

It is perfectly proper for a Public Body not to call an applicant for an interview if his qualification does not satisfy the “equivalent qualification” criterion in the Scheme of Service.

The Appellant averred that he applied for a post to be a trainee but he was not called for interview and was thus deprived of the chance of being appointed. He averred that earlier he had applied for the same post and had been called for interview. He was among the ten or so candidates who attended the interview but he had not been selected. According to him, he should have been called for interview anew, given that the Scheme of Service for the post had not been amended and was the same as when he applied the first time. He found it more surprising that he was recalled from his posting so that he could be available for the interview as his employer was aware that he had previously applied for the post. The Appellant felt that since he had a degree in another field, he should be eligible for consideration as the Scheme of Service made allowance for “an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Public Service Commission”.

Respondent averred that the Scheme of Service for the post was clear as to the qualification requirements for eligibility of consideration for this post. The Appellant did not have a degree in the subjects listed in the Scheme of Service and his degree in another field was not an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Respondent. Respondent agreed that previously there had been a similar recruitment exercise and more than ten applicants had been called for interview. But some were eliminated outright as they did not fit the requirements of the Scheme of Service. Of the ten called for interview, seven of them were found fully eligible and three of them, including the Appellant,

were on a “reserve list” , meaning that the Respondent was not sure whether they were eligible under the “ equivalent qualification” window and it was left to the Respondent’s selection panel to ascertain this. The Appellant was not found eligible as the degree course followed by Appellant did not contain the required quantum of modules in specific subjects. The Appellant was not called for interview as he was already disqualified following the first exercise.

As regards the averment of the Appellant that he was recalled from his posting in anticipation of the interview, Respondent stated that this was a decision of the Responsible Officer and Respondent was not a party to this decision. The Appellant could not, therefore, challenge the decision of Respondent not to call him for interview.

The Tribunal determined that there was a Scheme of service where the qualification requirements were spelt out and once a candidate did not meet the basic eligibility, he was eliminated. He could not expect to be called for interview.

The Tribunal also determined that the Appellant might have been confused by the fact that he was called for interview in a previous exercise for the same post and the Scheme of Service had not been amended since then. The Appellant was not aware that it was more to ascertain the possible eligibility of his qualification. He only came to know about this at the Hearing. This was because it was not the practice for Respondent to inform applicants of the reasons why their applications had not been retained or, when they attended an interview, why they had not been selected.

The Appellant was also under the impression that, since the trainee appointee had to follow a course abroad and the training institution providing

the course did allow persons with a degree in another field admission to such course, this might be a case for him, regarding the equivalent qualification part of the Scheme of Service. However, that was confusing the admission requirement of a training institution and the binding requirements of a prescribed Scheme of Service. The appeal was set aside.