



NATIONAL BOARD FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION, KADUNA
Plot B. Bida Road, P.M.B. 2239, Kaduna

POLICY DOCUMENT ON
OUTSOURCING NBTE QUALITY
ASSURANCE SERVICES

APPROVED BY HME ON 12TH FEBRUARY 2025

INTRODUCTION

The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is responsible for accreditation and regulating the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. Due to the vast scope of these responsibilities, and manpower shortage, NBTE proposes to outsource some of the services for effective execution of its mandate. This Policy document proposes a structured outsourcing approach using fully verified and quality-assured external organizations to support NBTE's oversight and accreditation functions, in line with international best practices adopted in the US, UK, and other nations.

JUSTIFICATION FOR OUTSOURCING

- a) Workload Management:** NBTE faces an overwhelming volume of accreditation and oversight responsibilities with fewer staff and an increasing number of TVET Institutions under it. At the moment, Tertiary TVET has 789 Institutions.
- b) International Best Practices:** Many advanced nations employ outsourcing models to maintain efficiency and quality.
- c) Specialized Expertise:** External organizations bring industry-specific knowledge and innovation to accreditation.
- d) Cost-Effectiveness:** Outsourcing reduces the need for extensive staff recruitment while maintaining high regulatory standards.

FRAMEWORK FOR OUTSOURCING

NBTE will establish a comprehensive register of prequalified vendors and individuals with proven expertise in accreditation and quality assurance. The outsourcing framework includes:

- a)** Development of a Vendor Register of prequalified organizations.
- b)** Establishment of Evaluation Criteria to assess external entities before engagement.
- c)** Implementation of a Monitoring and Review Mechanism to ensure regulatory compliance.
- d)** Formulation of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to define clear expectations and deliverables.
- e)** Appointment of Zonal Quality Assurance Vendors (ZQAV), two (2) in each of the six geo-political zones of the country, in line with the

criteria for selecting external organizations and individuals given below and the personnel requirements given in Appendix I.

- f)** The two ZQAV are to be in areas of:
- Polytechnic Education, and Agriculture/ Specialised Programs
 - Nursing and Health Technology Programs.

This is to establish close communications with TVET Institutions **in the zone** and ensure that Quality Assurance (QA) visitations are done at minimal cost.

These criteria and requirements will be reviewed by the Board every 3 years and sent for **approval of the Hon. Minister of Education** approval.

INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES AND CASE STUDIES

Several countries have successfully outsourced accreditation responsibilities. Examples include:

Country	Outsourcing Model	Key Features
USA	CHEA and Regional Accrediting Bodies	Private accrediting agencies oversee institutional accreditation.
UK	Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	QAA partners with higher education institutions for quality assurance.
Australia	TEQSA Model	TEQSA uses external experts for regulatory assessments.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

NBTE will assess potential vendors using the following criteria:

- a) Experience and Expertise:** Demonstrated history of accreditation and regulatory oversight in education and training.
- b) Compliance with International Standards:** Must adhere to recognized accreditation frameworks such as ISO, INQAAHE, and national regulatory requirements.
- c) Qualified Personnel:** Must employ experts with significant experience in TVET accreditation, policy formulation, and institutional evaluation.
- d) Capacity for Accreditation Exercises:** Ability to conduct both virtual and on-site assessments.

- e) Ethical and Regulatory Compliance:** Proven track record of integrity, transparency, and adherence to local and international educational standards.
- f) Technological Capability:** Adoption of digital tools and platforms for accreditation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- g) Sustainability and Long-term Viability:** Financial stability and organizational capacity to support long-term partnerships with NBTE.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS FOR ACCREDITATION OVERSIGHT

To ensure the highest standards of quality assurance in the accreditation process, NBTE will implement a rigorous selection framework for external organizations and individuals. The criteria for selecting these entities are outlined below:

Experience and Expertise

- a)** A minimum of 5 years of experience in accreditation, quality assurance, or regulatory oversight in TVET or higher education.
- b)** A proven track record of conducting institutional evaluations, curriculum assessments, and compliance audits.
- c)** Previous collaborations with recognized accrediting bodies or national regulatory agencies.

Compliance with International and Local Standards

- a)** Organizations must be accredited or recognized by relevant national or international accreditation agencies such as INQAAHE, ISO 9001, or national professional regulatory bodies such as COREN, CORBON, NIW,ITPN, etc.
- b)** Compliance with local education policies and alignment with NBTE's regulatory framework.
- c)** Compliance with the National Policy on Education and the Federal Ministry of Education's New Development Agenda for TVET.

Qualified Personnel

- a)** The organization must have a team of subject-matter experts, including professionals with advanced degrees (MSc/PhD) in relevant fields.

- b)** Assessors and QA agents must have a minimum of 10 years of experience in TVET accreditation and TVET Curriculum development approved by the Board.

These must comply with the qualifications and requirements set in Appendix I of this document.

Capacity for Accreditation Exercises

- a)** Ability to conduct both on-site and virtual accreditation assessments.
- b)** Availability of assessment teams with multi-disciplinary expertise in various fields of technical education.
- c)** Strong logistical support for field inspections and evaluation reports.

Ethical and Regulatory Compliance

- a)** A clean record of no previous sanctions or unethical practices in accreditation.
- b)** Adherence to transparency, neutrality, and confidentiality of information in the evaluation processes.
- c)** Compliance with anti-corruption policies and conflict-of-interest guidelines.

Technological Capability

- a)** Use of digital tools for accreditation and quality assurance (e.g., online assessment platforms, AI-driven evaluation systems and IT driven solutions for TVET Quality Assurance (QA) processes.
- b)** Secure data handling and adherence to data protection regulations.

Financial Stability and Sustainability

- a)** Demonstrated financial strength and stability to ensure long-term partnerships.
- b)** Evidence of sustained funding sources and financial transparency.

Previous Engagements with Accreditation Bodies

- a)** Prior engagement with the NBTE and other recognized professional accrediting agencies in Nigeria or internationally.
- b)** Membership in global education quality assurance networks.

This selection framework ensures that only competent and high-quality organizations are engaged in NBTE's accreditation processes, aligning with global best practices.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

a) Phase 1: Pilot Programme

- Identify and engage a small number of verified organizations for initial accreditation exercises in one category. Two geopolitical zones to be tested.
- Assess effectiveness and refine processes based on pilot outcomes.

b) Phase 2: Full-Scale Rollout

- Expand outsourcing to cover all zones and a broader range of institutions and accreditation requirements.
- Regularly update the register of verified vendors based on performance reviews.

c) Phase 3: Continuous Monitoring and Improvement

- Conduct periodic audits of external vendors.
- Collect stakeholder feedback to enhance the outsourcing model.

Accredited vendors will be approved to sign Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the NBTE for an initial period of six months and will be extended to 3 years with satisfactory performance.

ZQAV will work in close cooperation with the Board to identify TVET Institutions and Programmes that are within the Board's oversight mandate and provide an approved QA visitation plan quarterly and annually.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

Accredited ZQAVs will visit, evaluate and make recommendations to the Board for the establishment of new TVET Institutions and Programmes. The Board will review and forward request for the approval of the HME in the case of new TVET Institutions and approve the commencement of new programmes in already established institutions inline with current practice.

STATISTICS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Board will be responsible for the Monitoring and Evaluation of the operations of the ZQAVs in terms of agreed performance, Quality Assurance of the supervised TVET Institutions and the fiscal budgetary and

expenditures of the QA process to ensure that institutions are not unduly exploited.

ZQAVs will also assist the Board in sourcing and generation of statistical data of the TVET Institutions in their zone. The Board will collate, assess and compile this data for policy and management functions.

CONCLUSION

Outsourcing NBTE's oversight functions to verified, quality-assured organizations present a sustainable solution to its increasing regulatory workload. This approach aligns with global best practices and ensures maintenance of high standard of accreditation and quality assurance across the TVET sector.

This policy document is for the approval of the HME for implementation from the 2nd Quarter of 2025

Dated: 12th February, 2025.

REFERENCES

1. Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), USA.
2. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), UK.
3. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), Australia.

APPENDIX I:

ZONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE VENDORS – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

(to be advertised)

The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is a statutory regulatory body for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria in both the formal and informal sectors of the Nigerian economy. Due to its overwhelming responsibilities in this regard and the exponentially increasing number of TVET Institutions, the Board wishes to establish private sector led organisations and consultants to support it in the maintenance and upgrading of the quality of technical training in its recognised institutions.

The Vendors are planned to be established two (2) in each geo-political zone of the federation to assist the Board in the accreditation, resources inspection & verification, curriculum development, graduate tracer study and monitoring and evaluation of training in TVET institutions. These institutions are to be set up in each geopolitical zone for the purpose of reducing expenditures during visitation and having a local closer reach to all institutions in the country. The two are for the following :

- i. Polytechnic Education, and Agriculture/ Specialised Programs
- ii. Nursing and Health Technology Programs

A Zonal Quality Assurance Vendor (ZQAV) is an organization that will assist the Board in its responsibility in evaluating and certifying institutions and programmes based on established standards. The structure of ZQAV is expected to be as follows:

1. Board of Directors – that will provide overall leadership and strategic direction and set policy directions for the agency based on guidance and standards set by the Board. The number will range from 3 – 10 consisting of experienced and qualified citizens that have worked in the TVET Sector for 20 – 30 years.

2. Leadership and Management

a) Managing Director/CEO: Manages the agency's operations and represents it externally, on full time with 20 – 30 years' experience in accreditation and quality assurance of tertiary TVET Institutions.

b) Managers: Overseeing different departments such as;

- i. Accreditation & quality assurance

- ii. IT, research & statistics
- iii. Finance & audit,

These are to be full time, one for each department.

3. Accreditation Committees/Review Panels

Composed of atleast 5no. full time staff (with at least 10 years experience) in fields such as engineering, science and technology and environmental technology and management studies, for Polytechnic and allied programs, and Health Technology, Nursing and related medical programs, and other experts in various fields covering the fields of study under the Board. These Panels will be responsible for reviewing applications, conducting site visitations, and compiling visitation reports and making accreditation recommendations, and provide guidance to institutions seeking accreditation.

These committees may also set up Accreditation Evaluation Teams/Peer Review Teams that would assist them in conducting assessments of institutions applications, perform document reviews, site visits and interviews. As well they could provide reports and recommendations to the accreditation committees.

4. Administrative and Support Staff – a minimum of 3 no. full time staff (clerical, secretarial and human resources) responsible for handling logistics, communication and documentation, including the management of applications, and records management.

5. IT, Statistics and Research Unit – consisting of at least 3 staff that would help to develop and update accreditation criteria and standards, compile institutional and programme statistics and send the information to the Board on a regular basis. They will also conduct research to improve TVET curriculum and evaluation methodologies and engage with stakeholders to adapt to industry changes.

6. Finance and Audit Department – at least 1 fulltime accounting staff and a part time auditor. These would manage funding, budgeting, and financial sustainability, ensuring transparency and accountability in financial operations.

An annual technical and financial audit report should be submitted to the Board.

7. Appeals and Ethics Committee – consisting of full and part time staff members that will guarantee that appeals from institutions or individuals denied accreditation are heard in a transparent and open manner. This will ensure that decisions are fair, consistent, and in line with extant policies, **addressing ethical concerns and conflicts of interest.**

All conflict of interest must be resolved and no full-time staff of the vendor could be a staff of any TVET institution. The Board will ensure the integrity and transparency of the accreditation process.

All applications are to be submitted to the ES, NBTE, Kaduna for evaluation and invitation for interview.

Dated 12th February, 2025.