



**National
Council for
Higher Education**
Ensuring Quality for Excellence

**GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND
REVIEW OF COMPETENCE BASED
PROGRAMMES**

MARCH, 2026

**Logo of the
Institution**

Name of the Institution

Proposed Programme Name:

**Submitted to
National Council for Higher
Education, for Accreditation**

Month and Year

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Institution

(Provide a concise institutional profile including year of establishment, accreditation status, mandate, academic growth, and strategic direction).

1.2 Vision

(Insert Institutional Vision Statement)

1.3 Mission

(Insert Institutional Mission Statement)

1.4 Core Values

(List the Institution Core Values)

1.5 Legal Status

(Indicate the Legal Status of the Institution)

2. Governance and Management

Indicate how the programme is governed under the institutional governance framework, which should comprise but not limited to:

- a) University Council/Governing Council
- b) Senate/Academic Board
- c) Faculty Board
- d) Departmental Board
- e) Quality Assurance Directorate
- f) Students' leadership

The programme governance and reporting systems including the host faculty organogram should be clearly illustrated.

3. Programme Name, Code and Duration

Under this heading, clearly state:

a) Programme Name and corresponding Award

- i. The full programme name and the corresponding title of the award (e.g., Bachelor of Science in..., Diploma in..., Master of...).
- ii. The level of the programme according to UHEQF (e.g., Level 7 – Bachelor's Degree).

For Example,

The proposed programme shall be known as **Bachelor of [Full Programme Name]**.

The programme is classified at **Level 7 of the Uganda Higher Education Qualification Framework (UHEQF)** and shall lead to the award of **Bachelor of (Programme Name)** upon successful completion.

b) Programme Code

- i. A structured code aligned to institutional coding format.
- ii. It should reflect:
 - a. Level of study (e.g., 7 for Bachelor's).
 - b. Year of study.
 - c. Semester.
 - d. Departmental course serial number (where applicable).

The programme code shall be structured in accordance with institutional coding standards and the UHEQF level descriptors.

Example format: **BBA 71101**

c) Duration: Should consider;

- i. Number of academic years.
- ii. Number of semesters/trimesters
- iii. Duration of semesters/trimesters
- iv. Total credits required for graduation.
- v. Total Notional Hours (NH).
- vi. Conformity with NCHE minimum graduation load requirements.
- vii. Mode of study (Full-time, Part-time, Distance/Blended).

For example, the programme shall run for **(Three/Four/Five) Academic Years**, comprising **(Six/Eight/Ten) Semesters** under full-time study.

d) The minimum graduation load shall be:

- i. **Total Credits:** (360/480/600) Credits
- ii. **Total Notional Hours (NH):** (3,600/4,800/6,000) NLH
- iii. **Average Load per Semester:** 600 NLH

One Credit is equivalent to **10 Notional Hours**, in accordance with NCHE guidelines.

4. Programme Description

This section should provide:

- a) A concise but comprehensive overview of the programme.
- b) The disciplinary focus and scope.
- c) Key thematic areas covered.
- d) Expectation from the graduate.
- e) Teaching philosophy (for example, student-centered, experiential learning).

It should answer:

- i. What is the programme about?
- ii. What does it prepare students to do?
- iii. What makes it distinctive?

5. Programme Development/Review Process

Clearly describe:

- a) When and why the programme was developed or reviewed.
- b) Needs assessment conducted (labour market surveys, tracer studies, stakeholder consultations).
- c) Benchmarking against national, regional, and international programmes.
- d) Stakeholders involved: for example. Industry experts, Professional bodies, Academic staff, Employers, Alumni, students etc.
- e) Institutional approval processes followed (Department, Faculty, Senate, Council).
- f) Evidence of quality assurance and curriculum validation

6. Programme Rationale/Justification

This section should justify the need for the programme by explaining:

- a) National, regional, or global demand.
- b) Skills gaps identified.
- c) Employment trends.
- d) Government policy alignment.
- e) Industry demand and professional shortages.
- f) Contribution to innovation, research, and community development.
- g) Institutional strategic fit (Vision and Mission alignment).

It should answer:

- i. Why is this programme necessary?
- ii. What problem does it solve?
- iii. Why now?

7. Programme Competences

Programme competences describe the **broad abilities** graduates will possess.

They should include:

- a) Knowledge Competences** (Theoretical understanding and Conceptual mastery).

b) Practical/Technical Competences (Hands-on and professional skills and Application of tools, technologies, or methodologies).

c) Cognitive Competences (Critical thinking, Analytical reasoning and Problem-solving).

d) Affective/Professional Competences (Ethics, Professional conduct, Teamwork and Leadership).

8. Programme Learning Outcomes

These are **specific, measurable statements** describing what learners should be able to demonstrate upon completion.

They should:

- a) Be aligned to programme competences.
- b) Use action verbs (e.g., analyze, design, evaluate, demonstrate).
- c) Cover:
 - i. Knowledge outcomes
 - ii. Skills outcomes
 - iii. Values and professional attitudes
- d) Be assessable through defined assessment strategies.
- e) Reflect the qualification level (UHEQF level descriptor).

Example:

Upon Successful completion of the programme, the graduate should be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of concepts and theories in [discipline].
2. Apply appropriate techniques and tools in solving complex professional problems.
3. Conduct independent research and present findings effectively.
4. Design innovative solutions addressing societal and industry needs.
5. Demonstrate ethical conduct and professional responsibility.
6. Communicate effectively in both oral and written formats.
7. Work collaboratively in multidisciplinary teams.

9. Target Group

Specify:

- a) Intended applicants (e.g., UACE holders, diploma holders, working professionals).
- b) Career stage (fresh school leavers, in-service professionals).
- c) Sector focus (public, private, NGOs, industry).

- d) Special categories (international students, mature-age entrants).

10. Programme Entry/Admission Requirements

State clearly:

- a) The institution shall specify the admission requirements to the programme which are inline with NCHE minimum admission standards.

11. Human Resources – Academic, Administrative and Support Staff

List, in a tabular form the human resources dedicated/proposed for the programme (Administrative staff, academic staff and support staff like the Technicians with the qualifications, awarding institutions and when graduated together with area of specialisation and terms of employment).

Provide a **tabulated list** including:

- a) Full name.
- b) All qualifications
- c) Awarding institution.
- d) Year of award.
- e) Area of specialization.
- f) Employment status (Full-time/Part-time).
- g) Gender.
- h) Registration with professional bodies (if applicable).

This is implied

| No | Name of Staff | Qualifications and Awarding Institutions | Year of Award | Area of specialisation | Status/proposed | Gender (Female or Male) |
|----|------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Dr. John Tayebwa | PhD CSc (York), MSc CS (Mak), BSc CS (UCU). | 2015 2006 2001 | Computer Science | Full time | M |
| 2 | Ms. Anne Nabwire | MSc CS (KyU), BSc CS (UMU). | 2025 2015 | Computer Science | Part time | F |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

The academic staff should possess qualifications relevant to the discipline (minimum Master's degree for undergraduate teaching), Have demonstrable teaching and research experience, and be registered with relevant professional bodies (where applicable).

12. Physical Infrastructure and Learning Resources

Clearly show availability of adequate physical facilities and learning resources to support the effective delivery of the (Programme Name) at the institution in compliance with NCHE standards.

12.1 Administrative Offices

The programme is supported by dedicated administrative offices including; Dean's Office, Head of Department's Office, Programme Coordinator's Office, Administrative Support Office, Staff-room, Board room etc.

Indicate the specific facilities in each office e.g. adequately furnished, equipped with computers, internet connectivity, filing systems, and secure record storage facilities.

12.2 Lecture Rooms

Clearly indicate the number and capacity of the lecture rooms to support the delivery of the programme. The table below provides a guide:

| Room | Area (sqm) | Shared/Dedicated | Equipment/facilities |
|----------------|--------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Lecture Room 1 | 80 students | Dedicated | Projector, Smart Board |
| Lecture Room 2 | 120 students | Shared | Projector, PA System |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

12.3 Library Facilities

Indicate the provisions of the University Library in relation to:

- a) Size of the Library/Reading space
- b) Number hard-copy textbooks relevant to the programme/number of titles
- c) Access to peer-reviewed journals
- d) Access to electronic databases and e-books
- e) Institutional repository services
- f) Qualified librarians and research support staff

12.4 Computer Laboratory

Specify the provisions to support the learning and delivery of the programme; including:

- a) (Number) functional computers

- b) Reliability of internet connectivity
- c) Bandwidth (specify Mbps)
- d) Licensed software relevant to the discipline (if any)
- e) IT support personnel

12.5 Laboratories / Workshops/Studios/Demonstration Farms (where applicable)

Indicate the available specialised laboratories/workshops to support the programme delivery; including:

- a) Size of Laboratories / Workshops/Studios/Demonstration Farms
- b) List of major equipment
- c) Safety equipment and standard operating procedures
- d) Available laboratory technicians
- e) Attach a detailed inventory of equipment.

13. Modes/Strategies of Delivery

The programme should adopt a **Competence-Based Education (CBE)** approach emphasising active, student-centred, and experiential learning methodologies.

Examples of the Delivery methods include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Interactive Lectures
- b) Project-Based Learning (PBL)
- c) Problem-Based Learning
- d) Case Studies
- e) Tutorials and Seminars
- f) Practical and Laboratory Sessions
- g) Fieldwork and Industry Placements
- h) Role Play and Simulations
- i) Group Discussions and Debates
- j) Guest Lectures by Industry Practitioners
- k) Self-Directed Learning

14. Modes/ Strategies of Assessment

Assessment should be competency-based, continuous, authentic, and aligned with clearly defined learning outcomes. Examples of modes of assessment include; Tests, Practicals, Portfolios, Group work, case study, document critical analysis, presentations, projects etc. Consider both Formative and Summative assessment with more emphasis on the critical value of continuous assessment.

14.1 Formative Assessment (Minimum 50%)

Formative assessment is continuous and developmental. It should constitute at least 50% of the total assessment.

Examples include:

- a) Continuous Tests – 10%
- b) Practical Assignments – 15%
- c) Projects (Individual/Group) – 10%
- d) Case Studies – 5%
- e) Portfolio Development – 5%
- f) Participation and Professional Conduct – 5%

Formative assessments should provide timely feedback to enhance learning progression.

14.2 Summative Assessment (Maximum 50%)

Summative assessment should constitute not more than 50% of the total assessment.

Examples include:

- a) End-of-Semester Examinations
- b) Capstone Projects
- c) Practical Examinations
- d) Research Reports

Summative assessments should emphasise higher-order cognitive skills including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

N.B. Formative and summative assessments must be passed independently

14.3 Grading Scheme

The grading system shall be in accordance with institutional academic regulations and in conformity with the NCHE regulatory provisions.

15. Progression

Indicate how Student progression is governed and guided by institutional academic policies, for example:

- a) **Normal Progression:** Successful completion of required credits per semester.
- b) **Probationary Status:** Applied where minimum GPA is not attained.
- c) **Retake:** Students retake failed courses in accordance with regulations.
- d) **Deferred Year:** Granted on justified grounds.
- e) **Discontinuation:** Applied where academic performance remains unsatisfactory.

16. Minimum Graduation Load

The minimum graduation load complies with UHEQF and NCHE requirements.

For a Bachelor's Degree (3 years):

- a) **Total Credits:** 360
- b) **Total Notional Hours:** 3,600 NH
- c) **Average per Semester:** 600 NH

One Academic Credit equals 10 Notional Learning Hours.

Notional Hours comprise:

- a) Directed Hours (DH)
- b) Self-Study Hours (SH)
- c) Assessment Hours (AH)
- d) Other Hours (OH)

Table of Graduation Load

An average load per semester is 600 Notional Hours.

| STUDENT MINIMUM GRADUATION LOAD | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | Programme | Number of years | Number of Semesters | Credits | Notional Hours |
| a | Higher Education Certificate | 1 | 2 | 120 | 1,200 |
| b | Diploma Programme | 2 | 4 | 240 | 2,400 |
| c | Diploma Programme | 3 | 6 | 360 | 3,600 |
| d | Bachelors Degree | 2 | 4 | 240 | 2,400 |
| e | Bachelors Degree | 3 | 6 | 360 | 3,600 |
| f | Bachelors Degree | 4 | 8 | 480 | 4,800 |
| g | Bachelors Degree of | 5 | 10 | 600 | 6,000 |
| h | Postgraduate Certificate | 1 | 1 | 60 | 600 |
| i | Postgraduate Diploma | 1 | 2 | 120 | 1,200 |
| j | Masters | 2 | Course work and Project Report | 240 | 2,400 |
| k | Masters | 2 | Course work and Dissertation | 300 | 3,000 |
| l | Masters | 2 | Research only | 180 | 1,800 |
| m | Doctorate | 3 | | 540 | 5,400 |

Table: The Uganda Higher Education Qualification Framework (UHEQF)

| LEVEL | EQUIVALENT (UHEQF) |
|--------------|--|
| 9 | Doctoral Degrees |
| 8 | a) Master Degree b) Postgraduate Diploma c) Postgraduate Certificate |
| 7 | Bachelor Degree |
| 6 | Higher/Advanced Diploma |
| 5 | Ordinary Diploma |
| 4 | Higher Education Certificate (HEC). |
| 3 | Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) |
| 2 | Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE). |
| 1 | Primary Leaving Certificate (PLE). |

17. Curriculum Structure

The curriculum structure is presented in a matrix format indicating:

- a) Course Code
- b) Course Name
- c) Directed Hours (DH)
- d) Self-Study Hours (SH)
- e) Assessment Hours (AH)
- f) Other Hours (OH)
- g) Total Notional Hours (NH)
- h) Credits

Example:

BBA 71102 is the course Code which means:

7 - Is the level of the programme in the Uganda Higher Education Qualification Framework.

1 - is the year of study (Year One).

1- Is the semester of study (Semester One).

2 - Is the serial number of this course in the department.

Table of Curriculum Structure/Matrix

| Course Code | Course Name | DH | SH | AH | OH | NH | C |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ICT 71101 | Computer Literacy | 45 | 35 | 30 | 10 | 120 | 12 |
| BBA 71102 | Communication Skills | 45 | - | 35 | 10 | 90 | 9 |
| | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------|-----------|
| | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | 620 | 62 |

A guide to Curriculum Structure/Matrix Parameters

Directed Learning Hours (DLH) - Components

- a) Structured learning activities with direct Lecturer/Facilitator interaction.
- b) In-Person and Virtual Instruction: Physical and virtual platforms.
- c) Lectures: Foundational knowledge and core concepts.
- d) Small Group Sessions: Tutorials, seminars, and workshops.
- e) Practical Sessions and Demonstrations: Hands-on experiences.
- f) Tutorials: Feedback on assessed work.

Self-Study Learning Hours (SLH) - Components

- a) Independent learning activities to deepen understanding.
- b) Emphasises independent learning and responsibility.
- c) Includes preparation, follow-up work, additional reading and practice.
- d) Problem-Solving and Practice, Research and Reading, Review of Lecture Notes, Software Tool Practice, Session Preparation and Follow-Up, Wider Reading and Exploration, Group Work and Peer Discussions, Practical Hands-On.
- e) Portfolio

Assessment Learning Hours (ALH) - Components

- a) Activities related to preparing for and participating in formal assessments.
- b) Consolidate knowledge and demonstrate understanding.
- c) Exam Preparation, Project Work and Assignment Completion, Practice Tests and Mock Exams, Group Study for Assessments, Presentation Preparation, Feedback Review and Improvements.

Other Learning Hours (OLH)- Components

- a) Experiential learning opportunities beyond formal contact hours and self-study.
- b) Supervised Placements and Practice Hours.
- c) School Placements, Professional Placements, Academic Conferences, workshops and Seminars.

DETAILED COURSE CONTENT

COMPUTER LITERACY

Course Name, Code and Duration

Course Name: Computer Literacy
Course Code : ICT 71101
Course Level : Year 1 Semester 1
Notional Hours: 120
Credit : 12

Course Description

This Computer Literacy course is a foundational, competency-based induction course designed to equip learners with essential digital literacy knowledge, practical ICT skills, and responsible technology-use competencies required in higher education and the modern digital workplace.

The course develops students' ability to:

- a) Understand core computer concepts (hardware, software, operating systems, and storage)
- b) Use productivity applications effectively (word processing, spreadsheets, presentations)
- c) Access, evaluate, and communicate information using digital platforms
- d) Practice safe, ethical, and responsible use of digital technologies
- e) Apply digital tools to academic and real-world problem-solving tasks

The course emphasizes hands-on practice, performance-based learning, and authentic assessment. By the end of the course, learners demonstrate competence in executing essential digital tasks independently, efficiently, and ethically.

Course Competences

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe key computer system components including hardware, software, operating systems, and storage devices.
2. Create, format, edit, and manage professional documents using modern word processing software.
3. Analyse data using spreadsheet software, applying formulas, functions, and graphical tools appropriately.
4. Demonstrate ethical, responsible, and professional digital behaviour in academic and workplace contexts.
5. Use digital technologies to solve simple real-world and academic tasks independently.

Detailed Course Content

1. Introduction Computers (20 hours)

- i) History and Evolution of Computer Systems, Definition, Classification
- ii) Hardware and Software Concepts
- iii) Computer Storage
- iv) Advantages and Uses of Computers

2. Computer Operating Systems and Applications (20 hours)

- i) Windows GUI Vs Linux
- ii) Managing files and Folders
- iii) Ms Word Basics

3. Computer Applications Continued (20 hours)

- i) Ms Excel Basics
- ii) Formulas and functions, Graphs

4. **Presentation Software (20 hours)**
 - Presentation Design Basics
5. **Information and Communication (20 hours)**
 - i) LAN, WAN, Internet, Emails
 - ii) Computer in Everyday life (Home, Office, and Daily)
6. **Computer Security and Care (20 hours)**
 - i) Security, Virus,
 - ii) Computer care

Learning and Teaching Resources

Relevant text books, library e-resources, power point slides, a projector, lap top, management information system and teaching aids necessary.

Modes /Strategies of Delivery

The programme adopts a **Competency-Based Education (CBE)** approach that prioritizes active, student-centered, experiential, and technology-enhanced learning methodologies. The focus shifts from passive lecture-based instruction to participatory and performance-driven learning experiences that promote mastery of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes.

Examples:

- a) Interactive Lectures and Guided Learning
- b) Project-Based Learning (PBL)
- c) Problem-Based and Case-Based Learning
- d) Practical and Laboratory Sessions
- e) Tutorials and Small Group Discussions
- f) Fieldwork, Community Engagement, and Industry Exposure
- g) Self-Directed and Independent Learning
- h) Guest Lectures and Practitioner Engagement

Modes/Strategies of Assessment

Assessment in this programme is competency-based, continuous, authentic, and aligned with clearly defined learning outcomes. It emphasizes demonstration of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes.

Assessment is categorized into **Formative (minimum 50%)** and **Summative (maximum 50%)**, in accordance with CBE principles

a) Formative Assessment (Minimum 50%)

Formative assessment is continuous and developmental. It provides feedback that supports learning improvement and mastery of competencies.

Examples include:

- a) Continuous Tests and Quizzes
Short tests designed to assess understanding of core concepts.
- b) Practical Assignments
- c) Hands-on tasks that assess technical and procedural skills.
- d) Projects- Individual or group projects requiring application of theory to real-world contexts.
- e) Case Study Analysis- Critical examination of practical scenarios to assess analytical and problem-solving skills.
- f) Portfolios -Compilation of evidence demonstrating progressive competency development.

- g) Presentations and Demonstrations -Assessment of communication skills, confidence, and conceptual clarity.
- h) Reflective Journals -Used to assess affective learning outcomes such as ethical awareness, professional growth, and attitude change.
- i) Participation and Professional Conduct -Evaluates teamwork, punctuality, collaboration, and engagement.

b) Summative Assessment (Maximum 50%)

Summative assessment evaluates cumulative learning at the end of a course or semester. Summative assessments are designed to measure higher-order cognitive skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) rather than rote memorization.

Examples include:

- a) End-of-Semester Examinations- May include structured questions, case-based scenarios, and applied problem-solving tasks.
- b) Capstone Projects or Practical Examinations -Where applicable, students demonstrate integrated competencies in authentic performance settings.
- c) Research Reports or Technical Papers -Evaluates analytical depth, research competence, and academic writing skills.

Reading List/References

1. Ciampa, M. (2022). *CompTIA IT fundamentals (ITF+) study guide* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons.
2. Evans, A., Martin, K., & Poatsy, M. A. (2023). *Technology in action: Complete* (18th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson Education.
3. Parsons, J. J., & Oja, D. (2022). *New perspectives on computer concepts 2022: Comprehensive* (23rd ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
4. Sanders, D. H. (2020). *Computers today* (15th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.
5. Shelly, G. B., & Vermaat, M. E. (2021). *Discovering computers: Digital technology, data, and devices* (17th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
6. Stair, R., & Reynolds, G. (2023). *Principles of information systems* (14th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

18. Research and Innovation

Specify how the programme integrates research and innovation. This can be through:

- a) Research methodology courses
- b) Key projects
- c) Industry-based problem-solving projects
- d) Undergraduate research conferences
- e) Community-based research initiatives

Students should be encouraged to engage in applied research addressing societal and industry challenges.

19. Community Engagement

Indicate how Community engagement is embedded in the curriculum. This can be evidenced through:

- a) Fieldwork placements
- b) Service-learning projects
- c) Community-based research
- d) Partnerships with local organisations
- e) Outreach programmes

The programme should be developed and implemented in such a way that it contributes to community transformation and sustainable development.

20. Policies

Indicate how the programme operates in compliance with institutional and national policies including: strategic plan, Human Resources policy, admissions policy, financial management policy, Academic Regulations, Quality Assurance Policy, Research and Innovation Policy, Gender and Equity Policy, Disability Inclusion Policy, Examination and Assessment Policy, Staff Development Policy, ICT Policy etc.

You should specify the available policies and how often they are reviewed to ensure compliance with NCHE standards.

21. Financial Resources and Sustainability

Clearly indicate how the programme is financially sustainable, such as through: Tuition and functional fees, Institutional budget allocations, Research grants (where applicable), and Strategic partnerships among others.

22. Students Welfare (Sports facilities, Health facilities, Places of worship, Counselling Services).