

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

Draft



Ministry of Education

Royal Government of Bhutan

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Provisions in 'The Constitution of The Kingdom of Bhutan'.

Article 9: Principles of State Policy-

15. The State shall endeavour to provide education for the purpose of improving and increasing knowledge, values and skills of the entire population with education being directed towards the full development of the human personality.

16. The State shall provide free education to all children of school going age up to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

1. Introduction

Until the advent of modern education in Bhutan in 1961, monastic education was the main form of education. Monastic education served the social, economic and spiritual needs of the country for centuries. The modern education system scaled up with the commencement of planned development in 1961. Since then, education has played a principal role in the pursuit of political, cultural, environmental and socio-economic development of the country.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan requires the State to provide education to improve and increase knowledge, values and skills of the entire population for full development of the human personality. It also mandates the provision of free education to all children of school going age up to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all based on merit.

Bhutan has made commendable progress in this endeavour including the access to education. However, more needs to be done to improve quality. In response to this challenge, numerous measures have been initiated such as school reform programmes, teacher development programmes, and curriculum and assessment reforms.

In light of ongoing reforms within the sector and to make education more relevant for changing needs and expectations, the National Education Policy 2018 aspires to provide overarching directions for building and nurturing an education system that prepares citizens who are nationally rooted and globally competent.

The National Education Policy 2018 also draws upon the constitutional commitment to educational provision, the earlier education policy documents of 1976 and 1982 and Education Policy Guidelines and Instructions that were formulated thereafter.

2. Rationale

Education as a public undertaking has multiple stakeholders that necessitate the citizens to be equipped with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to become socio-economically productive members of the society. This entails the system to respond to changing needs, and to promote acquisition of competencies, foster interpersonal skills and collaborative values that responds to the country's aspiration of Gross National

Happiness. It is also one of the primary drivers of socio-economic development of the country.

Concerted efforts have been made to achieve universal access to education, strengthening foundations for learning, develop literacy, numeracy, and skills for work and lifelong learning. While significant progress has been made in terms of access to education, more efforts need to be made in provision of equitable and quality education.

Therefore, this policy is developed to enhance access, quality and equity in education towards preparing and nurturing citizens with values, skills and knowledge for the 21st Century aligned with the country's unique values, traditions, culture and aspirations. Such an education system will also realize His Majesty's aspiration for an education system that is timeless and acts as an ongoing social equalizer.

3. Vision

This policy aims to enable the development of an education system that will contribute to:

"An educated and enlightened society of Gross National Happiness, built and sustained on the unique Bhutanese values of *Tha-Dam-Tshig Ley Gyu-Drey*."

4. Goals

The purpose of education is to develop citizens that value Bhutan's unique national identity, ancient wisdom and culture, prepared for right livelihood, and practice contemplative learning. It is to develop individuals who are lifelong learners, who have a holistic understanding of the world and a genuine care for others and nature. It should also develop citizens' competency to deal effectively with the contemporary world, who are critical, creative, informed and engaged in civic affairs.

Therefore, the National Education Policy 2018 aims to create a robust and holistic education system that:

- 4.1 Inculcates the principles and values underpinning Gross National Happiness, and upholds the nation's unique cultural and spiritual heritage and values; and
- 4.2 Prepares citizens to become knowledgeable, skilful, creative, innovative, enterprising, and capable of responding to the national needs and emerging

global trends.

5. Scope

This policy informs and guides all forms and levels of education in Bhutan, public and private, to support the aspirations of the Royal Government of Bhutan over the long term. This includes early childhood, schooling, monastic, tertiary, training, non-formal and continuing education.

6. Early Childhood Care and Development

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) provides opportunities for all children aged 0 to 8, including those with special educational needs, to develop to their full potential. ECCD programmes and services provide strong foundations for learning, lifelong development and a smooth transition from early childhood education to school.

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- 6.1 All children from 0 to 8 years of age shall have access to ECCD programmes and services.
- 6.2 Home based parenting education and interventions shall be encouraged through awareness and advocacy programmes to cater to children from conception to 35 months of age to promote childcare, health, hygiene, nutrition, and stimulation.
- 6.3 The Ministry shall provide early learning opportunities for children aged 36 to 71 months old .
- 6.4 Interventions shall be instituted in primary schools to transition children aged 6 to 8 years from ECCD to primary school.
- 6.5 The establishment and operation of public, private, community and work place based Crèches and ECCD centres shall fulfil the prescribed standards and guidelines set by the Ministry of Education.
- 6.6 The Ministry of Education shall regulate the provision of ECCD education services.
- 6.7 ECCD centres must address the needs of all 36 to 71 months old children and be inclusive of gender, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, or location.

6.8 ECCD centres shall not collect any form of fee or contribution from students/families other than fees approved by the Ministry of Education.

7. School Education

School Education in Bhutan provides a formal learning environment, public and private, from Pre-Primary (PP) to Class XII. The school education shall offer opportunities to all students to realize their full potential by addressing access, quality, and equity so that they can become socially useful and economically productive citizens. Hence, the school education policies are geared towards developing a system of school education that shall be dynamic and responsive to the changing local, national, and global needs.

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- 7.1 All Bhutanese children of school going age shall have equitable access and opportunity to free quality basic education as defined in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- 7.2 The entry age to the Pre-Primary shall be six, and admission procedures shall be guided by the school admission guidelines of the Ministry of Education.
- 7.3 The Ministry shall facilitate the enrolment of out-of-school children aged 6 to 14, and retention in basic education and provision of support systems, including children with special educational needs.
- 7.4 The entry to public higher secondary education shall be made equitably accessible to all students on the basis of merit. Efforts shall be made to ensure that students shall complete higher secondary level or equivalent.
- 7.5 All schools shall promote students to the next level based on their attaining set standards, keeping students in an age appropriate group, prevention of repetition, and provision of appropriate supports to ensure the best placement for the student. Schools shall consult parents on matters relating to students' academic progress and learning achievements, promotion and repetition.
- 7.6 All schools shall promote core values and facilitate productive and critical engagement in society as active and informed citizens. To this end, schools shall teach the country's spiritual and cultural heritage throughout schooling and develop civic, financial, entrepreneurial, environmental, media literacy, and provide life skills education programmes.

- 7.7 The annual school academic calendar shall ordinarily consist of 880 instructional hours delivered over 180 instructional days. Variations to this will consider class cohorts, seasonal conditions, and other relevant factors. Details on instructional hours will be maintained and reviewed periodically in school management and operational guidelines.
- 7.8 Schools shall contribute to the expansion of required vocational skills by offering a diverse range of technical, vocational education and training subjects and programmes.
- 7.9 Schools and Technical Training Institutes shall collaborate in order to enhance the quality of technical, vocational education and training subjects and programmes and to promote the Technical, Vocational Education and Training system as an equivalent and integral aspect of education and training in Bhutan.
- 7.10 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) shall be promoted in schools through provision of ICT based resources and ICT aided teaching and learning.
- 7.11 The Ministry, Dzongkhags and Schools shall maintain a class size of maximum of 24 for primary and 30 for secondary levels.
- 7.12 Schools shall foster best practices and promote innovative methods to engage students and develop their life-skills.
- 7.13 Schools shall put in place appropriate measures for students with special educational needs across all grades to ensure equitable access to and participation in school, including higher secondary education.
- 7.14 Schools shall not collect any form of fee or contribution from students/families other than fees approved by the Ministry of Education.
- 7.15 Special provisions and considerations shall be made for schools with exceptional circumstances, such as extreme remoteness, high altitude, and low socio-economic communities.
- 7.16 students with special educational needs shall be supported with specialized, appropriate educational services and facilities including trained personnel.
- 7.17 All Bhutanese students studying in public schools shall be provided with appropriate and adequate learning materials, including textbooks.
- 7.18 All students at the primary level, students in rural schools, and priority secondary schools shall be provided free stationery.

- 7.19 Teachers in public schools will be provided with appropriate and adequate teaching materials and stationery
- 7.20 Schools shall practice proactive and positive forms of behaviour management, and adopt alternative forms of discipline to corporal punishment.
- 7.21 Schools shall have standard physical facilities including classrooms, learning support facilities such as libraries and counselling rooms, functioning water and sanitation facilities, sporting facilities and administrative facilities that ensures accessibility, safety, effective teaching and learning, enhances growth and development of students and that considers age, gender, disability, and climatic conditions.
- 7.22 Schools shall have eco-friendly infrastructure with Bhutanese architectural designs.
- 7.23 Schools shall operate as either Primary (Class from Pre-Primary to Class VI), Secondary with Class X as highest grade), or Higher Secondary (with class XII as highest grade).
- 7.24 All schools shall have a Bhutanese principal who is a qualified educator with appropriate and extensive teaching experience.
- 7.25 The Ministry of Education shall facilitate and regulate the establishment and operations of all public, private and international schools in Bhutan.
- 7.26 Schools shall have an inclusive disaster management and preparedness plan.
- 7.27 Schools shall hoist the national flag of Bhutan as per the laws of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- 7.28 All students shall attend academic sessions in national dress as a standard school uniform.
- 7.29 The National Anthem shall be sung during morning assembly sessions and on all formal school occasions.

8. Monastic Education

Monastic education refers to the Buddhist traditional form of education and remains the central form of spiritual learning and development in Bhutan. It has its own established independent governance and follows an independent curriculum, learning environment,

assessment and examinations, and standards. This form of education provides distinct medium of acquiring knowledge, skills and values.

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- 8.1 *Zhung Dratshang* shall maintain its independent governance, regulations, and guidelines for Monastic Education.
- 8.2 Children shall have equitable access to Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* registered and recognized by *Zhung Dratshang*.
- 8.3 Identified Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall put in place appropriate measures for students with special educational needs across all grades to ensure equitable access to and participation in monastic education.
- 8.4 *Zhung Dratshang*, the Ministry of Education, and other relevant government agencies shall collaborate to facilitate the enhancement of quality and inclusive education, through provision of education support services, sharing of resources, including provision of support for students with special educational needs.
- 8.5 *Zhung Dratshang* shall monitor and ensure access, quality, and equity in all Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras*.
- 8.6 *Zhung Dratshang* shall put in place mechanisms to ensure quality of education in Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras*.
- 8.7 Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall promote students to the next level based on their attaining set standards.
- 8.8 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) shall be promoted in Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* through provision of ICT based resources, and ICT aided teaching and learning.
- 8.9 *Dratshang Lhentshog*, in consultation with *Zhung Dratshang*, shall support teachers and students with adequate and appropriate teaching and learning materials, including textbooks.
- 8.10 Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall have standard physical facilities including classrooms, functioning water and sanitation facilities, sporting facilities and administrative facilities that ensures accessibility, safety, effective teaching and learning, enhances growth and development of students and that considers age, gender, disability, and climatic conditions.

- 8.11 Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall operate as *Zhirim Lobdra* (Class from Pre-Primary to Class VIII), *Dingrim Shedra* (Class IX to XII), *Thorim Shedra* (Class XIII to XV), and *Tsugla Lobdra* (Masters Level).
- 8.12 *Dratshang Lhentshog* shall facilitate and regulate the establishment and operations of private monastic education institutes to provide quality education.
- 8.13 Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall have an inclusive disaster management and preparedness plan.
- 8.14 Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall promote culture, tradition and the values of *Tha-Dam-Tshig Ley Gyu-Drey*.

9. Curriculum, Assessment and Recognition

9.1 Curriculum

The curriculum is central to education and plays a vital role in achieving the purpose of education as defined under the policy goals. It secures the right of all children and young people to a broad and balanced education. It should provide a variety of experiences and knowledge to enable students to think rationally, be reflective, understand the world through its various disciplines, and foster aesthetic appreciation and global harmony. It also should promote the country's unique culture and tradition, values, while learning to participate actively in the process of building an educated, enlightened, and cohesive society.

Policy statements

- 9.1.1 The curriculum shall equip students with the knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes based on Bhutanese values of *Tha-Damtse Ley-Judrey*, *Zacha-Drosum*, and *Sampa-Semke*.
- 9.1.2 The curriculum shall be designed to develop sound foundation in literacy, numeracy and language.
- 9.1.3 Dzongkha as the national language shall be taught in all schools to ensure that all students acquire high proficiency.
- 9.1.4 English shall be the medium of instruction in schools. Efforts shall be made to ensure that all students acquire high proficiency in English, and continually improve the standard of English teaching and learning.

- 9.1.5 The curriculum shall be designed to suit local contexts and enable students to be innovative and creative, lifelong learners, and prepare them for the world of work.
- 9.1.6 Curriculum shall provide opportunities for learners to pursue diverse academic and vocational pathways.
- 9.1.7 All educational institutes shall encourage strong reading habits to foster a reading culture and study skills among students for their personal growth and intellectual development.
- 9.1.8 School curriculum shall strengthen Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education to promote creativity and innovation. Schools shall also promote Arts education to develop and enhance creativity.
- 9.1.9 Curriculum shall emphasize the use of pedagogical approaches that involve active student participation, development of competencies, and the use of ICT in teaching and learning.
- 9.1.10 The curriculum and pedagogy shall be inclusive of gender, special educational needs, socio-economic circumstances and geographic location.
- 9.1.11 Curriculum design and development shall integrate vocational skills in relevant subjects across all levels.
- 9.1.12 Curriculum shall be based on current research to remain relevant, dynamic, and current, whilst preserving and promoting traditional knowledge, values, and cultural heritage.
- 9.1.13 Any school curriculum revision and reform shall follow the standard curriculum development cycle.
- 9.1.14 An overarching national school curriculum framework shall guide the learning experiences, outcomes, standards, and assessment for all learning areas. The curriculum framework shall be inclusive of gender, students with disabilities, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, students from diverse geographic locations, and students with family and work responsibilities. It shall contain sufficient flexibility as to enable students to complete basic and higher secondary education over an extended period, and to be adapted for students who are unable to access the general curriculum.
- 9.1.15 There shall be an independent professional body responsible for the development of school curriculum.

9.1.16 There shall be a clear governance, and roles and responsibilities among the Ministry of Education and the independent professional bodies responsible for school curriculum, assessment and examinations with respect to the development, implementation, and review of school curriculum, assessment and examinations.

9.1.17 The Ministry of Education shall facilitate collaboration amongst key agencies and other stakeholders on matters related to school curriculum implementation, assessment, monitoring and evaluation, and relevant **teacher pre-service** education and development. *Geden Tsugla Dutshog* shall facilitate collaboration in all matters related to curriculum implementation, assessment, monitoring and evaluation in monastic education institutes.

9.2 Assessment and Examinations

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. It informs students, teachers, parents and stakeholders about student's learning achievements. Assessments can also provide valuable information about the health and quality of the education system to inform the scope, delivery and emphasis of the curriculum. Assessment practices shall incorporate formative and summative forms, including standardized examinations. In view of this, it is imperative that assessment and examinations are adaptable to ensure continuous improvement of the quality of education.

Policy statements

9.2.1 The health of school education shall be monitored through a periodic national and/or international education assessment system.

9.2.2 Assessment of student learning shall be based on learning standards prescribed in the school curriculum, and shall include standardized holistic school level assessment and national examinations. It shall incorporate formative and summative forms, and emphasize competencies.

9.2.3 Standardized modes of assessment including national examinations shall be based on the curricula.

9.2.4 Appropriate arrangements shall be made available for students with disabilities in assessment and examinations to ensure that all students are able to demonstrate their learning.

9.2.5 An independent professional body shall be responsible for standardized assessment and examinations, including certifications, protocols, and regulation.

10. Tertiary Education

Tertiary education in Bhutan aspires to be a nationally rooted and globally competitive system that aims to develop productive, socially responsible, culturally grounded, ecologically sensitive, and spiritually aware citizens equipped to lead Bhutan into a knowledge based society that values lifelong learning. Tertiary education plays a central role in building future leadership of the Kingdom of Bhutan and its professional requirements in the near and distant future. It develops citizens who can resolve complex social and technical problems. In addition to the following overarching policies, the provision of tertiary education shall be guided by the Tertiary Education Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2010 (TEP) and amendments thereof.

Policy statements

- 10.1 TEIs in Bhutan shall offer courses that are relevant to the current as well as future national, social, economic, and spiritual needs.
- 10.2 Entry to all TEIs shall be on the basis of merit appropriate to their abilities, interests, competencies and performance, and consider students' economic circumstances, gender and/or special educational needs.
- 10.3 Scholarships and access schemes for undergraduate courses within and outside Bhutan shall be made available on merit, especially in critical areas of national human resource requirements, and consider gender, disabilities, geographical location and students from low socio economic backgrounds.
- 10.4 TEIs shall support different modes of study and flexible course structures.
- 10.5 TEIs shall institute appropriate strategies to promote a strong culture of research and continuous professional development.
- 10.7 TEIs shall leverage the power of ICT to enhance teaching and learning through the development of ICT infrastructure and skills.
- 10.8 Special measures shall be put in place to provide equitable access to and participation in tertiary education that consider, among other factors, student's socio-economic circumstance, geographic location, gender and disability.
- 10.9 All relevant educational agencies shall collaborate to promote and provide pathways for learners and credit transfer among non-formal education, school education, technical, vocational education and training, and tertiary education.
- 10.10 The overall policy directions for and regulation of all Tertiary Education Institutes

(TEIs) shall be through the recognized national tertiary education regulatory bodies.

10.11 All TEIs shall have an inclusive disaster management and preparedness plan.

10.12 Tertiary education shall promote culture, tradition and the values of *Tha-Dam-Tshig Ley Gyu-Drey*.

11. Literacy and Lifelong Learning

The Royal Government of Bhutan encourages all of its citizens to pursue lifelong learning both formally and informally. This enables a society that responds to changing labour market demands, and well-rounded individuals who can effectively contribute culturally and economically. An individual's level of formal education and their consequent literacy directly influences their ability to effectively participate in society and pursue lifelong learning. This also helps conserve, strengthen, and promote country's culture, traditions, and values. As such, measures need to be put in place to ensure all citizens are equally equipped with the tools to fully participate in lifelong learning and community services.

Policy statements

11.1 The Ministry of Education shall continue to promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills for all citizens, and provide programs that contribute to this goal.

11.2 Opportunities shall also be provided to enhance literacy, numeracy, and vocational skills through appropriately resourced educational institutes, distance and online learning.

11.3 Opportunities shall be provided for those from fifteen years of age and above who wish to upgrade their qualifications through continuing education and equivalency programmes, and consider their economic circumstances, gender, disabilities, and/or special educational needs.

11.4 Non-formal education shall continue to be provided and made accessible to all those from fifteen years of age and above who have missed formal education, for those who have dropped from the formal education system, and/or for those requiring basic literacy development and vocational skills.

11.5 Non-formal education shall infuse life skills such as health and reproductive issues, environment, disaster management, social issues such as gender, child

care and protection, democracy, Gross National Happiness within its course content. Programme design, content delivery and duration should be flexible in order to be inclusive of gender, disability, geographic location and socio-economic circumstances.

11.6 The relevant agencies shall collaborate to support out-of-school youth to engage in appropriate education pathways.

11.7 Non-formal and continuing education shall be directed and strengthened by an appropriate governing board and operational guidelines.

12. Accreditation & Quality Assurance

The credibility of educational institutes can be maintained by a rigorous accreditation and quality assurance process. These ensure that educational institutes meet and maintain a minimum standard of quality and integrity regarding academic standards, administration, and related services. They establish recognition, legitimacy and credibility of all educational institutes, both within and outside the country.

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12.1 All educational institutes shall be affiliated to a nationally or internationally recognized assessment, examination and certification body endorsed by the Ministry of Education or the relevant agency of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

12.2 The Ministry shall assess the quality of and accredit private and international schools.

12.3 A quality assurance and accreditation body shall assess the quality of and accredit Tertiary Education Institutes.

12.4 A comprehensive framework, shall be developed, maintained and periodically reviewed to recognize equivalency of assessment results /certification of students studying outside Bhutan.

12.5 The Ministry of Education shall recognize internationally orientated (primary and secondary) curriculum such as International Baccalaureate, Cambridge International General Certificate for Secondary Examinations or equivalent.

12.6 Mechanisms shall be put in place to recognize prior learning and facilitate credit transfer for seamless movement of students between and into schools, technical

and vocational education and training, tertiary, and other forms of education.

12.7 An effective monitoring & evaluation framework shall be put in place to oversee the overall health and quality of education to inform future planning related to curricula, teachers, resource allocations and system efficiency.

13. Health and wellbeing of children and young people

In addition to academic, intellectual and cognitive development, educational institutes play an important role in the development of the health and wellbeing of children, young people and all learners. Educational institutes can support children, young people and all learners through mechanisms and programmes that promote their physical and mental health, leadership attributes, life skills, career aspirations, safety and wellbeing.

Policy statements

13.1 All educational institutes shall provide adequate and appropriate programmes and support to enrich and empower learners to facilitate their growth and wellbeing.

13.2 All programmes for children, young people and all learners shall meet the safety and protection standards set by the relevant regulatory bodies.

13.3 All educational institutes shall put in place plans and programmes to imbue a sense of volunteerism and foster character building of children, young people and all learners based on the country's unique values and culture.

13.4 All educational institutes shall provide safe, supportive, inclusive, and learner-friendly environment that is conducive to holistic learning and intellectual engagement.

13.5 All educational institutes shall put in place and implement procedures to minimize the risk to the safety of all children, young people and learners in their care. Educational institutions shall also report cases of suspected abuse, including neglect, while attending, travelling to and from, or outside the educational institute, to appropriate authorities.

13.6 All educational institutes shall maintain the privacy and confidentiality of personal information, including images of children, young people, learners and staff under their jurisdiction.

13.7 All educational institutes shall provide comprehensive counselling and guidance

to all students with designated trained counsellors. A Guidance and Counselling Framework shall guide protocols and procedures.

- 13.8 Every child shall be supported to complete basic education through strategies such as transportation, accommodation with bedding facilities, school feeding programmes, additional support for students with disabilities, and other innovative support services.
- 13.9 Every child shall be supported to complete basic education through strategies such as transportation, accommodation with bedding facilities, school feeding programmes, additional support for students with disabilities, and other innovative support services.
- 13.10 All children in public ECCD centres, schools, Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall be provided with at least one balanced and nutritious meal per day, and those in boarding schools and Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* shall be provided with three meals per day to foster their physiological and cognitive development.
- 13.11 All schools shall promote agricultural programmes that are integrated with the local food production systems to supplement nutrition and ensure sustainability of feeding programmes, to educate children about food, nutrition, and sustainable farming practises.
- 13.12 All educational institutes with feeding programmes shall provide balanced, nutritious and sufficient food.
- 13.13 Learner's health shall be monitored through periodic checks to educate, prevent, treat, and rehabilitate for their wellbeing.
- 13.14 All schools shall institute scouting programmes to support the holistic development of children and young people.
- 13.15 All educational institutes shall promote sports and physical education for all round development and wellbeing of children.
- 13.16 Recreational, educational and remedial services and programmes for youth in schools, Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras*, and out-of-education shall be provided through integrated youth friendly centres or other alternative models.

14. Human Resources

Educational personnel are critical in realising educational goals and national aspirations. Adequate, competent human resources, staff with the right aptitude and attitude, and right supply of critical human resources are pre-requisites for an effective and efficient education system. Hence, it is imperative that all educational institutes are adequately staffed with competent and well-motivated personnel. In addition to the following overarching policies, the Teacher Human Resource Policy 2014 and amendments thereof shall also guide the educational professionals within the Ministry of Education.

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- 14.1 Opportunities shall be created to encourage competent high calibre graduates with the right aptitude and strong commitment to education, from diverse backgrounds, to undertake pre-service courses in education.
- 14.2 A competitive selection process shall be put in place to facilitate the recruitment of competent candidates to all educational institutes with the right aptitude and strong commitment to education.
- 14.3 Education professionals, either national or international, highly specialized in fields where their service is required, shall be employed to meet critical human resource needs.
- 14.4 Incentives and rewards shall be put in place in order to facilitate enhanced performance and retain effective teachers in classrooms.
- 14.5 The Ministry of Education shall provide incentives to attract and retain education personnel to remote locations, high altitudes, and boarding schools.
- 14.6 Clear career pathways, advancement opportunities, specialization choices, and entry and exit requirements shall be provided for educational personnel.
- 14.7 Efficient deployment systems shall be put in place to ensure all educational institutes are adequately staffed with appropriately trained and competent personnel.
- 14.8 Sufficient additional professionals shall be made available to provide effective and inclusive special education services.
- 14.9 Education personnel shall receive adequate, relevant, and regular professional development.

- 14.10 Professional development shall be based on national priorities and emerging needs through coordinated resource sharing.
- 14.11 Opportunities, programmes and support systems shall be put in place to continually develop and enhance educational leadership capacity, including programs and initiatives that focus on supporting, developing and enhancing women leaders, leaders with disabilities, and leaders from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.
- 14.12 Mechanisms shall be developed to respond to emerging circumstances such as professional development, transfers or resignation to maintain continuity of student learning and instructional hours.
- 14.13 A performance-based management system shall be instituted in order to maintain and enhance quality performance.
- 14.14 An autonomous governing body under the Ministry shall be created and maintained to regulate the teaching profession and promote professional standards through functions such as, certifications, registration, and licensing.
- 14.15 The relevant regulatory body shall develop and periodically review standards for education personnel and code of conduct to ensure professionalism of all education personnel.
- 14.16 All teachers shall refrain from providing private tuition. Schools shall provide in-school support for those students who require learning support.
- 14.17 Support systems and mechanisms shall be put in place for education personnel's wellbeing and overall welfare, morale and motivation.
- 14.18 The maximum number of classroom contact hours for full-time teachers in a week shall range from 18 to 22, pro-rata for part-time teachers. **The maximum shall depend on school circumstance and location.** The details shall be articulated in a teacher workload guidelines.
- 14.19 Teacher workload guidelines shall be maintained and regularly reviewed to enable effective instructional delivery. The guidelines shall include number of subjects a teacher shall teach, classroom contact hours, and a teachers' scope of responsibilities.

15. Financing Education

As mandated by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Article-9, Section-16, “the State shall endeavour to provide free basic education up to tenth standard to all school going age children”, the Ministry shall ensure that all children have access to quality and inclusive education through necessary provisions. Also, to ensure sustainability of education, it is important to formulate a state funding mechanism to sustain the achievements made in terms of access and to realize the goal of providing quality education.

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- 15.1 The government shall ensure adequate funding allocation to education in order that appropriate levels of resourcing can be made available to provide equitable access to quality and inclusive education for all. An international benchmark shall be maintained, which is at least 7.1% of Gross Domestic Product and/or 23% of the national budget' outlay for education.
- 15.2 A financing model shall be applied that enables effective and equitable distribution of resources within the education sector. The model will consider an optimum and differential allocation of funding for different models and levels of educational institutes, geographic location of educational institutes, socio-economically disadvantaged educational communities, and educational institutes with students who have special educational needs.
- 15.3 Resource allocation will consider education policy priorities such as early childhood care and development, primary education, inclusive education, gender, special educational needs, schools in diverse geographic locations, schools that service socio-economically disadvantaged communities, emergency contingency funding, tertiary education, research and development.
- 15.4 To achieve greater efficiency, accountability and transparency in the system, financial and human resources decentralization shall be enhanced at all levels of education administration and management. Guidelines to this effect shall be regulated by the Ministry.

16. Educational Administration and Governance

To enhance and ensure efficiency in service delivery and also to support the Ministry and agencies in managing programmes, projects, and services, it is important that a clear set of policy guidelines are laid down at each level of service delivery.

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16.1 The Ministry of Education shall:

- 16.1.1 Provide the overall policy guidelines for development of education in the country;
- 16.1.2 Facilitate effective coordination and collaboration within the Ministry, with other agencies, local governments and schools for the development and implementation of educational policies, plans, services; and
- 16.1.3 Review its structure and mandates from time to time to enhance its efficiency and service delivery.

16.2 The agency (ies) for Technical and Vocational Education and Training shall:

- 16.2.1 Provide the overall policy guidelines for the provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the country;
- 16.2.2 Facilitate effective coordination and collaboration within the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, with other agencies, local governments and TTIs for the development and implementation of educational policies and plans; and
- 16.2.3 Review its structure and mandates from time to time to enhance its efficiency and service delivery.

16.3 The independent professional bodies responsible for the development of school curriculum and standardized assessment and examinations shall:

- 16.3.1 Provide the overall frameworks and guidelines for the development and implementation of curriculum, assessment and standardised examinations in the country;
- 16.3.2 Develop teaching, learning and assessment resources for schools, teachers and students;
- 16.3.3 Conduct research into effective curriculum, pedagogy and assessment design and practices;
- 16.3.4 Develop and implement initial professional development programs as part of the roll-out of new or revised curriculum and standardised assessment and examinations;

- 16.3.5 Consult and collaborate with relevant agencies on matters that influence their core business; and
- 16.3.6 Review its structure and mandates from time to time to enhance its efficiency and service delivery.

16.4 Universities shall:

- 16.4.1 Facilitate effective coordination and collaboration with the Ministry of Education or other central agencies, local governments and TEIs for the development and implementation of educational policies, plans, services; and
- 16.4.2 Review their structure and mandates from time to time to enhance their efficiency and service delivery.

16.5 Zhung Dratshang/Dratshang Lhentshog shall:

- 16.5.1 Facilitate effective coordination and collaboration within Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras*, with the Ministry of Education, other agencies, and local governments for the development and implementation of educational policies, plans, and services;
- 16.5.2 Review its structure and mandates from time to time to enhance its efficiency and service delivery;
- 16.5.3 Ensure that the quality and performance of the Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* are maintained through regular monitoring;
- 16.5.4 Ensure systematic planning and budgeting for Monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras* and programmes; and
- 16.5.5 Coordinate and report educational data to the Ministry periodically.

16.6 Dzongkhags/Thromdes shall:

- 16.6.1 Support and facilitate coordination, collaboration, and implementation of educational plans, programmes and services;
- 16.6.2 Ensure systematic planning and budgeting for their respective ECCD centres, schools, and NFE centres and programmes;
- 16.6.3 Ensure that the quality and performance of ECCD centres, schools, and NFE centres are maintained through regular monitoring;
- 16.6.4 Coordinate and report educational data to the Ministry periodically; and

16.6.5 Have a special educational needs resource team to support schools to be inclusive and to provide special education services.

16.7 TEIs/ Schools/ECCDs/NFE Centres/ Monastic Lobdras and Shedras shall:

16.7.1 Deliver quality and inclusive educational programmes and towards this, assess their own performance on a regular basis and develop and implement their improvement plans;

16.7.2 Engage community through consultation on current policy issues, soliciting opinions, views and feedback to strengthen the delivery of educational services;

16.7.3 Schools shall engage the community through school management boards, parent teacher meetings/associations, parenting education awareness programme, alumni associations and community services; and

16.7.4 Maintain and update records of students, staff, and facilities in education management and information system on annual basis.

17. Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation

The effectiveness of policy lies in its successful implementation, monitoring and appropriate changes and improvements as they are identified. To this end, clear processes, governance arrangements and timelines for implementation, monitoring and evaluation are required.

Policy statements

17.1 The Ministry of Education in collaboration with key stakeholders shall develop an implementation plan to achieve the policy goals and objectives.

17.2 The Ministry of Education shall carry out a periodic monitoring of the implementation plan.

17.3 Evaluation of the policy shall be conducted by an external agency after five years and at regular intervals thereafter.

18. Glossary

1. **Academic calendar:** The schedule of events occurring in the academic year; that includes term times, assessment and examination dates.
2. **Academic year:** The customary annual period of instruction at an educational institute. In Bhutan this is the period from February till December each calendar year.
3. **Access Scheme:** Additional merit for a student to overcome long-term educational disadvantage experienced due to circumstances outside their control.
4. **Accreditation:** The process of self-study and external review for quality assurance, accountability and for quality improvement of education institutions. It is an assurance that a program or institution meets established quality standards.
5. **Assessment:** Evaluation of a student's progress in learning and their achievements or performance.
6. **Behaviour management:** Approaches and strategies that facilitate fostering positive behaviour, and build a positive social and physical environment for learners. Behaviour management can adopt a whole school approach, or other forms.
7. **Chhoedey Lhentshog:** Religious foundations established as non-profit organization
8. **Community Learning Centre:** A local educational institution outside the formal education system, usually set up and managed by local people to provide various learning opportunities in the fields of livelihood skills program, life skills, and literacy.
9. **Continuing education:** An instructional program that facilitates adult learners to update their knowledge and skills in a particular area.
10. **Curriculum:** A planned integrated course of academic studies for schools and monastic *Lobdras* and *Shedras*
11. **Disabilities:** Social position resulting from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
12. **Dratshang Lhentshog:** The Commission for the Monastic Affairs of Bhutan

13. **Education personnel:** Those staff who work in education institutes such as Lams, Lopens, Professors, Lecturers, Instructors, School Guidance and Counsellors, District Education Officers, Thromde Education Officers, Librarians, Lab assistants, Administrative Assistants, Washer man, Warden, Matron, Care givers, Early Childhood Care and Development facilitators, Store Assistants, Drivers, Cooks.
14. **Education:** Any form of teaching and learning, including through an educational institute, both formal and non-formal.
15. **Educational institutes:** Places of learning that offer structured educational courses and/or programs and attended by learners. It refers to all places of learning from early childhood to adult.
16. **Educational professionals:** Inclusive of the following education personnel: Principals, Vice Principals, teachers District Education Officers, Thromde Education Officers, Curriculum Officers, Education Monitoring Officers, Counsellors in schools and the Ministry of Education
17. **Examination:** A formal test of a person's knowledge or competency in a subject or skill.
18. **Fee:** an amount of money charged for educational tuition or related educational activity
19. **Formal education:** Certified education services provided by educational institutes.
20. **Formative assessment:** An ongoing process of gathering and interpreting evidence of student learning through formal and informal procedures, conducted by teachers during the teaching and learning process in order to monitor learning progress in student learning. Formative assessment is often used to guide teachers to modify teaching strategies, or learning activities to enhance students' learning and achievement. It may also be used to prepare students for summative assessment.
21. **Geden Tsugla Dutshog:** Monastic Education Council of Bhutan
22. **Inclusive education:** The process of valuing, accepting and supporting diversity in schools and ensuring that every child has equal opportunity to learn.
23. **Learner friendly:** Educational institutes and learning environment that are conducive to learning, aesthetically appealing and welcoming, which ensure safe and supportive school enrolment regardless of their background or ability. Learners have equal opportunities to enter the educational institutes and to participate in learning inside and outside the classroom.

24. **Learning standards:** Statements that define of what students are expected to know and be able to do at the end of each stage. Sometimes, it is referred to as bench mark
25. **Lobdra:** Monastic school where students/ Monks are taught general subjects with more emphasis on the art and skills development on conduct of rituals, mask dances, etc.
26. **Merit:** Taking into consideration of the recognised situational advantages and disadvantages based on an individual's performance and effort. It shall also consider students' economic circumstances, gender and/or special educational needs.
27. **Ministry:** The Ministry of Education.
28. **Monastic education:** The Buddhist traditional form of education
29. **National Curriculum Framework:** A document that provides a road map to what students are expected to learn and be able to perform at different key stages. As an overarching curriculum document, it guides the drafting of curriculum frameworks for different subjects.
30. **National Education Assessment:** It is the system of assessing the national standard of students' learning and performance in schools. Generally, a specific key stage is chosen and the test is administered, either nationwide or through random sampling.
31. **National examination system:** The set of protocols adopted and practiced during the conduct of national high stakes examinations at selected grades.
32. **Non-formal education:** Education that has tailored learning experiences to meet the learning needs of the population in a given community, generally targeting learners who did not go to school or could not continue studies.
33. **Principal:** The educator who has executive authority for a school.
34. **Priority:** Educational institutes that are given resourcing priority at a given point in time due to particular circumstances affecting the community (e.g. secondary schools in low socioeconomic communities).
35. **Professional development:** Structured, semi-structured and informal forms of education that enhance the knowledge and pedagogical skills of educational personnel with the aim of improving teaching and learning.
36. **Programme:** Provision of several related projects, activities or services designed to support educational goal, to educate, to promote, and build skills for learners.
37. **Quality assurance:** The systemic and systematic monitoring and evaluation of

service and program provision to assure the required standards are met, maintained and improved.

38. **Safe and supportive environment:** Educational environment that is child-centred, gender-sensitive, inclusive, community-involved, environmentally friendly, protective and intellectually, emotionally and spiritually healthy.
39. **Sampa-Semke:** Notion, thought, idea, or anything arising or dawning in the mind.
40. **School going age:** Ages six to sixteen years.
41. **Services:** An agency that performs a public service subject to government regulation. This includes youth, health, childcare and protection.
42. **Shedra:** Monastic institute where indepth-teaching learning takes with emphases on literature, language and research, etc.
43. **Special communities:** Communities that are accorded priority by the Royal Government of Bhutan, the Ministry of Education or the local government, due to particular unique circumstances of that community (e.g. remoteness, high altitude, populated by an ethnic minority).
44. **Special educational need:** A child or young person who has significant learning difficulty than most children, or young person of the same age, or has disability, which prevents or hinders from making use of facilities of a kind, provided for others of the same age in mainstream educational institutes.
45. **Standard physical facilities:** Standard infrastructure in an educational institute which shall include classrooms, appropriate furniture and teaching and learning equipment, learning support facilities such as libraries and counselling rooms, administrative facilities, water and sanitation facilities, games and sports facilities and equipment, as issued by the Ministry of Education or relevant agencies.
46. **Standardized holistic school level assessment:** A set of tools developed to measure holistic development and progress of a student in the school
47. **Summative assessment:** Assessment that measures student's achievement at the end of a period of learning. It is used to communicate information on student achievement to students, teachers, parents and guardians, and others.
48. **Tertiary Education Institutes (TEIs):** Educational institutes offering specialised tertiary courses affiliated to a university in Bhutan.
49. **Tertiary education:** formal and structured education courses, usually offered by a university, culminating in the awarding of a degree or higher degree.
50. **Tha-Dam-Tshig Ley Gyu-Drey:** Sublime values of solemn devotion and trust

based on interconnectedness, relationship and bonding (*Tha-Damtse*), and sublime values of cause and effect (*Ley-Judrey*).

51. **University:** Institute of post-secondary learning offering degree level courses or higher.
52. **Vocational Skills:** Skills needed for an occupation, trade, or a profession acquired either through orientation or practical or first-hand skills to prepare learners to work in various jobs such as in trade, craft, or in technical areas.
53. **Youth centre:** A place where information or services relating to health, career, and employment are provided targeting for youths.
54. **Youth:** People in the age group of 13 to 24 years.
55. **Zacha-Drosum:** Etiquette of how one eats, one behaves, and how one walks/moves based on national values.
56. **Zhung Dratshang:** Central monastic body of Bhutan.

For comments/feedback/clarifications, please contact:

Dochu
Policy and Planning Division
Ministry of Education
dochu@moe.gov.bt
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