



GUIDELINES FOR TVET SHORT COURSES TRAINING & CERTIFICATION



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VALIDATION OF GUIDELINES

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FOREWORD

Since 2008, the Government of Rwanda has positioned TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) as a crucial tool to alleviate poverty and equip youth with relevant skills essential for the labor market, enabling them to secure meaningful and decent employment.

The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) seeks to accelerate Rwanda's transformation and economic growth, with a focus on the private sector driving the economy and job creation. The Economic Transformation pillar of the NST1 aims to generate 1,500,000 jobs during the implementation period, translating to over 214,000 new jobs annually. The strategy emphasizes the development and transformation of Rwandans into a capable and skilled workforce ready to compete globally. The TVET sector plays a vital role in achieving this goal by increasing the number of TVET graduates with skills aligned with the labor market. The TVET sector's challenge is to provide relevant and high-quality training programs that address critical skills gaps.

One of the key mandates of the Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) is to offer a strategic response to the country's skills development challenges across all economic sectors. This involves developing and implementing competence-based curricula that are responsive to evolving labor market needs. As these needs evolve, new standards and training approaches are necessary to ensure that trainees are well-prepared for employment with competencies meeting employer expectations.

These guidelines specifically pertain to the curricula of training programs leading to the certificate of competence.

The demand for these guidelines for short courses training and certification has been steadily increasing over the years. It is anticipated that this document will serve as a guide for all stakeholders to continually align skills development programs with technological changes, considering benchmarking with regional and international TVET providers and integration into the Rwanda Qualification Framework.

Users of these guidelines will include TVET trainers, training providers, as well as private sector representatives aiming to deliver short courses addressing identified skills gaps.



Thank you!



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Our appreciation goes to the following members of the taskforce for the development of these guidelines:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since RTB was legally established in 2020, the institution lacks several policies and strategies to guide the implementation of skills development for the successful realization of its mandate. The guideline for short course training and certification is considered a crucial strategy for creating a standardized and regulated process for short course training delivery and certification. This guideline is produced in line with RTB's mission to promote quality education in technical and vocational education and training from level one (1) to five (5), aimed at fast-tracking the socio-economic development of the country.

The Guidelines cover the short courses that are being implemented through TVET Schools and/or accredited training providers, as well as short courses that are part of a dual training program or an industry-based training program. The document is organized into four (4) sections, namely: Context and Scope of the guidelines, authorization and curriculum design process for short courses, short course implementation and assessment, and short course certification process. Each section highlights important aspects that need consideration, the procedures that need to be followed, including the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.



TABLE OF CONTENT

COPY RIGHT.....	2
VALIDATION OF GUIDELINES.....	3
FOREWORD.....	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
LIST OF FIGURES	10
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	11
DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS.....	12
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	14
1.1 Rwanda Education Sector	14
1.2 Rwanda TVET Board.....	15
1.3 Objectives of the Guidelines	15
1.4 Methodology	15
SECTION 2: CONTEXT AND SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES	17
2.1. Rationale	17
2.2. Definition of Short Courses	17
2.3. Types of short courses.....	17
2.3.1. School-based Training	18
2.3.2. Dual Training	18
2.3.3. Industry-Based Training.....	18
2.4. Target Groups of Short Courses.....	18
SECTION 3: AUTHORIZATION AND CURRICULUM DESIGN PROCESS FOR SHORT COURSES.....	20
3.1. Authorization for short courses provision	20
3.2. Short courses curriculum design and validation	20
3.3. Entry requirement for short courses program	20
SECTION 4: SHORT COURSE IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT	22
4.1. Qualification of Trainers	22
4.2. Registration of Trainees	22
4.3. Training Delivery	23
4.4. Assessment process for short course program	23
4.5. Portfolio building	23



4.6. Pass- mark	24
5.1. Introduction	25
5.2. The Certification Process	25
5.3. Appealing process	25



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Types of Short Courses 17



LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

9YBE	9 Years Basic Education
CBA	Competency Based Assessment
CBE/CBT	Competency Based Education/Competency Based Training
DACUM	Developing a Curriculum
DG	Director General
DVET	Dual Vocational Education and Training
ESP	Education Sector Policy
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Programme/Plan
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
HEC	Higher Education Council
HoD	Head of Department
IAP	Industrial Attachment Program
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
NESA	National Examination and School Inspection Authority
NST1	1 st National Strategy for Transformation (2017-2024)
NYC	Not Yet Competent
REB	Rwanda Education Board
RP	Rwanda Polytechnic
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RQF	Rwanda Qualifications Framework
RTB	Rwanda TVET Board
TSS	Technical Secondary School
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEVOC	International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNESCO)
UR	University of Rwanda
VTC	Vocational Training Centre
WPL	Workplace Learning



DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Authorization	A process of authorizing an institution of vocational education or training, a programme of study, or a service, showing it has been approved by the relevant legislative and professional authorities by having met predetermined standards.
Assessment	A process of gathering and judging evidence in order to decide whether a person has attained a standard of performance.
Certification	A formal process of recognizing that an individual is qualified in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes based on industry standards, usually after passing an examination or completion of a course of training
Competency-based assessment (or CBA)	The gathering and judging of evidence to decide whether a person has achieved a standard of competency.
Curriculum	Curriculum is a systematic and intended packaging of competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills and attitudes that are underpinned by values) that learners should acquire through organised learning experiences both in formal and non-formal settings (UNESCO)
DACUM	<u>Developing A Curriculum</u> ; A story-boarding process that provides a picture of what the worker does in terms of duties, tasks, knowledge, skills, traits and in some cases the tools the worker uses, including information on critical and frequently performed tasks and the training needs of workers. It forms the basis for curriculum development
Evidence	The available body of facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid.
Job	A Job is defined in ISCO-08 as a set of tasks and duties performed or meant to be performed, by one person for an employer or in self-employment.
Knowledge	Means the result of the adoption of information through the learning process. Knowledge is a set of facts, principles, theories, and practices related to area of work or study. In CBET context lifelong learning knowledge is described as theoretical and / or factual.
Portfolio	Used to plan, organize and document education, work samples and skills.
Qualification	Means the formal name for the result of a process of assessment and validation, which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to the required standards.
Quality assurance	The systems and procedures designed and implemented by an organization to ensure that its products and services are of a consistent standard and are being continuously improved.



Unemployed	People above a specified age not being in paid employment or self-employment but currently available for work during the reference period.
Underemployed	The underuse of a worker occurs when jobs do not utilize the worker's skills effectively, providing only part-time opportunities, or leaving the worker idle. Examples of underutilization include holding a part-time job despite desiring full-time work and overqualification, wherein the employee possesses education, experience, or skills beyond the requirements of the job.
Under Skilled	A situation where existing workers find their skills challenged by the work content. Under-skilling, reflects skill shortages in the economy, where the existing workforce lacks certain skills when hired but may be able to do the job at a minimum level required (CEDEFOP).
Validation	The action by an officially approved body of making or declaring something legally or officially acceptable



SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 . Rwanda Education Sector

The 10th education for all global monitoring report, “*Putting Education to Work*”, reveals the urgent need to invest in skills for youth. 200 million people aged 15 to 24 in developing countries, have not even completed primary school and need alternative pathways to acquire basic skills for employment and prosperity. The world’s youth population is larger than ever before: 1/8 young people are unemployed and over a quarter are trapped in jobs that keep them on or below the poverty line. As the effects of the economic crisis continue to squeeze societies worldwide, the severe lack of skills is more damaging than ever (UNESCO:2014).

The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) aims at accelerating the transformation and economic growth of Rwanda and views the private sector as critical in this process. The strategy focuses on developing and transforming Rwandans into a capable and skilled people ready to compete in a global environment. The TVET sector is instrumental in this as it will have to scale up the number of TVET graduates with skills relevant to the labour market. The provision of relevant and quality training programs, addressing the critical skills gap, is a task the TVET sector is confronted with. The private sector is instrumental in this development in terms of driving the economy and creating jobs. The Economic Transformation pillar of NST1 targets the creation of 1,500,000 jobs over the NST1 implementation period, which means over 214,000 new jobs per annum.

Rwanda’s vision 2020 aspiration leading to the vision 2050, places education as a key component for the envisaged knowledge society. The Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) is guided by the Education Sector Policy (ESP). It reflects the Rwanda Government’s vision that sets out ambitious plans to create a growing knowledge economy based on a skilled workforce that can compete in the region and the wider international arena.

In the context of these guidelines, the National Policy on Workplace Learning to prepare Rwandan youth for employment (in short: The Workplace Learning Policy), should not go unmentioned. It is one of the instruments to integrate the country’s employers and companies into the education and training structures, safeguarding the employment-demand responsiveness of the education and training system and to develop skills development programs that focus on practical and employable skills. In this, workplace learning represents an important way to improve quality and relevance of skills development. Hence the inclusion of dual training and industry-based training in these guidelines.

The Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), as the lead Ministry, works closely with its affiliated semi-autonomous entities that include National Commission for UNESCO-CNRU, University of Rwanda-(UR), Higher Education Council (HEC), Rwanda Polytechnic (RP), Rwanda Education



Board (REB), Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) and National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA).

1.2 . Rwanda TVET Board

Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) is a government institution established in 2020 by the presidential order No N° 123/01 of 15/10/2020 published in Official Gazette N° 32 bis of 19/10/2020. It was established under the Ministry of Education, and is mandated with the coordination of all programs, projects and activities that can fast-track the development of TVET in Rwanda, at level one (1) through level five (5) of the Rwanda Qualifications Framework (RQF). More in particular, RTB has the following responsibilities:

- To design and distribute curricula, teaching materials, trainer's guides, methodologies and establish training methods for technical and vocational education and training from level one (1) to five (5).
- To promote the use of information and communication technology in technical and vocational education and training from level one (1) to five (5).
- To coordinate and fast track technical and vocational education and training programs and activities.
- To coordinate programs and activities to ensure trainers development, build their capacities and monitor their management.
- To advise the Government on all activities which can fast track technical and vocational education and training development in Rwanda.

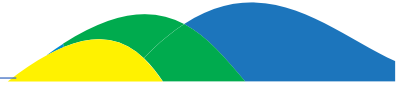
1.3 . Objectives of the Guidelines

These guidelines have the following objectives:

- ✓ To clarify specific concepts and categories of short courses
- ✓ To define eligibility criteria of short courses provision
- ✓ To give clarification on authorization and curriculum design process for short courses,
- ✓ To provide guidance on the process of short courses implementation and assessment
- ✓ To clarify the short courses certification process.

1.4 Methodology

These Guidelines for short course development, implementation, and certification contribute to RTB's efforts in developing curricula that respond to labor market demands and meet the expectations of all stakeholders. The guidelines have been developed through the efforts of a multitude of stakeholders, considering the partnership with the private sector in all aspects of curriculum development and implementation. The relevance and dynamism of RTB are reflected in an up-



to-date curriculum offer that includes full qualifications and short courses, ensuring that the content of these programs aligns with the current practices in the respective disciplines and the current needs of the labor market.

A task force was established by RTB senior management to lead the process of developing these guidelines. The task force members were composed of staff from RTB, Development Partners, and the Private Sector Federation. The elaboration, development, and processing of these guidelines were conducted through a highly participatory and consultative process.



SECTION 2: CONTEXT AND SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES

2.1. Rationale

Short courses are viewed as effective interventions to address unemployment and underemployment without routing trainees through formal education programs. When properly tailored, short courses may equip trainees for self-employment, thus contributing to job creation.

In Rwanda, short courses are being developed and implemented by various providers, but in an unharmonized way due to the lack of guidance regarding training delivery, assessment, and certification. These trainings are not standardized, and the issued certificates do not contribute to the educational attainment of graduates and are not recognized by the labor market.

The Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) initiated the development of these guidelines to address this shortcoming within its current mandate. It intends to formalize and quality-assure the process of short course program delivery and assessment so that these can be formally certified through the issuance of certificates of competence.

2.2. Definition of Short Courses

Short courses are brief and intensive training programs designed to equip individuals with specialized skills and knowledge. They are typically shorter in duration compared to related traditional academic programs, depending on the competence(s) to be acquired. These courses are highly focused and aim to address specific skills gaps or industry needs. Short course programs are offered by various educational institutions, training centers, and organizations, both in a face-to-face setting and/or online. It is a stand-alone program, delivered in a limited timeframe, that does not lead to a full qualification. Trainees successfully completing short courses are awarded a certificate of competence by the relevant authority.

2.3. Types of short courses

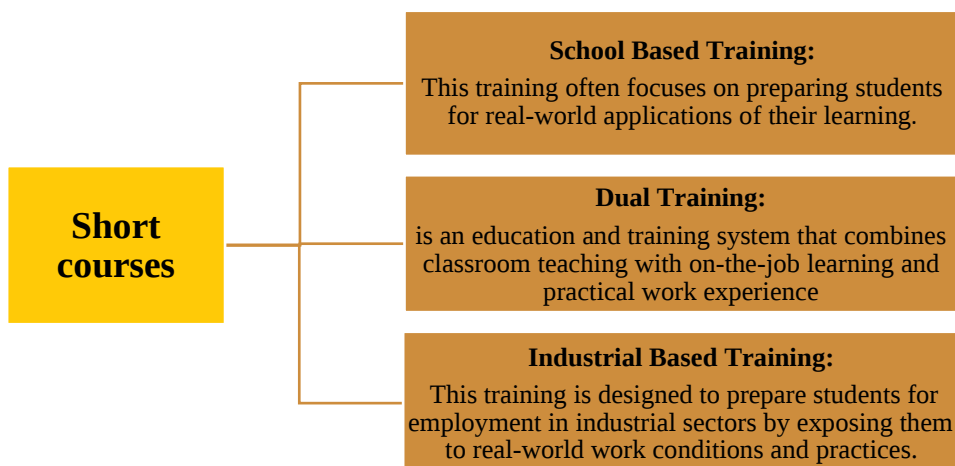


Figure 1: Types of Short Courses



2.3.1. School-based Training

These short courses are typically offered within an educational institution, such as a TVET school (TSS, VTC, or College), and other accredited training providers. During this training, the training provider should organize and deploy students in the industry to implement the "Industrial Attachment Program."

2.3.2. Dual Training

Dual training refers to a specific approach to education and skill development that combines both theoretical classroom instruction and practical on-the-job training. This approach aims to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application by providing learners with hands-on experience in a real work environment.

The private sector is usually actively involved in the design of the curriculum, and the company not only offers the practical training part in the form of on-the-job training within their workplace but also takes an active role in the recruitment and selection of trainees. All supplementary training is delivered in TVET institutions accredited for apprenticeship training. The trainee spends at least 50% of the training period in the company, whereas the remaining 50% is spent at the learning institution.

2.3.3. Industry-Based Training

Industry-based training refers to educational programs and initiatives designed to prepare individuals for specific roles within a particular industry. It is delivered by experienced industry practitioners and takes place at the enterprise where the trainee is employed, allowing them to participate in productive activities as regular employees.

2.4. Target Groups of Short Courses

Depending on the duration of the short course, the purpose is to allow the trainee to either acquire a specific skill or a whole set of skills, addressing an identified skills gap in the labour market. Either way, the short course leads to enhanced employability, self-employment, or improved access to business opportunities, therefore aiming at the following target groups:

- Unemployed persons: Individuals above a specified age, not currently in paid employment or self-employment but available for work.
- Underemployed workers: Individuals underused because jobs do not utilize their skills, are part-time, or leave the worker idle.
- Under-skilled persons: Individuals lacking adequate skills or qualifications for employment or to perform a particular job.



- Individuals: Participants in short courses due to a specific interest in the knowledge and skills being offered.
- TVET students: While TVET students are not the primary target group for short courses, RTB is actively promoting short courses to become part of its full qualification programs. As such, TVET students indirectly benefit from the short courses being developed.



SECTION 3: AUTHORIZATION AND CURRICULUM DESIGN PROCESS FOR SHORT COURSES

3.1. Authorization for short courses provision

For TVET schools that have already received accreditation from a competent authority for a full qualification program at levels 1-2-3-4-5, short courses in the same occupational domain may be delivered without additional approval. However, they need to apply to RTB to officially start training activities.

In the case where a TVET school or training provider wishes to provide short courses in the absence of a full qualification program for which it has received accreditation from a competent authority, it must apply for authorization, following the procedure provided by RTB.

Similarly, any other institute wishing to provide short courses, not being a TVET school or training provider under the mandate of RTB (e.g., a company, NGO, association), must submit a request for that purpose to RTB.

RTB assesses the application for short course provision based on the following criteria:

- The short course curriculum/training program should be the one authorized by RTB and listed on its platform.
- The training provider, in terms of a school, shall be accredited by NESAC and RTB for the school in possession of the trade without accreditation.
- The training provider, in terms of a company, shall be authorized by RTB.

3.2. Short courses curriculum design and validation

The short course curriculum is designed by RTB through the DACUM Methodology in its Curriculum and Instructional Material Development Department and is made available to any TVET provider wishing to offer the training. However, a TVET stakeholder may design short course curricula by selecting modules from existing (accredited) curricula, and its developers do not need to go through the entire DACUM process again. The short course curriculum designed in such a way should be submitted to RTB when applying for short course provision.

If there is a new skill to be introduced and there is no related curriculum, the provider addresses the request to RTB. In collaboration with the provider wishing to offer the short course training, the training program will be developed for such a purpose.

3.3. Entry requirement for short courses program

TVET Short Courses are valuable for acquiring additional skills to enhance existing careers or explore new areas of interest, and they can cater to a wide range of beneficiaries or target groups, depending on the content and purpose of the course. However, candidates must be a minimum of



16 years old. This requirement applies to all individuals who did not complete primary school for various reasons or those who have completed primary school and above.

Regarding the content and purpose of the course, the short-course curriculum designer determines entry requirements for beneficiaries to undergo the course.

Specific entry requirements include:

- Cognitive / Literacy requirements (i.e., prerequisite courses/modules, language skills, ICT skills)
- Other specific requirements specified by the course developers as long these are within the legal and policy guidelines of the government.



SECTION 4: SHORT COURSE IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

4.1. Qualification of Trainers

Having competent, qualified TVET trainers is critical for the effectiveness of vocational education in producing skilled workers, emphasizing the quality of interactions between trainees and TVET trainers.

Providers of short courses must ensure that their trainers are qualified, and considering the unique features of TVET education where the knowledge and skills of trainers can quickly become outdated due to rapid technological changes, they should maintain their expertise by adopting a continuous learning culture.

It is recommended that short courses be delivered by TVET trainers with ample experience as industry practitioners. In the absence of such expertise within the school or training provider, one should deploy an industry practitioner if necessary, from outside the institute. To gradually build in-house expertise, it is encouraged, in the case of assigning a practitioner as the lead trainer, to appoint a co-trainer from that institute. Over time, the co-trainer may gain the necessary exposure to facilitate short course delivery independently. Such an approach ensures that course delivery is practical, relevant, and mirrors real-life situations in the workplace.

While dedicated trainers facilitate short courses delivered as part of dual training or industry-based training, In-Company/Workplace Learning Instructors (ICI) supervise and mentor apprentices in the workplace. To ensure that they are guided professionally and can be certified at the end of the internship, ICIs must acquire the necessary competencies in a) Demonstration of the in-company/workplace learning instructor role in the TVET system; b) Preparation of workplace learning; and c) Workplace learning facilitation.

4.2. Registration of Trainees

Training providers intending to have participants enrolled in the short courses they offer and certified by the Rwanda TVET Board must ensure that all participants are duly registered via the TVET Management Portal of RTB (www.tvetmanagement.rtb.gov.rw/register). Such registration must be completed before the training commences; late registration may jeopardize the certification process. Only participants eligible for certification, meeting the entry requirements for the course, may be registered. A confirmation of registration is given by the system, considered adequate proof of participants' registration.



4.3. Training Delivery

To avoid disparities in training planning and to harmonize pedagogical activities for training providers, course developers are requested to develop a training chronogram or training schedule/timeline. Such a chronogram is a spreadsheet that provides: a) Trade specification; b) Name, code, and learning hours for specific, general, and complementary competences; c) Time (range of dates) allocation; d) Periods for each competence to be covered; e) Period(s) for assessment; f) Period(s) for Industrial Attachment Program (IAP) in case of school-based training, periods for training and apprenticeship in a company in case of dual training, and a period for apprenticeship in case of industry-based training. The chronogram functions as a compass for any training provider. Implementation of the short course follows the chronogram, ensuring a logical flow of all competences for a specific level of a given trade.

4.4. Assessment process for short course program

The assessment of short course programs comprises three types of assessments:

- **Formative assessment:** A progressive assessment given at the end of each learning outcome or competency.
- **Summative assessment:** An end module assessment. It is theoretical for complementary and general modules, while for specific modules, it must be practical.
- **Final Integrated assessment:** A final and integrative assessment designed to combine trainees' learning from multiple modules (or learning outcomes) into a single assessment. The integrated assessment is conducted by the lead trainer and the co-trainer within the trade being assessed, working with an assessment checklist that covers all elements of professional competence the trainee must demonstrate. The trainer and co-trainer may use an external assessor, depending on the course and the need for specific expertise in the assessment area.

The final integrated assessment is subject to external supervision on behalf of RTB's quality assurance procedures to assure its consistency of marking and assessment. A TVET School or company engaged in short course provision and planning for the Final Integrated Assessments must notify RTB at least 4 weeks ahead of time. RTB will send an external verifier to coordinate the final integrated assessment activities. The marks for the final integrated assessment are input into the system by the Deputy Headteacher, referring to the external verification report.

4.5. Portfolio building

In the competency-based training context of Rwanda, portfolios are utilized to enhance the learning development of the trainee and facilitate decision-making regarding their competence achievement. These portfolio-based assessments necessitate that the trainee's competence development is adequately reflected in the portfolio content. Therefore, trainees must be guided on



how to select and document their development in their portfolios. Portfolios may contain a variety of items such as plans, reports, essays, resumes, checklists, self-assessments, references from employers or supervisors, as well as audio and video clips, and pieces of work completed near the end of their course.

For the purpose of quality assurance, all the aforementioned types of assessments are subject to external verification by RTB, and each trainee's score and evidence for each type of assessment have to be uploaded in the RTB TVET management system for further verification.

4.6.Pass- mark

For a module, the total marks for formative, summative, and final integrated assessment are one hundred (100 marks).

Part one of formative and summative assessment is worth 60 marks, and the final assessment is worth 40 marks. The passing threshold for a trainee to be eligible for the Final Integrated Assessment is 40 marks, and the passing threshold for the Final Integrated Assessment is 30 marks. A trainee is deemed competent when awarded a grade not less than 70% of the total module score.



SECTION 5: SHORT COURSE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

5.1. Introduction

A short course, implemented as a standalone course, does not usually lead to a full qualification under the Rwanda Qualification Framework (RQF). These guidelines were developed to formally recognise that trainees who successfully complete a short course are awarded a certificate as evidence of their achievement of competencies.

Ensuring formal certification of short courses that are implemented by TVET Schools and other training providers, either as school based, dual, or industry-based training, was the rationale for developing these guidelines. For a short course to be eligible for certification by RTB, these guidelines must be followed.

5.2. The Certification Process

After the assessment of the trainee, the trainee's portfolio provides the comprehensive evidence through which the competency of a trainee can be proven. The evidence resulting from the final integrated assessment, conducted by the trainer and co-trainer as well as external assessor, is added to the trainee's portfolio on the TVET Management Portal of RTB and the **external verifier**, present during the final integrated assessment session drafts an External Verification Report, that is to confirm the outcomes of the assessments.

The TVET School or training provider is to apply for certification of their trainees through the online platform that can be accessed through RTB's website. The list of students to be certified should be the ones who were successfully verified as competent by internal and external verifiers.

If the application meets all these criteria, RTB will inform the TVET School/Training Provider of its assessment and issue Certificates of Competence to the trainees.

5.3. Appealing process

The training provider shall receive the feedback at least 5 days after the external verification.

A training provider can appeal against the performance results of their trainees after final verification report. Such an appeal shall be lodged in writing via email to RTB within the period of one week after publication of the short course training results.