

GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (RPLA) IN TANZANIA

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The Vocational Education and Training Act, 1994 part II section 4 (1) stipulates the objectives and functions of the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA). The promotion of on the job training in industry for both apprenticeship training and for skills updating and upgrading and promote access to vocational education and training for disadvantaged groups. The Competence Based Assessment Guidelines which were approved by the VET Board in March, 2011 considers informal and formal apprenticeship as alternative modes of training delivery hence providing for mechanisms for assessing competencies attained therefrom.

Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment (RPLA) is an integral part of Competence Based Assessment. The concept of recognizing and accrediting what people already know and can do is having a significant impact on many of the education and training programmes currently being developed. If applied properly, the concept is very useful for integrating the marginalized populations both, the self employed who seek qualifications to access wage employment or the employed who aspire for promotion and better pay or further career development. The guidelines for RPLA

have been developed to act as a tool that will facilitate the exercise by providing proper guidance to all parties that will be involved in the process. These include, among others, RPL facilitators, assessors and moderators/validators. The guidelines are as well important to other stakeholders who in one way or another, interact with apprentices/ employees. They include individual employers and their related umbrella associations, trade unions, regulatory bodies other than VETA, VET providers, the government, NGO and higher learning institutions. It is our belief that, involvement of all key stakeholders will not only strengthen the VET system but also forge linkages and hence get approval and recognition of its services especially the graduates who will undergo the RPL processes successfully.

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