



ECZ

IN PERSPECTIVE

News about the Examinations Council of Zambia

Issue No. 23

January to June 2025



ECZ GEARS UP FOR ASSESSMENTS UNDER THE 2023 COMPETENCE BASED CURRICULUM

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The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) was established by an Act of Parliament Number 15 of 1983 which was repealed and replaced with the ECZ Act Number 3 of 2023 with a mandate to set and conduct examinations and award certificates to successful candidates.

VISION

An Educational Assessment Body of Excellence

MISSION STATEMENT

To Efficiently Conduct Educational Assessments and Award Certificates of Comparable International Standards.

VALUES

Professionalism
Integrity
Accountability
Innovativeness
Teamwork

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Dear readers,

We are grateful for your continued support to the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) in fulfilling its mandate. For this reason, we owe it to you and wish to continue sharing information on what we are doing to realise this mandate and to attain our vision. In this edition, we have provided details on our recently conducted training for setters and item writers on competence-based assessment preparation. This initiative aims to enhance the quality of assessments and ensure that they align with the new curriculum. The training focused on developing items that test learners' competences in various subjects, emphasizing critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity among other critical skills and competencies the new curriculum intends to establish, develop, nurture and achieve.

We also provide guidance in detail on what will happen to the G9 candidates who sit our Junior Secondary School Leaving Examination with the coming of the new curriculum. A significant move that discontinues the Junior Secondary School Leaving and Junior Secondary External examinations to pave way for the implementation of the new curriculum that is Competence-Based. This change reflects the Council's commitment to aligning its assessment practices with the new curriculum's requirements. The decision is expected to improve the assessment process, making it more relevant and effective in measuring learners' competences.

In terms of our digital transformation, the ECZ continues to prioritise digital transformation as a means of enhancing service delivery. By leveraging technology, the Council aims to streamline its operations, improve efficiency, and provide better services to stakeholders. This initiative is expected to have a positive impact on the overall assessment process, making it more accessible, reliable, and efficient. In a similar manner, we relocated our Livingstone Service Centre to enhance on the customer experience when we serve clients physically.

The ECZ has also taken steps to improve the conditions for the professional work of setters and item writers by increasing their allowances. This move demonstrates the Council's commitment to recognising the critical role that these professionals play in developing high-quality assessments. The improved allowances are expected to motivate setters and item writers to continue delivering excellent work.

The ECZ remains committed to effective examination administration and management. Therefore, the Council continues to engage with various stakeholders, including learners, teachers and parents to address concerns and provide feedback. This commitment to transparency and accountability ensures that the assessment process is fair, reliable and valid.

In this issue, we remain committed and value the feedback and concerns of our stakeholders. We have a section that is dedicated to feedback. The Council continues to provide regular updates and responses to queries, demonstrating our commitment to transparency and accountability. By engaging with you our stakeholders, the ECZ can identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments to enhance the assessment process.

In conclusion, the ECZ's recent initiatives demonstrate its commitment to improving the assessment process and enhancing service delivery. Through training, digital transformation and stakeholder engagement, the Council is working to ensure that its assessments are valid, reliable, and relevant to the needs of learners and stakeholders.

Enjoy reading this edition.

Nicolas Nkhuwa
Public Relations Manager
Examinations Council of Zambia

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Editorial Team
Dr Michael M. Chilala
Mr Nicolas Nkhuwa
Ms Angela Mwandu
Mr Fredrick Simasiku
Mrs Banji M. Shakubanza
Mr Clairs Chileshe
Mrs Bathseba C. Sakala
Mr Boniface Lisuba

Mr Henry A. Muloongo
Mr Akakulubelwa Nalishuwa
Photo Editor
Mr Nicolas Nkhuwa
Contributors
Mr Akakulubelwa Nalishuwa
Dr Kunda Kuku

Mr Milimo Mweemba
Mr Julius Sambiana
Mr Smart Sakala
Mr Bright Chiwama
Enerst Mukubesa

Published By
Examinations Council of Zambia, Haile Selassie Avenue, Long Acres, P.O. Box 50432, Lusaka, Zambia.
Tel: +260 211 252544, +260 211 252588, +260 211 254629, +260 211 226464
E-mail: info@exams-council.org.zm
Website: www.exams-council.org.zm
Facebook: www.facebook.com/examsCouncilZambia

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Dr Michael M. Chilala

Embracing Change: ECZ's Progress in Curriculum Transition and Operational Efficiency

Over the period January to June, 2025, we had very exciting experiences, like was the case over the past ten years or so. This time around, we begun the year looking into the issue of the transition from the 2013 Outcomes Based to the 2023 Competence Based Curricula (CBC). In the first instance, our focus was to ensure that our consultants (draft setters and examiners), our examination specialists, or partners in the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders have a common understanding of what competence-based assessment is, given the fact that the Ministry of Education had just implemented the 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (ZECF), which focuses on competence-based teaching and learning.

We therefore had our officers, together with all stakeholders trained in Competence Based Assessment (CBA). After training, we moved to interpret the curricula, mapped the content and developed draft Assessment Schemes based on the 2023 ZECF. As a way of enriching our resource materials as we move to finalise the Assessment Schemes, we planned to host and conduct benchmarking visits to Uganda and Kenya and prepared to host the 50th Conference of the International Association for Educational Assessment, (IAEA) both activities to take place in the third quarter of 2025. We are hopeful that by end of 2025, we will have concluded the development of the Assessment Schemes as we drift towards 2028, when the first Primary and School Certificate Ordinary Level examinations will take place.

Then we focussed on the issue of operational efficiency by promoting and implementing our self-service portal, and delving into developing a robust processing system in-house. The self-service portal was launched by the Minister of Education, Honourable Douglas Syakalima, MP, in 2024. During the first half of 2025, we focused on integrating the services to

the payment gateway, to allow for smooth online transactions and services, hence improving operational efficiency. The integration was successful and our clients can now enjoy more, our online services. With regard to the processing system, we have been using an off-the shelf, legacy system which can not integrate with the various systems we have developed in-house, for capturing, processing and dissemination of assessment information and reports. In an effort to enhance operational efficiency, and pursuant to our Strategic Plan which focusses on automation of most of our processes and systems, we embarked on the mammoth task of developing a processing system, in-house. By the end of June, 2025, we had made enough progress to assure ourselves that we will achieve our intention to trial the system before end of year, and migrate fully in 2026.

At the continental level, we focussed on providing leadership to the Technical Committee of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) in the development of the Continental Assessment Framework for Africa (CAF-Africa). As Secretariat of the AEAA, we committed to, among other tasks, leading the process of developing the Continental Assessment Framework for Africa (CAF-Africa). On behalf of the AEAA Executive Committee, we worked with the AU, UIS, ADEA, CESA, LEARN, the Global Education Monitoring Report, Stellenbosch University, and other partners to ensure the CAF-Africa was developed and ready for the launch at the AEAA Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in August, 2025.

I now invite you to explore our 2025 January to June activities, to ensure that we move with you as we continue to transition our organisation, ECZ, into 'An Assessment Body of Excellence'. Please enjoy as you read through, and remember that we would appreciate your feedback and suggestions for improvement.

ECZ Gears Up for Assessments Under the 2023 Competence Based Curriculum

By Editorial Team



Competence Based Assessment Training in Kabwe

Following the implementation of the 2023 Competence Based Curriculum by the Ministry of Education ECZ convened a training for Setters and Item Writers at Primary and Ordinary level respectively in Kabwe as part of the preparatory work for assessing learners under the competency-based curriculum. The training was attended by over 107 participants drawn from across the country in various subject areas. Others trained are 83 Ministry of Education and ECZ staff. These participants are currently Setters and Items Writers under the old Outcome-Based Curriculum.

The goal of the training was to build capacity focused on addressing the needs of the competence-based assessments as ECZ

prepares to run the first examinations under the new curriculum in 2028.

In order to ensure that this transition is well implemented, ECZ engaged an expert, Dr Arnold Brouwer, a renowned research expert from the Research Centre for Examination and Certification in the Netherlands as a facilitator for the training.

Officially opening the training, ECZ Executive Director, Dr Michael Chilala encouraged participants on the requirements to ensure assessments build a learner who is able to learn, adapt and innovate and be relevant to the society they live in. He also said that a lot of countries are moving towards competence-based assessments, giving an example of Uganda and the Netherlands as

countries that have already implemented this education system and Zambia cannot afford to remain behind.

"You were carefully selected in order to facilitate transfer of the skills from this training to others" Dr Chilala said. "This knowledge should go to benefit others involved in assessment such as teachers". He also said, "Let this information begin to permeate in to all corners of the education system so that we can enhance our implementation of the new curriculum."

Meanwhile, Dr Brouwer challenged participants on the need to understand the 12 general competences in a competency-based curriculum summarised in four categories as Cognitive, Technical, Social and Metacognitive Skills.



Dr Arnold Brouwer (2nd from right) poses for a photo with ECZ Staff and one of the participants during the training.



One of the participants presenting group work during the training

He also talked of the need for learners to build digital skills, entrepreneurship and financial literacy. Other skill areas are analytical thinking, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and problem solving just to mention but a few.

Participants were also trained on how to develop competence based multiple choice test items. The training further zeroed in on smart learning and development of open-ended test items making sure that real-life challenges faced by society are mirrored in the assessments in order to build learners to such realities.

These skills will contribute towards content mapping among other assessment requirements.

In line with this development, ECZ is on track and has developed the draft Assessment Schemes (Examination Syllabi) for the Primary School Leaving Examination and the School Certificate Ordinary Level Examination, conducted benchmarking visits to Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), institutions that conducted Primary School Leaving and Secondary School Leaving Ordinary Level examinations in 2024, using the CBA approach.

The finalisation of the assessment schemes shall be done in the 3rd quarter of 2025.

Development of School Based Assessment (SBA) Guidelines shall be done in the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2025, for the guidelines to be available for use in schools effective January, 2026. The guidelines will also include exemplar tasks and materials to guide the teachers on how to develop and score the learners' work.

In terms of sample question papers, the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) and School Certificate Ordinary Level Examination (SCOLE) examinations shall be developed during the 2nd Quarter (April to June) of 2026. The sample papers shall be in schools in January, 2027.

ECZ remains committed to its mandate and to providing assessments of comparable international standards and is taking strides for the smooth implementation of the new curriculum.



Senior Examinations Specialist giving a response on testing in Home Economics



Participants during a training session on the Competence-Based Curriculum testing

ECZ Scoops Best Special Library Services Award at 2025 National Library Week

By Milimo Mweemba



Members of the public visiting the ECZ stand during the National Library Week in Mongu



Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) Library was awarded "Excellence in Special Library Services Award". This recognition highlights the library's outstanding collection development, innovation, and digital transformation contributing to information openness and self-archiving practices.

The ECZ Library which is known for its specialised collections in education, assessment and research, stood out for its commitment to modernisation, digital outreach, and user-focused services. Over the past years, the library introduced several impactful initiatives and services which include:

- Digital Archiving of Resources: Preserving over 2000 documents.
- Customised Research Information Dissemination: Supporting members of staff, researchers and industry professionals with in-depth, tailored research help (Selective Information Dissemination).
- Institutional Repository: Supporting self-archiving practices, streamlining access and enhancing user experience with smart search functionalities.

- Improved Collection Development: Housing over 5000 resources
- Automation of Information Services: The library uses an information integrated system to manage physical resources.

This award was a recognition of ECZ's Library's mission to bridge knowledge gaps and create a more user-centric, digitally empowered library environment. We were honoured for being a model for other special libraries across the country in terms of collection development. As the information landscape continues to evolve in the face of

technological advancement, the recognition of the ECZ Library reminds us that libraries, more especially special libraries, are not only repositories of knowledge or information but are active engines driving innovation, research, education and informed decision-making process.

Representing the ECZ were, Mr Milimo Mweemba, Information and Documentation Officer, Mrs Agness Manyando, Senior Records Officer, Mr Nicolas Nkhuwa, Public Relations Manager and Mr Nyambe Siyandwa, Driver.





2025 School Examinations Sessional Dates

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) hereby notifies Examination Centres, Candidates, Stakeholders and the General Public that the 2025 School Examinations will be conducted between the following dates.

SN	EXAMINATION	START DATE	END DATE
1.	Primary School Leaving Examination	Monday 27th October, 2025.	Friday 31st October, 2025.
2.	Junior Secondary External Examination	Wednesday, 23rd July, 2025.	Friday, 1st August, 2025.
3.	Junior Secondary School Leaving Examination	Tuesday, 18th November, 2025.	Thursday, 27th November, 2025.
4.	School Certificate Examination	Friday, 31st October, 2025.	Tuesday, 18th November, 2025.
5.	General Certificate of Education Examination (GCE)	Wednesday, 23rd July, 2025.	Friday, 8th August, 2025.
6.	Teacher Education Education	Friday, 7th November, 2025	Thursday, 27th November, 2025

Junior Secondary School Leaving and Junior Secondary External Examinations to be Discontinued under the 2023 Curriculum

By Editorial Team

In light of the 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework, the 2025 Junior Secondary School Leaving Examination and the Junior Secondary External Examination will be the last. This is because the 2025 Form 1 pupils will be in Form 2 in 2026 and they will not need to write an examination. Since the standards are set on the internal examination and applied on the external examination, the Junior Secondary External (Grade 9 External) examination cannot be conducted in 2026.

As a result, the learners who do not perform well during the 2025 Junior Secondary examinations have an option of either starting Form 1 in 2026 to write the School Certificate Ordinary Level examination in 2029 or to proceed and write the General

Certificate of Education (GCE) Examination upon them reaching 16 years of age and obtaining the Zambia National Registration Card (NRC), which is the required identity for the GCE Examinations.

Members of the public should take note that if the candidates who do not pass the 2025 Junior Secondary External or 2025 Junior Secondary School Leaving Examinations were to repeat Grade 9 in 2026, they would not have any advantage because they would take the same four years inclusive of 2026, before they could write the School Certificate Examination on the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework in 2029. Considering that the number of years they would take is the same as the learners starting Form 1 in 2026 and writing the School Certificate Ordinary Level in Form 4 in 2028, it will be

advantageous for them to take the option of starting Form 1 in 2026 and write the School Certificate Ordinary Level examination in Form 4 in 2029.

However, the GCE Examination will continue to be conducted at ordinary level based on the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework until 2028; thereafter, the GCE examination will continue to run on the new 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum. The First GCE Examination based on the 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum shall be conducted in 2029.

ECZ will also commence assessment at School Certificate Advanced level (A'level) in 2027.

Going Digital to Enhance Service Delivery

By Julius Sambiana



The ecosphere is rapidly shifting to digital platforms for service delivery. This enhances accessibility, efficiency, and security. The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) is no different. Examination Management System, Online Marks Entry System, Online Candidate Registration System, eResults Slip System and Self-Service Portal are replacing traditional methods. This sits very well not only with our Strategic Plan but the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) as well. We have embraced cloud-based technologies to manage educational service delivery seamlessly to meet modern demands.

This transformation reduces costs, minimises human error and ensures faster results. The Self-Service portal is the focus of this writeup. The ECZ Self-Service Portal is a centralised hub of our post examination services. This is like taking all our provincial service centres i.e Lusaka, Livingstone, Chipata, Mongu, Kabwe, Mpika, Kasama, Mansa, Kitwe and Solwezi, to our clients' homes and offices. How does that sound? A milestone in service delivery indeed!

By putting our customers in the driver's seat, the self-help portal promises service delivery

without any barriers of time and place. Our clients can apply for different services any time and from anywhere provided they have access to a smart device and internet. This implies that one does not need to travel distances to visit our provincial service centres to apply for a number of our services. One can be in Shang'ombo, Kaputa or even in the United States of America but still confirm their ECZ results, combine your results etc.

HOW TO SIGN UP (CREATE ACCOUNT)

- On your WEB browser type **ECZ WEB Portal**
- Click on the **ECZ Web Portal** link
- Click on Number 5 (**SELF-SERVICE PORTAL**)
- Scroll down to and click on **SIGN UP**
- Fill in all your particulars and click **REGISTER**
- Once your registration is successful, you may proceed to Log In and access our services.
- Kindly note that you can skip the above steps and simply scan the QR Code to get to the portal.

SERVICES ON THE PORTAL

What can you do with our self-service portal? You can apply for;

- Results Combination (G9)
- Results Accumulation (GCE)
- Results Confirmation
- Replacement of Certificates (Grades 7, 9) and 12, GCE
- Teacher Education as well as TEVET
- Equating of foreign academic qualification to the Zambian standard
- Examination script remark,
- Missing/unresolved marks,
- Name correction
- And many more services...

The innovation of the Self-Service Portal is a great milestone in the achievement of the ECZ's strategic plan. It brings efficiency in service delivery by overcoming time and distance barriers. The stakeholders are, therefore, encouraged to embrace and take advantage of this innovation. This will undoubtedly help clients save both time and money and on the other hand help fight climate change through the reduction of paper use.

ECZ Participates in Inaugural Uniform Day

By Editorial Team

Employees at the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) Headquarters and Service Centres across the country joined the rest of the nation in commemorating the inaugural "Uniform Day" organised by the Ministry of Education under the theme: "Free Education!"

Uniform day is a ministerial event aimed at highlighting the achievements recorded in the Education sector, reflecting on the progress made in 2024 and setting the course for future educational endeavours.

Throughout 2024, the Ministry of Education championed various initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of education in Zambia. Notable achievements included the successful track record of the Education for All Policy, school feeding programmes, allocation of school grants, implementation of digital learning resources in rural schools, improvements in teacher training programmes and impactful community engagement projects.

At the Examinations Council of Zambia headquarters, ECZ Executive Director, Dr Michael Chilala, reported for work clad in Canisius Secondary School uniform. The atmosphere was charged with excitement as Dr Chilala who served as 'Head Boy' for the day, interacted with members of staff who showed up dressed in uniforms from different schools dotted across the country.



Dr Chilala's Uniform Day Message

"We are in the education industry – that is our business. Everybody knows the most common thing is that at one time they wore uniform and went to school. That means uniform is a common denominator. When you talk about openness, freedom, knowledge, skills, competencies, they are associated with uniform. As a Ministry that gives knowledge, as a Ministry that imparts knowledge, skills and competencies to everybody and prepares everyone...remember everyone went to school for the first time before they became what they became. As a result, the Ministry has decided to have Uniform Day in remembrance of everybody who passed through the Ministry of Education. We want to open up to you so that we hear and understand the developments taking place and the achievements we have made especially over the past year, 2024."

Meanwhile, during the commemoration of the Day at the Ministry of Education Headquarters earlier this year, the Ministry re-affirmed its commitment to fostering a conducive learning environment for all. The Ministry was excited to outline future plans that focused on inclusivity and innovation in education. Key objectives included rolling out the new curriculum, expanding its' infrastructure, and strengthening partnerships with international educational bodies.

A series of presentations by various directorates highlighting their journeys and future plans, were made. Guests and members of the public also had the chance to engage with educators and students from diverse backgrounds. Feedback was obtained, as part of efforts to enhance service delivery.



ECZ Committed to Delivery of Quality Services

- Dr Michael Chilala

By Editorial Team

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) has continued to re-affirm its commitment to deliver quality services to the people.

The institution has been on a transformative journey to take services closer to the people - a journey fuelled by the desire to have the people access the various services in a conducive environment.

As part of efforts to make this a reality, ECZ renovated its new service centre in Livingstone at a total cost of five hundred and thirty-two thousand kwacha (K532,000.00). The handover and commissioning of the new ECZ Livingstone Service Centre was done earlier this year and witnessed by various stakeholders.

The Livingstone Service Centre was moved from the District Education Board Secretary's (DEBS) Office near the High Court, to the old DEBS Office off Nakatindi Road and opposite the Livingstone City Bus Station.

ECZ Executive Director Dr Michael Chilala was represented at the event by ECZ Director in charge of Certification, Dr Kunda Kuku.

In a speech read for him by Dr Kuku, Dr Chilala was pleased that the strategic growth for service delivery continued to receive support from various stakeholders including from the parent ministry, the Ministry of Education.

Dr Chilala stated that the facility was a testament of ECZ's continued collaboration with various stakeholders and showcased the institution's innovations and forward thinking in addressing the needs of its clients.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank staff from ECZ and from the DEBS for ensuring that our plans become a reality and for the ECZ Board for always providing oversight on the operations of the ECZ," Dr Chilala said. Meanwhile, Southern Province Education Office, Dr Oliver Kambuli who officiated at the event said his office was happy with the strides and innovations that ECZ continued to implement.

Dr Kambuli said the Livingstone Service Centre would continue offering services to the masses catering not only residents of Livingstone, but even those from other districts including from Western Province such as Mwandwi, Mulobezi, Sesheke and others.

He urged members of the public in far flung places who could not physically visit the Service Centre to take advantage of the online services offered by the ECZ on its portal.

"We can only develop our country if we all contribute towards the effective and efficient use of resources. This is exactly what I believe



the ECZ is doing by investing in improving service delivery that will eventually propel this District, Province and the Country at large to higher heights," Dr Kambuli said.

And ECZ Director – Human Resource and Administration Mrs. Honester Kabanda said the occasion was yet another milestone in enhancing service delivery by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

The new ECZ Livingstone Offices are now open to the public. Online services are also available through the Self-Service Portal at <https://serviceportal.exams-council.org.zm/>



ECZ Compliant to National Qualifications Framework Standards

By Nicolas Nkhuwa



ECZ has in the past been placed as a compliant appropriate authority

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) and the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) held a meeting to undertake the 2024 monitoring and evaluation of compliance to National Qualifications Framework (NQF) standards in the ECZ.

ECZ as an awarding body and authority has listed a number of its qualifications on the Zambia National Qualifications Framework (NQF) under the General Education sub-framework. The monitoring and evaluation exercise is a quality assurance measure to ensure that there is integrity throughout the process leading to the award of qualifications and ultimately this leads to the acceptance of the qualifications on the NQF and recognition thereof.

Acting Executive Director for the ECZ, Mr. Albert Siamunako welcomed the ZAQA team to the ECZ headquarters in Lusaka on 21st May 2025 and underscored the

importance of the exercise highlighting that ECZ has been monitored by ZAQA before and was ready to continue working with the Authority.

ECZ has in the past been placed as a compliant appropriate authority and ZAQA Manager in charge of Quality Assurance, Mr. Jencho Kashiys highlighted the importance of carrying out such activities on a regular basis to ensure that the ECZ qualifications feed into the NQF which they maintain at ZAQA. The adherence to the qualification standards is key for Zambia's education system.

The ECZ is committed to its mandate and ensuring that the qualifications awarded to all persons that sit examinations continue to get high level recognition both locally and abroad.

ECZ Increases Allowances for Setters

By Nicolas Nkhuwa

In a bid to improve working conditions for various stakeholders in the assessment business, ECZ increased the rates for those that work in writing, setting and proof-reading items that support ECZ in the assessments at various levels.

ECZ Executive Director, Dr Michael M. Chilala made the announcement on Wednesday, 12th March 2025 as he opened a training for the development of Competence Based Assessment tasks in Kabwe where more than 107 participants were trained in readiness for the assessments to be conducted in 2028 under the new Competence Based Curriculum.

ECZ has increased the rates by 39 percent for most subjects while in some cases, the rates were increased by 100 percent. The rates were last reviewed in 2012 and implemented in 2013. The new rates announced were with immediate effect in March 2025.

It is expected that those engaged in such work will see value in this in ensuring that the ECZ's collaboration continued to bear fruits for the development of Zambia's education system.

One of the participants who is a seasoned setter has commended the ECZ for this milestone adjustment in the setting and item writing rates indicating that more will be motivated to join to undertake such work that will contribute to efficiency in assessments.

The New ECZ Statements of Results

Dr Kunda Kuku

A Statement of Results is document given to a candidate who sits the examinations conducted by the Examinations Council of Zambia at various levels. Further, if a candidate who sits for an ECZ examination does not meet the conditions for the award of a School Certificate, then they are given a Statement of Results.

Difference between Old and New Statement of Results

Old Statement of Results	New Statement of Results
Printed on ordinary paper	Printed on a card similar to that of a certificate
Soft	Hard/more durable due to texture
Available to all candidates	Available only on request from 2021 going forward
Issued free of charge	Available at K200.00 fee

The new Statements of Results can only be printed for candidates who sat for ECZ examinations in 2021 going forward. The reason behind this is that before 2021, the ECZ would print GCE Certificates even for candidates who did not have grades equivalent to a School Certificate. However, from 2021 onward, a candidate needs to have grades equivalent to a School Certificate to qualify for a GCE Certificate in the event that they do not, they can request for the **New Statement of Results**.

172,880 Candidates Register for the 2025 School Certificate Examination

By Angela Mwandu

An increase of 3.83 percent (6,379) has been recorded at School Certificate level. In the 2024 School Certificate Examination, a total of 172,977 candidates have been registered compared to 166,501 candidates registered for the same examination in 2023.

Of the 172,977 registered candidates in 2024, 172,880 were from Zambia, while 97 were from St. Jeff College School based in South Africa.

Among the 172,880 registered candidates from Zambia, 169,464 (98.02%), comprising 82,586 (48.73%) boys and 86,878 (51.27%) girls sat the examination while a total of 3,418 (1.98%) were absent from the examination.

Of the 169,464 Zambian candidates who sat the examination, 115,532 (68.17%) obtained School Certificates showing an increase of 0.14 percentage points from 68.03 percent who obtained the School Certificate in 2023.

Further, a total of 50,404 (29.74%) candidates obtained Statements while 3,528 (2.08%) candidates failed the examination;

When announcing the results earlier this year, Minister of Education Honourable Douglas Syakalima, MP noted that despite the increase in candidature by 3.83 percent, the proportion of candidates that obtained the School Certificate increased slightly by 0.14 percentage points from 2023.

Mr. Syakalima attributed the improvement in performance despite a larger candidature to the various interventions the Government of the Republic of Zambia had put in place, which included the provision of Grants to schools for procurement of educational materials, the recruitment of over 40,000 teachers, provision of meals to learners and improvement of the teaching and learning environment through provision of school furniture.

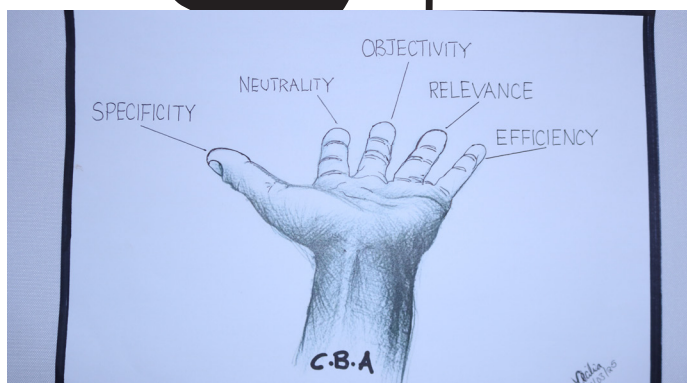
Further, Mr. Syakalima observed that the results showed that the gender gap in terms of candidature was now favouring girls at Grades 7, 9 and 12 levels while in terms of performance and overall quality of passing, boys were still performing better than girls.

He urged the Permanent Secretaries to ensure that a study was conducted within 2025 to establish whether there were significant differences in performance between boys and girls and establish the causes of absenteeism from examinations.

"The study should recommend measures aimed at creating a favourable education environment for both girls and boys to ensure that no one is disadvantaged on grounds of their gender," Mr. Syakalima said.



PHOTO



An illustration of the CBA characteristics



ECZ and DEBS Officials pose for a photo after a successful meeting in Livingstone



ECZ hosts Officers from ZAQA at HQ in Lusaka



ECZ makes a donation of furniture at Zambia Education Publishing House (ZEPH)



ECZ staff at the 2025 National Library Week in Mongu



ECZ staff coordinating the Training of Setters in CBA



ECZ Executive Director, Dr. Michael Chilala (3rd from left) poses for a photo with ECZ staff during the Uniform Day



Uniform Day at the Ministry of Education Headquarters in Lusaka



Kabwe Service Centre staff onboarding clients on the Self Service Portal



ECZ takes contractors on site at the Kasama Service Centre for renovation works



ECZ exhibits at the Uniform Day in Lusaka



ECZ Attends SAEAA Executive Committee Meeting



Participants pose for a photo after a training in CBA in Kabwe hosted by ECZ



ECZ staff, Ms Beula Mofya presents on the ECZ Self-Service Portal at the 52nd Library and Information Association of Zambia (LIAZ) Conference in Livingstone

Teaching for Tomorrow: Implementing Zambia's Competency-Based Curriculum

By Smart Sakala

Zambia has undertaken a significant shift in its educational landscape with the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). This innovative approach moves away from traditional content-focused education towards a more learner-centred, skills-oriented model designed to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical competencies among learners (MoE; 2023). As teachers and learners across both urban and rural settings began to engage with this new curriculum, the promise of enhanced learning experiences has been accompanied by a number of challenges that must be addressed to ensure its successful implementation. To capitalise on the transformative potential of the CBC, it is essential to develop a comprehensive Curriculum Implementation Guide that provides clear learning objectives, standardised teaching practices, and effective assessment strategies, enabling teachers to navigate the transition smoothly and ultimately enhance the educational outcomes for all learners in Zambia.

The CBC is designed not only to foster essential skills and attitudes but also to equip learners with the necessary knowledge for their personal and professional development (Sarlin; 2005). A pivotal aspect of this shift is the transformation of the teacher's role from being a mere transmitter of information to a facilitator of learning. However, many teachers may find it challenging to transition to this new pedagogical paradigm. A well-structured curriculum implementation guide can thus address this challenge by providing practical strategies, methodologies, and assessment models aligned with CBC principles. Such a guide would serve several critical functions for teachers and other stakeholders within the educational sector. First and foremost, a curriculum implementation guide outlines clear learning objectives and expected outcomes for teachers. These are a simpler version of the ones enshrined in the National Curriculum Framework (MoE; 2023). This clarity is crucial as it allows teachers to understand the larger goals of the curriculum which, in turn, aids them in developing well-structured lesson plans and lesson-related materials. The rationale behind this is an understanding that when teachers are aware of what is expected of them, they can align their

teaching methods accordingly and focus on achieving the desired results for their learners.

Secondly, the guide would clearly define the twelve general competencies (Analytical thinking, Citizenship, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, etc.) and explain how these are to be achieved in various learning areas or subjects. Learners need both skills and knowledge, so they need to develop a set of competencies as well as improve their subject knowledge. Teachers would then be able to plan their lessons with a clear focus on what learners should be able to do, rather than just what they should know. Furthermore, this would ensure that teachers incorporate these competencies when making lesson plans in order to enable learners become competent in each of these twelve competencies. They could also consider how each of these competencies would enhance learning across the curriculum. This clarity would promote consistency and equity in instructional delivery across schools throughout the country.

Another primary reason for developing a curriculum implementation guide would be to establish a standardised framework that could ensure consistency in teaching practices and approaches across schools in Zambia. With a diverse range of educational institutions, including urban and rural schools, there is often a vast disparity in the quality of education provided. A comprehensive guide offers clear directives on what should be taught and how, creating uniformity and possibilities that could help level the playing field for all learners, regardless of their geographical location and school type.

The fourth point is the fact that the guide would provide an array of learner-centred instructional strategies suitable for CBC. These would include inquiry-based learning, collaborative work, project-based assignments, and experiential learning. For example, in a Form 1 Religious Education class, instead of lecturing on "Care for the environment", under a topic called "Growing Up", a teacher might facilitate a community-based project where learners investigate local environmental management practices and propose sustainable solutions. This

approach encourages active learning and real-world application of knowledge.

Furthermore, Assessment in CBC is also fundamentally different from traditional examinations. For this reason, a curriculum implementation guide would help teachers understand how to use various forms of assessments such as formative assessment and performance-based tasks, to track learner progress. For instance, in a Language class, instead of merely marking grammar, the teacher might also assess learners' ability to write and present a persuasive speech, thereby measuring their communication, organisation and critical thinking skills.

Moreover, the curriculum implementation guide would offer samples of lesson plans that teachers could adapt for different subjects and contexts. A lesson plan template could provide clear sections for essential components such as learning objectives, materials needed, instructional strategies, and assessment methods. Furthermore, teachers who may be unfamiliar with the CBC or new pedagogical approaches, a lesson plan template would offer guidance on how to incorporate learner-centred strategies and the twelve general competencies into their lessons. Lastly, a template could streamline the planning process, allowing teachers to fill in specific details rather than starting from scratch. This can be particularly helpful in busy teaching environments.

In addition, a well-crafted curriculum implementation guide would support ongoing professional development as it would be used as a training resource kit since it incorporates best practices and pedagogical strategies, encouraging educators to engage with innovative teaching methods. These professional development meetings would not only benefit teachers but also enrich the learning environment for students.

In conclusion, a Curriculum Implementation Guide is not just a supportive tool but an essential component for the successful roll-out of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Zambia. With such a guide, teachers will be empowered to transform their classrooms into active, inclusive and skill-building environments, ultimately fostering a generation of learners equipped to thrive in the 21st century. This would indeed be teaching for tomorrow.

Formative Assessment: A Way of Nurturing Continuous Learning through Timely Feedback

By Bright Chiwama

Definition and Purpose:

Formative assessment often referred to as “assessment for learning,” is a pedagogical approach that involves the ongoing assessment of learner understanding and progress throughout the learning process (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Unlike traditional evaluations that occur at the end of a unit or course, formative assessments are integrated into the instructional cycle, providing both educators and learners with immediate feedback to guide further learning (Sadler, 1989). The primary purpose of formative assessment is to inform instruction, enabling educators to adapt their teaching methods based on students’ evolving needs, strengths, and challenges (Heritage, 2007).

Characteristics of Effective Formative Assessments:

Effective formative assessments possess several key characteristics that contribute to their ability to enhance learning outcomes (Hattie & Timperley, 2007):

Immediacy: Formative assessments are conducted in real-time, allowing educators to identify misconceptions and gaps in understanding while the learning is still ongoing.

Actionable Feedback: Feedback provided in formative assessments is specific, constructive and actionable, guiding students toward areas that need improvement and strategies for enhancement.

Student Involvement: Formative assessments often engage students actively in the assessment process, encouraging them to self-assess, reflect and set learning goals.

Varied Formats: They encompass a range of formats, including quizzes, polls, discussions, assignments and observations, catering to diverse learning styles and objectives.

Informing Instruction: The insights gained

from formative assessments are immediately used to adjust instructional strategies, reteach concepts or introduce additional resources.

Benefits of Formative Assessments:

Formative assessments offer numerous benefits to both teachers and learners:

Personalised Learning: They allow teachers to tailor their teaching to the individual needs and strengths of each learner.

Motivation: Regular feedback fosters a sense of achievement and progress, motivating learners to remain engaged and active in their learning journey.

Reduced Achievement Gaps: By identifying and addressing learning gaps early on, formative assessments help in minimizing achievement disparities among learners.

Higher-Level Thinking: They encourage critical thinking and metacognition as learners analyse their own learning process.

Improved Teaching Strategies: Teachers can refine their instructional methods based on real-time insights, leading to more effective teaching.

Continuous Improvement: Both teachers and learners experience ongoing growth as formative assessments drive continuous learning and refinement.

Challenges and Misconceptions:

Despite their evident benefits, formative assessments also come with challenges that need careful consideration:

Time Management: Integrating frequent formative assessments requires strategic planning to ensure they complement the curriculum without overwhelming learners.

Grading Burden: Providing timely feedback can be time-consuming, posing a challenge for teachers, particularly in larger classes.

Validity and Reliability: Ensuring the validity and reliability of formative assessments can be challenging due to their informal nature.

Misalignment: If not well-aligned with learning objectives, formative assessments might miss the mark in effectively guiding learning.

Strategies for Implementing Formative Assessment:

Formative assessment strategies are a cornerstone of effective teaching practices, enabling teachers to gauge learner progress, adjust instruction and provide timely feedback. These strategies create a dynamic and responsive learning environment that fosters growth and continuous improvement. Here, we delve into various practical strategies for implementing formative assessments in the classroom:

Classroom Discussions and Questioning Techniques:

Engaging learners in discussions and using effective questioning techniques are powerful ways to formatively assess their understanding. Teachers can pose open-ended questions that encourage critical thinking and class participation.

“Formative assessment strategies are a cornerstone of effective teaching practices, enabling teachers to gauge learner progress, adjust instruction and provide timely feedback”

Incorporating techniques like Think-Pair-Share or Socratic seminars promote peer interaction, idea exchange and reflective learning (Birenbaum & Dochy, 1996; Mercer & Littleton, 2007).

Quizzes and Polls:

Frequent low-stake quizzes and polls provide valuable insights into learner comprehension and retention. These can be administered in various formats such as multiple-choice questions, short answer questions or even interactive online platforms. Instant feedback on quiz results enables learners to identify areas that require further review (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006; Davenport & Davenport, 1985).

Peer and Self-Assessment:

Peer and self-assessment foster metacognitive skills and encourage learners to take ownership of their learning. Through guided instructions, learners can evaluate their own work or that of their peers, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. This process not only enhances their understanding but also nurtures collaboration and communication skills (Andrade & Du, 2005; Falchikov & Goldfinch, 2000).

Feedback and Feed-Forward Mechanisms:

Timely and constructive feedback is a hallmark of formative assessment. Teachers can provide written or verbal feedback that focuses on specific learning objectives and offers guidance on improvement.

Additionally, incorporating feed forward, which suggests strategies for future growth, empowers learners to actively enhance their performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Sadler, 1989).

Learning Journals and Reflective Activities:

Integrating learning journals or reflective activities into the curriculum encourages learners to synthesise their learning experiences. These personal accounts provide insight into individual progress, challenges and emerging insights. Through these reflections, teachers can identify common misconceptions and adjust instructional approaches accordingly (Moon, 2001; Schön, 1987).

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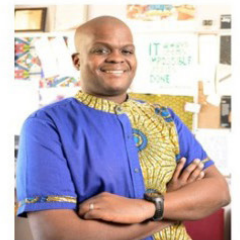
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Prof. Vukosi Marivate



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AVANI VICTORIA FALLS RESORT– LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA



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Reduce Candidate Registration Errors: An Appeal for Parental/Guardian Participation in the Registration and Verification Exercise



By David Chilikazi

information such as an incorrect date of birth, that error may remain throughout their academic career.

Once a candidate is registered under an incorrect name or date, their records may not align across other examination levels unless formally corrected. Such corrections can be costly, often requiring affidavits, ECZ centre visits, and in some cases, they may be impossible, especially if the records are already archived. Errors can also disqualify students from scholarship programmes or bursaries that are based on age or other eligibility criteria. This is how significant this exercise is for every parent or guardian to be concerned and involved.

Before any examination conducted by the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) can be written, a crucial process known as candidate registration is undertaken. This involves the registration of eligible candidates at various levels using the Online Candidate Registration System (OCRS). Conducted annually at every examination level, this process establishes a student's lifelong academic identity within the ECZ system.

To better understand its importance, one can compare it to the National Registration Card (NRC) system: just as each Zambian citizen is uniquely identified by an NRC number, ECZ identifies its candidates by their Examination Numbers. Once a candidate registers at the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) level and progresses through to the School Certificate (SC), they continue to use the very details captured during their first registration as there is no provision for changing these details at each level. This underscores the importance of accurate data entry at the point of first registration.

It is important to note that ECZ itself does not register candidates. Instead, registration is conducted at examination centres across the country. This means that the responsibility of accurately capturing candidates' details lies primarily with school officials (school

users) and the candidates themselves. ECZ provides registration guidelines to all centres which must be strictly followed during the registration period. During this window, schools not only register candidates but also verify and correct any errors. The key details captured include:

- Full legal name
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Subject choices
- Special Education Needs (where applicable)

In addition to the roles played by school users and candidates, parents and guardians can play a vital role in ensuring the accuracy of their children's details during this process. Errors made at the PSLE level often persist into the learners academic journey and can significantly affect them.

How Parents/Guardians can help Reduce Registration Errors:

Parents and guardians can contribute by personally visiting the schools where their children are registered to verify the captured details. In most cases, the registration is managed by the Guidance and Counselling Teacher, who relies on information provided either by the student or from the school register. If a child submits incorrect

During the verification window, parents and guardians can assist school officials by cross-checking captured details using official documents such as birth certificates. At the PSLE level, candidates may unknowingly provide nicknames, select subjects without understanding future implications or report incorrect birthdates. To avoid such issues, schools should invite parents to confirmation sessions when provisional candidate registers are printed, allowing them to verify and confirm the information.

As Zambia's education system becomes increasingly digital, even small errors at the PSLE registration stage can result in major consequences later. When parents and guardians take an active role in verifying registration details, they do more than fulfil a formal obligation, they help secure their child's academic identity and future opportunities.

It is essential that ECZ, schools and the wider community collaborate to prioritise this oversight, ensuring every learner begins their educational journey on a strong, accurate foundation. Get involved.

ECZ Holds Successful Nationwide Sensitisation on PSLE in Adapted English for Hearing Impaired Candidates

By Enerst Mukubesa



English is a foreign but official language in Zambia. To comprehend it, one has to learn its grammar. As a foreign language, it becomes more difficult to learn it without having ever heard the sound or pronunciation of certain words. This is the case for many candidates with hearing impairments (H.I). Candidates with hearing impairments normally find certain English terminologies difficult to comprehend. This leads to communication and assessment challenges for them. It is such challenges that have led to yet another new addition of Access Arrangement provision at Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) for candidates with Hearing Impairments. This new addition is called Adapted English Assessment. To roll out this program, the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) through the Special Education Needs section benchmarked, conducted research and consequently came up with specimen papers which have been rolled out to special education schools/units and stakeholders at district and provincial level.

The Special Education Needs (SEN) Section under Examination Administration Department conducted SEN sensitisation meetings on examination administration and management and at the same time distributed Adapted English specimen papers for candidates with hearing impairment. This activity was conducted from 7th to 11th and 22nd April, 2025 in all the provinces and involved 116 districts of Zambia.

The main objectives of the activity were to; clearly state the correct candidate registration procedures and guide on the SEN examination scripts packing. These objectives clearly sought to resolve the challenges of missing scripts and missing marks. Additionally, sensitisation meetings sensitised various stakeholders about Adapted English for Candidates with Hearing impairments.

The sensitisation meetings targeted serving officers in different ranks of the Ministry of Education from the school level to the provincial office. Participants included; Provincial Education Officers, Senior Education Standards Officers – Examinations, Senior Education Standards Officers – Special Education, District Education Standards Officers (DESO), Education Standards Officers – Special Education, Education Standards Officers – General Inspection, Head-teachers - Special Education School/Unit (one from each District), Special Education Teacher – (one from each District) and Guidance and Counselling Teachers (one from each district).

The topics tackled in the sensitisation meetings included; Registration and Self-verification using the ECZ online portal, Access Arrangement, Invigilation, Packing of SEN Scripts and OMR cards and Adapted English Specimen for H.I.

Why has Adapted English been introduced in the examinations for candidates with hearing impairments? Candidates (learners) with hearing impairments have one main challenge in their education, the challenge of communication. This challenge affects them in their social and education life. To communicate, they mostly use Zambian Sign Language (ZSL). ZSL is a language with its own grammar that should be used in teaching/learning and assessment processes. However, like any other learner, H.I learners learn English for them to be able to read and write. English language is an additional language and can be difficult to the majority of the learners (especially pre-lingual Deaf) to understand. Trying to learn a new language (which is sometimes compared to the challenges of having hearing loss) is exhausting for those who have hearing impairment. Deaf candidates may find English/local languages or language processing difficult. This can make

it harder to know what is being asked or show what they understand about a subject. For a deaf student, extra time to process and understand the questions can help. Due to communication barriers emanating from English vocabulary that might be in the examination papers, Adapted English should be provided. Thus, the SEN section conducted a comparative study of performance in Adapted English and ordinary test items for learners with H.I. This study informed the need for Adapted English to be one of the Access Arrangements that can provide candidates with H.I to be able to have equitable assessment items.

Adapted English that will be part of PSLE beginning this year (2025) for H.I candidates is part of Access Arrangement. Access arrangements are changes to how tests, assessments and examinations are written, assessed or delivered. These changes make sure learners with special education needs are not at a disadvantage. This applies to deaf children and young people with any type of hearing loss or level of deafness, (National Deaf Children's Society, 2025). In the Adapted English papers, the questions will remain the same as the mainstream examination.

The adaptation will take the form of; use commonly used vocabulary that the Deaf use (use of synonyms), shorten longer sentences and paragraphs without favoring the candidate and usage of pictures and other necessary adjustments will be made in order to make the examination clearer. Furthermore, it is important to note that Adapted English is not taking the form of Zambian Sign Language Grammar structure for now. Examinations for candidates with Hearing impairments can be done in Zambian Sign Language Grammar and this is another area of interest that ECZ is exploring.



NEW FACES AT ECZ



Francis Muleya

Senior Examinations Officer Certification
2nd January, 2025



Jonas Mwansa

Applications Developer
20th January, 2025



Namunjebwa Kasempa

Customer Care Assistant Front Office
3rd February, 2025

Continous Professional Development Key to ECZ Growth

The Examinations Council of Zambia was among the various organisations that convened in Livingstone for the 2025 Zambia Institute of Public Relations and Communication (ZIPRC), Annual General Meeting and Conference held under the theme; Strategic Communication and AI: Collaborate, Innovate and Thrive. The gathering presented a critical platform for shaping the future of communication in Zambia and championing excellence in the field of public relations and strategic communication.

The public relations and communication industry in Zambia has grown significantly over the years across all spheres; that is government, the private sector, and civil society. Public Relations and Communication is recognised as a strategic function that drives transparency, accountability, and engagement.

With the current unprecedented transformation in communication, driven by artificial intelligence, changing public expectations it is not surprising that Government has made communication a cornerstone of the governance agenda. Government is among stakeholders that have taken the lead in advocating for access to timely, accurate and credible information, with the firm belief that this is a right, and not a privilege.

This state of affairs inspires the ECZ to remain committed to sharing information that is accurate, ethical and impactful. The Government has embraced digital platforms to improve real-time communication with citizens and this is a measure the ECZ has also taken to engage with its clients.

It is against this background that the ECZ recognises the importance of capacity building for officers in the Public Relations Unit and supports the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Programs offered by ZIPRC in collaboration with the University of Zambia.

This is to ensure that institutional communication is structured and responsive to the needs of clients and stakeholders. The ZIPRC Conference was timely and one of the highlights included the changing nature of organisations in present-day society. Experts at the Conference shared that Public Relations and Communications had evolved from simply communicating a company's actions to actively shaping and upholding its Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) narrative and providing counsel on the impact of company policies and actions on people, planet and profits.

ENVIRONMENT

In this case, the Public Relations Unit at ECZ:

1. Acts as a bridge between the institution's environmental efforts and

stakeholders ensuring that the efforts are understood, valued and trusted.

2. Communicate environmental policies and initiatives through exhibitions
3. Builds stakeholder engagement by facilitating dialogue through events and social media platforms among other means.

GOVERNANCE

- Publishes annual reports which are distributed to stakeholders
- Promote Board Communication on major policy developments and initiatives
- Promotes communications of company policies with internal and external stakeholders.

SOCIAL

- Engages with stakeholders through social media,
- Builds stakeholder trust and manages social risks.

The ECZ remains committed to ensuring that information shared by the Council is accurate, ethical and impactful.

Competence Based Assessment Training in Picture

01



02



04



03



05



06





1. Dr Arnold Brouwer conducting training in Competence Based Assessments
2. ECZ Senior Examinations Officers during the training
3. Participants engage in a group discussion during the training
4. ECZ Executive Director, Dr Michael Chilala giving an address
5. One of the participants taking a task in development of CBA
6. Dr Brouwer engages the participants
7. Dr Brouwer engages the participants
8. Certificate presentation ceremony after the successfully training of participants in CBA
9. Members of ECZ Management pose for a photo with Dr Brouwer

2024 School Examination Results Highlights

Primary School Leaving Examination - PSLE

A total of 543,069 candidates entered the 2024 PSLE. The candidature comprised 542,913 candidates from Zambian schools and 156 from St. Jeff College in Johannesburg, South Africa. Overall, the 2024 candidature increased by 8.04 percent from 502,670 in 2023. Of the candidates who entered the 2024 examination, 47.70 percent (259,066) were boys, while 52.30 percent (284,003) were girls. Compared to 2023, the proportion of boys decreased by 0.47 percentage points, while the proportion of girls increased by the same margin.

In 2024, a total of 66,919 candidates (13.61%) obtained Division 1, while 139,490 candidates (28.36%) obtained Division 2. A total of 143,707 candidates (29.22%) were awarded Division 3 and 141,669 candidates (28.81%) fell in Division 4.

The absenteeism rate at this level of examinations decreased slightly by 0.16 percentage points, from 9.60 percent in 2023 to 9.44 percent in 2024.

Junior Secondary School Leaving Examination - JSSLE

A total of 325,108 candidates registered for the 2024 Grade 9 Examination. Of these, 154,345 (47.47%) were boys while 170,763 (52.53%) were girls.

The total number of candidates who registered for the 2024 Junior Secondary School Leaving (Grade 9 Internal) Examination increased by 3.6% compared to the previous year, 2023 which recorded a 2.07% increase in candidature.

Out of the 325,108 candidates who registered, 302,870 sat for the 2024 Examination. This represented an increase of 0.14 percentage points from the 93.02 percent recorded in 2023. Increases were also recorded in 2023, 2022, 2021 and 2020.

The absenteeism rate for 2024 was recorded at 6.84 percent, reflecting a decrease of 0.14 percentage points from the 6.98 percent recorded in 2023. Absenteeism rates have been consistently decreasing since 2020.

Of the 302,870 candidates who sat the 2024 JSSLE, 55.89 percent were awarded certificates while 36.39 percent received statements of results and 7.72 percent did not pass the examination.

A notable performance improvement was observed with a higher proportion of candidates awarded certificates (55.89%) compared to 2023 (53.55%). This upward movement in the number of candidates obtaining certificates is mirrored by a decline in the proportions of candidates receiving statements or failing, indicating a general shift towards improved performance.

School Certificate - SC

In 2024, a total of **1,637** centres presented candidates for the School Certificate Ordinary Level Examination. One of these centres, St. Jeff College, is in Gauteng, South Africa while the remaining centres are all Zambian schools.

A total of **172,880** candidates from the Zambian centres registered for the 2024 examination, reflecting a **3.83** percent increase compared to the 2023 figure of **166,501** candidates. Of these candidates, **84,307** (48.77%) were boys and **88,573** (51.23%) were girls.

At St. Jeff College, **97** candidates registered for the 2024 examination, with **46** (47.42%) being boys and **51** (52.58%) being girls. Compared to 2023, the number of registered candidates increased by **5.43** percent, rising from **92** in 2023 to **97** in 2024. The number of registered boys grew by **1.77** percentage points while the number of registered girls decreased by the same margin.

Out of the **169,464** candidates who sat the examination, **115,532** (68.17%) obtained a School Certificate. This represents a slight increase of **0.14** percentage points in the proportion of candidates achieving this qualification compared to the previous year. In contrast, the 2023 School Certificate examination saw a **1.26** percentage point decrease in the proportion of candidates obtaining a School Certificate.

General Certificate of Education - GCE

In 2024, a total of **149,920** candidates registered for the G.C.E Examination, marking a **1.55** percent increase from the 2023 figure of **147,629** candidates. Of the total, **48,415** (32.29%) were male while **101,505** (67.71%) were female. Similar to the trend observed in the 2023 G.C.E Examination, a higher number of females registered for the 2024 G.C.E Examination compared to males.

Compared to 2023, the proportion of male candidates that registered decreased by **1.11** percentage points, dropping from **33.40** percent.

During the 2024 G.C.E Examination session, **15 821** candidates (10.55%) registered for at least five subjects. This represents a decrease of **3.86** percentage points compared to the number of candidates who registered for five or more subjects in 2023. Out of this group, **14 930** candidates sat the examination.

138 084 (92.11%) of the **149 920** registered candidates sat the examination, representing a slight increase of **0.50** percentage points from **91.61** percent in 2023. Among those who sat for the examination, **43 395** (31.42%) were male and **94 689** (68.57%) were female.

Of the overall **138,084** candidates who sat for the 2024 examination, regardless of the number of subjects taken, **2.64** percent obtained a GCE Certificate and **84.74** percent received statements.

The absenteeism rate among candidates decreased to **7.89** percent, reflecting a 0.50 percentage point drop from **8.39** percent in 2023, similar to the trend observed from the previous year.

Inside Examinations Council of Zambia's Digital Journey: A View from the Stakeholders' Lens

By Grace Chambaka Moono

In this era, digital acceleration is undeniably of great significance. The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) has not only embraced this shift by adopting new technologies but also transforming how educational services are delivered across the nation. For ECZ, digital integration is not merely a modernization effort, it is a strategic means of improving operations, advancing educational standards, improving efficiency and ultimately enhancing service delivery. This transformation is anchored on ECZ's strategic plan and a broader vision which in turn supports the National vision of evolving public Institutions. The Council's digital journey has primarily been undertaken to serve its large and diverse clientele more effectively.

But what is the perception and the reaction of stakeholders to this significant transformation? The question has changed from "why go digital?" to "what is next?". Stakeholders from various ministries, educational administrators, lecturers, teachers, students, parents, guardians, employers and employees, have come to recognize that the world is evolving and keeping pace with technological advancements is essential.

Before this initiative, the operations within the Council were predominantly paper

based, requiring clients to queue for extended periods to receive services. This was not only tedious to the clients but also the Staff. Some clients had to travel from far places to access ECZ services. However, through various online efforts including the self-service portal, ECZ services can be accessed without physically visiting an ECZ Service Centre.

Nonetheless, concerns have remained such as limited access to reliable internet, digital literacy gaps and unequal access to devices. Some Clients have expressed that the automation of various services may disproportionately be beneficial to individuals with better access to technology, potentially leaving underprivileged communities behind.

Amid these concerns, many stakeholders have applauded the integration of digital systems. Encouragingly, Zambia's population is largely covered by youths and most of these youths are tech-savvy who are no strangers to technology and are able to navigate especially with step by step instructions provided to them. A youth who had used the portal described it as "the way to go," emphasizing the importance of digital transformation in public service provision and delivery.

Additionally, ECZ staff have been praised

for their professionalism as well as support in assisting users who may not be as digitally literate. This assistance not only bridges the digital divide but also builds user confidence. As clients are guided and made to feel capable, they are more likely to embrace the system and in turn, become advocates for the transformation within their own communities.

On average, clients that have embraced the self-service portal are greater than those that have shown resistance. In the same vein, the Ministry of Education and other agencies have been engaging in digital literacy programs and mobile access hubs aimed at bridging this gap.

It is therefore, worth applauding ECZ for making bold strides towards digital integration and in supporting Zambia's education system in moving further into a digital age. As with all transformations, sustainability and long-term success depends on continued stakeholder engagement, investment in digital resources and targeted efforts to close the digital divide, especially in rural areas. While the journey may not be as smooth, it is worth taking and striving for. From the stakeholders' lens, it's a journey worth supporting.

Your Questions ANSWERED

ECZ endeavors to provide information and responses to questions on examination issues and various services provided. Messages are responded to under this page to offer an opportunity for many to get a response on similar questions they may have.

I am a Zambian studying in Canada currently, and I was hoping to apply to a University in Poland, which requires me to produce results of a General Certificate of Education from Zambia. I completed my IGCSE at Chengelo School, and I'm not sure if that counts as the same thing. I have never written one, and I wanted to inquire if its possible for me to write the exam online, because I will not be able to come home any time soon, and I need to apply to Poland as soon as possible. Please let me know if it's possible.

Response: Thank you for your enquiry. Kindly be advised that all ECZ examinations are conducted in physical facilities. Meaning you have to be physically present to sit the examination as we have not yet introduced the e-assessments. You could explore the option of translating your IGCSE results to the Zambian standard and still use that to apply although this is mainly for local purposes here in Zambia. We would further advise that you find time to sit for the examinations and avoid missing out on many other opportunities in the future.

I sat for my Grade 12 exams in 2017 at Chelstone Secondary School. Could you please guide me on how to obtain my certificate? I since moved away from Lusaka before they came out. Is there any means I can get through a pdf file? Thank you.

Response: Thank you for getting in touch with us. As a matter of procedure and standard, all certificates issued by ECZ are dispatched to examination centres for candidates to collect. We therefore advise that you find time to visit your former school to collect your certificate from there or better still engage any of your close relatives whom

you could assign the power of attorney to collect on your behalf.

Hello. I am trying to apply to a university abroad and I have been told that they need my grade 12 School Certificate to be sent directly by you to them. How do I go about this?

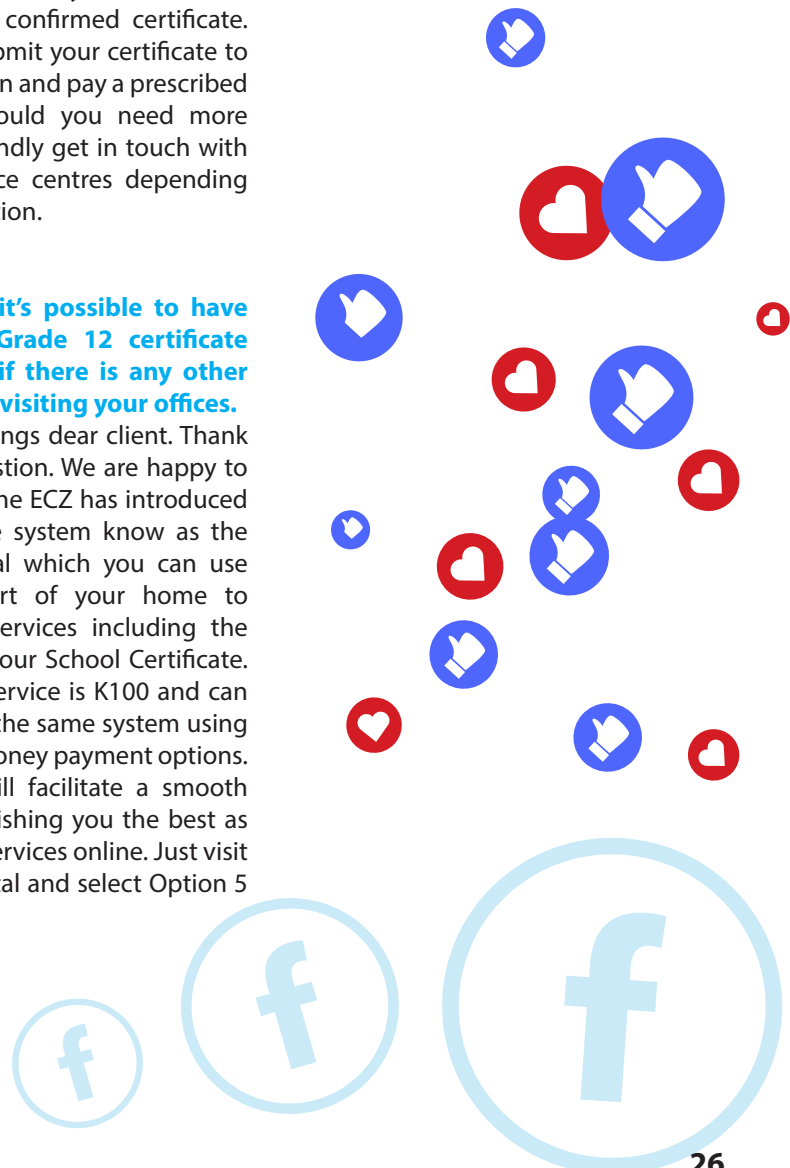
Response: Hello and thank for your message. This is possible if you submit a formal request and indicate the address for the university where you would want us to send your confirmed certificate. You must first submit your certificate to us for confirmation and pay a prescribed fee of K100. Should you need more details on this, kindly get in touch with any of our service centres depending your current location.

Just a query if it's possible to have verification of Grade 12 certificate done online or if there is any other alternative than visiting your offices.

Response: Greetings dear client. Thank you for your question. We are happy to inform you that the ECZ has introduced an online service system know as the Self-Service Portal which you can use from the comfort of your home to access all ECZ Services including the confirmation of your School Certificate. The fee for this service is K100 and can be paid through the same system using VISA or mobile money payment options. We hope this will facilitate a smooth service access. Wishing you the best as your access our services online. Just visit the ECZ Web Portal and select Option 5 on the list.

Hello ECZ, if someone has legally changed names using a DEEDPOLL can you change names on the certificates. If yes, how much do you charge?

Response: Hello and thank you for your question. As a matter of standards, ECZ does not change names on certificates or results. Only name corrections are allowed if an error was made to the names.



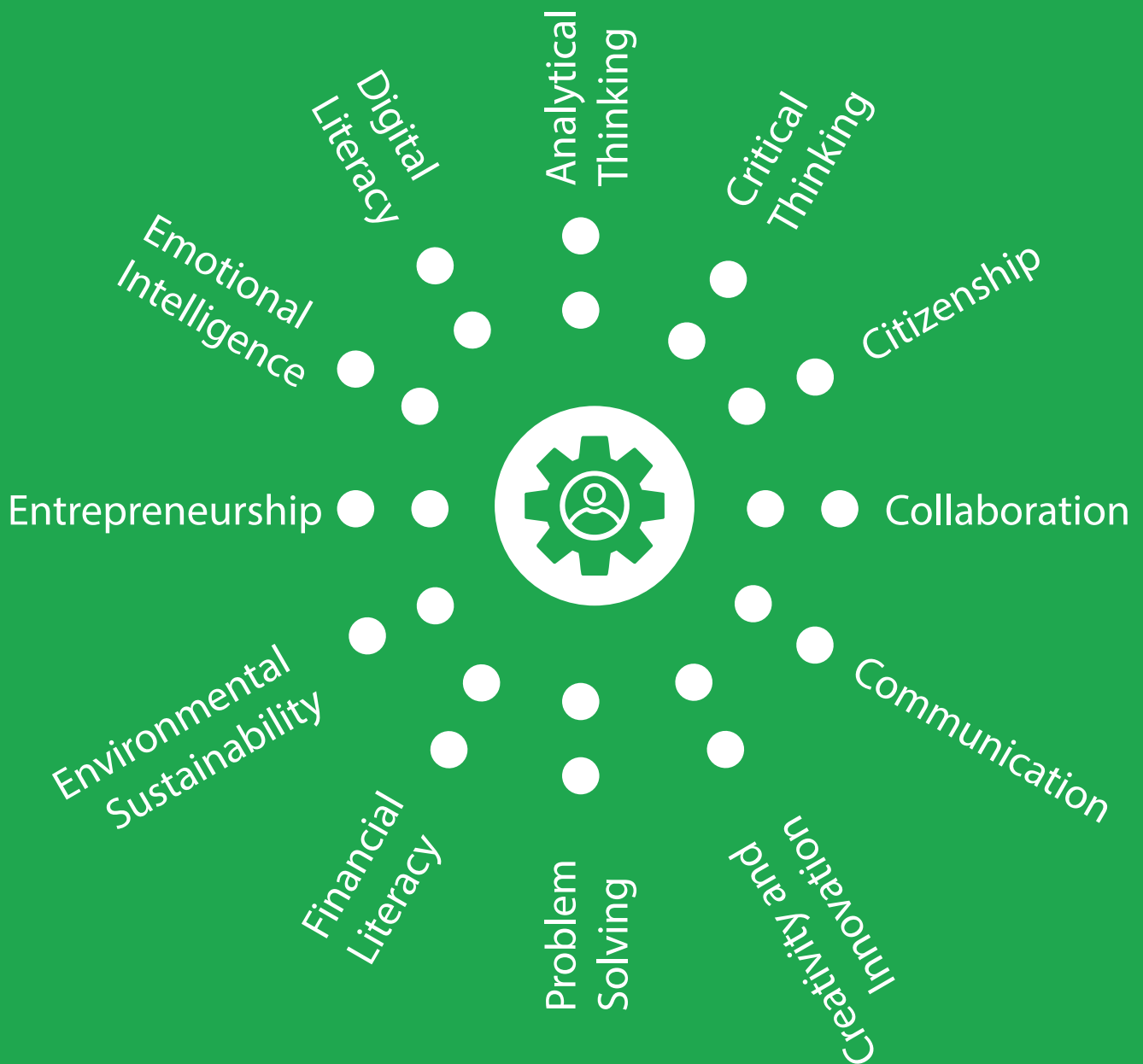
PUZZLE

C T M F A R L D D M U M G I T I C E
A E P X A P U Y U L A C O F S W B X
T A R L R Z S L O L N N V N E V S A
W Z I T I Y U H P N E Q F D C P E M
K E J N I C J R Z V I Z K L R W C I
K W F O I F A I B A L L Y S E C I N
H T X R D C I U P N D E M H T S V A
A P R Y T L R C G F E F U A A Q R T
E U Z I V K N G A K I N Z A R R E I
C H C A C O M P E T E N C Y Y Z S O
F E Q I O G K L Q R E T N F Q G Z N
F I W T S E R A E X Y M H E X Z V V

Find the underlined words to learn more about the Examinations Council of Zambia.

1. To qualify for the General Certificate of Education, candidates must obtain grades equivalent to the award of the School **Certificate**.
2. All requirements for the School Certificate must be satisfied at one sitting and the same **examination**.
3. Smuggling of foreign materials into the examination room is prohibited as it constitutes examination **malpractice**.
4. Formulating examinations **syllabi** and assessment schemes is one of the functions of the ECZ.
5. The ECZ **Self** Service Portal enables clients (both individuals and organisations) to access ECZ **Services** from the comfort of their homes and offices.
6. The 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (ZECF) is reforming the education system from Outcome Based Curriculum to **Competency** Based Curriculum (CBC).
7. Mrs Teza N. Musakanya is the current Board **Secretary** of the ECZ.

COMPETENCE BASED CURRICULUM



Examinations Council of Zambia

Haile Selassie Avenue, Longacres, P.O. Box 50432, Lusaka, Zambia.

Tel: +260 211 252544, +260 211 252588, +260 211 254629, +260 211 226464

www.exams-council.org.zm | info@exams-council.org.zm

