

Establishing new assessment standards in the context of curriculum change

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Nigeria's response to the global reforms in the social and economic context is the adoption of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). The critical elements of NEEDS are: value re-orientation, poverty reduction, wealth generation, job creation and using education to empower the people in order to achieve all of these. In the education context, Nigeria has embarked in far reaching school reforms. Particularly for the pre-tertiary level, a 9-year free basic education has been adopted with corresponding re-structuring of the subject offerings and on-going reforms in the school curriculum. The selective external examination for admission from the 6-year primary school into the 3-year junior secondary school has been scrapped. A Basic Education Certificate will be awarded at the end of the 9-year continuous schooling. The education contents are being tailored to ensure acquisition of life-long strategic work skills and appropriate value orientation while ensuring a strong support for functional academic competencies. These curriculum reform measures have thrown new challenges for setting new assessment standards. This paper proposes a strategic framework for establishing these standards.