



**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

**P.O BOX 6311, KIGALI**

**Website: [www.highereducationcouncil.org](http://www.highereducationcouncil.org)**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICE CHARTER**

**December, 2011**

## **FOREWORD**

It is my pleasure to present to you this service charter for National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). This service charter has been prepared in tandem with the Government reform agenda and in the spirit of being responsive to effective service delivery, transparency and accountability.

This service charter spells out the role of National Council for Higher Education, and highlights the services offered and requirements therein. It lists the service centers at which our services can be accessed and the guiding legal instruments.

The development of this charter signifies our commitment to serve our clients with a view to creating a better understanding and enhancing our service delivery.

**Prof. Geoffrey Rugege**

Executive Director

The present Citizen's Charter reflects the service provided by HEC to its customers. Therefore, it contains different services, service standards, service delivery methods and timelines, grievance mechanisms. This citizen's charter shows the following elements:

- Vision and Mission statement of the HEC which affirms its commitment to deliver the services with:
  - Integrity
  - Judiciousness
  - Courtesy
  - Understanding
  - Objectivity and impartiality
  - Transparency
  - Accountability
  - Promptness
  - Efficiency and effectiveness.
- Details of services delivered by the HEC:
  - Specification of services provided by HEC,
  - Clear identification of the department to be approached or where specific services can be obtained. In this way citizens will know which office to approach and save time and energy;
  - Clear statement of the time it takes to deliver each service. This provides citizens with useful information and will prevent them from back and forth.
  - Setting of service quality standard by specifying service standards in term of timeliness, access, accuracy, reliability, affordability, responsiveness, fairness, sensitivity and courtesy in service delivery; On the basis of this, citizens can expect improvement
  - Clear information about the required document and procedures to get a service in HEC. For example, the documents to be shown, the available forms to be filled in.
- Details of the 'Citizens', groups/end users or People who are eligible for each service offered by HEC
- Contact information of key officers in charge of these services
- Complaint procedures or grievance redress mechanisms and how to access them
- Feedback mechanisms for interaction with Citizens to continuously improve services
- Information and dissemination for availability and visibility for services.

This Citizen's Charter is a tool to increase the information available to customers of HEC and sets standards for transparency in public services. It is expected that through Citizen's Charter, HEC's Clients will have faster access to services, setting an end to tremendous time wasting and delays in services delivery process.

Considering that its services have to be responsive to high expectations from citizens, HEC commits to inform them what services are available to them and what their rights and obligations are in accessing these services.

#### Feedback mechanism

Realizing that HEC cannot go this route alone, it thus invite the citizens to keep a hawk's eye on its employees, to be correct, realistic and comprehensive in furnishing information to better meet their expectations and root out all activities which negate service delivery improvement.

Indeed, for a better implementation of this Citizen's Charter, HEC expects continuous interaction with citizens seeking its services. For this, HEC has developed the following instruments in order to actively obtain feedback from its clients:

- Citizens' feedback form available at each department;
- Suggestion box at entrance;
- Open days/Accountability day
- Citizen panels, focus groups
- Hot line services;
- Customer surveys
- Grievance redresses mechanism or Complaints Systems in order to offer customers an immediate channel for feedback mechanism regarding the service they received.

This Citizen's Charter specifies also what actions will be taken when a service is not delivered, as it should. Thus, HEC encourages its clients to give their

feedback through the complaints mechanisms that are accessible, approachable and open to all. It goes without saying that the HEC takes these complaints seriously and adopts prompt and proper action in a timely manner (fashion). Ideally, a time frame for dealing with these grievances and redresses has been set. The HEC is willing to share a more systematic review of the grievances with its clients. The key following elements will be considered during the implementation process of this Citizen's Charter:

- Establish regularly the channels through which users can log grievances. Potential channels include a website, text messaging, and customer surveys at the point of service delivery, complaints boxes, mail, and phone.
- Assign grievance redress responsibilities within the HEC and outline the internal grievance redress process for addressing each grievance subcategory.
- Devise standardized internal processes for logging grievances. Grievances can be logged either manually or, if resources allow, using a computer-based system that permits the HEC to identify "real-time" trends in the data.
- Set a clearly defined timetable for grievance redress, including time to initial acknowledgement of the complaint (if complainant is not anonymous), expected time to resolution for each stage of the investigation, and the time frame for updating beneficiaries on progress.
- Decide what measures will be taken if there is a violation of service standards.
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation system to monitor trends in grievances data.

For encouraging communication, feedback and dialogue on the implementation of its Charter, HEC commit to use new media and ICT such as sms, email, twitter, facebook, etc..., and any combination of these technologies.

To improve continuously the service delivery, HEC is considering using the tools and techniques below in the implementation process of the present charter:

- service delivery review;
- benchmarking with best practice;
- performance management;
- training, learning and knowledge management;
- empowerment or delegation of authority;
- diligent complaints management;
- information management.

## **Information and communication**

Considering that information is the cornerstone of implementing and monitoring of Citizen's Charter, this Citizen's Charter will be delivered through various dissemination technologies and publicized widely through websites, radio, newspapers etc. to reach the public. Thus, HEC will seek to use the following channels to ensure maximum availability and visibility of its services to users and stakeholders:

- Public relations/information desk.
- Open day/Accountability day
- Publication of promotional material:
  - Leaflets,
  - Posters
  - Press releases
- Publications and creation of booklet: Production of brochures or handbills. The information contained in the brochure must be concise, clear, simple and easy to understand. The brochures should also easily be obtained;
- Print the Charter and display in front of the office and formally issue the Charter and place it on website;
- Formal announcement and publication in newspaper;
- Messages broadcasted on radio and television;
- Discussions on call-in radio and television shows;
- Internet and continuous update of the public institution web site:
  - Search engines
  - Public Websites
  - Partner Websites
  - Restricted Website
- SMS directions where to find the Charter;
- Distribution of copies to public representatives and key stakeholders;
- Newspaper articles;
- Conferences and other targeted events related to service delivery improvement.

- Trainings and orientation sessions to employees and their representatives.
- Other (mailing lists, web forums).

In brief, our customers include patients, researchers, students (and pupils), private companies, donor agencies and international organizations, local communities and local authorities, general public.

### **Commitment to our clients:**

This charter is a commitment by the HEC to provide high quality services to all our stakeholders/ customers. We in this regard endeavour to serve you effectively, with due diligence and professionalism. We shall uphold the utmost integrity in the delivery of our services.

### **Expectations from customers:**

In order to serve you better, you can help us improve performance by:

- Treating HEC staff with courtesy and respect;
- Abiding by the regulations governing the academics services;
- Suggesting ways of improving our services at HEC;
- Providing the HEC with adequate feedback on service delivery through various dissemination technologies;
- Addressing all complaints/compliments/suggestions to relevant department.

### **Contact:**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Tel.: +250 788309022  
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We shall acknowledge receipt and respond to all complaints made within 3 working days.

If the matter requires more investigation and time to be resolved, we shall inform you of the intended course of action and time frame of response.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

NCHE is a semi-autonomous institution under the Ministry of Education established under Law N°. 20/2005 of 20/10/05 governing the organization and functioning of Higher Education and Law No. 23/2006 of 28/04/2006 governing the National Council for Higher Education. It is responsible for securing coherent quality provision of higher education in Rwanda in line with Government policies and priorities. It is also responsible for strategic planning for the higher education sector as a whole and ensuring that institutions are developing and implementing strategic plans in line with national goals and objectives.

## **2. VISION**

To build an HE system underpinning Vision 2020 by supporting the development of a dynamic, entrepreneurial and internationally competitive Rwanda through the production of a skilled and educated graduate workforce and the carrying out of research, innovation and knowledge transfer to meet the needs of the economy and enhance the quality of life for all.

## **3. MISSION**

The primary mission of the NCHE is the assurance of quality and its enhancement in HE and to ensure that HLIs in Rwanda produce citizens capable of playing their part in the social and economic development of Rwandan.

## **4. CORE FUNCTIONS**

The National Council for Higher Education is responsible for advising the Minister in charge of Higher Education on all matters relating to the accreditation of higher education institutions. It is also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality and standard and ensuring the quality and enhancement of teaching and research.

## **5. CORE VALUES**

- To strive for high quality in its work and have high expectations of others.
- To be entrepreneurial, innovative and imaginative.

- To be transparent in its operations.
- To adopt a partnership approach.
- To value the contribution of its staff and strive to be an employer of first choice.
- To act with integrity and professionalism in dealings with both private and public HLIs.
- To promote equality of opportunity for all staff and students and respect diversity.
- To use resources effectively and efficiently.

## SERVICES OFFERED BY NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (NCHE)

### 1. Types of Services: Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions

<p><b>Services offered</b></p> <p><b>Eligibility</b></p>	<p>Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provisional operating agreement/License</li> <li>- Definitive operating agreement/License</li> </ul> <p>HLIs, Government bodies, donor agencies, and private sector</p>
<p><b>Department/directorates to be approached</b></p>	<p>Academic Quality Unit</p>
<p><b>When to access the services</b></p>	<p>Monday to Thursday: 7:00am to 5:00pm</p> <p>Friday: 7:00am to 12:00pm</p>
<p><b>Time taken to process requests</b></p>	<p>This depends on the kind of request that is made. Following examples:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1. A month : Request for program validation:</b></p> <p>The process of this kind of request involves a consideration of the proposed programme by a validation panel from NCHE which includes at least one external academic member who is an expert in the subject area of the proposed programme. Such an expert is head hunted regionally even beyond and might take <b>a month</b>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2. Six months for a provisional operating license or agreement for an institution of higher learning:</b></p> <p>The providers wishing to establish an institution of higher learning will have to meet the requirements</p>

	<p>of Institutional Audit and Subject Reviews as well as demonstrating they have sound financial management and the resources necessary to continue to deliver higher education of the necessary quality and standards. This process is short or long depending on the ability of the provider to meet all that is required by the NCHE audit team. On receipt of the audit report, the National Council for Higher Education will make a recommendation to the Minister of Education based on the outcome of the Institutional Audit for the Minister to decide.</p> <p>Decisions will normally be made within <b>six months</b> of the date of the receipt of the completed application and the Minister of Education will sign the agreement where the outcome is successful. The provisional operating license will be valid for up to <b>three years</b> from the date of the signature of the agreement, renewable once.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>3. Definitive operating agreement : Three (3) months from the date of the receipt of the application</b></p>
<b>Costs of service</b>	As up-to-date, this service is free of charge.
<b>Documents required</b>	<p><b>1. Written Application for a provisional agreement /License accompanied by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the denomination of the higher learning institution, its headquarters, its category and the teaching disciplines;</li> <li>- the mission and objectives of the institution;</li> <li>- a detailed document specifying the assets</li> </ul>

	<p>and financial resources of the institution;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- a document showing the organization and administration of the institution;</li><li>- the details on the system of admission of students and on the teaching programmes offered by the institution;</li><li>- a detailed document specifying the nature of the buildings and equipment connected to the kind of training to be offered;</li><li>- a document specifying the size of the planned personnel, its category and the classification of its posts;</li><li>- a detailed document describing existing or planned infrastructure;</li><li>- a document showing the functional and financial management control system of the institution;</li><li>- the certificate of full identity of the founder of a Higher Learning institution and the certificate of legal personality, if it is a legal person.</li></ul> <p><b>2. Written application for a definitive operating agreement,</b> accompanied by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the provisional operating agreement;</li><li>- a list of members of the permanent academic, administrative and technical staff indicating their qualifications;</li><li>- a list of students in each level;</li><li>- the detailed document describing buildings and equipment in relation with the training offered;</li><li>- an annual activity and financial report of the institution approved by an authorized auditor;</li><li>- an inventory of current and fixed assets of</li></ul>
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	<p>the institution;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any other document that may be required by the Minister in charge of Higher Education.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Procedure for making and submitting applications</b></p>	<p>Applications are submitted directly to Executive Director's office:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The provider makes a written application to the National Council for Higher Education providing the information as set out below together with the Application Form (Appendix 3). The Minister of Education can require a non-accredited provider to make such application.</li> <li>2. Ten bound copies of the submission (in French and English) should be supplied (A preliminary single copy may be submitted to the National Council for checking that all necessary material is included prior to the submission of the 10 copies).</li> <li>3. Officials in the National Council check the formal submission to ensure that it confirms with the requirements and contains all the necessary documentation. The application is then acknowledged, or the applicant is requested to amend the application/provide additional documentation so that it meets the necessary requirements.</li> <li>4. The National Council for Higher Education establishes an expert committee to advice on the application. The five members of the</li> </ol>

	<p>expert committee are selected from amongst the Rectors, Vice Rectors Academic or other senior staff of higher education institutions and may in addition include one Rector/Vice Rector/senior academic from an institution of higher education outside of Rwanda. The expert committee scrutinizes the application and takes whatever expert advice it considers necessary in coming to agreement as to the advice it will provide the Minister of Education.</p> <p>5. The expert committee may choose to meet senior representatives from the institution and/or visit the premises in order to enable it to reach a decision on the advice it will give, but it does not have to do so.</p> <p>6. The expert committee provides written advice to the Minister on the merits of the application together with a recommendation as to whether provisional recognition should be given or not. If the recommendation is to reject the application, the committee may also indicate if a revised application should be encouraged.</p> <p>The Minister, on receipt of the advice from the expert committee, then makes a decision and informs the applicant accordingly.</p>
<p><b>Other institutions that you may need to access</b></p>	<p>None</p>

<b>their services before coming to NCHE</b>	
<b>Complaints procedure</b>	There is a complaints procedure. All complaints have to be submitted directly to Executive Director's Office for action
<b>Additional information</b>	This is accessed from NCHE website: <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a> , For further information call on this telephone number : Tel. +250 788309022, +250 788506161, +250 785701724, +250 788531122 during office hours
<b>Forms available</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application for Accreditation ( Provisional Operating Agreement to establish and Operate ) for a private Institution of Higher Education</li> <li>- Application for Accreditation (Definitive Operating Agreement) for a Private Institution of Higher Education</li> <li>- Program proposal Form</li> </ul> <p>Forms are available and can be downloaded from NCHE website: <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a>.</p>
<b>Relevant legal documents</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Law n°20/2005 of 20/10/2005 governing the organization and functioning of Higher education</li> <li>2. Law n°23/2006 of 28/04/2006 governing the National Council of Higher Education</li> <li>3. Presidential Order <b>N°51/01 of 13/07/2010</b> establishing quality standards in higher learning institutions</li> <li>4. General Academic Regulations</li> <li>5. Qualification for Framework and Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education</li> <li>6. Rwandan national policy on academic appointment and promotion procedures in higher education;</li> <li>7. Rwandan national policy framework for the recognition, accreditation, institutional audit and subject review in higher education;</li> <li>8. Rwandan national qualifications framework</li> </ol>

	<p>for higher education;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. National student admission policy;</li><li>10. National staff development policy for higher education;</li><li>11. National learning, teaching and assessment policy;</li><li>12. National equality and diversity policy for higher education</li><li>13. Procedures for Validation of Modules and Programs</li><li>14. Guidelines for provisional Recognition of Private Institutions of higher education</li><li>15. Document describing Powers, Responsibility and Duties of Higher learning Institutions</li></ol> <p>NB: These can be accessed from the NCHE website, <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a>, and Amategeko.net website: <a href="http://www.amategeko.net">www.amategeko.net</a></p>
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**2. Types of Services: Information on Quality and standard in order to ensure the quality and enhancement of teaching and research**

<b>Services offered</b>	Information on Quality and standard in order to ensure the quality and enhancement of teaching and research.
<b>Eligibility</b>	HLIs, Government bodies, donor agencies, and private sector
<b>Department/directorates to approach</b>	Academic Quality Unit
<b>When to access the services</b>	Monday to Thursday: 7:00am to 5:00pm Friday: 7:00am to 12:00pm
<b>Time taken to process requests</b>	Between 30 minutes to 2 days
<b>Costs of service</b>	None
<b>Documents required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application/Request</li> <li>- All the necessary documentation (Programs, List of Materials)</li> </ul>
<b>Procedure for making and submitting applications</b>	Applications are submitted directly to Executive Director's office
<b>Other institutions that you may need to access their services before coming to NCHE</b>	None
<b>Complaints procedure</b>	There is a complaints procedure. All complaints have to be submitted directly to executive director's office for action

<b>Additional information</b>	This is accessed from NCHE website: <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a> , For further information call on this telephone number: Tel. +250 788309022, +250 788506161, +250 785701724, +250 788531122 during office hours.
<b>Forms available</b>	Forms are available and can be downloaded from NCHE website: <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a> .
<b>Relevant legal documents</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Law n°20/2005 of 20/10/2005 governing the organization and functioning of Higher education</li> <li>2. Law n°23/2006 of 28/04/2006 governing the National Council of Higher Education</li> <li>3. Presidential Order <b>N°51/01 of 13/07/2010</b> establishing quality standards in higher learning institutions</li> <li>4. General Academic Regulations</li> <li>5. Qualification for Framework and Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education</li> <li>6. Rwandan national policy on academic appointment and promotion procedures in higher education;</li> <li>7. Rwandan national policy framework for the recognition, accreditation, institutional audit and subject review in higher education;</li> <li>8. Rwandan national qualifications framework for higher education;</li> <li>9. National student admission policy;</li> <li>10. National staff development policy for higher education;</li> <li>11. National learning, teaching and assessment policy;</li> <li>12. National equality and diversity policy for higher education</li> <li>13. Procedures for Validation of Modules and Programs</li> <li>14. Guidelines for provisional Recognition of Private Institutions of higher education</li> <li>15. Document describing Powers, Responsibility and Duties of Higher learning Institutions</li> </ol>

	NB: These can be accessed from the NCHE website, <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a> , and Amategeko.net website: <a href="http://www.amategeko.net">www.amategeko.net</a>
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### 3. Types of Services: Foreign academic equivalence service

<b>Services offered</b>	Provides foreign academic equivalence service
<b>Eligibility</b>	HLIs, Students, Government bodies, donor agencies, and private sector
<b>Department/directorates to approach</b>	Academic Quality Unit
<b>When to access the services</b>	Monday to Thursday: 7:00am to 5:00pm Friday: 7:00am to 12:00pm
<b>Time taken to process requests</b>	Month, a week or even two days depending on the circumstances in which the requesting institution is categorized. <u>Equivalence request</u> : this kind of request might take a month, a week or even two days depending on the circumstances in which the requesting institution is categorized. Any degree delivering institution must prove to NCHE its accreditation and other related documents, and this can take long or short depending on its vicinity.
<b>Costs of service</b>	Only 1,000 RWF is paid for obtaining an equivalence certificate,
<b>Documents required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Request/ Application Letter</li> <li>- Accreditation of the institution/ University's legal act/Charter</li> <li>- Programs offered by the institution</li> <li>- Institution's prospectus/catalogue</li> <li>- Individual's original Diploma/degree and transcripts</li> </ul>
<b>Procedure for making</b>	Individual candidate submits the following:

<p><b>and submitting applications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application letter addressed to Executive Director</li> <li>- Notified copies of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Certificate</li> <li>+ Transcripts</li> </ul> </li> <li>- RRA receipt of 1,000frw</li> <li>- Copy of Identification (ID)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other institutions that you may need to access their services before coming to NCHE</b></p>	<p>RRA ( for payment of 1,000 RWF for equivalence certificate)</p>
<p><b>Complaints procedure</b></p>	<p>There is a complaints procedure. All complaints have to be submitted directly to executive director’s office for action</p>
<p><b>Additional information</b></p>	<p>This is accessed from NCHE website: <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a>, For further information call on this telephone number : Tel. +250 788309022, +250 788506161, +250 785701724, +250 788531122 during office hours.</p>
<p><b>Forms available</b></p>	<p>Forms are available and can be downloaded from NCHE website: <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a>.</p>
<p><b>Relevant legal documents</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Law n° 20/2005 of 20/10/2005 governing the organization and functioning of Higher education</li> <li>2. Law n°23/2006 of 28/04/2006 governing the National Council of Higher Education</li> <li>3. Presidential Order <b>N°51/01 of 13/07/2010</b> establishing quality standards in higher learning institutions</li> <li>4. General Academic Regulations</li> <li>5. Qualification for Framework and Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education</li> <li>6. Rwandan national policy on academic appointment and promotion procedures in</li> </ol>

	<p>higher education;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Rwandan national policy framework for the recognition, accreditation, institutional audit and subject review in higher education;</li> <li>8. Rwandan national qualifications framework for higher education;</li> <li>9. National student admission policy;</li> <li>10. National staff development policy for higher education;</li> <li>11. National learning, teaching and assessment policy;</li> <li>12. National equality and diversity policy for higher education</li> <li>13. Procedures for Validation of Modules and Programs</li> <li>14. Guidelines for provisional Recognition of Private Institutions of higher education</li> <li>15. Document describing Powers, Responsibility and Duties of Higher learning Institutions</li> </ol> <p>NB: These can be accessed from the NCHE website, <a href="http://www.highereducationcouncil.org">www.highereducationcouncil.org</a>, and Amategeko.net website: <a href="http://www.amategeko.net">www.amategeko.net</a></p>
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Approved by **Prof. Geoffrey RUGEGE**

Executive Director

Date: .....