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# People's Republic of China

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## Principles and general objectives of education

In terms of the Education Law of 1995, education in the People's Republic of China shall serve the construction of socialist modernization, be combined with production and labour, and satisfy the needs of training constructors and successors with all round development of morality, intelligence and physique for the socialist cause. The State shall conduct education for promoting among learners patriotism, collectivism and socialism as well as ideals, ethics, discipline, legality, national defence, and ethnic unity. Education shall be carried out in the spirit of inheriting and expanding the fine historical and cultural traditions of the Chinese nation and assimilating all the fine achievements of the civilization progress of human beings. Article 3 specifies that in developing the socialist educational undertakings, the State shall uphold Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and the theories of constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics as directives, and comply with the basic principles of the Constitution.

Article 24 of the Constitution, promulgated in 1982 (and amended in 1988, 1993, 1999 and 2004), stipulates that the State strengthens the building of socialist spiritual civilization by promoting education in high ideals, ethics, general knowledge, discipline and legality, and by promoting the formulation and observance of rules of conduct and common pledges by various sectors of the population in urban and rural areas. The State advocates the civic virtues of love for the motherland, for the people, for labour, for science and for socialism. It conducts education in patriotism and collectivism, in internationalism and communism and in dialectical and historical materialism, to combat capitalist, feudalist and other decadent ideas.

The educational equity is fundamental for social equity. To provide all people the access to education and ensure the opportunity for the quality education constitutes the major content and essential condition for the construction of the socialist harmonious society. (MOE, 2008).

## Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

On 18 March 1995, the Third Session of the Eighth National People's Congress examined and adopted the **Education Law of the People's Republic of China**, which came into force on 1 September 1995. This Law guarantees the strategic position of education in the social and economic development, implements the significant decision of the State of establishing education development as a priority, and guarantees the reform and development of education. Article 9 stipulates that the citizens shall have the right and duty to be educated and enjoy equal educational opportunities of education regardless of ethnic community, race, sex, occupation, social conditions or religious belief. According to article 12, the Chinese language, both oral and written, shall be the basic oral and written language used in schools and other educational institutions. Schools or other educational institutions which enrol mainly students from ethnic minority groups may use the language of the respective



ethnic community or the native language commonly adopted in that region. Schools and other educational institutions shall popularize the nationally common spoken Chinese and the standard written characters.

On 15 May 1996, the Nineteenth Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth National People's Congress adopted the **Vocational Education Law**, which came into force on 1 September, 1996. This Law was intended to accelerate the reform and development of vocational education system.

On 28 December 1990, the Seventeenth Session of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress examined and approved the **Law on the Protection of the Disabled**, which has been revised in 2008. In order to guarantee the right of the disabled to basic education, on 23 August 1994 the State Council issued the **Regulation on Education of the Disabled**. The Regulation stipulates that education of the disabled is an obligation of the State; it also establishes that people's governments at all levels should strengthen leadership, planning and development of education of the disabled. Furthermore, it foresees a gradual increase of financial inputs and an improvement of educational provision for the disabled. The educational authorities of the State Council are responsible for education of the disabled in the whole country, and local people's governments and educational authorities are responsible for the education of the disabled in their regions.

In order to improve quality of teachers and improve teacher training, on 12 December 1995 the State Council promulgated the **Regulation on Qualifications of Teachers**. The Regulation stipulates that Chinese citizens who are teaching in educational institutions, at all levels and of all types, should acquire teacher's qualifications according to law. The Regulation stipulates the categories, application, recognition and pre-conditions of teachers' qualifications.

On 31 October 1993, the Fourth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Eighth National People's Congress approved the **Teacher Law of the People's Republic of China**, which came into force on 1 January 1994. This Law introduced important measures for the improvement of teachers' qualifications and the protection of teachers' rights. The Law recognizes that teachers are professionals who exercise the functions of education and teaching, and are charged with the duty of imparting knowledge and educating people training builders and successors for the socialist cause and enhancing the quality of the nation. It also calls for the whole society to respect teachers and to this end the 10th September of each year is designated as Teachers' Day.

The **Higher Education Law of People's Republic of China** was approved on 29 August 1998 by the fourth Conference of the Ninth Standing Committee of National Congress. This Law, which came into force on 1 January 1999, is the first comprehensive legal document regulating higher education in the country.

The **Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China**, adopted at the 13th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Fifth National People's Congress on 12 February 1980, and amended at the 11th Session of the Standing Committee of the Tenth National People's Congress on 28 August 2004, stipulate the requirements for awarding bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.



The **Law on Compulsory Education**, adopted at the Fourth session of the Sixth National People's Congress on 12 April 1986 and amended at the 22nd session of the Standing Committee of the Tenth National People's Congress on 29 June 2006, stipulates that the States adopts a system of nine-year compulsory education (consisting of two stages, e.g. primary and lower secondary education). According to this Law all children who have attained the age of 6 years shall enroll in school to complete compulsory education. For the children in those areas where the conditions are not satisfied, the entry age may be postponed to 7 years. All children and adolescents who have the nationality of the People's Republic of China and have reached the school age shall have equal right and have the obligation to receive compulsory education, regardless of gender, nationality, race, status of family property or religious belief. No tuition or miscellaneous fee may be charged in the implementation of compulsory education.

The **Private Education Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China**, adopted at the Thirty-first Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People's Congress on 28 December 2002, came into force on 1 September 2003. The stipulates that the establishment of non-public schools that provide education for academic credentials, preschool education, training for preparing self-study examinations and other cultural education shall be subject to examination and approval by the administrative departments of education under the people's governments at or above the county level within the limits of their powers defined by the State; the establishment of a non-public school that mainly provides vocational skills, including training for vocational qualifications, shall be subject to examination and approval by the administrative department of labour and social security under the people's government at or above the county level within the limits of its powers defined by the State. The Law made it possible for foreign institutions to offer programmes in China through joint ventures with Chinese higher education institutions.

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

Governments at the central, provincial, prefecture, municipal and county levels have departments of education responsible for the administration of education. According to the Education Law, the **State Council** and **local people's governments** at all levels shall guide and administer education according to the principles of management at different levels and with a suitable division of responsibilities.

The administrative educational departments under the State Council are in charge of educational work throughout the country, and undertake overall planning, coordination and management of educational activities. The administrative departments of education under the people's governments, at or above the county level, are in charge of educational activities in their respective administrative regions. Other administrative departments of the people's governments, at or above the county level, are responsible for the relevant educational activities within their jurisdiction.

Other ministries and commissions under the State Council also have departments in charge of educational administration within their sphere of competence.



The State Education Commission was the agency in charge of education throughout the country between 1985 and 1998. The **Ministry of Education** is the highest educational administrative body. It takes charge of implementing the relevant laws and regulations, principles and policies, defining specific educational policies, preparing and coordinating educational development plans, coordinating the education-related work of all departments in the country, and providing guidance to the reform of the education system. The management of preschool education is mainly within the responsibility of local governments. Compulsory education (e.g. the nine-year programme covering primary and junior secondary education) is guided by the State Council and principally managed by the people's governments at the county level; its implementation is carried out in accordance to the overall planning of the provincial, autonomous regional and municipal people's governments. Vocational education is under the leadership of the State Council, with the local authorities taking up the major responsibility, and the overall coordination of government and the participation of the society. Higher education is under the supervision of the State Council and administered by the people's governments of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government.

The **National Education Examinations Authority**, under the Ministry of Education, coordinates and supervises the system of national education examinations. The **National Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT)**, an agency affiliated to the Ministry of Education, was established in 1998 on the basis of the former Research Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development. NCCT has the following main functions: conducting research on the evaluation of elementary, junior secondary and senior secondary education, and formulating standards for the assessment of learning results and teaching materials in elementary, junior secondary and senior secondary education; assessing curricula, textbooks, educational materials, and audio and video products in elementary, junior secondary and senior secondary education; assessing the teaching and administration of teaching affairs at elementary and middle schools; acting as the secretariat of the National Committee for the Examination and Approval of Textbooks used at elementary and middle schools; and accreditation of schools for children of foreign nationals. Additionally, the Ministry of Education has established sixteen **Basic Education Curriculum Research Centers** all over the country, mainly within normal (e.g. teacher education) universities.

The **China Scholarship Council (CSC)** is a non-profit institution affiliated to the Ministry of Education. Its objective is to provide, in accordance with the law, statutes and relevant principles and policies, financial assistance to the Chinese citizens wishing to study abroad and to the foreign citizens wishing to study in China in order to develop the educational, scientific and technological, and cultural exchanges and economic and trade cooperation between China and other countries, to strengthen the friendship and understanding between Chinese people and the people of all other countries, and to promote world peace and the socialist modernization drive in China.

The **China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC)** is an administrative department under the Ministry of Education, operating under the joint leadership of the Ministry and the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council. The CDGDC, a non-profit agency with the



independent qualification of legal entity, was established in 2003, evolving as one department from China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center affiliated to Tsinghua University.

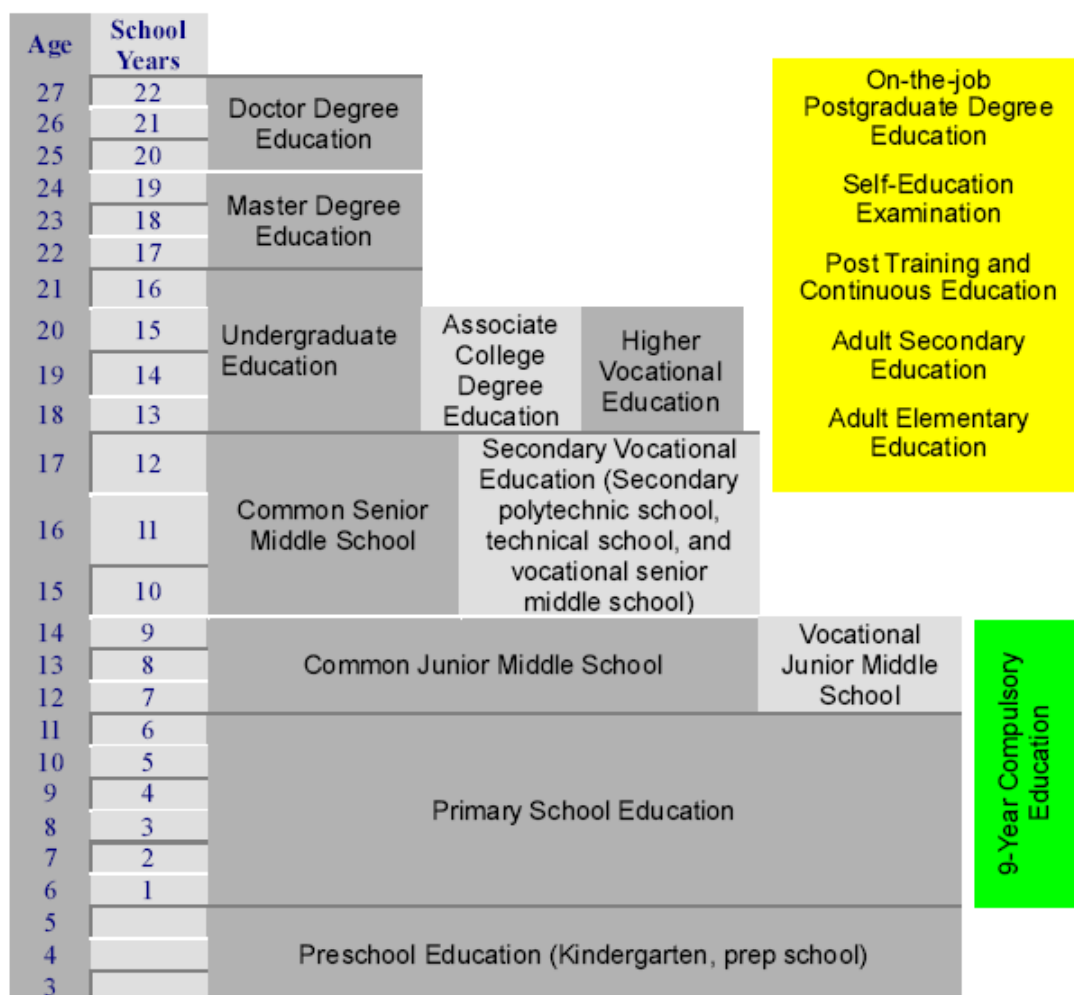
Founded in 1957, the **China National Institute for Educational Research** (CNIER) is the only national-level comprehensive educational research institute in China mainland under the direct administration of the Ministry of Education. CNIER is primarily engaged in many aspects of educational policies research, basic theoretical research, experimental and comparative educational research. CNIER administers two publishing houses specializing on education and four major academic journals. The National Educational Planning Office based in CNIER administers educational research programmes of the whole country. CNIER also serves as a steering organization for the educational research institutes in over thirty provinces.

Educational inspection is a system whereby governments (at or above the county level) monitor, examine, assess and direct the educational activities as well as the work of schools (mainly primary and secondary education) being administered by the government at the lower level. The **State Education Inspectorate** is the agency for national educational inspection. It is composed of a chief inspector, a deputy chief inspector and some 60 inspectors that the State Education Commission has engaged from the provinces and ministries. The Inspectorate has an office to take charge of day-to-day operation. Local governments have also established similar agencies. Departments of inspection have been created in the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government.

The main responsibilities of the departments of inspection at all levels are to: monitor and examine the implementation of state laws, regulations, principles and policies on the part of the governments at the lower level, their departments of education and schools; assess and give guidance to educational work as administered by the governments at the lower level; give advice and report to governments and their education departments with regard to educational activities.

## Structure and organization of the education system

### People's Republic of China: structure of the education system



Source: National Center for Education Development Research, 2008.

### Pre-school education

Pre-primary education caters to children in the age group 3-5 years (three-year programme either full- or part-time) and is offered in kindergartens and preschool classes. Preschool education (one-year programme before primary education) is not compulsory.

### Primary and lower secondary education

The nine-year compulsory education programme covers primary and junior secondary education; the entry age is normally 6. In most provinces, the programme is organized into six years of primary and three years of junior secondary education; in other

provinces the 5 + 4 pattern is still followed. Vocational education is offered in vocational junior middle schools.

## Secondary education

Senior secondary education lasts three years (general senior middle school) and is for students having passed the entrance examination. A credits system has been introduced at the senior secondary level. In order to complete the programme, students must have accumulated a total of 144 credits (116 for compulsory subjects and 28 for electives). At the end of the programme, students sit the 'general ability test' (the new examination system being introduced since 2002) administered by provincial authorities and, if successful, receive the senior middle school graduation certificate. (NUFFIC, 2010). Vocational education is offered in specialized schools, vocational senior middle schools and technical schools. The duration of programmes is three to four years.

## Higher education

Higher education institutions include universities, research institutes, specialized institutions, independent colleges (since 2008), professional universities, military institutions, medical schools and colleges, and executive training schools. Admission to university depends on the results of the national entrance examination. Universities and other higher education institutions offer practically-oriented, non-degree programmes, typically lasting two or three years, leading to the award of a diploma; diploma holders can continue on to a bachelor's degree by completing an additional three or two years of study. Programmes leading to a bachelor's degree normally take four years to complete (five years in the case of medicine, traditional Chinese medicine, architecture, and engineering). If successful in the entrance examination, bachelor's degree holders can pursue a master's degree, normally awarded after two to three years of study. Admission to a programme leading to the award of a doctorate requires a master's degree, passing the entrance examination, and formal recommendations by at least two professors. Programmes usually last between three and five years. Programmes combining a master's and a doctorate are also offered; in this case, it is not required to sit the entrance examination for admission to the doctorate programme. (See: NUFFIC, 2010).

The school year at the primary and secondary levels is divided into two terms, with the first term beginning in autumn (September), and the second term beginning in spring (usually in March). At the primary and lower secondary levels, each school year normally includes 34 weeks of classes, one week for school activities, one week for community-based activities, two weeks for general review and examinations (three weeks at the lower secondary level), and one week in reserve.

The academic year consists of 36 weeks (eighteen weeks for each of the two terms), two or three weeks for general review and tests, and eleven weeks for winter and summer vacations. A number of higher education institutions that have adopted the credit system follow a different approach, with the school year divided into three terms in order to strengthen practical teaching.



## The educational process

The Law on Compulsory Education stipulates that the teaching approach, teaching contents and curriculum development for compulsory education should be determined in accordance with the needs of the socialist modernization drive as well as the physical and mental development of children and young persons. The revision of the teaching plans and syllabi for the nine-year compulsory programme has been organized by the State Education Commission.

Formally promulgated in 1992, the syllabi and twenty-four curricula began to be used in all primary and middle schools across the country as from the autumn 1993. The new curricula embodied many breakthroughs in curriculum policies, training objectives and curriculum structures. There have been: a shift from the individual disciplinary courses to a combination of disciplinary and activity courses; increased elective courses; adjustments in the ratio between the arts and science; strengthening of a number of courses (sociology, labour skills, music, sports and arts); the introduction of vocational guidance courses; and more emphasis on integrated courses.

In 1998, the contents of primary and middle (lower secondary) school education have been further adjusted with the aim of reducing the difficulty of some teaching subjects and curriculum overloading. To cope with the reform, it has been decided that while the basic uniform teaching requirements should be maintained, teaching materials should be diversified. For this purpose, the State set up a national body to analyze teaching materials and established a system for examining and approving new teaching materials. Several sets of materials were compiled, published and made available to the different regions for their selection. In addition, the provinces (including autonomous regions and centrally controlled municipalities) also compiled sets for electives and local teaching materials. The diversification of teaching materials has enabled the different regions and schools to select the materials in light of the local and school conditions. This has changed the decades-old rigid control over teaching materials and created conditions for deepening the educational reform. (Ministry of Education, 2001).

In 2001, the national authorities issued the Programme of Action for Curriculum Reform of Basic Education (Trial), formulated the curriculum implementation plan for compulsory education and the curriculum standards for various academic subjects, and set up a system of curriculum standards for basic education. These curriculum standards reflect the basic requirements for the students at different educational stages in terms of knowledge and skills, processes and methods, attitudes and values, and specify the nature, goal and framework of various courses, including teaching and assessment strategies. The curriculum reform is mainly aimed to implement quality-oriented education and raise the quality of education. The new curricula highlight the requirements on the innovative spirit and practical abilities of students, attach more attention to cultivation of their initiatives, encourage their creative thinking, explore the interest and potential of youth and teenagers, and foster their curiosity and aspiration to knowledge. Until the autumn of 2005, the new curricula were implemented in the first grade of the primary and secondary schools nationwide, covering more than 100 million students. In 2006, ten

provinces have adopted the new curricula for regular senior secondary schools. (NCEDR, 2008).

## Pre-primary education

Pre-primary education caters to children in the age group 3-5 years (three-year programme either full- or part-time) and is offered in kindergartens and preschool classes. Preschool education is the one-year course before the starting of primary education and is aimed at preparing children for school education. In recent years, the State Education Commission has adopted the Rules for the Administration of Kindergartens, the Directive Rules for the Work at Kindergartens, as well as a series of other laws and regulations aimed at promoting the development of preschool education. The local governments, which are the main providers of preschool education, also established and promulgated supporting policies and local regulations and systems. Regional educational authorities also adopted quality standards and evaluation systems for kindergarten education so as to strengthen evaluation and supervision.

Diverse forms of preschool provision have been developed integrating formal and non-formal approaches and combining collective education with family education. In rural areas, preschool education mainly consists of nursery classes and seasonal kindergartens. In remote and poor regions, seasonal classes, week-end classes, tutorial stations, child visit days, home tutorial classes, and other non-formal approaches have been developed to gradually expand the coverage.

In recent years, preschool education in the rural areas—particularly in remote, poor and minority areas—has developed rapidly. Kindergartens combine childcare with teaching so that the children will develop physically, morally, intellectually and aesthetically in a harmonious way to get ready for formal school education. The educational activities in kindergartens constitute a systematic, purposeful and multi-faceted process of education conducive to lively, invigorating and sound development of children. With playing games as the main part of educational activities, a good environment should be created conducive to the education with conditions and opportunities offered to children to live and display their expressiveness.

For preschool classes, instructional time is no more than twelve periods per week and each period is no longer than thirty minutes. No tests or examinations are administered at the preschool level.

According to the Ministry of Education (MOE), by the end of 2002 there were some 111,800 kindergartens nationwide with a combined enrolment of 20.36 million children. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 the gross enrolment ratio at the kindergarten level (three-year programme) was estimated at 36%. In 2006, the gross enrolment ratio for children aged 3-6 was estimated at 42.5%. Since 2001, the children-teacher ratio in kindergartens has been decreasing. However, significant differences still exist between the central and western regions and the eastern region and between the urban and the rural. In particular, in rural areas the children-teacher ratio as high as 55: 1, far exceeding the limit set by the government. (NCEDR, 2008).



MOE reports that in 2009 there were 138,209 kindergartens (of which 89,304 were non-state/private) and 867,894 pre-primary classes (395,050 non-state/private), of which 246,121 were preschool classes. The total enrolment was 26.57 million children (including 11.98 million girls), of whom 7.67 million in preschool classes. The total number of staff in kindergartens was 1,570,756, including 141,909 heads of kindergarten, 985,889 full-time teachers (of whom 967,353 females), 123,764 nurses, and 319,194 other staff. In terms of qualifications of kindergarten heads and full-time teachers, 2,053 were graduates, 132,539 were undergraduates, 538,528 had an associate degree, 418,418 were high school graduates, and 36,260 had a qualification below high school graduation. (NBSC, 2010).

## Primary education

The nine-year compulsory education programme covers primary and junior secondary education; the entry age is 6 (or 7). In most provinces, the programme is organized into six years of primary and three years of junior secondary education; in other provinces the 5 + 4 pattern is still followed.

The curriculum of primary education comprises academic subjects and practical activities, determined at State and province levels. The curriculum set forth by the State is compulsory. Some schools with the necessary capacities also offer foreign languages teaching. The local curriculum mainly aims at facilitating the local economic and cultural development and is arranged by the educational authorities of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities under the control of the central government. Schools are authorized to arrange the local curriculum, both in academic and activity aspects, as compulsory or alternative courses.

According to the two patterns of nine-year compulsory education (6+3 or 5+4), the State determines the number of teaching periods per subject for the full-time primary education programme. The weekly lesson timetable for primary education (six- or five-year programme) at the end of the 1990s is presented below:


**Primary education (six-year programme): weekly lesson timetable**

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<b>Subjects:</b>						
Ideology and moral character	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese language	10	10	9	8	7	7
Mathematics	4	5	5	5	5	5
Society	–	–	–	2	2	2
Nature	1	1	1	1	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3	3	3
Music	3	3	2	2	2	2
Painting	2	2	2	2	2	2
Work	–	–	1	1	1	1
Sub-total	23	24	24	25	25	25
<b>Activities:</b>						
Collective activities	1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	4	4	4	4	4	4
Sub-total	5	5	5	5	5	5
Locally-arranged curriculum	2	2	3	3	3	3
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)						

*Source:* Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

**Primary education (five-year programme): weekly lesson timetable**

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each grade				
	I	II	III	IV	V
<b>Subjects:</b>					
Ideology and moral character	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese language	11	11	9	9	9
Mathematics	5	6	6	6	6
Society	–	–	2	2	2
Nature	1	1	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3	3
Music	3	3	2	2	2
Painting	2	2	2	2	2
Work	–	–	1	1	1
Sub-total	25	26	28	28	28
<b>Activities:</b>					
Collective activities	1	1	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	3	3	3	3	3
Sub-total	4	4	4	4	4
Locally-arranged curriculum	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)					

*Source:* Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Concerning Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, the structure of the education system still reflects the British model, with six years of primary (divided into two three-year cycles, i.e. junior and senior primary or key stages 1 and 2), three years of lower secondary, two years of senior secondary, and two years of post-secondary education (leading to the A-level examination). By 2012, the system will shift to a 6+3+3 pattern. In line with the aims of education and the overall aims of the school curriculum, the Curriculum Development Council had set out the learning goals that students should be able to achieve as follows: (i) recognize their roles and responsibilities as members in the family, the society, the nation; show concern for their well-being; (ii) understand their national identity and be committed to contributing to the nation and society; (iii) develop a habit of reading independently; (iv) engage in discussion actively and confidently in English and Chinese (including Putonghua); (v) develop creative thinking and master independent learning skills (e.g. critical thinking, information technology, innumeracy and self management); (vi) possess a breadth and foundation of knowledge in the eight key learning areas; and (vii) lead a healthy lifestyle and develop an interest in and appreciation of aesthetic and physical activities.



The new *Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum* (2006) has been fully implemented in all Hong Kong pre-primary institutions since 2007. The Guide emphasizes that early childhood education lays the foundation for lifelong learning and whole person development. The core value of early childhood education lies in “child-centeredness”. Pre-primary institutions should formulate their curriculum according to the basic principles of children’s development and children’s learning. Children’s learning interest, needs and abilities should also be taken into consideration. Through play, meaningful life experiences as well as sensory, exploratory and interesting activities, children’s holistic development can be fostered. There are four developmental objectives in the curriculum framework for early childhood development, namely: physical development, cognitive and language development, affective and social development, and aesthetic development. These objectives can be achieved through six learning areas, which are: physical fitness and health; language; early mathematics; science and technology; self and society; and arts.

In terms of the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide Primary 1-Secondary 3*, issued in 2002 by the Curriculum Development Council of Hong Kong, all students should be entitled to the following five essential learning experiences for whole-person development: moral and civic education; intellectual development; community service; physical and aesthetic development; and career-related experiences (for junior secondary students). The curriculum framework has three interconnected components: key learning areas, generic skills (collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, information technology, numeracy, problem-solving, self-management, and study skills) and values and attitudes (in particular, responsibility, commitment, respect for others, perseverance, and national identity). The eight key learning areas are: Chinese; English; mathematics; science; technology; personal, social and humanities education; art education; and physical education. At the primary level, the subject ‘general studies’ provides pupils with a platform to integrate skills, knowledge and values across the key learning areas of personal, social and humanities education, science education, and technology education.

According to the Basic Education Curriculum Guide of 2002, the suggested time allocation over each three-year cycle of primary education is as follows:

### Hong Kong, SAR of China. Primary education (P1–P3 and P4-P6): suggested time allocation

Key learning area	Subjects	Suggested time allocation over each three-year cycle
Chinese language education	Chinese language, <i>putonghua</i> (standard Chinese)	594-713 hours (25–30%)
English language education	English language	404-499 hours (17–21%)
Mathematics education	Mathematics	285-356 hours (12–15%)
Science education; Technology education; Personal, social and humanities education	General studies	285-356 hours (12–15%)
Arts education	Music, visual arts	238-356 hours (10–15%)
Physical education	Physical education	119-190 hours (5–8%)
<i>Sub-total (over each three-year cycle)</i>		<i>1,925 hours (81%)</i>
Flexible time	Provided for: moral and civic education; guidance to complement values education; additional reading time; school assembly; remedial studies; other learning experiences such as community service, co-curricular activities, and aesthetic and physical activities	About 451 hours (19%)
<b>Total over each three-year cycle</b>		<b>2,376 hours (or 792 hours in each grade)</b>

Source: Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2002.

As regards Macao (the other Special Administrative Region of China), the table below shows the teaching subjects and the average time allocation at the primary level in 1994:

### Macao. Primary education: weekly lesson timetable

Area/Subject	Average number of weekly periods	
	Grades I–IV	Grades V and VI
<i>Desenvolvimento pessoal e social:</i> [Personal and social development]		
Moral education, civic education, religious education (at least one of these subjects)	1–2	1–2
<i>Aquisições básicas:</i> [Basic skills]		
Language (first and second language), mathematics	18–20	19–22
<i>Actividades de descoberta:</i> [Discovering the world]		
Social studies, natural sciences, hygiene and health, history, geography	4–6	5–7
<i>Expressões:</i> [Expressive skills]		
Aesthetic education, practical activities, music education, physical education	4–8	4–8
<i>Complemento curricular</i> [Additional lessons to be decided by the school]		
<b>Total weekly periods (min.)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total weekly periods (max.)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>

Source: Government of Macao, 1994. The school year consists of 180 working days. Each teaching period lasts 35 to 45 minutes.

In primary and junior secondary schools examinations in China mainland are conducted at the end of each term, at the end of the school year, and for graduation. In the areas where the nine-year compulsory education is implemented, there is no entrance examination for access to junior secondary education.

The population of the 55 ethnic minority groups is over 100 million, accounting for over 8% of the total population of China. The autonomous regions cover 64% of the territory. To ensure the rights of ethnic minority groups to use and develop their own written and spoken languages, the State has implemented bilingual education (using the local language of the ethnic minority and Mandarin) in primary and secondary schools. Trilingual schemes (ethnic minority language, Mandarin and foreign language) have also been trialed. By the end of 2007, bilingual education in Mandarin and 21 ethnic minority languages was carried out in over 10,000 primary and secondary schools, with a total enrolment of over 6 million students. Every year the ethnic minority language teaching materials translation and editing organizations translate, edit and publish over 3,500 teaching materials, with a total number of copies of over 100 million. (MOE, 2008).

The World Bank observes that “literacy rates, enrolment rates, (especially past primary school), and educational attainment rates (especially past junior high school)





are all much lower in rural areas, and while there have been improvements in all these indicators in rural areas in absolute terms, the relative gap between rural and urban areas has continued to widen.” “Good progress is being made in universalizing 9-year compulsory education. The waiving of school fees and the provision of boarding subsidies under the compulsory education finance reform, introduced in rural areas in 2006 and gradually extended to urban areas in 2007, is an important step in the right direction. It will also be necessary to ensure that this policy can be implemented through China’s decentralized fiscal system on a sustained basis. Poorer local governments (at the provincial and sub-provincial levels) will thus need to be adequately resourced, which in turn will be important for ensuring that free compulsory education does not come at the expense of a compromised quality of education. China has achieved close to universal primary education. But significant inequalities in educational attainment beyond primary school – middle and high school, and eventually tertiary education – remain, and these are an increasingly important source of disadvantage for those who are not well-off. While middle school education is being covered by the compulsory education initiative, there is a need to turn attention to reducing the private costs of high school education especially for the poor. Means-tested subsidies for high school education could be an important future policy initiative, and these could be offered to poor households conditional on school attendance by their children, especially girls. There also remain large differences in the quality of educational inputs across regions, especially across rural and urban areas. Further investments into improving the quality of educational inputs in rural areas will help strengthen the demand and private incentives for education which in turn will be important for addressing the rural-urban education gap.” (World Bank, 2009).

According to the Ministry of Education, the net enrolment ratio was estimated at 98.6% in 2002. The total number of full-time primary school teachers was 5,778,900. The transition rate to junior secondary school was estimated at 97% (98.4% in 2007). In 2007, the net enrolment ratio at the primary level reached 99.5% and the gross enrolment ratio for junior middle school education was estimated at 98%. (MOE, 2008).

There is a big gap between urban and rural areas, and regional educational levels. By the end of 2007, there were still 42 counties in the west China which had not fulfilled the “two basics”, e.g. universalizing the nine-year compulsory education and eliminating illiteracy among young people and adults. (MOE, 2008).

MOE reports that in 2009 there were 100,714,661 pupils (of whom 46,604,874 girls) enrolled in 280,184 primary schools; there were also 72,483 external teaching sites. The total number of staff at the primary level was 6,135,536, including 5,633,447 full-time teachers (of whom 3,217,059 females), 237,699 administrative staff, 106,191 teaching auxiliaries, 156,216 workers, and 1,983 employees in school-run factories and farms. In terms of qualifications of full-time teachers, 4,684 were graduates, 1,110,503 were undergraduates, 3,100,558 had an associate degree, 1,384,082 were high school graduates, and 33,620 had a qualification below high school graduation. The average pupils-teacher ratio was 17.8:1 in 2009.

As regards special education, in 2009 there were 1,672 special education schools with a total of 47,466 staff (including 37,945 full-time teachers) and 428,125

students enrolled (mainly in grades 1-9). In 2007, it was estimated that some 223,000 school-age disabled were not in school; 54% of the teachers had special education qualifications. (MOE, 2008). Concerning adult education, there were 2,108,199 persons enrolled in adult primary schools and 1,148,550 in literacy courses. (NBSC, 2010).

## Secondary education

Depending on the structure of the nine-year compulsory education programme (6+3 or 5+4), the State determines the number of teaching periods per subject for the full-time junior secondary education programme. The weekly lesson timetable for junior secondary education at the end of the 1990s is shown below:

### Lower secondary education (three-year programme): weekly lesson timetable

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	I	II	III
<u>Subjects:</u>			
Ideology and politics	2	2	2
Chinese language	6	6	5
Mathematics	5	5	5
Foreign language (Level II)	4	4	4(*)
History	2	3	2
Geography	3	2	–
Physics	–	2	3
Chemistry	–	–	3
Biology	3	2	–
Physical education	3	3	3
Music	1	1	1
Painting	1	1	1
Work skills	2	2	2
Sub-total	32	33	31
<u>Activities:</u>			
Collective activities	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	3	3	3
Sub-total	4	4	4
<u>Locally-arranged curriculum</u>	–	–	1(*)
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)			

*Source:* Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. (\*) The course foreign language at level I is offered in Forms I and II only (four weekly periods); in Form III, four additional weekly periods are allocated to the locally-arranged curriculum. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

**Lower secondary education (four-year programme): weekly lesson timetable**

Subject/activity	Number of weekly periods in each grade				
	I	II	III	IV	V
<b>Subjects:</b>					
Ideology and moral character	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese language	11	11	9	9	9
Mathematics	5	6	6	6	6
Society	–	–	2	2	2
Nature	1	1	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3	3
Music	3	3	2	2	2
Painting	2	2	2	2	2
Work	–	–	1	1	1
Sub-total	25	26	28	28	28
<b>Activities:</b>					
Collective activities	1	1	1	1	1
Physical exercise, science, technology and cultural activities	3	3	3	3	3
Sub-total	4	4	4	4	4
Locally-arranged curriculum	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>
Morning/afternoon meeting (ten minutes per day)					

*Source:* Zhou Wei & Gao Min, 1999. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Concerning Hong Kong, according to the Basic Education Curriculum Guide of 2002 the suggested time allocation over the three-year junior secondary education is as follows:



### Hong Kong, SAR of China. Junior secondary education (S1–S3): suggested time allocation

Key learning area	Suggested time allocation over S1-S3
Chinese language education	468-578 hours (17–21%)
English language education	468-578 hours (17–21%)
Mathematics education	331-413 hours (12–15%)
Science education*	276-413 hours (10–15%)
Technology education*	220-413 hours (8–15%)
Personal, social and humanities education*	413-551 hours (15–20%)
Arts education (music and visual arts)	220-276 hours (8–10%)
Physical education	138-220 hours (5–8%)
<i>Sub-total (over the three-year cycle)</i>	<i>2,534 hours (92%)</i>
Flexible time (provided for: moral and civic education; guidance to complement values education; additional reading time; school assembly; remedial studies; other learning experiences such as community service, co-curricular activities, and aesthetic and physical activities)	About 220 hours (8%)
<b>Total over the three-year cycle</b>	<b>2,754 hours (or 918 hours in each grade)</b>

*Source:* Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2002. (\*) Suggested time allocation for schools whose curriculum has not a technology education orientation.

Under the key learning area ‘technology education’ the following subjects can be offered: automobile technology; business fundamentals; catering services; computer literacy; design fundamentals; design & technology; desktop publishing; electronics & electricity; fashion design; graphical communication; home economics / technology and living; retail merchandising; and technology fundamentals. The key learning area ‘personal, social and humanities education’ includes the following subjects: Chinese history; civic education; economic & public affairs; geography; history; religious education; and social studies.

Hong Kong started to implement the new senior secondary curriculum (S4-S6) in September 2009. The new curriculum framework is designed to enable students to attain the following learning goals for whole-person development and stretch the potential of each student: (i) to be biliterate and trilingual with adequate proficiency; (ii) to acquire a broad knowledge base, and be able to understand contemporary issues that may impact on their daily life at personal, community, national and global levels; (iii) to be an informed and responsible citizen with a sense of global and national identity; (iv) to respect pluralism of cultures and views, and be a critical, reflective



and independent thinker; (v) to acquire information technology and other skills as necessary for being a lifelong learner; (vi) to understand their own career/academic aspirations and develop positive attitudes towards work and learning; (vii) to lead a healthy life-style with active participation in aesthetic and physical activities. The SS curriculum is an extension of the curriculum in basic education (e.g. primary and junior secondary education). It promotes students' learning to learn capabilities. It is broad and balanced, and is developed from prior knowledge of the eight key learning areas and the learning experiences of students gained in their basic education with an emphasis on positive values and attitudes.

The SS curriculum is made up of three components, namely core subjects, elective subjects, and other learning experiences; it covers a total of 2,700 hours of lesson time over three years.. Core subjects for all students are: Chinese language, English language, mathematics and liberal studies (45-55% of time allocation); liberal studies include independent enquiry study and six modules: personal development and interpersonal relationship; Hong Kong today; modern China; globalization; public health; energy, technology and the environment. Students must choose two or three electives among 20 subjects, a range of applied learning courses and other languages (20-30% of time allocation). Other learning experiences include: moral and civic education, community service, aesthetic development, physical development, and career-related experience (15-35% of learning time). Applied learning courses cover six areas, namely: applied science; business, management and law; creative studies; engineering and production; media and communication; and services. They aim to develop students' basic skills, thinking abilities, interpersonal relationships, values, attitudes and career-related abilities necessary to prepare them for further studies, work and life-long learning. The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education will record the learning outcomes of applied learning course(s) and give recognition to students' level of performance by two levels, i.e. 'attained' and 'attained with distinction'. The new system will be 'standards-referenced', i.e. students' performance will be compared to a pre-defined standard. There will be five levels and each level will be accompanied by descriptors that make it clear what a typical student at a given level is able to do.

According to the Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide of 2009 the suggested time allocation over the new three-year senior secondary education is as follows:

### Hong Kong, SAR of China. New senior secondary education (S4–S6) curriculum: suggested time allocation

Component	Suggested time allocation over S4-S6
<i>Core subjects:</i>	
Chinese language	338-405 hours (12.5-15%)
English language	338-405 hours (12.5-15%)
Mathematics	270-405 hours (10–15%)
Liberal studies	270 hours (min. 10%)
<i>Elective subjects</i> (2-3 subjects, min. 270 hours per subject)	540-810 hours (20-30%)
<i>Other learning experiences:</i>	
Aesthetic development	135 hours (5%)
Physical development	135 hours (5%)
Moral and civic education, community service and career-related experiences	135 hours (5%)
<b>Total over the three-year cycle</b>	<b>2,700 hours (or 900 hours in each grade)</b>

Source: Hong Kong Education Bureau, *Senior secondary curriculum guide. The future is now: From vision to realization*. Provisional final draft, May 2009.

In China mainland, students completing senior (general) secondary education sit the final examination (administered by the provincial authorities) in nine subjects: politics, Chinese, mathematics, a foreign language (normally English, but it may be also Japanese, Russian, French or German), physics, chemistry, biology, history and geography. Students also sit practical examinations in physics, chemistry and biology, and are assessed on their moral, ideological and political development. Successful students are awarded the senior middle school graduation certificate. In 2002, the Ministry of Education introduced changes to the examination system with the aim to have the new system nationally in place by 2010. A credits system has been introduced in the three years of senior secondary education, and students must obtain a total of 144 credits in order to complete the programme (116 from compulsory subjects and 28 from electives). New subjects have also been introduced into the curriculum, including research skills, social service, social work experience placements, physical education, and art subjects. Each subject is made up of various 36-hour modules which are worth two credits, except for the art and physical education modules (one credit). Subjects are also subdivided into eight areas of study, namely: language and culture; mathematics; humanities and society; science; technology; arts; physical education and health; and a combination of practical activities. A distinction is now drawn between compulsory and elective subjects. One hundred points can be obtained for each subject (sometimes less for electives, this differs between provinces). The points score is then converted into a letter according to a slightly modified assessment system made up of four letters, A standing for 'excellent' (100-85), B for good (84-70), C for satisfactory (69-60), and D for unsatisfactory (59-0). The examination is conducted twice per year, and students can sit the exam from the second year of senior middle school onwards (except for the

three compulsory subjects of Chinese, mathematics and foreign language; these must be examined in the third year). The highest score obtained in any subject is the one that counts. The results for electives are only valid for the same year, as opposed to the results of compulsory subjects, which are valid for three years. (NUFFIC, 2010).

Vocational education is provided at three levels: junior secondary, senior secondary and tertiary. Junior vocational education refers to vocational programmes after primary education and is part of the nine-year compulsory education. Junior vocational schools mainly provide workers, peasants and employees with basic professional knowledge and certain professional skills. Vocational programmes at this level usually last three to four years. Junior vocational schools are generally located in rural areas where the economy is less developed.

Secondary vocational education plays a guiding role in training manpower with practical skills. The network consists of specialized secondary schools, schools for skilled workers and vocational high schools. Junior secondary school graduates can enter specialized secondary schools (e.g. secondary technical schools and normal schools) where the duration of studies is usually four years—three years in some cases. A few specialties are open only to graduates from senior high school, and the duration of programmes is two years. Schools for skilled workers and vocational high schools enrol graduates from junior secondary and programmes normally last three years. Their main task is to train secondary-level, practice-oriented talents with comprehensive professional abilities and all round qualities directly engaged in the forefront of production, service, technology and management. Accordingly, the specialties offered in vocational high schools are mainly related to the third industry.

Post-secondary vocational education is offered to graduates from senior secondary schools and secondary vocational schools; the duration of programmes is two to three years. In recent years, the proportion of graduates from secondary vocational schools has increased, gradually establishing a link between secondary and tertiary vocational education. Aiming at training secondary and high-level specialized technical and management talents needed in the economic construction, tertiary vocational education emphasizes the training of practice-oriented and craft-oriented talents. Educational establishments providing tertiary vocational education are divided into four categories: higher vocational technology institutions; five-year higher vocational classes provided in the regular specialized secondary schools; tertiary vocational education provided in some regular higher education institutions and adult higher education institutions; and reformed regular institutions offering two- to three-year higher education courses with the emphasis on training practice-oriented talents, namely high-level professional technical talents.

Measures have been taken to establish a system of double certificates oriented to vocational education. When students receive their diplomas, the authorities concerned will check their skills in accordance with their specialties and then the qualified students will receive the vocational qualification certificate or the technical-grade certificate. These measures have been implemented in schools for skilled workers and senior secondary vocational schools.

A wide range of vocational training courses have been playing a more important role in vocational education. Vocational training is mainly conducted and



managed by the departments of education and labour, but enterprises are encouraged to provide vocational training for their own employees. In 2001, short-term training courses involved the equivalent of 100 million person-time (150 million in 2005). (NCEDR, 2008).

According to the Ministry of Education, by 2002 in China there were 65,600 junior secondary schools with a total enrolment of 66,874,300 students; the number of full-time teachers was 3,467,700. The net enrolment ratio was estimated at 90% and the transition rate to senior secondary was estimated at 58%.

MOE reports that in 2009 there were 70,774 regular secondary schools, of which 14,607 senior secondary schools (including 6,476 senior secondary schools and 8,131 complete secondary schools offering six years of secondary education), and 56,167 junior secondary schools (including 43,744 junior secondary schools and 12,423 nine-year schools offering combined primary and junior secondary education). Concerning vocational education, there were 3,789 regular specialized secondary schools, 5,652 vocational senior secondary schools, 3,077 technical schools, and 153 vocational junior secondary schools.

The total enrolment at the secondary level was as follows: 54.33 million students (of whom 25.74 million girls) in regular junior secondary schools; 24.34 million students (of whom 11.73 million girls) in regular senior secondary schools; 8.404 million students in regular specialized secondary schools; 7.78 million students in vocational senior secondary schools; 4.15 million students in technical schools; and 72,995 students enrolled in vocational junior secondary schools. Concerning adult education, there were 487,876 persons enrolled in 1,558 adult junior secondary schools, 1,509,942 in 1,883 adult specialized secondary schools, and 114,676 in 753 adult senior secondary schools.

The breakdown of full-time secondary teachers in 2009 was as follows: 3,513,438 teachers in junior secondary schools; 1,497,687 in senior secondary schools; 272,270 in specialized secondary schools; 321,511 in vocational senior secondary schools; 186,432 in technical schools; and 4,571 in vocational junior secondary schools. In the same year, the average students-teacher ratio was 15.4:1 in junior secondary, 16.3:1 in senior secondary, 23.6:1 in vocational senior secondary, and 27.8:1 in specialized secondary schools. (NBSC, 2010).

### **Assessing learning achievement nationwide**

The assessment of the teaching quality in schools has been strengthened. Schools are required to establish a mechanism of assessment that prioritizes their self-assessment but also calls for joint participation by the departments of educational administration, departments of supervision, students, parents, and communities. The intensification of both internal and external school assessments aims to know better their situations and take measures to tackle the existing problems, so as to raise their educational quality in a comprehensive manner. Currently, the country is working to build the basic education monitoring network at four levels, (the national, provincial, prefecture, and county levels), and the Ministry of Education has established a new Center for Monitoring the Quality of Basic Education. (NCEDR, 2008).





The *Outline of China's National Plan for Medium- and Long-term Education Reform and Development* (2010-2020) stipulates that the quality of compulsory education shall be improved. Basic national standards and a monitoring system for the quality of compulsory education shall be established. (MOE, 2010).

Shanghai (the largest city in China and one of the four municipalities with the status of province as Beijing, Tianjin and Chongqing) participated for the first time in the 2009 OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy which involved 65 countries/economies. The sample consisted of 5,115 students in 152 schools. The city achieved very high average results overall, ranking first internationally in reading, mathematics and science. Hong Kong participated in the second round of PISA 2000 (2002/03), as well as in 2006 and 2009. Concerning PISA 2003, the sample consisted of 4,405 students from 140 schools including government, aided and independent schools. Overall, students in Hong Kong performed well internationally, ranking first in mathematics, third in science, and sixth in reading among the participating countries. Hong Kong also participated in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) conducted under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Education, and in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

## Teaching staff

A system of teacher's professional titles has been implemented. At higher education institutions, teacher positions include: professor, assistant professor, lecturer and assistant lecturer. Teacher positions at specialized secondary schools include: senior lecturer, lecturer, assistant lecturer and teacher. Teacher positions for cultural and technical theory at skilled workers schools include: senior lecturer, lecturer, assistant lecturer and teacher. Titles of practice-guiding teachers in skilled worker schools and vocational secondary schools are senior practice-guiding teacher, first-rank practice-guiding teacher, second-rank, and third-rank practice-guiding teacher. Teacher positions at general secondary schools include: senior secondary school teacher, first-rank secondary school teacher, second-rank, and third-rank secondary teacher. Teacher positions at primary schools and kindergartens are: senior primary school (or kindergarten) teachers, first-rank primary school teacher, second-rank, and third-rank primary teacher.

In accordance with the regulations of the central government, schools are authorized to manage their teachers independently. Within the State-formulated establishment ceilings, schools independently decide upon the employment of teaching and supporting staff, the terms of employment and methods of selection (although the method generally adopted is choosing the best candidates, following comprehensive examinations). The State sets annual quotas for schools of various kinds and at various levels. Those that fit the post qualifications and gain the approval of the selection and examination organs are recruited as teachers.

The qualification system for teachers is the legal system which gives permits for the teachers to practice. It stipulates the titles, types, the scope of application of teachers' qualifications, the requirements for different kinds of teachers, the examinations for teacher qualification, the confirmation of the teachers' qualification,

and their legal liabilities. The requirements for teacher status are a vital part of the teacher qualification system. To acquire a teacher's certificate, the following requirements must be met:

- **Citizenship.** to be qualified as a Chinese teacher, one must first be a Chinese citizen; on the other hand, any Chinese citizen, regardless of ethnic origin, sex, or occupation, can acquire a teacher status provided that he or she meets all the qualifications requirements.
- **Ethical requirements.** to apply for a teacher's certificate, one has to be sound ideologically and politically; this is a basic requirement for teachers determined by the socialist nature of education in the country.
- **Academic requirements:** for different levels of teachers' qualifications the requirements are as follows: (i) graduates from infant normal schools for preschool education or above (teachers in nurseries and kindergartens); (ii) graduates from secondary normal schools or above (teachers in primary schools); (iii) graduates from two- or three-year specialized higher normal school or other colleges or above (teachers of junior middle schools or teachers who teach general academic and specialized courses in primary vocational schools); (iv) graduates from normal college or other universities and four-year colleges or above (teachers in senior middle schools or teachers who teach general academic and specialized courses in senior vocational schools, technical schools, or vocational high schools); (v) university graduates or postgraduates (teachers of institutions of higher learning); (vi) graduates from institutions of higher learning or secondary schools or above (teachers of adult education in accordance with the different levels and types of adult education involved).
- **Educational and teaching skills:** In order to select correctly the educational or teaching content and method, design the teaching programme scientifically, and conduct educational and teaching activities effectively, a teacher must have: a good command of pedagogic and psychological laws; a reasonably good articulation and ability to handle the students; an ability to conduct scientific research, so as to improve the teaching content and method and raise the teaching standard; and a good physique needed for conducting teaching activities.

Due to the numbers of secondary and primary school teachers, teacher training is a shared responsibility of various education administrative organs at different levels. The education administrative organs formulate policies, provide financial support, define training programmes and methods for management and examination, and sum up and spread good practices in a timely manner. Training institutions collaborate with the organs responsible for education research in organizing training activities systematically, providing professional guidance and management for training activities and conducting training research. Schools where teachers work are the prime places for teacher training. They should provide time for training and necessary material conditions for a systematic, permanent and effective training.

The State Education Commission is responsible for the macro-guidance of teacher training for the higher education institutions, overseeing the teacher training institutions. The education administrative organs of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are responsible for the pre-service and in-service teacher

training for the local higher education institutions and for coordinating teacher training with higher education institutions located within their regions, but attached to the ministries of the central government. Higher education institutions are responsible for their own teacher training (e.g. formulation of plans, concrete arrangement for teachers' advanced studies on teaching theories and practices, and sending teachers abroad for further studies). There has been a process of merging and upgrading of the existing institutions during 1992-2005, which finally resulted in 475 institutions involved in teacher training, including 183 normal (teacher training) colleges and universities, 34 independent teacher training institutes, and 258 general colleges and universities offering teacher education programmes by the end of 2005.

Prior to their employment, nursery and kindergarten teachers must: follow specialized courses at secondary normal schools for preschool education; acquire general and scientific knowledge and skills needed for undertaking nursery and kindergarten work; learn about laws and characteristics of preschool children's physiological and psychological development; master basic knowledge and skills in childcare and education; develop some knowledge about how to conduct research on preschool education; develop the ability to increase social contacts and bring the initiative of the family and society of the preschool children into full play; learn how to observe and understand preschool children's behaviour; and learn how to set objectives for child care and education, to organize games and other educational activities for children, and to manage the class and nursery or kindergarten.

Before they start working, primary school teachers must: acquire a specialized education in politics, general literacy and scientific knowledge, educational theories, art, physical culture, and labour skills in secondary normal or other schools or above. They must also obtain job training which includes: an effort to inspire their dedication to primary school education; instructions on related laws; regulations and policies; developing familiarity with the teaching and general educational theories; and mastering teaching methods for different courses (if the students are non-normal school graduates).

Prior to employment, teachers of secondary schools must receive an education in: politics, physical culture, basic theories of specialized courses, basic knowledge and skills, pedagogy, psychology, and develop basic knowledge and skills about methodologies of specific courses in normal universities or other and in schools of higher learning. Prior to employment, university and college teachers must receive training, especially those undergraduates and post-graduates who immediately start working as assistants and lectures respectively after finishing their studies.

The main forms of in-service training for primary and secondary school teachers are as follows:

- Systematically send teachers to teacher training schools for advanced studies or normal schools at different levels with the purpose of making them qualify for a certain academic status.
- Apply a training model which combines correspondence and satellite TV education with a national examination system for self-taught students.



- Offer the chance for junior middle school teachers to take the courses in two-year programmes of normal universities though self-study and acquire qualifications through a series of examinations.
- Encourage teachers to study while working. Encourage them to improve their competence in teaching in close connection with their teaching practice and in all possible forms: to be trained by the school itself, to learn through research work, to require the veteran teachers help the young (or to encourage them in self-directed teaching).
- Require the government educational authorities sponsor all kinds of training programmes and get teachers together for intense training.
- Require schools at various levels which are authorized to undertake teachers' training, to offer training in accordance with specific plans for teachers of primary and middle schools who are: new on their jobs, need training for their specific posts, are the backbones of the school, or need more education to meet the qualifications for a higher academic title.

The main forms of in-service training for university and college teachers are:

- Offer the chance to take a specified course to those who are preparing themselves to teach that course.
- Offer the chance for young teachers (who still have not been conferred an M.A. or M.S. degree) to apply for an M.A., M.S., or Ph.D. thereby becoming candidates equivalent to post-graduates.
- Allow teachers to receive advanced training as visiting scholars in domestic institutions of higher learning. This is an important way to train academic leaders as well as an effective channel to promote intercollegiate academic exchanges.
- Offer advanced studies programmes for backbone teachers, mainly intended for young teachers with two years' or above teaching experience.
- Offer short academic conferences or lectures. This is the way teachers get together in order to learn from, and exchange views with, each other and discuss the new developments, achievements, as well as problems that need to be solved in a certain academic field.
- Send some teachers, mainly young and middle-aged *backbones*, overseas for further studies.
- Offer advance academic conferences for the purpose of training new academic leaders and *backbones* in specific fields so as to fulfil the strategic task of completing the "change of guards", where the young take over the tasks from the old.

The workload of teachers at the compulsory education level is primarily the responsibility of the local authorities, under the macro-guidance of the central government. Generally speaking, the number of teaching hours for senior secondary school teachers is 10 to 14 hours per week; for junior secondary school teachers, 12 to 16 weekly hours; and for primary school teachers, 16 to 22 hours per week. The localities determine the number of teaching hours for extra-curricular classes, according to local conditions. The workload for teachers at higher education institutions is determined by the institutions themselves.



The leveled-salary is practiced both for teaching and support staff. Salaries are composed of two parts: post salary and allowances. The allowances account for 30% of the total salary and the grade of post salary is determined on the basis of: performance, duration of employment, record of schooling, etc.

In accordance with the Teacher Law, the main material benefits include: (i) teachers' average salary shall not be lower or higher than that of the State public servants and shall be raised gradually; (ii) teachers of primary and middle schools and vocational schools enjoy subsidies, primarily in accordance with the length of their teaching; (iii) local people's governments at all levels, and the departments concerned under the State Council, shall give priority and preferential treatment to teachers in the construction, renting and sales of the houses in urban areas; (iv) teachers enjoy equal medical care treatment as the State public servants of the localities; they shall be given regular health check-ups and enjoy recuperation holidays, organized in line with actual local conditions; (v) after retiring or resigning from posts, teachers enjoy the retirement or resignation treatment as stipulated by the State; local people's governments above the county level can appropriately raise the pensions for the retired primary and middle school teachers who have long been engaged in education and teaching; (vi) measures shall be adopted to improve the treatment of the teachers who receive state subsidies and are paid by the collectives, so that they can enjoy equal pay for equal work just as the teachers who are paid by the State. The Constitution provides that female teachers enjoy the same equal rights and treatment as their male counterparts.

Following the salary reform in 1993, the overall salary level of teachers registered a substantial gain. The retirement benefits have risen for teachers in over twenty provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities to the extent that secondary and primary school teachers who have had a teaching career of 30 years (25 years for female teachers) shall have a pension of the same amount as their salary.

The training of university presidents is mainly entrusted by the State Education Commission to the National Academy of Educational Administration (NAEA). The main content includes: the development strategies and policies in the field of society, economy, science and technology, and education; the reform and development policies of higher education, educational laws and regulations; theories and practice of school management; world trends in promoting and organizing scientific research and higher education reforms. The pre-service training of educational inspectors is handled at two levels. First, under direct leadership of the central government, the State Education Commission (in collaboration with the municipality) is responsible for the training of inspectors at the precinct and city levels. Second, under the direct leadership of the central government, the educational authorities of autonomous regions, provinces, and municipalities are responsible for the training of county and district inspectors. The main content of the inspectors' training includes: selected lectures on Marxist philosophy; basic educational theories; general theory on educational management; educational inspection and evaluation; educational laws, regulations and policies; and various kinds of inspections. By the end of 1994, about 43.5% of the nation's inspectors had received pre-service training. (Ministry of Education, 2001).



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## Web resources

China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center:  
<http://www.cdgdc.edu.cn/> [In Chinese; some information in English. Last checked: June 2011.]

China National Institute for Educational Research: <http://www.cnier.ac.cn/> [In Chinese and English. Last checked: June 2011.]

China Scholarship Council: <http://www.csc.edu.cn/> [In Chinese and English. Last checked: June 2011.]

Ministry of Education: <http://www.moe.edu.cn/> [In Chinese and English. Last checked: June 2011.]

National Academy of Education Administration:  
<http://www.naea.edu.cn/english/index.htm> [In Chinese and English. Last checked: June 2011.]

Higher Education Evaluation Centre, Ministry of Education: <http://www.pgzx.edu.cn/> [In Chinese. Last checked: June 2011.]

National Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development, Ministry of Education: <http://www.ncctac.org/> [In Chinese and in English. Last checked: June 2011.]

National Education Examinations Authority, Ministry of Education:  
<http://www.neea.edu.cn/> [In Chinese. Last checked: June 2011.]

Education Bureau, Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region:  
<http://www.edb.gov.hk/> [In English and Chinese. Last checked: June 2011.]



Macao Education and Youth Affairs Department: <http://www.dsej.gov.mo/> [In Chinese, Portuguese and English. Last checked: June 2011.]

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