



World TVET Database Oman

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Contents

Abbreviations	4
1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation	5
2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems	7
3. Governance and financing	9
4. TVET teachers and trainers.....	9
5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks.....	10
6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges	12
7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions.....	14
8. References and further reading	14

Abbreviations

CBFS	College of Banking and Financial Studies
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OAAA	Oman Academic Accreditation Authority
OQNHE	Oman Quality Network in Higher Education
TOP	Technician Omanisation Programme

TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

Basic education	Non-formal education
Diploma	On-the-job training
Entrepreneurial/Entrepreneurship skills	Pre-service training
Flexibility	Qualification
Higher education	Quality
Informal Learning	Quality Assurance
Job	Skills
Key skills/competencies	Social/Soft Skills
Knowledge	Teacher
Labour market	Teacher In VET
Life skills	Trainer
National Qualifications Framework	TVET

Oman

Population:	4,491,000 (2015)
Youth population ¹ :	730,000 (2015)
Median population age:	29.0 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010-2015) ² :	8.45%



Data © OpenStreetMap Design © Mapbox

1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

TVET mission

Oman intends TVET to become the first choice for students and employers by providing demonstrably high quality teaching, learning and research that makes significant contribution to the ongoing national economic development. Oman views TVET mission's as being to achieve and sustain a strong reputation for excellence in teaching and learning. It is dedicated to the delivery of high quality technical education and vocational training and aims to produce graduates who have the professional and personal skills to enter employment with confidence, contributing effectively to the Sultanate's ongoing economic development.

TVET in Oman aims to:

- Achieve excellence in governance and administration, and act at all times according to strong ethical principles;
- Offer to all students high-quality teaching, learning and training opportunities in line with the requirements of the market needs, so as to provide the society with graduates who are equipped with appropriate technical knowledge and personal/ professional skills;
- Provide excellent services to students;
- Provide state-of-the-art learning resources for students, and encourage them to develop their academic, vocational and social skills;
- Ensure that the facilities are well managed, effectively used, and developed innovatively;
- Ensure that financial planning and management follow well-defined rules, procedures and standards;
- Develop its staff, offering opportunities for professional and personal growth and development, rewarding hard work and fostering leadership skills and innovative thinking;
- Achieve and sustain a national and regional reputation for excellence in specialist technological and applied research of benefit to Omani society; and
- Foster an open and fruitful relationship with public and private sector organisations and with the community at large.

¹ Population aged 14-25

² All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/>)

TVET strategy

In order to provide a system for TVET that is capable of preparing a workforce that can meet the labour market needs, and to achieve the level of income that is commensurate with their performance and productivity, the following policies have been implemented:

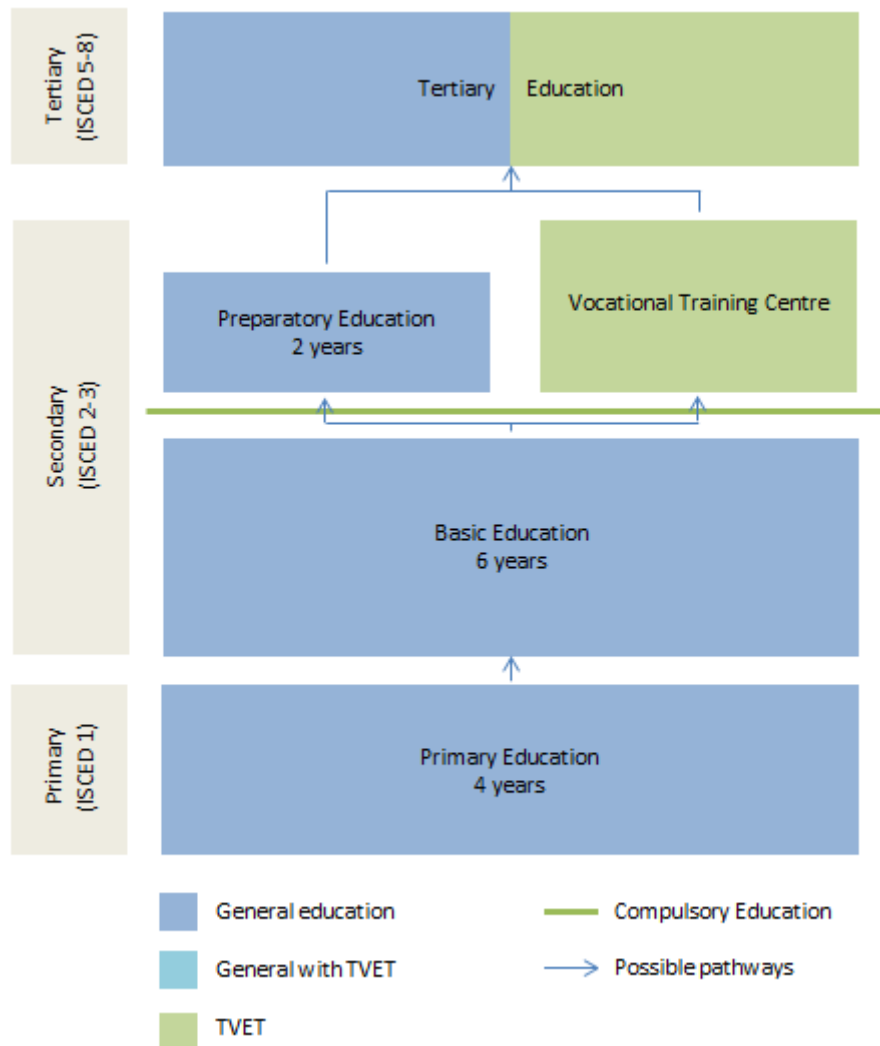
- Adoption of an open and flexible educational and training system that allows career progression and continuously helps to develop the skills of Omani labour.
- Adoption of advanced systems for TVET that are capable of keeping up with market demands and contemporary technological developments.
- Efforts to increase the participation of women
- Conducting periodic evaluations of the efficiency of these programmes to determine to which extent they meet the labour market needs, adjusting the programmes when necessary and benefitting from the experiences of other countries where applicable.

TVET legislation

TVET in Oman has witnessed several developments. The most recent Royal Decrees and Ministerial Decisions regarding TVET are outlined below:

- In 2001, TVET came under the responsibility of the Ministry of Workforce according to Royal Decree No. 108/2001 on the establishment of the Ministry of Workforce, and the devolution of the responsibilities of Labour and Vocational Training to it. This resulted in the Ministry of Workforce being responsible for the Technical Colleges and public and private Vocational Institutes.
- On 20th May 2001, a decision was issued by the Higher Education Council, approving the change of the name "Muscat Technical Industrial College" to a University College awarding a Bachelor's degree in technological education under the name of "The Higher College of Technology", and approving the change of the name of "The Technical Industrial Colleges" to "Colleges of Technology", awarding the National Technological Diploma.
- The most recent By-laws for the Colleges of Technology and Vocational training Centres were published by Ministerial Decision No. 72/2004 on 21st March 2004 for the Colleges of Technology and Ministerial Decision No. 429/2008 on 16th September 2008 for the Vocational Training Centres. Few amendments were made to the By-laws through Ministerial Decrees.

2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC.

The school system in Oman consists of basic and post-basic education where both are designed and developed to ensure that students are prepared to be good citizens who can exploit the skills they have acquired in school, whether they become higher education students, employees or entrepreneurs.

Formal TVET system

Students who complete grade 10 can continue their education to post-basic school education offered by the Ministry of Education or to vocational training offered by the Ministry of Workforce.

Post-basic education comprises grades 11 and 12. At this level, students are preparing for their future academic career, which may take them into vocational, technical or university education, or into the world of work depending on their aptitudes and career objectives. It aims at continuing the development of key skills, work skills and career planning skills. It also focuses on developing positive attitudes towards work, society and the environment. Post-basic education encourages more independence in learning and provides students with life-skills. At this stage, students are informed about the different specialisations available in higher and technical education and the subjects needed for each specialisation or programme.

Higher Education

Students who complete the 12th grade in school can join any of the following education and/or training programmes depending on their achievement in grade 12:

- Academic universities and colleges;
- Colleges of Technology (Post-secondary Technical Diploma and Bachelor);
- Vocational Education (Post-secondary Vocational Diploma).

Vocational Education and Training

Vocational training centres seek to attract the 10–12 grade school leavers, and prepare them for vocational levels: limited skills, skilled and craftsman. In addition, to the occupational sciences, the training and education plan includes the basic skills. Each level is presented in one academic year as follows:

- First year: Limited skills
- Second year: Skilled
- Third year: Craftsman

From September 2012, Vocational Training Centres started offering the Post-secondary Vocational Diploma which consists of a one-year foundation programme and a two-year diploma programme. Some students that successfully complete the Vocational Diploma may be allowed, depending on their performance, to continue their study at the Colleges of Technology at Bachelor Level.

Technical Education

At the Colleges of Technology, students progress through several levels. Upon acceptance, the student is enrolled on the foundation programme, focusing mostly on English. In the foundation programme students also study Mathematics, IT and life skills. After successfully completing the foundation programme, students move to specialisations at the level of diploma of technology, with possible progression to advanced diploma of technology and bachelor of technology. Students cannot progress to any higher level unless they achieve the academic requirements and a certain level of English language. Students that do not achieve the requirements for progressing to a higher level are offered industrial training (On-the-Job Training), whereby they undergo intensive training supervised by college-based tutors and industry-based practitioners.

3. Governance and financing

Governance

The Colleges of Technology have a Board of Trustees chaired by the Minister. It includes the Director General, two of the College Deans as well as representatives from government agencies and industry. The Board is responsible for setting down strategies and policies for the colleges and ensuring their implementation. Decisions are arrived at by a majority vote.

The decisions are passed on to the Undersecretary for Technological Education and Vocational Training who oversees the Ministry plan in the light of the government's development plans and job market needs. The Director General supervises the implementation of the rules, regulations, and decisions issued by the Board of Trustees and pass them on to the Deans of the Colleges of Technology. The Dean, along with the College Council, is responsible for managing the College affairs as established by Article 16 of the Bylaws of Colleges of Technology.

The Board of Trustees and the College Council provide a platform for involving internal and external stakeholders in the Higher College of Technology management. Decisions and directions of the Board and the Council are communicated to staff through well-defined channels.

Financing

Each College of Technology and Vocational Training Centre has a developmental budget and an operational budget. The developmental budget is used to support infrastructure projects including classrooms, offices, labs, workshops, network and etc. whilst operational budget covers the repeated activities or expenses such as salaries, consumables, maintenance and purchase of minor equipment.

The financial system in TVET is controlled by two major bodies: the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Workforce. The Colleges of Technology and Vocational Training Centers can, to a certain degree, manage the allocated resources as some of the authorities are still centralised. However, there is gradual move towards giving more autonomy to the individual colleges and vocational centres.

4. TVET teachers and trainers

Recruitment of TVET Teachers and Instructors focuses on two groups. These are Omani new graduates and experienced non-Omanis. Ambitious training programs have been developed to equip the teachers and instructors with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes.

TVET Teacher Training:

Every year a large number of new Omani Bachelor holders are recruited as TVET Teachers in the required area of specialisation such as engineering, information technology, business etc. After recruitment these are sent to the industry for six months for real exposure to the world of work. After that, these teachers are sent abroad to follow a master's degree program in the area of

specialisation. Sometimes, the industrial training is postponed after completion of the Master's program. Before these teachers can start teaching they attend a few months of training within the college to learn modern teaching techniques and methods of transferring knowledge and skills to students. Also, their first semester of teaching will be on a shadowing basis with an experienced teacher.

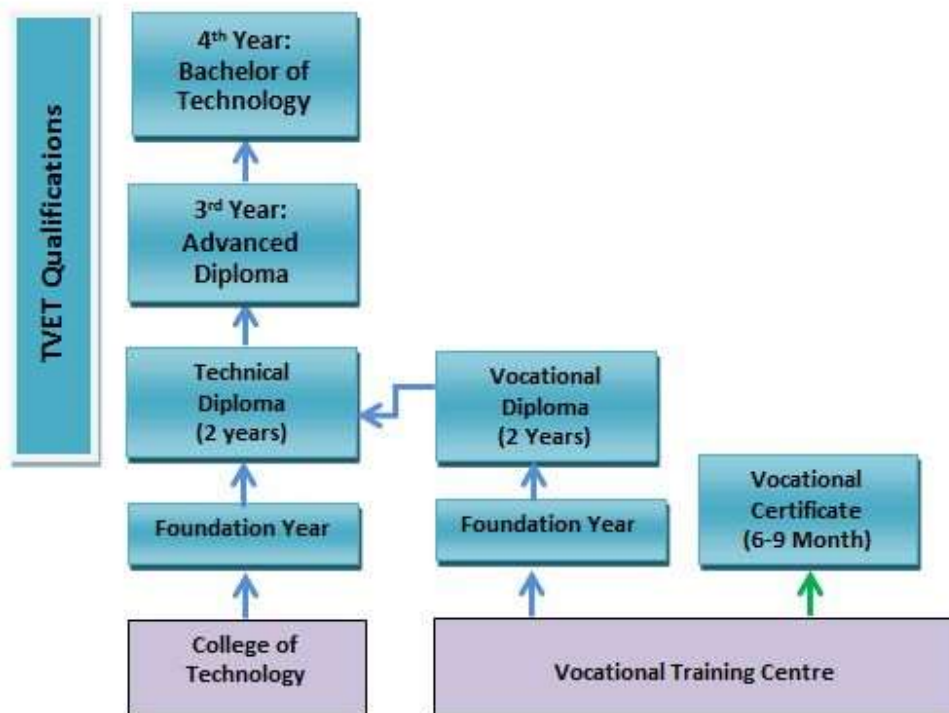
TVET Instructor Training:

Instructors (referred to as technicians) with a post-secondary diploma or advanced diploma are recruited in the required area of specialisation. Pre-service training takes place through sending newly recruited instructors to the industry for training. Then they are trained in the laboratories and workshops within the college under the supervision of experienced instructors. Some in-service training programmes are conducted through agreements with vendors of new technologies. After working for two years, and depending on need, instructors may be sent abroad to continue their study towards a Bachelor degree.

5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

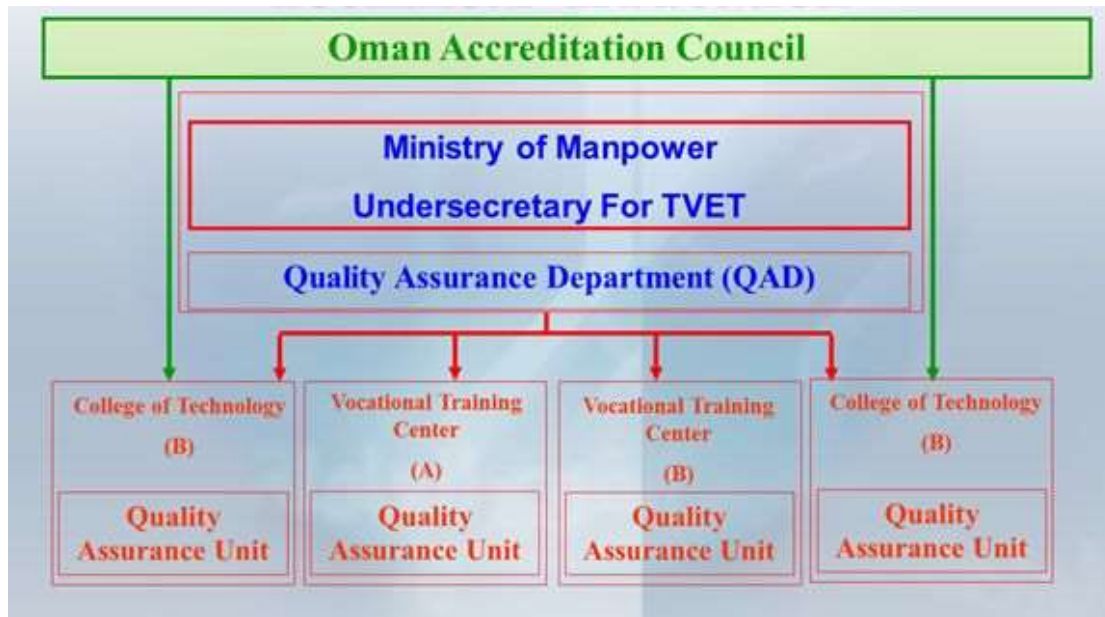
Programme	Duration	Qualification
Vocational Training Centre	6-9 months	Vocational Certificate
Vocational Training Centre	2 years	Vocational Diploma
College of Technology	2 years	Technical Diploma
College of Technology	3 years	Advanced Diploma
College of Technology	4 years	Bachelor of Technology

Quality assurance



The Ministry of Manpower, being responsible for the TVET sector in Oman, adopted several policies to ensure the quality of education and training, and quality of the graduates are in line with the policies governing higher education in Oman. In 2001, The Oman Accreditation Council was formed, later restructured as Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA), responsible for institutional and programme accreditation for all the public and private higher education (post-secondary) institutes. The Ministry of Manpower created a Quality Assurance Department to respond to the requirements of OAAA. This department is responsible for education and training quality, accountable to the undersecretary for technical education and vocational training.

In addition, a quality assurance unit was created in each vocational training centre and college of technology. These units are responsible for following the implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures. Figure 3 illustrates the TVET quality framework.



6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

Current reforms and major projects

Reforms

Oman has recently made a number of reforms in order to equip students with the required knowledge, skills and attributes in order to best address the needs of the industry. The most recent reforms are:

- In 2012, the Certificate of Achievement which was awarded to students who cannot complete the Diploma level was cancelled responding to the labour market.
- In September 2012, Vocational Training Centres started offering the post-secondary Vocational Training Diploma. This reform attracted more students and made vocational training more responsive to industry needs. The Vocational Training Centres, at the same time, continue to accept 10–12 grade school leavers to study Specialised Vocational Courses so that they have sufficient knowledge, skills and experience to join the labour market.
- The need for continuing to offer the Advanced Diploma in the Colleges of Technology is being discussed and decision will be made after consultation with the industry.

Curriculum Review

The Colleges of Technology and Vocational Training Centres have run reviews on the curricula of the programmes offered. Developments have been made on the curricula and teaching styles and methods in order to provide the students with the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the labour market needs and Oman's Vision 2020. Review of curricula takes place through

Specialisation Committees which consist of experts from the ministry and teachers from the different Colleges of Technology.

Currently, Memorandums of Understanding are being signed with academic and industry institutes to enhance the TVET programmes being offered.

Teacher Training Plan

As mentioned in the TVET teachers and trainers section, after recruitment, teachers are sent abroad to follow a master's degree programme. They then spend a few months working in industry to gain occupational experience and to acquire entrepreneurship skills, followed by a few months of training within the college to learn modern teaching techniques and methods of transferring knowledge and skills to students.

Challenges

The development of vocational training and technical education in Oman was a major success. Vocational training which was not attractive to many young people is now attracting a good number of students. Furthermore, many school graduates are now attracted to technical education, making it their first or second choice amongst other higher education institutes. Despite this success, there are few challenges facing TVET in Oman, which are:

- Non-existence of a national framework for vocational, technical and professional qualifications and certificates, leading to difficulty in absorbing certain qualifications and certificates within the labour market.
- Despite overcoming the perception of inferiority of technical education in Oman, vocational training continues to be the last choice. Current reforms being implemented are expected to help in overcoming this challenge.
- Difficulties in finding enough training opportunities within the industry, especially in certain disciplines. Current discussions with the industry will hopefully help in solving this problem.
- Low percentage of Omanisation* (i.e. localisation of the national workforce) within the academic faculties and support staff in the colleges of technology and vocational training centres, despite ambitious plans and proper budgeting. This is attributed to several factors that include the graduates preference to work in the industry rather than academic or training, especially in engineering disciplines.

Omanisation is meant Oman's tendency to enhance the role of manpower in the nation development. http://www.manpower.gov.om/en/omanisation_home.asp.

7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

UNEVOC Centres

- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network+-+Centre&tid=371> Ministry of Manpower, Directorate of Curricula]

TVET Institutions

- [<http://www.hct.edu.om/> Higher College of Technology]
- [<http://www.sct.edu.om/web/> Salalah College of Technology]
- [<http://www.shct.edu.om/> Shinas College of Technology]
- [www.ibriect.edu.om Ibri College of Technology]
- Nizwa College of Technology

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http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/pdf/EPE_Component_One_English_14_May_2010_01.pdf.

Further reading

- [<http://oqnhe.org/> Oman Quality Network in Higher Education]
- [<http://www.oac.gov.om/> Oman Academic Accreditation Authority]