remarks
1.	Director	Relevant qualification in any occupational area, or Competency-Based qualification Certificate in Management (added advantage)	1.10 – 15 years' experience. 2.industrial/workplace experience	
2	Centre Manager/Coordinator	Relevant qualification in relevant occupational area, or Competency-Based qualification At least Unit 1 of QAA (added advantage)	1. 5 -10 years' experience 2.Industrial/workplace experience	
3	Placement Officer	ND in Relevant Qualification	Experience in public relation and networking with industry and stakeholders	
4	Sector Coordinators	1.HND or equivalent in own occupational area. 2.Competency-Based qualification 3.QAA/IQAM (optional) 4.Ability to multitask 5.Ability to work with minimal supervision	Preferably 3 years of experience working in the industry or workplace or self-employed Experience in workshop management in institutions	
5.	Instructors/Facilitators /Trainers	1.ND/HND in relevant occupational area 2. ANTC in relevant area	Experience in working with workplace. Self-employed	Can be outsourced from

		2.NSQ in relevant occupational area 3.Highly skillful in own area of occupation.		industry/work place. Experienced MCPs may be engaged
6.	ICT Personnel	1.ND, Computer science (Microsoft Certification)	Experience in data entry & management	

3.0 GENERAL RESOURCES FOR THE CENTRE:

The resources required for imparting knowledge and skills in the centre may be broadly divided into the following categories:

1. physical facilities which include the site, accommodation for lecture rooms, offices, workshops, and studios.
2. tools and equipment for the workshops, studios, etc.
3. human resources; and
4. financial resources.

The requirements for each resource are explained below.

3.1   Physical facilities:
The SDC shall have some physical facilities for the delivery of skills and knowledge. These include: the workshops, studios, lecture rooms and offices.

3.1.1 Workshop:

The availability of good workshop facilities is crucial to the success of skills training offered by any SDC. The layout design of the workshop may be an integrated type like the Introtech workshop where many practical activities take place for more than one occupational area. The workshop shall consist of a store, an office for the supervisor and an open class with marker board for demonstration. The workshop shall be large enough with a capacity to accommodate between 15 – 20 trainees at a time during practical lessons for each occupational area.

Requirements of the Workshop:
a. Well-lit and ventilated, where necessary, with AC and ceiling fans.
b. exhibits good housekeeping with clean floor free from oil, dirt and non-slippery;
c. have in addition to adequate working space, the following:
   - a tool store, fitted with racks and storage cabinets
   - storage space for training materials, etc.
   - project storage and display room.

d. office space for the supervisor.
e. adequate and regular power supply to facilitate continuous use of the various equipment/machines.
f. adequate workshop equipment/tools for the occupational areas to be taught.
g. An open class with marker board for demonstration by the side of the workshop.
h. have toilet facilities.

The SDC in the Polytechnics should leverage the use of existing workshops in the departments offering relevant occupational areas for the Centre.

3.1.2 Lesson rooms:

There shall be a lesson room that can accommodate, at least, 40 trainees at a time for theory lesson. The lesson room shall be well lit and ventilated with writing tables and chairs for each trainee and a marker board. The purpose of the lesson room was to teach the learner some basic and foundational skills in line with the occupational areas. The state of condition of the lesson room should be comfortable for teaching and learning equipped with Air Conditioning and well illuminated.

The lesson room should be dedicated for the SDC and well furnished and comfortable.

3.1.3 Administrative offices:

A block of office accommodation to house the principal officers and instructors shall be available for the Centre. The offices should be adequately furnished with executive chairs and tables, cabinet for keeping trainees confidential documents. It should also be well-lit and ventilated. Existing offices in the Polytechnic can form part of the office accommodation for the Centre.

3.1.4 Record room:

This is a strong room where all documents pertaining to the trainees, like the assessment portfolio, centre documents, etc. are kept. It should always be under lock accessible only to authorized persons.

3.1.5 Library:

A good and functional library should be available as the main resource centre in the Centre. There should also be an e-library for the Centre.

However, suffice for the Centre to use the main Polytechnic Library, ensuring that relevant materials for the Centre are made available.

3.2   Equipment/Tools:

These include hand and machine tools and instruments which are required for practical exercises in the workshops. The existing equipment and tools in the workshops of various related departments in the polytechnics can serve for the occupational areas in the SDC. The Centre should therefore, put emphasis in the provision of such machines that can aid the real skills acquisition like simulators for different occupational areas which may not be available in the main departmental workshop of the polytechnic. Each Centre should, also acquire at least two KYAN Projecting machines for practical demonstration in various occupational areas. Similarly, consumable materials should be made adequate for all the occupational areas during practical lessons.

3.3   Human Resources:

In addition to the principal officers mentioned in Section 2.0, the SDC shall have the following categories of staff

i.   The Sector Coordinators:
     They will be under the direct supervision of the Centre Director or Manager. The Sector Coordinators' role will be similar to that of Head of department in a conventional school setting. He should be versatile in the trade areas that are intended to be run by the Centre, with relevant qualifications and experiences.

ii. Trade facilitator/instructor:
     This is a specialist with relevant qualifications and experiences. Outside practitioners with relevant skills and competencies can be engaged to serve as instructors or facilitators. However, they should demonstrate competences in their occupational areas with at least 5-10 years of practical experience or hold relevant National Skills Qualifications (NSQ).

iii. Artisans, Craftsmen and Technicians:
     These are the technical support staff of the Centre. They serve as guide, attendants and manage machines, tools and other workshop/laboratory equipment. Those possessing the pre-requisite qualifications (ND/NID and above) may be trained as assessors and/or verifiers in the NSQF.

iv. Administrative support staff of the Centre:
     These are the secretary, clerks and other support staff such as cleaners and watchmen. The administrative clerk and the secretary report

directly to the centre Director/Manager and often maintain records and communication in the Centre. These staff can be seconded by the polytechnic.

3.4   Financial Resources:

This is critical to the establishment, operation, and survival of any skill acquisition centre. There shall be adequate financial support for the Centre. These should include adequate funds for personnel cost, the purchase of training materials and maintenance of training facilities.

After providing funds for the establishment of these centres, an intervention should consolidate on this giant stride and make available seed funds to enable the centres float and spin-out small businesses from their operations, in order to provide sustainable training environment.

The Centre may charge reasonable fees to compliment the institutions funding. Fees and charges from the trainees are vital in the day-to-day operation of the Centre. Similarly, the Centre can go into partnership with local business community in the funding and marketing of its products/services.

On all the above funding sources, it is advisable that the centre enjoys a degree of financial autonomy. Absolute autonomy is not feasible, as the centre derives its being from the existence of the polytechnic. However, the lines of authority should be minimal while the Centre maintains its own account though under the supervision of the Rector/CEO.

4.0   CENTRE RECOGNITION/APPROVAL:

4.1   Requirements to Operate Skills Development Centre (SDC) for NSQ Training:

The Centre was established to train and assess the trainees towards achieving the NSQ in the interested occupational areas. To achieve this, the Centre must meet certain requirements for its establishment:

  i.   One experienced NSQ Assessor for every twelve (12) NSQ candidates
  ii.   One experienced Internal Verifier for every ten (10) Assessors
  iii.   A Centre Coordinator to manage the registration of NSQ candidates and to request certificates
  iv.   A placement officer who manages relationship with industries.
  v.   The required financial resources.
  vi.   The required structures (lesson rooms, offices, counselling rooms, library, record room, etc.)
  vii.   ICT facilities

viii. Agreement with industries for candidates work placement (Industry Bank)

ix. Registration with an Awarding Body

4.2 Application for Centre Approval

After putting the requirements in place, the Centre will prepare a formal application for approval as stated below:

- A named contact (Centre Manager) who will be accountable for the overall quality assurance, management and administration of the NSQs

- Evidence that the Centre meets approval requirements

- Declaration of any previous application, refusals or withdrawal of approved status, including the awarding organization involved and the reasons for the decision. Awarding Organizations must inform Centers that failure to provide accurate information will result in approval being withdrawn.

- If a Centre is applying for approval to offer an NSQ for the first time, the Awarding Organization must visit the Centre for resource inspection

- Before submitting a formal application for approval, a Centre needs to understand the obligations associated with 'approved Centre status'

- Centre must be provided with appropriate guidance and support to enable them to meet the approval requirements.

- If a Centre applying for approval is in partnership arrangements, the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of each partner must be clearly documented in relation to assessment, quality assurance and administration of the NSQs

4.3 Roles and Responsibilities of NSQ Training centre:

The role of the SDC as a training centre will include

i. Provision of clear aims and policies regarding NSQ Assessment, supported by Management of Centre and understood by the Assessment Team

ii. Ensure that roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of the assessment and verification team are clearly defined, allocated and understood

iii. Conduct of internal and independent assessment

iv.   Maintenance of standards and the consistency of assessment decisions through internal verification

v.   Maintenance of the requirements for Assessors and Internal Verifiers to have appropriate qualifications and occupational expertise

vi.   Register of candidates with an AB

vii.   Provision of accurate data in respect of claims for certification

viii.   Authentication and recording of candidate assessments and period these records should be retained

ix.   Ensure the safety and security of candidates' work being held for assessment purposes

x.   Provision of access to premises, personnel and records for the purposes of external quality assurance

xi.   Compliance with regulatory procedures for dealing with and reporting malpractice.

5.0   SYSTEM OF DELIVERY:

5.1   Methods of delivery:
There are various methods of imparting knowledge and skills. However, for skills centres, where skills acquisition is the emphasis, workshop practice dominates the period of learning. The trainees are not supposed to be engaged with lots of theory lesson in their area of occupation, hence the choice of appropriate methods of delivery must put this into considerations. Some general methods of imparting knowledge include, lecture, discussion, demonstration, assignment, etc. While methods for assessing the competence of the trainee in the NSQ are, Observation, Examining of Work Product, Witness Statement, Reflective Account, Professional Discussion, etc.
The coverage of practical lesson will be about 80% of the total hours so that trainees are engaged in demonstrating skills competence. About 20% of the period can be earmarked for theory class and other foundational subjects.

5.2   Language of Instruction:

The language of instruction is flexible which can be in English or even local language. The focus here is the ability to perform and not to speak good English. The skills to be imparted by the instructor and acquired by the learner are essentially, aimed at determining the competence of the trainee in performing certain tasks in the occupational area. However, basic numeracy and literacy are significant to the trainee to assist him in making

estimate and communicating to different clients during execution of his/her jobs.

5.3   Duration of Training:

Although skills training depends on the capacity and capability of the trainee, and whether it is Unit or full level qualification required by the trainee, a minimum duration must be given for the training.

Thus, for a meaningful skill training where competency is expected to be achieved, 6- 9 months shall be the minimum duration for the training.

5.4   Workplace Collaboration:

Assessment for achieving the Unit or Level qualifications must be carried out in the real on-the-job scenario, i.e., at the workplace. The SDC must have strong linkages with relevant workplaces according to the occupational areas being offered at the Centre.
The Centre shall enter into Agreement with the workplaces to allow its trainees have access to the facilities during assessment. But it should be noted that this agreement is not for training purposes like the SIWES, rather for the purpose of assessment activities only.

5.5   Assessment of Trainees

The assessment of trainee's achievements to determine his/her level of competence is a particularly important component in skills training. The emphasis is whether the trainee is competent or not yet competent on the skills being assessed. It is important to give the trainee all the necessary support to achieve the qualifications registered for. Assessment is conducted by a qualified quality assurance assessor (QAA) and occupationally expert (subject matter) staff. The system of assessment is what markedly differentiated the competency-based qualification of NSQ and other conventional qualifications.
Trainees will be assessed in two environments before obtaining an NSQ. The first assessment takes place within the Centre premises in the workshop while the other one is in the workplace. A trainee will only be considered eligible to achieve a Unit or Level qualification after being assessed in the workplace.

5.6   Award/Certification:

After undergoing assessment to determine the level of competence achieved, the learner will be awarded with either Unit or full Level qualification of the NSQ.

5.7   Equivalence of Qualifications:

Although the emphasis in NSQF is the attainment and recognition of skill regardless of where it was acquired, the framework gave equivalences for the approved nine-level of the NSQ as compared to the educational levels. However, it is important to understand that the equivalence was not meant for articulation into higher education. It is therefore, the responsibility of the Centre to sensitize the trainees at the onset during induction that the equivalence is primarily on the job placement rather than articulation into higher institution. The bridge to provide such opportunity is yet to be concluded.

5.8   Capacity Building for SDC staff:

Training and retraining of SDC staff shall form the key factor of continuous professional development. This will include QAA training for the staff, attendance of seminars related to own occupational area and pedagogy, standardization meetings, participation in assessment practice of learners, etc.

6.0   Monitoring and Quality Assurance:

NBTE has the overall responsibilities of monitoring and quality assurance for the delivery of NSQs nationwide, approval of NSQs and enforcement of NSQ code of practice in all Centres. While the Awarding bodies have the responsibilities to approve training and assessment centres for NSQ certification.

It is on this basis that NBTE will be carrying out periodic monitoring and quality assurance activities to all Skill Development Centres (SDC) in the Polytechnics to ensure compliance and sustainability of NSQ training procedures.

This document is hereby adopted today 7th June 2023, at a Validation Meeting attended by NBTE, Sector Skills Councils, Awarding Bodies, Rectors and Directors of Skills Development Centre (SDC) across the Polytechnics.