



# Ghana

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## Principles and general objectives of education

A major objective of the school system, as designed by the Education Reform Programme of 1987, is to make education more relevant to the socio-economic realities of the country, so that the Ghanaian children will be able to live a productive and meaningful life. One of the cardinal principles guiding the Reform Programme is the achievement of equity and quality in the education system. Since the reforms began, a number of special programmes have been introduced to deal with specific issues to enhance the teaching and learning process. The overall objective of the education system is to play a dynamic role in the development of the nation.

## Current educational priorities and concerns

Ghana's educational development over the recent years must be understood within the context of the on-going educational reforms which began in 1987. The need for reforms arose from the shortcomings of the old system. By 1983, Ghana's education system, which until the mid-1970s was known to be one of the most highly developed and effective in West Africa, had deteriorated in quality. Enrolment rates, once among the highest in the sub-Saharan region, stagnated and fell. The percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) allocated to education dropped from 6.4% in 1976 to 1.7% in 1985; the real levels of financing fell by about two-thirds. Government resources were no longer available to construct, complete, or maintain educational facilities. At the same time, scarcity of foreign exchange diminished the country's ability to purchase textbooks and other teaching and learning materials. The economic downturn also resulted in the mass exodus of qualified teachers. At the basic education level, the ratio of trained to untrained teachers fell significantly. The education sector was moreover weakened by low motivation and morale and ineffective supervision. Finally, the lack of data and statistics needed for vital planning led to decisions being taken on an *ad hoc* basis.

It was in the light of these problems confronting the country's educational sector that in 1983, under the Economic Recovery Programme, an initiative was taken to inject some urgently-needed instructional materials (such as textbooks, library books and stationery) into the school system. The Education Reform Programme of 1987 purported to expand and make access more equitable at all levels of education; to change the structure of the school system, reducing the length of education from seventeen to twelve years; to improve pedagogic efficiency and effectiveness; to make education more relevant by increasing the attention paid to problem-solving, environmental concerns, pre-vocational training, manual dexterity and general skills training; to contain and partially recover costs; and to enhance sector management and budgeting procedures. The Education Reform Programme was divided into three broad phases: the introduction of the new junior secondary school system from 1987 to 1990; the introduction of the new senior secondary school system from 1991 to 1993; and the tertiary reforms from 1994 to 1997. Since its implementation in 1987,



the Education Reform Programme has had a significant impact on the educational process in the country.

Since the inception of the current reforms, the management of the educational system has improved. However, the quality of education has not corresponded to the enormous resources that have been injected into the system over the past decade. District directors of education have been introduced into the system to supervise the schools, teachers have been retrained and provided with essential classroom facilities, students have greater access to education and basic textbooks, the curriculum has been redesigned towards greater relevance. Notwithstanding, the effectiveness of the public basic and secondary schools remains low.

A number of factors have created this situation: the lack of instructional materials and equipment and their inefficient use; teachers' and pupils' absenteeism; poor supervision in some rural areas; inappropriate pre-service training and inadequate in-service training; poor motivation of teachers; burdensome curriculum; unattractive modes of teaching, such as rote learning and copying from the blackboard—especially at the upper levels of basic education; and the language of instruction, when it differs from the children's mother language. The weakness in communication skills pervades the system up to the secondary education level. In addition, there is a general lack of effective management at the various levels of the education sector.

Furthermore, a large number of teachers are promoted and appointed to management positions for which they have no training. Consequently, assistant directors in technical positions like planning, budgeting, as well as data gathering and analysis are so incompetent that the desired technical support needed to make the District Education Office effective is often lacking. Finally, over-staffing in urban schools and under-staffing in rural schools is a characteristic problem both at the basic and secondary education levels. While well-established urban secondary schools are overcrowded, the newly created rural secondary schools have poor enrolment.

These problems tend to reflect the situation of poor community participation, gender disparities and poverty. Thus, the confidence of parents in the public school system is low because of its perceived low value for money. This is mainly so at the basic education level. However, at the secondary and tertiary levels, graduate unemployment and the difficulties in obtaining admission into tertiary institutions after completion of the secondary level have made many parents reluctant to invest in higher education. At the secondary level, the activities of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) have degenerated into the imposition of levies, sometimes without the consent of most parents.

In addition, various disparities exist in the school system at all levels. Key among these is gender bias. On the whole, fewer girls than boys enrol and complete basic education. At the secondary level, fewer females participate in the system, and fewer still in the science and technology-related areas of study. At the tertiary level, the disparity is even wider. Finally, harsh economic conditions have narrowed access to schooling because many parents have been unable to pay the cost of their children's education. Consequently, drop-out rates are high.



Most of the problems enumerated above are addressed by the Free, Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) Programme 1996-2005 drawn up by the Ministry of Education in 1992. It was hoped that the necessary measures put in place to address key issues—poor teaching and learning outcomes, access and gender bias, weak management capacity, the relevance of education to the industry and job-market, unsatisfactory resource mobilization and utilization, and inadequate financing arrangements—will improve the teaching/learning process with an envisaged increase in the pass rate for admission into senior secondary schools and technical/vocational institutions to 80% by 2005. This should ensure that at least 70% of basic school pupils (Grades I-VI) will satisfy the minimum acceptable standard of performance on the national criterion reference test. It was also targeted that repetition and drop-out rates will be reduced at a rate of 1% annually, until the most minimal reduction rate is reached. By the year 2005, it was expected to improve the gender balance in the number of pupils admitted by about 50%. By that year the proportion of the relevant age group entering Grade VII was expected to reach 95%, with a 85% completion rate for Grades V-IX in the same year.

The Education Strategic Plan (2003–2015) is one of the current tools designed to deal with the challenges facing education in Ghana in the twenty-first century. The preparation of the ESP was informed by the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS), Education for All (EFA) goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other sectoral and national reports. The ESP lays the foundation for a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) to education sector development in Ghana ensuring joint responsibility and partnership between government and all stakeholders. It is the ESP that will guide the action plans for educational development including EFA in the first two decades of this century. The ESP is organized along four main areas of focus as follows: equitable access to education; quality of education; educational planning and management; science and technology, technical and vocational education and training.

The Government has proposed to establish in 2007/08 academic year a new basic education structure lasting 11 years and made up of two years of kindergarten, six years of primary and three years of junior high school education. At the post-basic education level, the government proposes the following streams: four-year senior high school education, leading to post-secondary and tertiary education; parallel technical/vocational education leading to polytechnics or the world of work and an apprenticeship system leading to the world of work; 3- to 4-year tertiary education (polytechnic and university). The Government also recommends the creation of Open Community Colleges and an Open University to provide for work-study programmes and lifelong education. The specialized institutions (post-secondary institutions which are currently non-tertiary) under the new structure would be upgraded to award diploma and would be affiliated to relevant universities and polytechnics.

## **Laws and other basic regulations concerning education**

The **Education Act** of 1961 established the policy of free and compulsory primary and basic education for all school age children. The Education Act also made provision for the establishment of private schools to supplement the government's efforts, in order to dispose of enough schools to cater to the ever-growing demand for education—especially at the basic level. This led to the creation of the Private Schools Unit at the Ministry of Education in August 1973.



In 1983, the Government enacted the **PNDC Law No. 42** to modify and reinforce the Education Act of 1961. The Government declared that “without the provision of basic education for our children to meet the challenges of this environment, we would only be turning them into misfits and denying ourselves the most essential resources for national development.”

Since Ghana’s return to constitutional rule in January 1992, the government has set up institutions for the promotion of democratic rule and socio-economic advancement. The 1992 **Constitution** specifically stipulates that:

- the State shall provide educational facilities at all levels in all the regions of Ghana, and shall, to the greatest extent as possible, make those facilities available to all citizens;
- the Government shall—within two years after Parliament first meets after the coming into force of the Constitution—draw up a programme for implementation within the following ten years for the provision of free compulsory and universal basic education;
- the State shall, subject to the availability of resources, provide equal and balanced access to secondary and other appropriate pre-university or equivalent education with emphasis on science and technology; a free adult literacy programme; free vocational training, rehabilitation and resettlement of disabled persons; and lifelong education.

The **Children’s Act 1998 (Act 560)** enjoins the District Assemblies and other decentralized departments to facilitate the establishment of day care centres and other early childhood care and development (ECCD) institutions.

Since 1987, the education system has provided nine years of compulsory basic formal education for every child from the age of 6 to 14 years. In 1996 the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) Programme was launched, a ten-year programme (1996–2005) designed to establish the policy framework, strategies and activities to achieve free and compulsory basic education for all children of school going age.

## **Administration and management of the education system**

The Ministry of Education (since 2001, the **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports—MOEYS**) responsible for the provision and management of education in Ghana, has various statutory bodies under it, including the Ghana Education Service, the Ghana Library Board, the Bureau of Ghana Languages, the Ghana Book Development Council, the National Commission for UNESCO, the National Service Secretariat, the Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PBME).

The **Ghana Education Service (GES)** has the responsibility of implementing pre-tertiary education policies formulated by the Ministry. It is headed by a Director-General, and is one of the most decentralized sectors of the government. Indeed, the management of education at divisional, regional and district levels has been



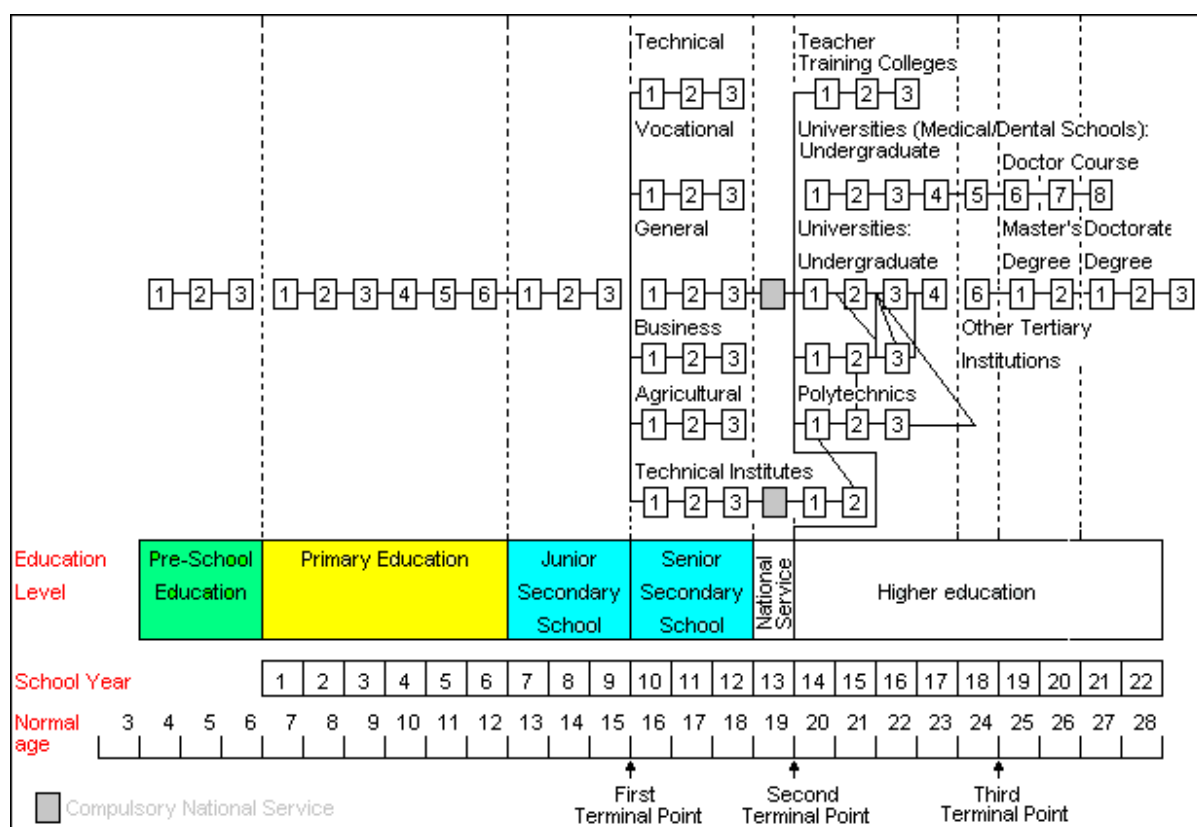
strengthened by posting of highly qualified personnel to all managerial and administrative positions in the service.

Furthermore, in order to foster greater local community participation in decision-making, various bodies and committees have been established at local and district levels, including Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), District Teacher Support Teams (DTSTs), School Management Committees (SMCs) and others, which co-ordinate their activities with the District. The **National Council for Tertiary Education** (NCTE) and the **Non-Formal Education Division** (NFED) have important sub-sectoral areas of responsibility regarding education delivery.

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) project launched in 1997 on a pilot basis in 12 Districts (out of a total of 110) and three Regional Offices was to improve the collection, processing and analysis of educational data in order to make reliable information available for decision making at all levels of the education system. It has been expanded to cover 14 additional Districts and the remaining 7 Regional Offices. In March 2004, a Planning Unit was established at the GES. This new unit which will be expanded into a division will be charged with the responsibility of collection, analysis and management of data and the efficient planning of activities of the various divisions. It will address data inconsistencies in the system and organize workshops for district and regional budget officers and their District and Regional Directors of Education on the need to create credible data to inform management for operational efficiency to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

## Structure and organization of the education system

### Ghana: structure of the education system



### Pre-school education

Pre-school education is not compulsory and normally caters to children in the age group 3-5. Nurseries are for children aged 3-4, while kindergartens cater to children between the ages of 4 and 6 years. There are also crèches for children up to 2 years old and day-care centres (age group 2-3 years). The age limits are not strictly observed as children of all ages could be found in any centre.

### Primary education

Primary education, or the first stage of basic education, lasts six years and is compulsory. Primary education is divided into two three-year cycles: lower and upper primary. Children start attending school at the age of 6.

### Secondary education

Secondary education is for pupils aged 12 to 19 years, including a year of compulsory national service. General secondary education consists of three years of junior secondary school-completing nine years of basic compulsory education leading to the Basic Education Certificate examination, followed by three years of senior secondary school. At the end of the senior secondary programme, students sit the Senior Secondary School Certificate examination administered by the West African



Examinations Council. Technical and vocational education usually lasts three years and is provided in technical secondary schools, technical institutions, vocational schools/training centres and other post-basic education training institutions.

Tertiary education consists of four years of university education, or three to four years of training at polytechnics, teacher training colleges or other training institutions.

The school year consists of forty weeks at the primary and senior secondary levels, and of forty-five weeks at the junior secondary level. The academic year is divided into two semesters.

## **The financing of education**

Since independence, the financing of public education institutions is the responsibility of the central Government. By law— the Education Act of 1961 and PNDC Law 207— the District Assemblies provide buildings and equipment for basic education (primary and junior secondary schools) in their communities. Most of the Assemblies are, however, unable to adequately perform this responsibility, due to financial constraints.

The central government is the main source of education financing. During the past ten years, a great percentage of public expenditure on education (around 85%) has been allocated to personnel salaries. Non-salary costs, such as the boarding fees of all students in special education schools, the allowances of all students in teacher training colleges, the total boarding fees for students in the universities, and the scholarships and bursaries for students in tertiary institutions, account for another 10% of this budget. Teaching and learning materials are also provided by the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education also provides the physical facilities, infrastructure, equipment and furniture for all post-basic educational institutions in the country. In 1998, only 4% of the total government budget was allocated to investment expenditure. This percentage is wholly inadequate to maintain basic education facilities. As a result, at least one-third of all basic schools do not have permanent structures. An alternative is cost sharing, which is practiced at all levels of education except primary and junior secondary public schools. Families and communities contribute, in cash or through communal labour, to the expansion of educational infrastructural facilities.

The major source of funding tertiary education is government subvention, which provides about 50% of institutions' budget requirements. Tuition is free at all levels of education, including higher or tertiary education. The Loans Scheme enables students in the tertiary education institutions to obtain loans from a financial institution (Social Security and National Insurance Trust—SSNIT) at a very low interest rate to pay for their meals on the campus and for educational materials such as books. The government pays the bulk of the interest rate. Academic Facilities User Fees (AFUF) have been introduced in the universities and the polytechnics as cost-



sharing measures which have been accepted by all stakeholders. Government currently provides 30% rebate on the AFUF and the students/parents bear the 70%.

In the framework of the decentralization of the financial management, the GES has adopted the Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) model for the preparation of budgets. The model allocates resources according to performance targets. District and Divisional Directors are allocated resources based on performance targets. Directors are empowered to manage their budgets to achieve their set objectives. Forty-five out of 110 districts have been fully decentralized. This means that when these districts have been provided with their budget allocations, they lodge the funds at local banks, and draw action plans, which are approved by their DEOCs and implement them without reference to GES Headquarters. Forty-three districts are partially decentralized. This means that though their resources are lodged in local banks, they have to prepare work plans, which are supervised by Regional Directors and approved by DEOCs before these resources can be utilized. (GES, 2004).

## The educational process

The Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD), a body under the Ghana Education Service (GES) is responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating the National Curriculum.

The curriculum reforms of 1987 were intended to address two essential issues: (a) there are many important jobs to be done in Ghana for which no one is being trained, and (b) scientific and technological training is insufficient for Ghanians to make use of their country's resources. Educational reforms in Ghana have also been motivated by social, economic, political, cultural tendencies and practices, feedback from the evaluation of the curriculum, and shifts in educational trends. Thus, primary education is intended to lay the foundation for pupil inquiry and creativity, and to develop the pupil's ability to adapt constructively to a changing environment; the junior secondary school curriculum has been planned to provide pupils with basic pre-technical, pre-vocational and scientific knowledge, and senior secondary education intends to reinforce the knowledge and skills acquired during basic education, while also providing opportunities to help students develop different talents and skills.

Furthermore, the education system has adopted the integrated subject-based approach of organizing the curriculum. In an integrated subject-based curriculum, important topics are selected and repeated at different levels within and across subjects. Some of the key topics identified are: democracy and human rights; environmental degradation; person to person communication; health and sanitation; belief systems; population and family life education; problem-solving and decision-making. Through the process of planned repetition within and across subjects, the syllabi are designed to strengthen understanding and the acquisition of knowledge. Furthermore, many subjects are combined into one (for instance, environmental studies at the primary level is a combination of science, agricultural science, life skills and social studies), as it is believed that integration is a more efficient way to transmit knowledge. The new curriculum targets high-level cognitive objectives, values and practical skills to give learners the ability to undertake scientific, critical and logical thinking and action.





In order to facilitate the learners' active participation, specific objectives of each unit in the syllabus are planned and arranged in such a way as to help the pupil acquire knowledge and understanding before moving on to analyze issues, apply the knowledge or acquire an associated affective or psychomotor skill. The teaching-learning activities are pupil-centred and involve role-playing, co-operative learning, non-directive teaching, discovering method, group participation, problem-solving and the project method.

Implementation of the new curriculum has been done mainly through teacher training. This involves a cascade approach whereby the CRDD prepares a team of trainers to guide and instruct a set of resource persons who are then responsible for the training of teachers in the field. CRDD staff are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the whole training process.

### **Pre-primary education**

A main learning objective for the pre-primary level is the promotion of a healthy mind and body. For the realization of this objective, all children are expected to be fully immunized against the six-killer diseases, and mothers follow courses in nutrition, family planning, and life education. Efforts have been made to ensure that schools are safe and equipped with toys for psychomotor development; also, teachers are expected to organize activities such as role-plays, sports and games that strengthen both children's health and the process of socialization. The use of local languages is also promoted at this level.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes comprise day care programmes based at centres or schools, in-home programmes (where caregivers go to the homes of children), nanny homes (where parents take children to homes of nannies), and after-school-homecare (where children who close earlier from their centres are sent until their parents pick them up after work). There are nurseries for children aged 3-4, day-care centres for the age group 2-3 years, and crèches that cater to children under 2 years of age. Programmes are run by the Department of Social Welfare, the Ghana Education Service, and private proprietors and NGOs. The two-year kindergarten education programme is considered as part of the basic education sector.

In order to ensure that nursery schools are properly run, the Government has set up a National Nursery Teachers' Training Centre where certificated teachers who want to specialize in nursery education, and nursery attendants are trained. The pre-school or nursery teacher training course lasts three months, after which a certificate is awarded. The basic-level teacher training course lasts three years, after which a teacher certificate "A" is awarded to successful students.

The rural population has little or no access to this level of education since most of the facilities are mostly found in the urban and sub-urban centres; over the years, however, efforts have been made by the Ghana Education Service and NGOs to establish more pre-school institutions.

Before 2002 pre-school education was not part of the formal system; it was introduced as a result of a recommendation made by the President's Committee on



Review of Education Reforms (October 2002). Consequently, plans are far advanced to include early childhood development education (ECD) in the formal system. Syllabi in six subject areas have been developed as well as a draft policy. The subject areas are: psycho-social skills (self-confidence, assertiveness); language and literacy; mathematics; environmental studies; creative activities; health, nutrition and safety.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, the Ghana National Commission on Children, with the support of UNICEF is conducting an inventory of all formal ECD centres to ascertain the number of children with access to these centres, the kind of structure being used, and the number and status of teachers and attendants at the centres. The policy Document on ECCD which aims at addressing the current problems of access and quality in ECD services has been reviewed, finalized and launched in August 2004.

The teacher-pupil ratio for pre-primary education was 1:24 in 1999/2000. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2005 the gross enrolment ratio at the pre-primary level was 42% (net enrolment ratio: 27%). There were 731,331 children enrolled assisted by 29,014 teachers (22% trained).

### **Primary (basic) education**

The operational guidelines for the implementation of the Basic Education Reform state that all schools, whether private or public, are expected to run a full forty-week school year.

Under the Primary School Development Project, instructional time in basic schools was increased from four to five hours a day. Even then, due to a number of factors, the actual instructional time in Ghana in public basic schools was found to have averaged 450 hours a year. It has been observed that the actual teaching and learning time is often affected by weather conditions and by the unattractiveness of the school facilities. Many of the schools in the more deprived parts of the country have no proper school buildings, while a large number of school buildings have leaking roofs and other impediments.

Learning time and effectiveness are also affected by other factors such as poor teacher discipline; teachers' and pupils' attendance at markets on local market days during school hours; attendance of teachers during school hours at funerals and meetings called by circuit and district education officers and the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) officials; and time taken off by teachers each month to collect their salaries. These problems were accentuated by an almost complete lack of school-level supervision by the headteacher in most public basic schools. These concerns are being addressed through the Primary School Development Project, which the Ministry of Education is implementing with a World Bank credit. Measures taken under the project to address these concerns are policy and management changes and investments in physical infrastructure.

Following the launching of the reforms, there has been a marked increase in basic education enrolments. The gross enrolment rate in primary school increased from 80.5% in 1988/89 to 82.5% in 1990/91. In 1999/2000, the gross enrolment rate (GER) was estimated at 83.5%, and the teacher pupil ratio was 1:33. According to the



UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2005 the GER was 88% (net enrolment ratio: 75%). There were 89,278 teachers (58% trained) the teacher pupil ratio was 1:33.

In order to make education more relevant to the socio-economic realities of the country, Ghanaian languages and practical agriculture have been introduced as core subjects at the basic and secondary levels of schooling, and science is being taught with an environmental approach. In addition, in order to expose the student to employable skills, each school at the basic education level offers one pre-vocational subject designed to familiarize pupils with, and give them practice in, use of simple hand tools. School curricula have also been diversified. The Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) is a general certificate awarded to successful pupils on completion of a three-year junior secondary school course.

The weekly timetables for primary and junior secondary education are presented below:

**Primary education (regular programme): suggested weekly time allocation**

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	Lower primary			Upper primary		
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
English	10	10	10	10	10	10
Mathematics	10	10	10	10	10	10
National language	8	8	8	6	6	6
Environmental studies	6	6	6	5	5	5
Integrated sciences	–	–	–	5	5	5
Religious and moral education	4	4	4	3	3	3
Music and dance	3	3	3	3	3	3
Physical education	4	4	4	3	3	3
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>

*Source:* Ghana Education Service, 2001. (Each teaching period lasts 30 minutes).

### Junior secondary education (regular programme): suggested weekly time allocation

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	I	II	III
Mathematics	6	6	6
English	6	6	6
Science	4	4	4
National language and culture	4	4	4
Agricultural science	3	3	3
Pre-technical skills	3	3	3
Pre-vocational skills	3	3	3
Religious and moral education	3	3	3
Social studies	3	3	3
French (optional)	4	4	4
Life skills	2	2	2
Music and dance	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>

*Source:* Ghana Education Service, 2001. (Each teaching period lasts 30 minutes).

### Secondary education

Under the new senior secondary school (SSS) system, 35% of the 1990 and 1991 JSS.3 enrolment cohorts were admitted. The increased intake into SSS.1 was facilitated by the opening or absorption of new community senior secondary schools to supplement the number in existence in 1989. To enable the newly opened senior secondary schools to stand on their feet, the government through cost-sharing with local communities provided them with additional facilities such as classrooms, staff houses, administration blocks, a science laboratory, library, etc., under the Community Senior Secondary School Construction project.

The number of schools rose from 240 in 1987/88 to 452 in 1991/92 and enrolment from 1,461,185 to 2,118,718—i.e. an increase of 45%. At the JSS.1 level, 1987/88 enrolments were 21.7% higher than comparable middle Form I enrolments, with by far the largest increases (83.9%) in the three educationally disadvantaged regions—the northern, upper-east and upper-west regions. In most of the southern regions, an over 70% enrolment rate of the age group 6-14 had been achieved, but in the three northern regions the equivalent enrolment rates were above 40%. In 1990/91 and 1991/92, enrolment in public junior secondary schools—in relation to the age group 12-14—was 50% and 56.3%, respectively. In 1999/2000, the gross enrolment rate was 36.18% and the teacher-student ratio was 1:18.6. The Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination is awarded to all final year Senior Secondary School students after a three-year's course.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2005 the GER at the secondary level (all programmes) was estimated at 44% (NER: 37%); at the lower secondary level (all programmes) the GER was 64%, and at the upper secondary level (all programmes) it was estimated at 23%. The number of teachers was estimated at 71,763, of whom 55,958 at the lower and 15,805 at the upper secondary level. The



teacher/students ratio at the secondary level was estimated at 1:19 (1:18 at the lower and 1:22 at the upper level). The total enrolment at the post-secondary, non-tertiary education level was estimated at 18,986 students.

Technical education constitutes an essential component of the Reform Programme. At the senior secondary school level, the new curriculum has been designed to prepare students for a wide range of occupations and to provide a solid educational foundation for post-secondary education and training.

Production units exist in the technical and vocational institutions, where links between institutions and industry have been forged through Industrial Liaison Units. This kind of co-operation promotes courses and qualitative practical activities relevant to the world of work. With support of foreign donors and the local business community, the Ministry of Education has instituted a pilot project called Junior Achievement (JA). JA provides entrepreneurship and leadership training in selected secondary schools and technical institutions in five out of the ten regions of the country to encourage students in creative and productive ventures and to expose them to the rudiments of business promotion and organization. The donors supply such schools with inputs for their projects including the production of business and marketing manuals, and local entrepreneurs play the role of consultants and teachers. The project links the schools with entrepreneurs in the public and private sectors and encourages them to employ students in their establishments when they finish school. The project is yet to be evaluated, updated and replicated in schools in other regions of Ghana. Similar projects are being undertaken in the universities and other tertiary institutions with collaboration among these institutions and various management consultancy agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The present TVET system is mostly institution-based and fragmented under different Ministries, Agencies and the Private sector, each developing and offering its programme under their parochial policies without any coordination. Linkages with industry in terms of input for curricula development are weak resulting in mismatches of supply and demand of skills. There is also the poor public perception of TVET affecting recruitment, funding and unsatisfactory quality of delivery due to inadequate instructor preparation and provision of instructional resources. To address these, Government in collaboration with industry has developed a TVET Policy Framework to guide policy makers and to sensitize the public on the Government's focus on a new vision for technical, agricultural and vocational education and training. This policy provides for the establishment of a National Council for TVET to regulate and give direction for the effective management and the development of competency-based curricula for polytechnics and technical institutions.

The tertiary level has only absorbed a limited number of secondary school graduates over the past few years. The universities did not offer admission to more than 40% of qualified applicants. Although a large number of Ghanaians would like to pursue university level courses, they are kept outside these institutions because of limited academic and residential facilities.



## Assessing learning achievement nationwide

The Ghana Education Service (GES) has evolved various models of evaluating the performance of pupils and students of all levels of education in the country, as well as that of teachers and lecturers.

At the basic and second cycle levels, there is a system of continuous assessments by which the actual classroom performance of the student is assessed and computed at the end of every school term. The GES has also developed a Teacher's Self-Appraisal Instrument to measure the performance of serving teachers in basic schools.

Criterion referenced testing (CRT) is a test administered to 5% of Primary Grade VI pupils in the country to assess the skills attained in English and mathematics at this level. The result is analyzed to give teachers the opportunity to carry out remedial exercises as well as make amends in cases of poor performance. Schools all over the country are randomly picked for this test. Results showed that pupils from public schools did not do as well as those in private schools. However, public schools have improved their performance in English and mathematics since the last test in 1997. The percentage of pupils scoring above the mastery levels of 60% in English and 55% in mathematics has also been improving over the seven-year period. Gender differences persist in mathematics, but there is no difference in performance in English.

Participatory Performance Monitoring (PPM) has two major components, namely, the Performance Monitoring Test (PMT) and the School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM). Under the PMT, uniform instruments are developed for measuring learning outcomes. The SPAM is a meeting of teachers and the community to discuss school performance, set new performance targets and design strategies for attaining these targets. The PMT and SPAM are expected to provide accurate data on the performance of public primary schools.

A central implementation coordinating unit has been established within the GES to co-ordinate the implementation of the Strategic Plan in all the Regions and Districts and report on quarterly basis to stakeholders. Consultative panel meetings are also held twice a year between the Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service and development partners to evaluate programmes, assess the areas of co-operation and assistance and formulate plans for the achievement of these objectives.

## Higher education

The tertiary education system, which provides education beyond the senior secondary level, includes three major categories of institutions: universities and university colleges; polytechnics and polytechnic-like institutions; and a number of training institutions which are primarily career- or work-oriented. The reform at the tertiary level is ongoing. The new University of Development Studies has been opened in the northern region of the country. The University College of Education, Winneba, has also been established. Polytechnics have been re-designated as tertiary-level institutions, as have other post-secondary institutions such as teacher training



colleges, the Institute of Professional Studies (which offers professional courses in accounting, marketing and secretarial studies), and the Ghana Institute of Languages. These efforts are expected to expand access considerably.

In order to ensure co-ordination of the tertiary education system, tertiary institutions were brought under the general supervision and direction of the Ministry of Education. For the better management of tertiary education, the process for admissions, accreditation and professional and technical examinations was streamlined; in this regard, the National Accreditation Board and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations were established. The establishment and accreditation of private tertiary institutions have also been encouraged to expand access to tertiary education to qualified people. So far, the National Accreditation Board has accredited fourteen private university institutions to pursue varied degrees and diploma programmes. The provision of tertiary distance education is also being pursued.

Thus, the tertiary education sector has registered significant progress over the last few years. Enrolment in universities, for example, have quadrupled while the polytechnics registered an all time high figure of 16,756 in the year 2000. In spite of this progress, the tertiary sector continues to face serious challenges. A large number of qualified applicants still do not have access to tertiary education. Academic and physical facilities are inadequate to accommodate the increasing number of students; faculty members in all the universities are aging with about 34% of academic staff about 50 years. The participation rate for the age group 17-23 in Ghana is less than 3% compared to the participation rate of between 30-40% for corresponding age groups in the developed countries. Salaries and working conditions in the tertiary institutions are relatively poor and unattractive making it difficult for the institutions to attract and retain qualified academic and senior administrative and professional staff.

But by far the major challenge appears to be inadequate funding. The tertiary sub-sector receives about 14% of the total budget allocation to the Ministry of Education. The allocation to the tertiary institutions is about 50% of their budgetary requirements which adversely affects their performance.

Tertiary institutions receive their subventions directly from the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Education. There are approved norms governing the application of the subventions. Management of financial resources of the institutions is vested in the Council/Boards. It is expected that the National Council for Tertiary Education will take over the disbursement of funds to tertiary institutions in the future and, therefore, will play a direct and important role in the management and monitoring of financial resources.

The demands and pressures on tertiary education are bound to be complex and far reaching in the new millennium. A number of urgent steps need to be taken: the sources of funding tertiary education need to be diversified to sustain a certain minimum level of funding. In spite of government's tuition-free policy, the emergence of private institutions strengthens the case for cost-sharing and fee-paying in public tertiary institutions by students/parents who are capable. Polytechnic education needs to be improved and access widened to reduce pressure on the universities.



Polytechnics should be strengthened to produce the middle-level technical and vocational personnel required for national development. Distance education is becoming more and more important. The limitations imposed by inadequate physical and academic infrastructure need to be removed.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 there were 69,968 students enrolled at the tertiary level (of whom 32% females). The total number of teachers was 3,933 (of whom 14% females).

## Special education

Special education is aimed at contributing to human resource development and providing social equity by equipping the disabled with appropriate skills to enable them to fit into society, function effectively and secure gainful employment. In the Ministry's effort to achieve the national goal of education for all, it has established a number of institutions at various levels for the education of the handicapped and their integration in the society. Presently, there is a move to integrate the visually impaired into regular schools on a pilot basis from primary to university levels.

The Special Education Division of the Ghana Education Service provides special schools for disabled persons. The Division develops, monitors and evaluates programmes in special schools established for disabled people at the pre-university level of education. It caters to the mentally retarded, the blind and the deaf, but does not cater to the physically disabled who are integrated in regular schools. The Ghana Education Service runs schools for the blind, the deaf and the mentally retarded at all the pre-university levels but has no special school for the physically disabled students aged 10-16. The Ministry of Mobilization and Social Welfare runs rehabilitation centres in all regional capitals which provide training facilities for the literate physically disabled persons aged 17-40 years.

There are ten residential primary and junior secondary schools for the deaf, one primary and junior secondary day school and one residential senior secondary technical school in the country. These institutions use the regular school curriculum. All subjects are studied, with the exception of Ghanaian languages and French. Assessment of pupils and students is the same as in regular schools. Total enrolment is 1,844, including 1,344 boys and 710 girls.

In addition to two residential primary and junior secondary schools, Resource Centres for the Blind have been established as follows: three in regular primary and junior secondary schools, two in teacher training colleges and four in tertiary institutions. The regular school curriculum is used in all basic schools. At the senior secondary, training college and university levels, all subjects of the regular schools are studied, with the exception of mathematics and science. However, plans are underway to introduce them at these levels soon. Total enrolment is 385 (254 boys and 131 girls).

There are four public schools and two private schools which cater to the mentally handicapped. In addition, two units have been established within the schools for the deaf to address the educational needs of the mentally handicapped. A special





curriculum, adapted to the abilities of the individual child, has been developed for their use. Total enrolment is 326 (194 boys and 132 girls). There are no institutions which provide formal education for the physically handicapped, since they are integrated into mainstream schools. However, two orthopaedic training centres provide formal education to their patients while they are undergoing treatment. Two schools have been attached to two teaching hospitals for school children who have to stay in the hospital over a long period. In addition, the Peripatetic Service aims at identification of children with disabilities at an early age, and recommends appropriate intervention and support to both parents and teachers in regular schools. There are specially trained officers based in sixty districts and eight regional offices who deliver the services in schools. There are plans to staff the remaining two regional offices.

The Assessment and Resource Centres assess special education needs of children who experience learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties at school, and provide appropriate remedial resources for their education.

It is estimated that only 0.6% of the population of children with disabilities or special education needs receives any form of education. Moving towards inclusion is the main policy of the MOEYS as outlined in the Education Strategic Plan 2003–2015. The GES has developed a project for moving towards a more inclusive system that will address both the special learning needs of pupils in the regular schools and also implement the MOEYS/GES policy of inclusive education. The project is being implemented on pilot basis in ten districts beginning from the 2003/04 academic year. A total of 35 schools with a focus on 350–500 children with special needs, 500 regular teachers and 400 parents are the target beneficiaries.

## Private education

The Education Act of 1961 empowers the Ministry of Education to be the responsible body overseeing the operation of private schools. During the establishment of the Ghana Education Service (GES) in 1974, the Private Schools Unit was placed under it, which made the GES the supervisory body of private schools. This ensures conformity to GES guidelines and regulations, with particular reference to the new educational reforms.

The structure and content of private schools are the same as in the established regulations of GES as prevailing now, and in conformity with the new education system. The private schools thus run a two-year pre-school programme and then follow the 6-3-3-4 structure—i.e. six years of primary school, three years of junior secondary school, three years of senior secondary school and four years of tertiary education. A two-year pre-school education programme (kindergarten), which used to be the luxury of urban children, is now spreading throughout the country. Private schools use the public school curriculum. Subjects studied as well as assessment of pupils and students are the same as in public schools.

There are a few private tertiary professional institutions, but the country is yet to have private teacher training colleges, polytechnics and universities. Tertiary institutions are supervised by the National Accreditation Board of Higher Education



Division of the Ministry of Education. The Board and the appropriate institutions determine the programme and requirements for the proper functioning of the institution. Courses offered at this level are mostly professional, i.e. accounting, marketing, public relations, management, purchasing and supply. The curriculum followed is of the various professional bodies, both local and foreign. The National Accreditation Board is responsible for the determination of equivalences of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications awarded by the institutions in Ghana and other countries.

## **Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure**

With the support of the World Bank and other donor agencies, the government assisted communities which were unable to complete their school structures. In areas where community initiative was completely lacking, classroom pavilions have been provided. Under the Primary Education Programme (PREP), the government has received support for the construction of head teachers' residences for selected primary schools in rural areas. With assistance of the World Bank, the government is expanding the scheme to include the construction of three-unit classroom pavilions for 1,983 primary schools in deprived areas. In addition, the number of senior secondary schools increased from 250 to over 400. A good number of the new schools are located in rural and deprived areas. Senior secondary schools have also benefited from the construction of multi-purpose workshops offering science and technical programmes. A total of 155 new senior secondary schools have benefited from the provision of two additional classrooms, a staff room, headmaster's office or a general office, or a store room, as well as a library and a store, and two staff houses.

The Ministry of Education accepted a proposal for the establishment of 110 Science Resource Centres throughout the country. The project started in 1995. It involves rehabilitation and refurbishment of laboratory facilities in selected senior secondary schools in each district and installation of modern equipment, including computers for the teaching of science at the secondary education level. The Science Resource Centres are to serve as teaching centres to supplement existing facilities in secondary schools and give ample opportunity for practical work, using modern facilities and techniques. Besides providing facilities for students in schools without well-equipped laboratories, the centres will be used to run in-service training programmes for science teachers.

Since the inception of the Reform Programme, textbooks and instructional materials have been injected into the education system, which for several years had been starved of even the most basic classroom requisites. New textbooks and teacher guides have been produced for basic education schools, from P.1 to JSS.3, and a range of tools and science equipment procured and delivered to schools. In addition, pupils have been provided with essential stationery at cost. Basic classroom supplies such as chalk, registers and notebooks have also been provided. The government has not been able to achieve a 100% coverage in terms of school supplies of textbooks, due to financial constraints. However, the percentage coverage of textbook supply in basic and secondary schools is as follows: basic schools (Grades I-VI): 70-80%; basic schools (Grades VII-IX): 90%; senior secondary schools (Forms I-III): 90%.



Production and importation of textbooks are based on school requirements. Some of the textbooks are developed and produced locally, others are imported. When information is received from Basic and Senior Secondary Directorates on the need for textbooks, printers listed by the Supplies and Logistics Division are invited to quote prices for the printing of the books. Letters of invitation for the importation of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials are sent to prospective suppliers through the Ghana Supply Commission.

Home economics equipment, agricultural tools, technical, secretarial and office equipment have been put into the system but these have not adequately met the needs of schools and Directorates. Computers are completely absent in public basic schools and District Directorates. In the past few years some senior secondary schools have received computers from external donor agencies.

Governments, both at local and central levels, are responsible for the provision of classrooms, school transport and residential accommodation for students. A reasonable proportion of staff in boarding schools has also been provided with residential accommodation. However, this does not meet the needs of the increasing staff population responding to the increasing number of students.

## **Adult and non-formal education**

Since 1990, over 50% of junior secondary school (JSS) students have been reaching their terminal point in basic education upon completion of junior secondary education. For this group, the basic learning skills acquired would not be adequate for guaranteeing them gainful employment. In the past, a similar dilemma facing middle school-leavers was tackled by the continuing school programme, which unfortunately did not receive consistent support and thus did not fulfil its potential. Presently, the Integrated Community Centres for Employable Skills (ICCES) Programme will continue to provide employable skills training and job opportunities for terminal students of both JSS and senior secondary school (SSS) schemes, as well as totally illiterate youths and adults in the local communities. This programme will be run side by side with technical schools, which are designed to provide formal instruction for the same cohort of youth. The programme expresses a model concept of basic functional literacy. It provides both urban and rural community industry for JSS and SSS drop-outs, illiterate youths and adults. The main aim of the programme is to provide management training and skills in bookkeeping to enhance self-support and self-employment. The non-formal nature of the programme also allows the study of other subjects, like family life education, maternal and child care, drug abuse, and rights and responsibilities of young people in their communities.

To develop the non-formal education curriculum, the Ministry of Education first formulates educational goals. The Non-Formal Education Division (NFED), established in 1989 at the Ministry of Education with the aim of making an estimated 5.6 million adult illiterates functionally literate by the year 2000, sets more specific policy directions and guidelines for implementation. The community then collaborates with literacy providers for base-level policy implementation and supervision. The basic text of the functional literacy programme is generated by the community, and takes into account the socio-cultural specificity of each of the 15 selected Ghanaian languages.



Thus, the NFED is responsible for the co-ordination of the Literacy and Functional Skills Programme, as well as all non-formal education activities in the country. The Division, with the financial support of the government and external donors, commenced the implementation of a country-wide functional literacy programme in 1992. The programme is operated nationally through its headquarters at the Literacy House in Accra and ten regional offices. These offices co-ordinate work being done by 110 district offices. Each regional office is administered by a regional coordinator and each district office is manned by a District Organizer. Each District is further divided into a number of zones depending on the number of classes available. A supervisor is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the day-to-day implementation of the literacy programme in each zone. It is the duty of the supervisors to mobilize facilitators for each literacy cycle with the support and approval of the community. The facilitator is also expected to mobilize at least twenty-five potential learners to a class. He/she is then given initial training before the start of the job, followed by two refresher courses in the course of the literacy cycle. Since 76% of the adult illiterate population are female, conscious efforts are made to ensure that females are recruited. From 1992 to 1995, the Division has established a total of 36,143 adult literacy classes. The total number of enrolment for the same period was 850,901, of whom 514,092 were female and 336,809 male. These figures, which reflect a percentage of 60.4% female participation, indicate that the Programme is gradually moving towards its main objective of reaching the poorest and the marginalized.

At the beginning of the programme, learners followed a literacy cycle of eight months, during which they were expected to acquire basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy. Based on experiences and evaluations, it became necessary to adopt a two-year cycle to enhance the programme. This implies that adult learners follow a two-year cycle, consisting of one year of basic literacy with the Primer as the main learning material, and another year of follow-up with two Readers. Certificates of participation and competence are then awarded to all learners who have achieved some level of literacy and who have taken part in development activities.

The NFED also caters to out-of-school children. The “northern conflict” in Ghana has resulted in many more children dropping out from school and shepherding animals. As a result, NFED in collaboration with the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) is running a Life Functional Literacy Project school for children in the ethnic conflict areas in the northern region. These areas include Gusheigu Karaga, Yendi and Savelugu Nanton districts. There are fifty classes in each of the afore-mentioned districts with an average class attendance of twenty-five children. The literacy course includes reading, writing, numeracy and games. Classes are held between 14:00 and 18:00 during weekdays except on market days. The NFED is involved in the preparation of curriculum, training of supervisors and facilitators and monitoring of these classes.

The main objectives of the Ghana National Tertiary Level Distance Education Programme are: to democratize access to higher education; to provide an alternative, off-campus channel for tertiary education for qualified and desirous people; to provide a complementary avenue to the higher forms of education provided by the traditional, residential universities and reduce the pressure they experience; to provide an opportunity to those who have the requisite qualifications but have been prevented



from having access to tertiary education by various circumstances like place of residence, work and family—such as the case of women learners who cannot combine work, household chores, child rearing and on-campus education; and to make the acquisition of a degree more flexible, especially for older adults who do not wish to join younger students on campus—such as graduates who want to shift to new areas of studies and life-long learners.

Universities in Ghana will offer some of their courses through the programme to students outside their walls. Such off-campus students will study the same courses and take the same examinations as those in on-campus programmes and will be awarded the same degrees when they pass their final examinations. The programme will adopt a multi-media approach but the main medium for teaching will be self-instructional printed materials. Written texts will be sent to students for study. Study centres will be opened in all regional capitals where students can go to for tutorials and counselling. Books and cassettes will be stored at such centres to enable students to have access to relevant texts and other material. Student assessment will be continuous and based on assignments and final examinations. A lot of preparatory work has already been done by both the Ministry of Education and the universities.

## Teaching staff

The objectives of teacher education are to provide the teachers with a sound basis in the content of the courses they teach, sound professional skills that will enable them to guide and interest the children in the acquisition of learning and basic vocational skills, and foster their qualities of leadership. Leadership should create favourable conditions in which children learn with pleasure and ease. It should also enable them to integrate themselves within the community.

As mentioned, the pre-school or nursery teacher training course lasts three months, after which a certificate is awarded. The basic-level teacher training course lasts three years, after which a teacher certificate “A” is awarded to successful students. Teaching at the secondary level requires a diploma or a degree which is obtained after two to four years of training. Master’s or doctoral degree programmes are offered at the universities and take two to three years to complete. Holders of these degrees are generally employed at the tertiary institutions.

With effect from 1988, admission to the teacher training colleges was for a three-year course, reserved for GCE O-level and SSSC holders. The curriculum at the teacher training colleges was also revised to reflect changes in the content and methods of basic education. Teacher training colleges now train teachers to teach groups of subjects to match the reform programme.

All trainee teachers, irrespective of their areas of specialization, study core subjects necessary for imparting relevant knowledge and skills in basic level schools. In Group I colleges, students study: science, mathematics, technical skills, agricultural science and physical education. In Group II, students study: English language, social studies, cultural studies, vocational skills, French, and Ghanaian languages. In-service training for all categories of teachers and supervisors has been intensified to meet the demands of the reforms. The thirty-eight initial teacher training colleges are grouped



into two programmes. While Group I colleges offer science, mathematics, agricultural science, technical skills, social studies, English literature and vocational skills, Group II colleges offer life skills, social studies, English literature and vocational skills. Of the thirty-eight colleges, three offer only Group I subjects, thirteen train teachers in Groups I and II subjects, and twenty-two offer only Group II subjects. One college has specialized in training physical education teachers, while another offers a French option.

For entry into Group I colleges the minimum requirements for the three-year certificate “A” course—for holders of senior secondary school examination certificates—are at least Grade E in: core English; core mathematics; either core life skills or core Ghanaian languages; and also in two elective subjects in science, agriculture or technical subjects. Entry into Group II colleges requires at least Grade E in: core English and core mathematics; either science or core agricultural science and environmental studies; and also in two electives in arts, vocational or business subjects.

Both the subject content and methodology are taught in all subjects to prepare the trainee teachers for their profession. Students are also supplied with the requisite textbooks and syllabi to make them conversant with these basic school materials before leaving the training college. The Guidance and Counselling Unit at the Ghana Education Service Headquarters, in collaboration with their officers in the schools, organizes seminars and lectures to help school leavers in the selection of their future career.

Recent innovations include continuous assessment as an integral part of the final examination. In order to eliminate subjectivity in the award of continuous assessment marks, the University of Cape Coast—which is the certifying authority—has adopted standardization of the marks before the final results are released. Another innovation is the integration of population and family life education into the curricula of schools and colleges. At the University College of Education, Winneba, a department—known as the Institute of Education Development and Extension—has been set up to promote distance education courses which give teacher training college tutors and primary school head teachers the opportunity to pursue degree courses. At the University of Cape Coast a department of primary education has been set up to promote the teaching of primary school methodology.

In order to improve on the pre-service training of the teacher, the Teacher Education Division of the GES collaborated with the Institute of Education of the University of Cape Coast and the University College of Education, Winneba, to update the existing curriculum to make it more methodology biased. Workshops were also organized for principals on school management and financial administration.

With regard to in-service training, a new concept in teacher education, the Whole School Development (WSD) programme was introduced. It is a school-based intervention programme to improve teaching and learning in basic schools. The programme includes courses in school administration, management and financial administration for heads of basic education schools, and courses in continuous assessment and guidance and counselling for heads and teachers. Orientation courses have also been organized in various subjects, as well as a course in reading skills in



primary schools. The in-service training courses are organized nationwide and involve teachers at basic and senior secondary school levels. It is compulsory for all teachers to attend.

A workshop for principals of training colleges in school management and financial administration, and an orientation course for tutors in the new syllabi to be taught at the training colleges have also been set up. Under the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the British Government has been assisting the Government of Ghana in setting up in-service workshops for tutors in English language and literature, mathematics, science and technical skills. Evaluation of the in-service course through questionnaires distributed to the participants helps the organizers in planning subsequent courses.

The national salary scale for public servants spans levels eleven to ninety-seven with 5-point graduations for every level (range). Progression along the 5-point scale within each level (range) is by merit through annual incremental awards. However, teachers' salaries are among the lowest, even in nominal terms, as there are fewer fringe benefits in teaching than in other professions with equivalent levels of education and training. The contrast becomes sharper as one ascends the higher echelons of the professional ladder. Certificates, diplomas, degrees and equivalent qualifications also enhance progression within the profession through incremental awards or promotions.

Trained teachers tend not to accept posting to the rural areas. In an attempt to meet the challenge of shortage of qualified teachers in the rural areas and other disadvantaged areas, a new sponsoring scheme has been developed, which took off in the 200/2001 academic year. Sponsored teachers will be contracted to teach for three years in the district that sponsored them.

Recently, the Government has embarked upon a policy of upgrading of pre-service certificate awarding colleges to diploma awarding colleges of education.

### **Teacher workload (1996)**

<b>Level and type of education</b>	<b>Number of hours per week devoted to classroom teaching</b>	<b>Number of hours per week devoted to other educational activities</b>
Pre-primary education	20 hours	15 hours
Primary education	22 hours	20 hours
Junior secondary	25 hours	20 hours
Senior secondary	16 hours	27 hours
Technical/vocational	18 hours	27 hours
Teacher training	14 hours	30 hours



## Educational research and information

Information is not available.

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