



# World Data on Education Données mondiales de l'éducation Datos Mundiales de Educación

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## Bahrain

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### Principles and general objectives of education

In accordance with the Education Law of 2005, education aims to develop the learner at the cultural, vocational, scientific, national, emotional, ethical, mental, social, health, behavioral and sport levels within the tenets of Islam, Arab heritage, modern culture and the customs and traditions of the Bahraini society. Education also aims to inculcate in the learner the spirit of citizenship, patriotism and allegiance to the King, emphasizing the role of Islamic religion in the integration of personality, family cohesion and unity within the society and highlighting the role of Islam as a guide in everyday life and its ability to keep pace with all modern developments at all times and places. Other objectives of education are defined as follows:

- Cementing ties between the Gulf Cooperation Council states and bolstering up Arab and Islamic bonds.
- Boosting the teaching of Arabic language in a way which enables the learner to master it and use it in the various areas of knowledge while giving attention to the teaching and mastery of foreign languages.
- Raising awareness of the principles of human rights and including them in the syllabuses.
- Promoting the concepts of education for spreading peace, a better future for human beings and international cooperation and solidarity based on justice, equality and mutual respect among all states and nations.
- Raising human heritage and environmental awareness and the conservation of wildlife.
- Promoting national cadres to enable them to actively participate in forming an educated productive society to keep pace with the progress and sustainable changes.
- Promoting the individual's critical thinking that contributes to the technological, scientific, economic and social advancement.
- Developing research skills and self-learning by using various techniques and employing advanced information technology methods to enhance the teaching process.

The main general goals for the Ministry of Education are the following:

- Fostering patriotic attitudes and citizenship rights in dealing with Bahraini students with emphasis on a balanced linkage between rights and duties with regard to citizenship.
- Implanting moral values and Islamic ethical standards in the mind of students in a balanced way which can dramatically affect his/her daily conduct.
- Developing the personality of the Bahraini student to prepare him/her to meet the challenges of life so that he can play an active role in production,



building and growth and interact with the goals and requirements of his/her country and people.

- Providing general basic qualification for the student to qualify him/her for private and public life so that he/she can keep pace with the tremendous scientific and technological developments and the possible future changes.
- Directing the teaching process to adopt effective strategies for the concept of lifelong learning.
- Giving attention to civil values and linking them to the educational concepts to lure students to play an active role in the guided environmental and community services.
- Integration between the family, school and society since this can make these parties share the responsibility of achieving the goals of educating the generation.
- Adapting school syllabuses to meet students' varied requirements while taking into consideration their individual differences and their diverse needs, inclinations and skills.
- Underlining the importance of the Bahraini citizen who is the material and moral source of wealth for the Bahraini society.
- Enhancing the quality of education in the various areas of specialization through clear-cut criteria for the evaluation of the education system.
- Implementing a comprehensive quality management in education. (MOE, 2008).

The *Economic Vision 2030* envisages a first-rate education system that will enable Bahrainis to fulfil their ambitions. Because education is essential for making the Vision a reality, it will be necessary to develop an education system that provides every citizen with educational opportunities appropriate to their individual needs, aspirations and abilities. Education and training need to be relevant to the requirements of Bahrain and its economy, delivered to the highest possible quality standards, and accessible based on ability and merit. A clear strategy will be developed for raising standards and performance in schools, vocational institutions and universities. The strategy will need to: (i) focus on developing teachers, by improving their recruitment and training, enhancing the management of their performance, improving their image in society, and increasing the attractiveness of careers in teaching; (ii) provide quality training in the applied and advanced skills required for global competitiveness and attract new industries to Bahrain; (iii) set standards for quality across the education sector, regularly review the performance of our educational and training institutions and compare them with those of other competitors; (iv) encourage research and development in universities to create the platform for a knowledge-based economy.

## Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

Article 7 of the **Constitution** of 2002 stipulates that the State guarantees educational and cultural services to its citizens. Education is compulsory and free in the early stages as specified and provided by law. The necessary plan to combat illiteracy is laid down by law. The law regulates care for religious and national instruction in the various stages and forms of education, and at all stages is concerned to develop the citizen's personality and his/her pride in his/her Arabism. Individuals and bodies may



establish private schools and universities under the supervision of the State and in accordance with the law. The State also guarantees the inviolability of the places of learning.

In 1995, Law No. 19, the **Academic Qualifications Evaluations Law**, was issued on the evaluation of academic qualifications, providing for modification or equivalence of foreign academic qualifications granted by foreign universities, institutions and schools in the absence of corresponding national qualifications by a decision issued by the Minister of Education based on the proposal by a Committee to be named the National Committee for Evaluation of Academic Qualifications.

Decree-law No. 25, the **Private Education and Training Institutions Law**, was issued in 1998, replacing the previous Decree No. 14 of 1985. The new law provides definitions and objectives of private education and training establishments, in addition to the definition of the types and divisions of private schools, the conditions relevant to establishment and management, financial system, technical supervision and administrative control to ensure establishment of educational institutions free from financial and administrative problems.

The **Higher Education Law No. 3** was adopted in 2005. This Law has endorsed for the first time the setting up of a Higher Education Council. The Higher Education Council General Secretariat has drawn up the financial, academic and administrative by-laws which organize the work of private higher education institutions, set conditions for the appointment of staff in academic jobs, introduce a data system for staff, besides a by-law on the organization of the Higher Education Council session meetings and another by-law on the facilities criteria for private higher education institutions. The Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training was established by **Royal Decree No. 32** of 2008 amended by **Royal Decree No. 6** of 2009.

Education is free through the secondary level and the new **Education Law No. 27** making basic education (nine years of schooling) compulsory and free of charge for children 6 to 15 years old was approved in 2005. The Law provides that education is a right guaranteed to all citizens. The philosophy stems from the established principles and the Islamic religion, human and cultural interaction, Arab affiliation and cultural and social framework of Bahrain (Article 1). The Law also sets out the responsible Ministry, its functions and responsibilities (Articles 4 and 5).

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

The **Ministry of Education** (MOE) is responsible for the administration of the public education in Bahrain. It is the official authority responsible for executing the State's educational policy, directing the education system at all levels, drawing up and planning its policies, and supervising and directing its departments.

After the reorganization of 2006, the Ministry consists of seven main sectors supervised by two Undersecretaries, one for Resources and Services and the other for Education and Curricula Affairs. Each sector is supervised by an Assistant Undersecretary who controls a number of directorates affiliated to him/her. The



sectors supervised by the Undersecretary for Resources and Services are: Planning and Information, Human Resources, and Financial Resources and Services. The sectors supervised by the Undersecretary for Education and Curricula Affairs are: Curricula and Educational Supervision, General and Technical Education, Educational Services and Students Activities, and Private and Continuing Education. There are other directorates that are attached directly to the Minister's office, namely the Directorate of Public Relations and Information, the Directorate of Organizations and Committees Affairs, and the Directorate of Scholarships and Cultural Affairs.

The new structure of MOE includes an advanced description of roles and tasks and a systematic approach with regard to the distribution of powers and responsibilities. The approach is based on the principle of the centralization of planning and the decentralization of execution. The Ministry has taken the necessary steps to implement the **Educational Districts** system (for the primary stage) since the academic year 2005/06. Each district comprises 20 primary schools at the rate of three districts for boys' schools and two districts for girls' schools. This system comes within the framework of the Ministry plans to establish decentralized administration to enhance efficiency in school work, follow up work in a smooth easy way, enhance daily follow up and facilitate school work through coordination and integration between the central administration and the Education Districts. MOE also implemented this system in the intermediate and secondary stages in the academic year 2006/07.

The MOE new organizational structure comprises the **Higher Education Council** General Secretariat which was established in 2006 and is directly affiliated to the Minister's office. The Council is concerned with matters related to higher education and scientific research in Bahrain, including: setting the conditions and criteria for granting licenses to the various kinds of higher education institutions; and following up the work of higher education institutions and monitoring their programmes and supportive services, the quality of their performance and outputs, besides their financial position..

Nurseries are under the supervision and control of the **Ministry of Social Development**.

Since the early 1980s, the Ministry of Education has promoted decentralization and a consultative democratic policy, by creating channels of expression and interaction amongst educational officials, involving all educational personnel in developmental committees and taking the appropriate decisions to raise educational efficiency. Several advisory committees have also been established. Membership is not confined to the Ministry's officials, and assistance can be sought from experienced personnel from other Ministries and universities in Bahrain. Students are involved in the decision-making process by participating in a number of these committees.

Higher education institutions enjoy autonomy in administrative and technical matters. However, the Ministry of Education is considered as the highest official authority responsible for some of them (i.e. the University of Bahrain and the Arabian Gulf University). The Minister of Education is the chairman of their Board of Trustees.



In 1990/91, the Ministry adopted the system of each school as an autonomous educational unit, according to the Ministerial decision No. 375/168/90 of 24 April 1990. The document attached to the Ministerial decision has defined the basic proceedings, the new organizational chart of school administration, educational and administrative tasks, as well as the evaluation process.

This new organizational structure of the school as an autonomous educational unit consists of the following. The **School Principal** represents the school's higher leadership as the chairman of its council. He/she participates in setting-up the general policy of the school, and takes the responsibility of leading the school's work to implement the educational policy and achieve the educational objectives. The **School Council** consists of: the principal as chairman, assistant principal(s), a social worker, an elected senior teacher, a learning resources centre specialist, a registrar, and five elected teachers. The Council discusses matters concerning the school policy in general; the school's administrative and academic problems and the appropriate solutions; the school's needs in terms of teaching and administrative staff; the suggestions and plans presented by the school staff regarding curriculum development and teaching methods; and the proposed school budget. The **Academic Sections** include all the teachers who teach one subject or carry out an instructional activity. Each section is headed by a senior teacher, who is in charge of developing the subject-matter curriculum, teaching methods, evaluation methods, and the programme of staff professional development. A senior teacher can be a member of the school council by election. The **Teacher** is considered as the cornerstone of the educational process. He/she participates as an elected member in the school council, participates in the process of decision-making, and contributes to the sound administration of the school. The **Social Worker** has an effective role in running school life and regulating social relations among the students, and between them and their parents. He/she also provides the students with psychological, social and vocational advisory services. He/she is a member of the School Council. The **Learning Resources Centre Specialist** is in charge of the school library and other learning resources. He/she coordinates with various sections in order to provide the needed services, assists and advises the teachers, and helps in teaching certain lessons in library science and research methods. He/she is a member of the school council.

To familiarize the school with autonomy, the Ministry of Education determined that self-evaluation would be the most appropriate method. The essence of self-evaluation is that all the school staff should participate in the evaluation process, from the definition of its objectives to the adoption of corrective measures based on the evaluation results. In the light of the above, an automated school administration system has been established. Since 2001/02, the Ministry has applied the comprehensive evaluation of the school administration systems aiming at creating a unified student evaluation database in order to facilitate the execution of the Ministry's decisions within this domain.

Private schools in Bahrain are mainly of two types. National private schools are established and run by Bahraini citizens or with the participation of non-Bahrainis; these schools have various educational levels, from kindergarten to primary, intermediate and secondary; they offer bilingual programmes (i.e. subjects are taught in Arabic and English). Foreign private schools are established, run and financed by foreign establishments, institutes or communities in Bahrain; these schools also have





various educational levels, from kindergarten to primary, intermediate and secondary. Although they were established originally to provide education for the children of foreign communities in Bahrain, most of them accept Bahraini and Arab students. They are taught in the language adopted by the school, usually English, French or Urdu (Indian). Arabic language is taught in all foreign private schools that accept Arab students, in addition to the Islamic religion for all Muslim students. Each private education institute has its own curricula, study plans, courses and textbooks. They are submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval. The MOE has the right to modify or reject any curriculum or textbook that is incompatible with the religious and national values of the country. The private schools comply with the curricula and textbooks approved by the Ministry concerning the Arabic courses for Arab students, Islamic religious education for Muslim students, and Bahrain history and geography for all students.

The **Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET)** was formally established in 2008 on the basis of the Royal Decree No. 32, amended by Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. The QAAET is an independent national body, supervised and attached to the Council of Ministers. The main objectives of the QAAET are to: (i) develop indicators, processes, mechanisms and guidelines for measuring and reviewing the quality of performance of education and training institutions; (ii) develop and carry out national examinations to assess performance levels for key stages of primary intermediate and secondary education stages; (iii) review the quality of the performance of education and training institutions in light of the guiding indicators developed by the Authority; (iv) emphasize transparency and accountability by publishing reports on the general status of the education and training system in the Kingdom and the performance and outcomes of the individual institutions; (v) issue an annual report containing the Authority's view of the Bahrain education system, identifying areas of strength and areas in need of improvement; (vi) review and update indicators and standards together with review and assessment mechanisms to keep abreast of development in the education and training field in line with international standards and consistent with the requirements of the Kingdom; and (vii) collaborate with other quality assurance agencies in the region and internationally, regarding matters relating to quality assurance in order to facilitate quality assurance processes and the international transfer and exchange of information.

## Structure and organization of the education system

### Bahrain: structure of the education system

G	A														
R	G														
A	E														
D															
E															
	18+	Higher Education													
12	17	Secondary Education	General		Unified Tracks <sup>Ⓢ</sup>	Commercial	Tech.	Voc. + App. <sup>Ⓢ</sup>	Textiles	R E L I G I O U S E d u c a t i o n  S e c o n d a r y  I n t e r m e d i a t e  P r i m a r y					
11	16		Sc.	Lit.											
10	15														
9	14	B A S I C  E d u c a t i o n	Intermediate Education												
8	13		3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle												
7	12		Primary Education												
6	11		2 <sup>nd</sup> Cycle												
5	10		Primary Education												
4	9		1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle												
3	8														
2	7														
1	6														

Source: Ministry of Education, 2008.

### Pre-school education

Preschool education is provided by the private sector. Kindergartens are supervised by the Ministry of Education and cater to children aged 3-5. Nurseries cater to children less than 3 years old and are under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Development.

### Primary education

Primary education includes the first two cycles of basic education. It lasts six years (grades 1 to 6) and caters to children aged 6-11. In the first three grades (first cycle) a class-teacher system is applied. The third cycle of basic education is called intermediate education, and lasts three years (grades 7 to 9). Students are admitted upon completion of primary education or its equivalent in literacy classes. Schools are not co-educational, i.e. there are separate establishments for boys and girls. At the end of grade 3 pupils are tested in Arabic and mathematics; at the end of grades 6 and 9 they are tested in Arabic, English, mathematics and science. Upon completion of grade 9, students having passed the examination receive the intermediate school certificate. On the basis of the Education Law of 2005, basic education is compulsory.





## Secondary education

Secondary education lasts three years (grades 10 to 12). The credit-hour system is applied at this level, since 1988/89 for technical secondary education (known as the modular courses system), and since 1990/91 for general and commercial secondary education. The credit-hour system was generalized in 1994/95. A student has a choice to pursue different curricula: scientific, literary, commercial, applied or technical. Within the applied curricula track, there are five branches: agriculture and livestock resources (for boys only); printing (for boys only); textile and clothing (for girls only); graphic design (for girls only); and hotel management (for boys only). Depending on the common courses, students may change tracks among more than one specialization. A total of 156 credit hours is needed to graduate for all tracks except technical, where a total of 180 credit hours is required (one credit hour is equivalent to fifteen periods). At the end of the secondary level, successful students are awarded the general secondary school certificate. A unified tracks system has been introduced in 2005 and generalized in 2009, replacing the separate tracks system (general, science, literary and commercial). Vocational apprenticeship was first introduced in the academic year 2007/08 in the secondary schools and is being expanded. Religious education is offered by a specialized institute under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. It is for boys only. This type of education is the same as that at the basic and general secondary levels, with the same duration of study and admission age, but it emphasizes Islamic studies to prepare men with an appropriate background in religious affairs. At the end of the secondary level, students are awarded the general secondary school certificate, religious branch.

## Higher education

Higher education is provided at universities, colleges and higher institutes. A student must have successfully completed the general secondary education cycle in order to be admitted to higher education. Courses are evaluated in terms of credit hours. At the University of Bahrain, associate diploma/degree programmes require 64 to 70 credit hours (typically two years of study). In order to obtain a bachelor's degree, a student must successfully complete 128-131 credit hours or typically four years of study (142-159 credit hours in the case of engineering; five years of study in the case of architecture; six years of study in the case of medicine). Master's degree programmes generally take two years to complete, and a postgraduate diploma requires one additional year of study. A doctoral degree requires at least three years of study and research.

In 2003/04 the school year extended from mid-September to the end of June, and consisted of 170-172 working days (or about thirty-four weeks) at the primary and intermediate levels, and 155 working days (or thirty-one working weeks) at the secondary level. The academic year is divided into two semesters and a summer session (optional). A semester consists of sixteen weeks, one of which is dedicated to final examinations. The summer session is usually eight weeks long. The first semester begins in September and the second in February, while the summer session begins in June of each year.

## The educational process

The Directorate of Curricula is responsible for the comprehensive process of curriculum development, including planning and providing study programmes and syllabi for all educational levels and types in public schools, planning of innovative curricular projects, and piloting, implementing, evaluating and analyzing results.

In the first stage of curriculum development, the Directorate assesses the needs of the society through investigation and research. Then, taking into consideration the general educational goals of the country, curriculum planners transform these needs into the general curriculum outline. This might require the reform or gradual improvement of the whole curriculum, or just parts of it; it also might require the improvement of learning materials and the introduction of new ideas into the syllabus. After its preliminary preparation, the curriculum outline is presented for consultation to a group of teachers, senior teachers, university instructors, institutions, and some private companies and ministries. Once its effectiveness has been evaluated, the outline is presented to the Higher Committee for Curricula (HCC), who then makes recommendations that are carried out by the development committees. Then the modified framework is once again presented to the HCC and the Education Committee for approval.

The process of change and adoption of contents is carried out by committees consisting of curriculum specialists, teachers, university instructors, and some ministries, organizations, and commercial establishments. For example, the Education Committee and the HCC make decisions concerning the development of secondary education curricula, the introduction of the new evaluation system in basic education, the modification of work plans, and the development of the technical education curriculum. After the adoption of the general framework the Directorate of Curricula plans syllabi following these two steps: it designs flowcharts of skills and concepts for every subject at all levels, and coordinates among subjects by careful study of the skills flowchart in order to avoid repetition and to ensure that all concepts and basic skills support and complement each other.

The following principles have governed curriculum development in Bahrain: (i) curriculum development should be geared towards the future prospects for Bahrain and the major issues of the Arab world; (ii) curriculum development should take into account the latest educational and psychological research; (iii) the improvement, renewal and piloting of curricula should be based on continuous field studies; (iv) the curriculum should aim to enable the learner to comprehend modern sciences and to raise her/his technical competency both theoretically and practically; (v) the curriculum should be flexible and innovative; (vi) self-access learning should be encouraged through access to educational technologies such as computers, the Internet and multimedia; (vii) the roles of government sectors and society should be clearly specified to ensure interaction, harmony, and collaboration with the education sector.

Various sectors of the community are involved in the decision making process on various aspects of the development of education. For example, parents associations and other associations were established to participate in ministerial committees. Indeed, the effective participation of the community in educational development and change has become a fundamental requirement for the improvement of the quality of

education. The committees that various community sectors may participate in include: (i) national committees, such as the National Committee for Elimination of Illiteracy, and the National Committee for Evaluation of Academic Qualifications; (ii) joint committees, formed to ensure coordination and integration between the Ministry's requirements and the agencies which implement these requirements; (iii) developmental committees, concerned with the development or reform of the structure and contents of education. These include the Secondary Education Development Committee, the Technical Education Development Committee, the Commercial Education Development Committee, and the Primary Education Development Committee.

## Pre-primary education

As mentioned, preschool education is provided by the private sector. Kindergartens cater to children aged 3-5 years; nurseries cater to children less than 3 years of age. The Ministry of Education supervises kindergartens which follow the regulations and rules of the Ministry, whereas the Ministry of Social Development oversees nurseries. The main objectives of pre-primary education are:

- developing the child's attitudes and behaviors in accordance with the Islamic religion, belief and heritage;
- promoting the child's mental, psychological, social and physical development;
- establishing the principles of the child's self-sufficiency;
- developing the child's skills and abilities;
- encouraging the child's creativity;
- preparing the child for school.

Each kindergarten used to implement its own curriculum. The curricula vary from one institution to another, according to the type of system applied in these kindergartens (i.e. Bahraini, British, American, etc.). Unlike other schools, kindergartens do not follow a rigid timetable. Children move freely under the direction and guidance of teachers and supervisors. Some kindergartens allocate a certain amount of time for reading and writing, as well as playing individual and group games to suit children's needs. Each kindergarten prepares an evaluation form which includes teacher's notes and comments regarding the child's skills and practices in the different developmental aspects, and a description of the child's development in each aspect.

In recent years, the Ministry of Education launched the kindergarten curriculum project. A Committee was established for this purpose that consisted of curriculum and private education specialists, in order to prepare a unified curriculum document. The document has been submitted to the concerned bodies at the Ministry to be reviewed and discussed for final formulation. The final version of the document has been distributed to all kindergartens to be implemented in the school year 2005/06. The integrated unified curriculum introduced by MOE is divided into educational units specially designed for kindergartens. This curriculum aims at preparing children for school life to be integrated easily in the primary school by acquiring a set of common values, concepts, skills and competencies tailored to the needs of kindergarten children while taking into account their individual differences.



The University of Bahrain plays a major role in training the educational staff. The college of education offers the Associate Diploma in Early Childhood. This diploma aims at preparing early childhood teachers capable of helping learners acquire experiences in an integrated form. The total number of credits to be completed in this programme is 65. There are also private educational institutions which provide training for early childcare education teachers, such as the Delmon Academy, the Nama Center and the Montessori Center.

In 2005/06, there were 1,037 children enrolled in nurseries. In the same year, the total enrolment in kindergarten was 18,992 children (of whom 9,143 were girls). In 2003/04, the gross enrolment ratio for pre-primary education was estimated at 44.7%, and the percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience was estimated at 73.4%. In 2005/06, the total number of female teachers was 51 in the case of nurseries, 126 in nursery-kindergartens, and 637 in kindergartens.

The MOE reports that in 2006/07 the total enrolment in kindergartens and kindergartens attached to schools was 21,621 children (of whom 10,369 were girls), representing an enrolment ratio of 52.3%. The percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience was estimated at 86.6%. (MOE, 2008).

In 2007/08, there were ten nurseries, 13 nursery-kindergartens and 101 kindergartens privately operated. There were 561 children in nurseries, 1,595 children in nursery-kindergartens, and 11,543 children in kindergartens. There were 48 female teachers in nurseries, 111 in nursery-kindergartens, and 707 in kindergartens.

### **Primary and lower education (basic education)**

The main objectives of the first and second cycles of basic education (grades 1-6) are the following:

- developing the children physically, mentally, morally, socially and emotionally, and providing them with the basic general education and skills required to be good citizens;
- helping the children to acquire the fundamental skills of reading, writing and mathematics in order to enable them to use their Arabic language in reading, writing and self-expression and to use numbers in their daily life;
- helping children to form good habits, attitudes and skills (such as close observation, careful listening, clear thinking, and interest in learning), to develop their talent and hobbies, motivating them towards study and self-learning;
- developing values and attitudes towards work and production, and respect for manual labour and those who practice it.

The main objectives of the intermediate stage (third cycle of basic education, grades 6 to 9) are as follows:

- developing the student, physically, mentally, morally, socially and nationally and providing him/her with the general and practical education required to be a good citizen;

- providing the necessary studies and aids to explore and develop the student's abilities and talents and to prepare him/her for life in general and for the various tracks of secondary education;
- helping the student to acquire good habits, skills and attitudes for self-learning and developing his/her specific talents and abilities;
- developing values and attitudes towards work and respect for manual labour, and inculcating an appreciation for handicrafts.

There are separated schools for boys and girls with teaching staff of the same gender. However, according to the 2003/04 statistics, about 31 primary schools for boys have been managed by women, and boys are taught by women teachers, in order to solve the problem created by the lack of male teachers at this stage, and in keeping with the Ministry's plan to extend this experiment to include a larger number of primary school classes. The weekly lesson timetable for basic education is presented below:

#### Basic education: weekly lesson timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade								
	First cycle			Second cycle			Third cycle		
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
Islamic education	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
Arabic language	9	9	8	7	7	7	6	6	6
English language	–	–	2	5	5	5	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Science and technology	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4
Social studies	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
Family life education	–	–	–	1	1	1	–	–	–
Fine arts	2	2	2	2	2	2	–	–	–
Practical studies (*)	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	3	3
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Music	1	1	1	1	1	1	–	–	–
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

Source: Information provided by the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC), November 2004. Each teaching period lasts 50 minutes.

(\*) Include home economics, carpentry, metalwork, pottery, etc.

The Ministry of Education's directions regarding the primary education curriculum emphasize the experience unit, treating the topics on the basis of the integration perspective, practicing scientific thinking and acquiring the necessary skills to solve problems. Special attention is also paid to practical aspects and their integration in the curriculum, in order to foster functional elements related to the present and future life of the student.

In the first cycle of basic education, where a class-teacher system is applied (e.g. all subjects are taught by one teacher with the exception of English, technology, physical education and music), the teacher assesses pupils' performance during the semester by continuous systematic evaluation, daily training and practicing, planned activities, individual and group projects, and diagnostic tests. Passing in this cycle is based on the continuous evaluation throughout the semester.



In the second and third cycles of basic education, where a subject-teacher system is applied (e.g. there is a specialized teacher for each subject), students are evaluated through systematic observation, daily training and practicing, planned activities, individual and group projects, mid-semester tests, and a final examination at the end of each semester. Students must attain an overall score of at least 50% on each subject.

If a student fails a subject, he/she has the right to again sit the examination in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in the evaluation and examination system of 1984. If a student fails more than one subject, he/she will have the right to repeat that grade for one time only, after the provision of remedial lessons. Students who fail in the intermediate level are allowed to sit the examination as external students. Those who pass the examination are awarded the Basic Education Certificate.

The Education Council at the Ministry of Education approved the Developed Student Evaluation System in basic schools in December 1994. The project was adopted on an experimental basis during the academic year 1995/96 before its final generalization, as stated in the Ministerial decree of September 1995.

The National Examinations Unit (NEU) of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET, established in 2008), is responsible for undertaking independent national examinations at grades 3, 6 and 9 levels in the core subjects of mathematics, science, Arabic and English. Grade 12 examinations are scheduled to be piloted in 2012. National examinations for grades 3 and 6 were conducted in all government primary and primary-intermediate schools in May 2009 for the first time. A total of approximately 21,000 students took the examinations, which in grade 3 were in Arabic and mathematics, and in grade 6 in Arabic, mathematics, science and English. In all subjects the examinations covered the whole curriculum. In 2010, grade 9 students were also included. In May 2010, all students in public schools in grades 3, 6 and 9 sat for the national examinations. A total of approximately 32,000 students sat for the examinations. Grade 3 students took the Arabic and mathematics examinations, whereas grades 6 and 9 students took the Arabic, mathematics, English and science examinations. (QAAET, 2009 and 2010).

In 2005/06, there were 82,943 pupils enrolled in grades 1–6 (of whom 24.7% in the private sector) and the gross enrolment ratio (GER) was estimated at 104%. The total enrolment in grades 7-9 was 39,741 students (of whom 18.6% in the private sector) for an estimated GER of 102%. In the same year, there were 22 special education institutes with a total enrolment of 1,452 students (of whom 618 were girls) and 246 teachers (of whom 214 were female teachers). For 2006/07, MOE reports that the GER at the primary level was 99.5% and that the net enrolment ratio was 98.9%.

In 2007/08, there were 62,143 pupils enrolled in grades 1-6 and 32,889 pupils in grades 7-9 in 204 government schools. The total number of teachers in government schools (all levels, including secondary) was 11,479, of whom 7,034 were female teachers. In the same year, there were 63 private schools (multi-level schools, from nursery to secondary education), with 2,492 teachers and 47,523 students enrolled.



## Secondary education

The main objectives of general secondary education are:

- preparing the students physically, mentally, morally, socially and nationally to be mature individuals and good citizens;
- educating students in the arts and sciences in order to prepare them for higher education;
- preparing the students for life in general by providing them with sound values and knowledge about scientific trends, and the ability to solve problems of contemporary life, so that, after receiving vocational training, they can become a productive member of society.

The study plan of secondary education (credit-hour system) is based on the total credit hours required to complete secondary education: 156 credit hours for scientific, literary, commercial and applied studies tracks; and 180 credit hours for the technical track. The credit hours are divided into four groups of courses as follows:

- Core courses. These are characterized by variety and integration, ensuring a minimum of general knowledge studied by all students. They include a sufficient amount of information, skills, and attitudes that help the students to continue their study and self-learning. The percentage of core courses out of all the study requirements is 45% for scientific, literary, commercial and applied studies tracks, and 25% for technical track.
- Specialized courses. These are a group of courses that the students must study in one track (as a major course). The percentage of specialized courses out of all the study requirements is 39% for the scientific, literary and commercial tracks; 45% for the applied studies track; and 69% for the technical track.
- Elective specialized courses. These courses are directed towards a specialization, or are linked to a specific field of knowledge. The percentage of these courses out of all the study requirements is 8% for the scientific, literary and commercial tracks; 5% for the applied studies track; and 3% for the technical track.
- Free elective courses. The objective of these courses is to enrich the curriculum, satisfy the students' interests and talent, and achieve the balance and integration between all other core and specialized courses. The percentage of these courses out of all the study requirements is 8% for the scientific, literary and commercial tracks; 5% for the applied studies track; and 3% for the technical track.

The daily timetable consists of six periods of fifty minutes each in all secondary schools. The yearly lesson timetable is showed below:

## Upper secondary education: weekly lesson timetable

Subject	Number of yearly periods in each form					
	I		II		III	
	Lit.	Sc.	Lit.	Sc.	Lit.	Sc.
<u>Core courses:</u>						
Arabic language	90	90	90	90	90	90
English language	90	90	90	90	90	90
Islamic education	40	40	40	40	40	40
Science	30	30	30	30	30	30
Mathematics	30	30	30	30	30	30
Social studies	30	30	30	30	30	30
Physical education	30	30	30	30	30	30
Family life education	10	10	10	10	10	10
Sub-total	350	350	350	350	350	350
<u>Compulsory specialized courses (science track):</u>						
Mathematics	–	90	–	90	–	90
Physics	–	90	–	90	–	90
Chemistry	–	60	–	60	–	60
Biology	–	60	–	60	–	60
Geology	–	10	–	10	–	10
Elective specialized courses	–	60	–	60	–	60
Free elective courses	–	60	–	60	–	60
Sub-total	–	430	–	430	–	430
<u>Compulsory specialized courses (literary track):</u>						
Arabic language	70	–	70	–	70	–
English language	60	–	60	–	60	–
Islamic education	20	–	20	–	20	–
History	50	–	50	–	50	–
Geography	50	–	50	–	50	–
Economics	20	–	20	–	20	–
Sociology	10	–	10	–	10	–
Philosophy	10	–	10	–	10	–
Psychology	20	–	20	–	20	–
Elective specialized courses	60	–	60	–	60	–
Free elective courses	60	–	60	–	60	–
Sub-total	430	–	430	–	430	–
<b>Total annual periods</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>

Source: Information provided by the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC), November 2004.

Each teaching period lasts 50 minutes. Lit. = Literary track; Sc. = Science track.



Secondary schools use the teaching methods adopted by the Directorate of Curricula, derived from the educational philosophy. These methods are based on the student's activity to achieve the objectives of the courses (mastery of the process of learning, co-operative learning, self-learning and group learning).

Evaluation in the credit-hour system aims at assessing students' achievement and academic efforts continuously throughout the semester. A variety of evaluation methods are used side by side with the mid- and final semester test depending on the nature of each course (i.e. oral, written, and practical tests, as well as research and report writing). The evaluation process also deals with the students' activity, his/her level of participation in the classroom, and homework accomplishment. The students' evaluation system in secondary schools was implemented in 1993/94. Three parties are participating together in this process: the teacher, the school and the Ministry.

The new evaluation system summarizes students' achievement and performance in each course based on continuous, diagnostic, formative and internal evaluation carried out by the teacher throughout the semester. It contributes 30% of the course's final grade, calculated according to the oral and written classroom performance tests. The internal evaluation of students is made by the school through a mid-semester examination, contributing 20% to the course's final grade. Specialized teachers in each subject-matter participate in this process, supervised by a senior teacher. The external evaluation represents the remaining 50% of the course's final grade. The Ministry of Education is carrying out this process in collaboration with the schools through a unified examination supervised by round committees. These committees comprise curriculum specialists and senior teachers. They organize cumulative and summative evaluation.

Students should attain an overall score of at least 50% in each subject matter, a 20% in the internal evaluation's overall grade, and the same in the cumulative evaluation carried out by the Ministry at the end of each semester. To obtain the secondary school certificate, students must attain an overall score of at least 50% in the final cumulative average, and complete all the study requirements. The Ministry adopted the percentage system in computing students' results, instead of a cumulative system. Thus, students' scores are calculated in percentages instead of points, because of their clarity for the students and their parents. Since the introduction of this system, the Ministry set up a scale showing how to convert the grade within the cumulative system into percentile system.

In 2005/2006, there were 34,026 students enrolled at the secondary level (of whom 14.1% in the private sector) and the gross enrolment ratio was estimated at 95%. In 2007/08 there were 30,548 students enrolled at the secondary level in government schools.

### **Assessing learning achievement nation-wide**

As mentioned, the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET) was formally established in 2008 as an independent national body supervised and attached to the Council of Ministers. QAAET has to: (i) develop indicators, processes, mechanisms and guidelines for measuring and reviewing the quality of performance of education and training institutions; (ii) develop and carry out national examinations



to assess performance levels for key stages of primary intermediate and secondary education stages; and (iii) review the quality of the performance of education and training institutions in light of the guiding indicators developed by the Authority.

Within QAAET, the National Examinations Unit (NEU) is responsible for undertaking independent national examinations for grades 3, 6 and 9, in the core subjects of mathematics, science, Arabic and English. Grade 12 examinations are scheduled to be piloted in 2012. The compulsory exams at primary and intermediate stage test students finishing grades 3, 6 and 9. Exams take place in May every year. At grade 3 students are tested in Arabic and mathematics, and at grades 6 and 9 they are tested in Arabic, English, mathematics and science. The role of the NEU is to design, develop and deliver the examinations and manage the marking process to ensure transparency, consistency, reliability and accuracy of results and information. The NEU is working together with its international partner, the University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), to establish the examinations in Bahrain. The NEU also publishes aggregate examination results (e.g. averages by year or by school) and issues students with certificates stating their examination results. These certificates state the results of the exam; graduation certificates continue to be issued by the Ministry of Education. Examinations are set based on the curriculum requirements and standards developed by the Ministry of Education. They set standards for what students should know, understand and be able to do at each stage of their school career. However, the NEU has complete freedom in setting examinations based on those curriculum requirements, and looks at standards in other countries to determine the correct level of difficulty for the examination.

During the NEU's first year of operation, national examinations for grades 3 and 6 were conducted in all government primary and primary-intermediate schools in May 2009 for the first time. A total of approximately 21,000 students took the examinations, which in grade 3 were in Arabic and mathematics, and in grade 6 in Arabic, mathematics, science and English. In all subjects the examinations covered the whole curriculum. All examinations were marked in Bahrain by teachers working in Bahraini government schools, and results were published to schools and students on 30 June 2009. The results of the examinations varied across subjects and across grades. Overall, students found the examinations challenging and their raw marks were low as a proportion of the total available marks. Students did best in grade 6 Arabic and science, and they did worst in grade 6 mathematics and English. Grade 6 mathematics stands out as a particularly poor performance overall and especially in comparison with grade 3 mathematics: there is a very significant decrease in performance in mathematics from grade 3 to grade 6. This is not mirrored in Arabic, where there is in fact a slight increase in performance from grade 3 to grade 6. In all language examinations students performed best in listening and worst in writing. Girls outperformed boys in the examinations by a large margin at both grades and in every subject. At both grades this difference is largest in Arabic.

In general, the low performance in grade 6 mathematics echoes Bahrain's performance in TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2003 and 2007. Bearing in mind that TIMSS tests grade 8 students and is a curriculum-independent test, the similarities are generally low performance of students in mathematics. In the Bahrain National Examinations, mathematics performance deteriorates markedly from grade 3 to grade 6, whereas science



performance in grade 6 is significantly better than mathematics. Bahrain's performance in TIMSS science is fairly close to the international average, and the gap between Bahrain's performance and the average decreased between 2003 and 2007. In TIMSS mathematics, however, the trend is the exact opposite: Bahrain's performance is a long way below the international average, and the gap between its performance and the average increased from 2003 to 2007. (QAAET, 2009).

The results of school reviews indicate that girls outperform boys. This is confirmed by national examination data in all subjects examined at grades 3 (mathematics and Arabic) and grade 6 (mathematics, Arabic, English and science). The gender gap is greatest in Arabic at grade 6, and it also widens from grade 3 to grade 6: in Arabic in grade 3 the difference in mean performance score is 1.22 in favour of girls, and by grade 6 this difference has increased to 1.77. Similarly the difference in mean performance score in mathematics at grade 3 is 0.83 in favour of girls; it increases to 1.44 by grade 6. Evidence from both school reviews and national examinations shows that primary school students' performance in language is weakest in writing, while their listening and reading skills are better. This is true for both the Arabic and the English languages. School reviews found that as a general trend, achievement is higher in grade 3 than in grade 6. In national examinations, this is reflected in the results for mathematics where there is also a general overall performance decrease from grade 3 to grade 6. However, this is not the case in Arabic. An issue emerging from school reviews is the overemphasis on content in the teaching and learning process and a lack of sufficient opportunities to develop higher level thinking skills. The breakdown of examination results by topic and skill areas from the curricula also seems to point in the direction of students being better at knowledge recall skills than at higher level thinking skills. Examination results for grade 6 science, however, do not fit this picture.

The development of students' analytical and critical thinking skills and their ability to work and learn independently is only satisfactory or inadequate in the great majority of schools. Almost half of schools do not develop these skills sufficiently, which in turn impacts standards and achievement. The teacher-dominated approach in many lessons creates student dependency on the teacher. This creates a gap in relation to preparing students with the independent learning skills needed for higher education and employment. Where personal development is graded as good, there is still scope for improvement in relation to the extent to which teachers promote independence and responsibility. Although students in good schools are often confident and articulate, in lessons they are not consistently given enough opportunities to work independently or to work together. Overall, the delivery and enrichment of the curriculum is good or better in just over one third of schools (38%) but it is satisfactory or less in just under two thirds of schools (62%). A strength in the curriculum is the development of students' sense of rights and responsibilities: 92% of schools are judged to be satisfactory or better in this area. The curriculum is set by the Ministry but schools often follow this too literally and miss the opportunity to 'bring the curriculum to life'. An over-reliance by too many teachers on the prescribed textbooks fails to capture students' interest and engage them in learning. Moreover, this is related to the failure to make the curriculum more coherent which hinders the development of cross curricular skills, including literacy and numeracy. ICT skills are not yet being developed well enough. Sometimes this is due to a lack of resources, but often it is due to a failure by the school to make the best use of generous resources. (*Ibid.*).



In 2010, grade 9 students were also included. In May 2010, all students in public schools in grades 3, 6 and 9 sat for the national examinations. A total of approximately 32,000 students sat for the examinations. Grade 3 students took the Arabic and mathematics examinations, whereas grades 6 and 9 students took the Arabic, mathematics, English and science examinations. For grade 3, the mean mark for mathematics increased but the mean mark for Arabic examinations decreased. For grade 6, whereas the mean mark for mathematics and English increased slightly in 2010, those of Arabic and science decreased. On average, the standard deviations remain stable. The means for grade 9 are low, with none at, or around, the mean mark of 50%. Low performance is most pronounced in mathematics for grades 6 and 9 where the mean marks are just 21% and 17% of the total respectively. This is lower than can be attributed simply to an unfamiliar style of examining, and might indicate a more deep-seated mismatch between the demand of the examinations and the abilities of the students being examined. The mean performance scores indicate that for grades 3 and 6 overall, students performed better in 2010 than in 2009. There is a general improvement in all examinations except for grade 6 Arabic. Again, girls outperformed boys in the national examinations by a large margin at all grades and in every subject. However, for grades 3 and 6, the gap between boys and girls in 2010 is smaller than the gap between boys and girls in 2009. While boys increased their performance in all grades 3 and 6 subjects from 2009 to 2010, girls increased their performance in almost all subjects, but not in Arabic in either grade 3 or 6. For grade 9, girls outperformed boys in all subjects with the largest difference in Arabic. (QAAET, 2010).

## Teaching staff

The Ministry of Education has determined the academic and educational qualifications that teachers should possess to join the profession at different levels of education as follows:

- The teacher should hold a bachelor's degree in education (classroom teacher programme) to be eligible to teach at the primary school level (first cycle of basic education) that adopts the classroom teacher system.
- Those who want to teach at the second cycle of basic education (grades 4-6) should hold a bachelor's degree in one of the arts subjects (Arabic, social studies or religious education) and should have a good academic background in the other two subjects; or, they should hold a bachelor's degree in one of the scientific subjects (chemistry, physics, biology or mathematics) and should have a good academic background in the other three subjects (i.e. the training programme should include courses that will qualify the graduate to pass the determination level test in non-specialized subjects).
- The teacher should hold a bachelor's degree in a specialized academic subject with a minor in education to be eligible to teach at the intermediate and secondary levels.

The Ministry of Education established a new procedure for teaching requirements in 1994. This procedure requires that all the university graduates in various specializations should sit proficiency level tests in their academic subject. The tests are prepared by experts and specialists at the Ministry. Recruitment of teachers is





based on the final results of the tests and priority is given to those who attained higher grades. Those who attained lower grades may attend a long intensive course in their specialization. They should attain the required pass grade to be eligible for the teaching profession.

The University of Bahrain plays a major role in the training of educational staff. The following programmes are offered:

- Associate Diploma in Early Childhood. This diploma aims at preparing early childhood teachers capable of helping learners acquire experiences in an integrated form. The total number of credits to be completed in this programme is 65.
- Bachelor of Education (classroom teacher programme). This programme aims at preparing classroom teachers at the primary school level. The total number of credits to be completed in this programme is 128.
- Bachelor of Physical Education. This programme aims at preparing physical education teachers to be eligible to teach at all school levels. The total number of credits to be completed in this programme is 129.
- Bachelor's degree programmes in specialized subjects such as Arabic, mathematics, English, chemistry, etc., with a minor in education. These programmes aim at preparing teachers of specialized subject-matters to be eligible to teach at all school levels.

The bachelor's, diploma, master's and minor programmes in education include a course in teaching methods. These courses deal with the objectives of modern education, its principles, techniques and the fundamentals of effective teaching, the various teaching methods (i.e. discussion method, lecture method, demonstration method, problem solving method, etc.; interaction analysis, questioning techniques, lesson planning, laboratory and classroom management), and the different teaching/learning processes. Emphasis is placed on the functional use of the methods and techniques applied in school practice through varied workshops according to the subject area of specialization.

The programmes offered also include courses containing elements related to education for democratic citizenship, intercultural/multicultural education, and education related to values, the environment, health, population, new technologies, arts, human relations, etc. For instance, the B.Ed. (classroom teacher programme) include courses in scientific subjects (i.e. man and the environment, the universe around us, water and energy, the human body and health education) in addition to the other different subjects related to art education, child literature, child culture and the social development in the Gulf States.

The bachelor's, diploma, master's and minor programmes in education include varied courses related to the above-mentioned areas, such as population and environmental education. This subject includes: the study of population and its inter-relation with comprehensive development plans; the role that education can play in the light of the study of the population and socio-economic characteristics of society; and the analysis of women's status in the process of development and the educational needs that have to be satisfied to improve their socio-economic status. The course also



includes concepts concerning environmental education and its problems, with special emphasis on the Arab Gulf area in general and Bahrain in particular.

Working and employment conditions are the same for all teaching staff in terms of salaries, recruitment methods, student/teacher ratio, promotion opportunities, in-service training and professional support. With respect to salaries, there is a special payroll for teaching staff which is different from that of general and specialized payrolls in terms of grades, steps, allowances and the salary itself. Salaries cover the following: basic salary; social allowance; medical and injury insurance (for technical education teachers only); housing allowance for expatriates; and air tickets for the whole family of expatriates. Male and female teachers enjoy opportunities for promotion to higher positions, such as senior teacher or deputy principal, based on the conditions and criteria for evaluating the applications for these positions. The MOE has drawn up a new wage scale for teachers who also got 15% pay rise at the end of 2007. The new scale also includes financial rewards and training. The new teacher's wage scale was introduced in line with the development and reform changes to encourage distinguished university graduates to join the teaching profession and provide promotion opportunities for all teachers according to their experience, qualifications and competence. The wage scale which was implemented in the academic year 2004/05 aims to improve the financial situation of teachers. Promotion in educational jobs will be linked to the teacher's professionalization programme. (MOE, 2008).

The Ministerial Resolution No. 1281 of 2007 specifies the number of periods a teacher should teach per week. The resolution recommended the following: (a) primary and intermediate education teachers should teach 22 periods a week; (b) secondary school teachers should teach 20 weekly periods; (c) teachers at technical and vocational schools and institutes should have 24 periods a week; (d) physical education teachers should teach 20 periods a week in all stages, however coaching students after school time shall be equivalent to four periods a week.

Celebrating World Teacher Day can be viewed as another step towards enhancing the social status of the teaching staff. The State also honors excellent teachers during the National Education Day ceremony every year. This initiative started in May 1986 following the issuing of the Ministerial decree No. 22/168-1/86 concerning the formation of a committee to select excellent teachers.

The Ministry of Education has established that all school principals should hold an educational qualification in school administration. The Ministry put this plan into effect through the Diploma Programme in School Administration implemented by the American University of Beirut from 1985/86 to 1990/91, and then through the Diploma in School Administration implemented by the College of Education at the University of Bahrain.

In the light of the development of central educational administration personnel, the Ministry implemented since 1989 the advanced management programme for senior personnel, through the University of Bahrain in conjunction with the Continuing Management Education Programme. The objective of this programme is to upgrade administrative efficiency. The first group comprised the under-secretaries and the directors who completed the programme in February 1990;



the second group comprised the section heads who completed the programme in 1991; and the last group comprised senior specialists and superintendents who completed the programme in 1993. With this third group, the Ministry has completed the training of senior educational leadership in its administrative organization, although in-service training is continuing.

The MOE has introduced an in-service training programme for teachers and specialists to raise the efficiency and competencies and make them gain new teaching techniques. The training scheme is based on the concept of continuous teaching and training which involves the pursuing of organized study (under the supervision of the MOE's Directorate of Training and Professional Development) in an academic institution or by participating in conferences and workshops organized or approved by the MOE. Under the scheme, training is compulsory and part of the job requirements. Teachers and specialists are also obliged to attend the short and long seminars endorsed by the scholarships and Training Committee since this can help to develop their vocational skills. Training seminars are designed for male and female teachers alike.

The Bahrain Teachers College (BTC), a college of the University of Bahrain, was established in 2008 by the Ministry of Education with the mandate of preparing teachers, educational administrators, and other education specialists. In 2005, and in line with its educational reform, the MOE requested the National Institute of Education (NIE) of the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore to design and develop appropriate teacher education programmes for the Kingdom of Bahrain. The teacher education programmes designed by the NIE for implementation at the BTC emphasize the principles of holistic development of prospective teachers, purpose-driven programmes, theory-practice link, reflective communities of practice, partnerships, benchmarking beginning teacher standards, authentic and formative assessment, and advancement of the teaching profession. These principles have thus become the backbone of BTC's operations. The College offers a four-year Bachelor of Education programme with a strong cross-curriculum core and two preparation tracks. The B.Ed. engages the student in 129 credit hours of programmed study. There are five key areas of course work: education studies, teaching subject content, curriculum studies, field work and personal development. At the end of the first year, students will be streamed into Cycle 1 (grades 1-3) or Cycle 2 (grades 4-6) programme and possible areas of specialization. This decision will be made by faculty of the BTC on the basis of demonstrated aptitude and level of practical and academic performance and the MOE in terms of their staffing plan. Reference will be made to: the needs of the MOE for teachers for each level; gender distribution of these staffing needs; and areas of teaching specialization and competency required. Core to the programme is a high degree of practical content and an integration of theory and application throughout all courses. The BTC also offers a one-year Postgraduate Diploma of Education (PGDE), intended for university graduates with a bachelor's degree, that offers appropriate content knowledge as the basis for becoming effective subject specialist teachers in post-primary schools (grades 7-9 and secondary).

The Ministry of Education offers a number of incentives to attract students to join the BTC, including: a complete financial grant that will be on the increase during the years of study; complete free study for entrants; an international education



standard programme with practical applications; and a guaranteed teaching job for graduates. (MOE, 2008).

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*For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>*