

SULTANATE OF OMAN  
THE EDUCATION COUNCIL

# Philosophy of Education

in the Sultanate of Oman





# **Philosophy of Education**

## in the Sultanate of Oman

First Edition  
2017 (1438 AH)

## Wise words

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*«We devote great care and attention to the development and reform of education in Oman. Our aims include the raising of standards and updating the curriculum to make it richer and more relevant to the needs of an ever-changing world.*

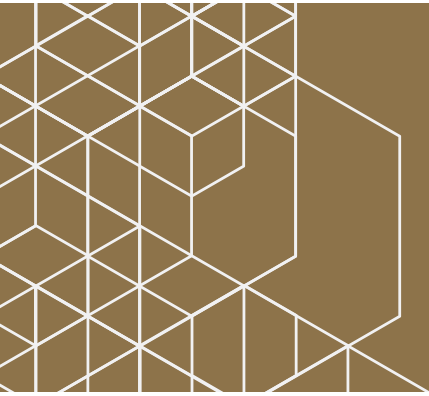
*These efforts recognize the importance the Sultanate assigns to the development of its human resources, to the fostering of scientific and technological understanding and the creation of an educated population who can make a positive contribution to the development process by dealing confidently with change and new developments...»*

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His Majesty speech to the General  
Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization (UNESCO), coinciding with the 60th  
Anniversary of its establishment - 4/10/2005



His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said

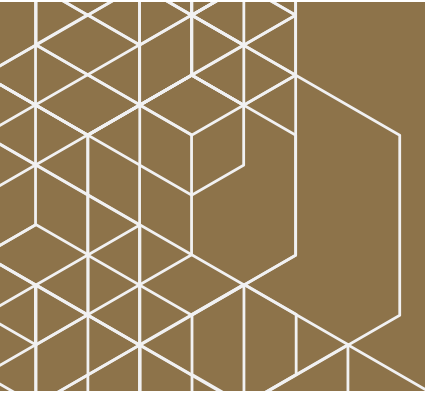


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# Introduction





# Introduction

The first Philosophy of Education document was issued in 1978 during the first five-year development plan. In 2003 and 2009, during the sixth and seventh five-year plans, the Ministry of Education updated the document in response to developments in the education sector.

The Philosophy of Education was required to undergo a process of revision in recent years. This was to enable it to respond to scientific and technological developments around the world, to ensure that it was consistent with the evolving national strategy and the state's development objectives, to allow it to comply with His Majesty's directives to comprehensively evaluate the education system, and to encourage the raising of performance standards and quality outcomes.

The Education Council is committed to translating His Majesty's directives and responding to the development requirements of Omani society. The Council has carried out several initiatives and has taken significant steps in order to help develop the education system. Along with the revision of the Philosophy of Education, this included the creation of a new Education Strategy 2040, the establishment of studies to restructure the educational stages and pathways, and the development of legislation and a range of programmes. The aim of the initiatives and projects carried out by the Council is to bring about a quality shift in education in the Sultanate so that students are adequately prepared to meet the challenges of living and working in a rapidly changing world and to ensure the achievement of the nation's development needs.

The Education Council accepted that there was a need to restructure the fundamental principles of the Philosophy of Education and to review and develop its general objectives so as to enable it to promote the present and future aspirations of Omani society. The Council decided that the scope of the Philosophy of Education should not be limited to school education, as it was before, but should be extended to encompass all stages and pathways of education. This decision was consistent with Royal Decree No 48/2012 which ordered the establishment of the Education Council with a remit to assume responsibility for policy-making for all stages and components of education in Oman, to direct and assist all educational bodies, to follow-up educational performance and promote its continuous development.

The Philosophy of Education document should be regarded as a principal reference for educational policy-making and planning in the Sultanate and an important driver towards the achievement of the main objectives and targets for all stages and levels of education. It covers aspects related to the comprehensive development of the learner (intellectual, social and physical), aims to reinforce concepts such as citizenship and Omani identity, and promotes awareness of religious, social and legal obligations in their relationships with themselves and others. The document's comprehensive and contemporaneous nature means

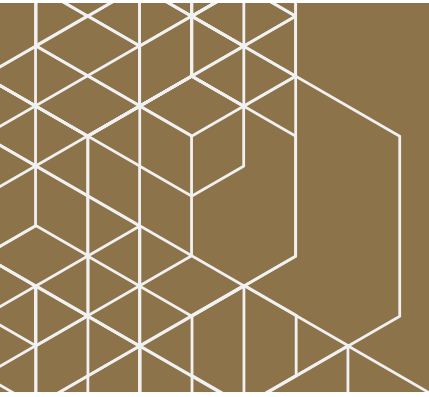
that it provides a solid foundation for the attainment of a high quality education system that includes appropriate programmes and pathways, and encourages the development of skills and competencies relevant to the achievement of sustainable development.

The Philosophy of Education comprises of a set of principles and objectives which serve as guidelines for the development of all sectors of the education system. These principles and objectives are derived from a set of religious, scientific, national and international sources.

The aim of the Philosophy of Education is to develop citizens who demonstrate their faith in Allah the Almighty and follow the principles and values of Islam. It also aims to encourage Omani citizens to practice their loyalty to their country and the Sultan, to understand current events and to respond to these events in an appropriate manner. The Philosophy of Education endeavours to encourage Omani nationals to acquire scientific thinking skills and contribute to achieving sustainable development across all sectors of Omani society.

The Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman is derived from essential sources on current international developments relating to educational improvement and preparing generations of students for the future. It considers current developments and the present status and future aspirations of Omani society. The aim is to promote improved performance from all educational bodies in their quest to deliver quality outcomes.

The Philosophy of Education is based on ten main sources. It includes sixteen principles which interact to form the targeted objectives to be achieved by the education system.



# Sources for the Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman



The Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman is based on a set of sources and principles which combine to form a coherent structure from which the ongoing reform processes of all elements of the teaching and learning process originate. These sources are:

## 1. The Islamic Religion

Omani society is based on the principles of Islam; the ideology, beliefs and behaviour of its citizens are derived from Islam. This belief includes faith and worship, people's behaviour in organizing their relationship with Allah the Almighty and with themselves, their family, society, the world and life. Islam calls for people to obtain knowledge and scientific thinking, and work for the building of civilization on Earth. The principles and values of Islam are, therefore, considered as a main source for the Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman.

## 2. The Thoughts of His Majesty the Sultan

The thoughts of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, which include his directives on improving the quality of education and development of human resources, is another source for the Philosophy of Education. His Majesty emphasizes that comprehensive economic development is dependent on a reformed education system in which standards are raised. This reform is required to produce future generations with the skills and capacities that will enable them to participate in the development process in the context of a rapidly changing world. His Majesty's pronouncements on the need for continuous revision and evaluation of the education system play an important role in developing and improving the educational process at all levels, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

## 3. The Basic Statute of the State

The Basic Statute of the State is considered as the main source of legislation. Article 2 states that, "The religion of the State is Islam and Islamic Sharia is the basis for legislation ". All institutions in the Sultanate of Oman are subject to the Basic Statute of the State and are governed by its texts. Article 13 of the Basic Statute of the State under the title "The Cultural Principles" reads:

- Education is a cornerstone for the progress of society which the State fosters and endeavours to disseminate and make accessible to all.
- Education aims to raise and develop the general cultural standard, promote scientific thought, kindle the spirit of research, respond to the requirements of economic and social plans, and build a generation that is physically and morally strong, which takes pride in its Nation, Country, and heritage and preserves its achievements.

- The State shall provide public education, work to combat illiteracy, and encourage the establishment of private schools and institutes under its supervision in accordance with the provisions of the Law.

## 4. Omani Civilization

The Sultanate of Oman has a rich record of political, cultural, social and economic achievements. The geographical location of the Sultanate of Oman, along with its long coastline and extended fertile plains, made it one of the oldest populated lands, with human groups living in Oman at the very beginning of civilization. It was an important economic centre throughout different ages of history, and was a starting point for the spread of Islam around the world. Its unique location encouraged its people to communicate with different civilizations and to develop a balanced and open-minded perspective.

The modern Omani Renaissance is based on building a prosperous and flourishing present that links a glorious history to a brighter future. We need to raise a well-educated generation that is aware of the country's achievements and future aspirations in order to contribute to the construction and development process.

## 5. Omani Society (Characteristics, Needs and Aspirations)

Omani society derives its identity from Islam and, since it belongs to the Arab nation, from Arabic culture. Justice, equity, equality of opportunities, fraternity, cooperation, altruism, peace and social security characterize Omani society. Strong ties that connect Oman to other societies, along with a feeling of mutual respect and friendship with other nations, are enduring characteristics of Omani society. Maintaining and reinforcing these characteristics are among the objectives of the Omani Philosophy of Education. It also endeavours to consolidate values of belongingness and national unity in the quest to achieve continuous progress and comprehensive development to meet the needs and aspirations of the Omani people.

Omani society, like other modern societies, faces many different economic, social, cultural, political and educational challenges due to the emergence of changing values and relationships resulting from technological development and globalization. Therefore, the objectives of the Philosophy of Education include the implementation of approaches to provide learners with appropriate values, knowledge and skills to help them to face these challenges.

## 6. The Future Vision of the State

The strategic policies and plans of the State are important because they are the general guidelines for future development plans and programmes. These plans and programmes are adopted in accordance with the directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said as announced in his speech to the annual session of the Council of Oman on 12th October 2004. His Majesty said, “As you know, our goals are the implementation of successive development plans in the Sultanate, to finish the main infrastructure of a modern state, and to raise the living standards in all areas of our dear homeland. This is being accomplished in accordance with specific programmes, which have been studied very carefully, and which are aimed at increasing the ratio of economic development with more emphasis on the diversification of the sources of national income and the development of human resources”.

To achieve these directives, the Sultanate of Oman began the process of designing long-term strategic policies and plans to achieve sustainable development and to make significant changes in the structure of the national economy so as to diversify its productive base and support an increased role for the private sector. These policies and plans aim to upgrade the capacities and skills of Omanis’ to enable them to participate in the technological and knowledge development of the country and to manage change effectively. Human beings are both the maker and the developer of development, and so educational institutions play a central role in producing learners who can effectively participate in, and make a positive contribution to the development of their societies.

## 7. Modern Educational Thought

The Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman is based on the fundamental principles which govern the modern educational process. These principles include the concepts of nurturing, educating, training, cultivating and awareness-raising in the light of quality standards and through linking these principles to life-long learning, human development and the labour market.

The Omani Philosophy of Education is based on current educational research and studies on modern educational thought, and in identifying the values, attitudes and knowledge that are consistent with those practiced in Omani society.



## 8. Characteristics of Learners


Stages of growth in individuals involve mental, intellectual, physical and social characteristics. These include a number of skills, responsibilities and needs. Authorities responsible for education and educational institutions should take these characteristics into consideration when developing their education systems and designing curricula. They should also provide support to individuals to enable them to grow according to their abilities and aptitudes in a way that meets society's requirements.

## 9. International Conventions and Charters

The Omani Philosophy of Education recognizes the international conventions and charters which aim at reinforcing awareness of global concerns and human rights, developing positive attitudes towards and acceptance of other people, and stressing the principles of equality and justice. It develops awareness of the rights of the child and women and of other principles and laws included in international conventions and charters.

## 10. Contemporary International Issues

The world today is confronted by a variety of political, ideological, social and economic issues. These issues have provoked discussions among thinkers and politicians and have included dialogue between civilizations, human rights, democracy, international justice, globalization, international trade, environment, information security, water and food security, the information explosion and the spread of technology, and rapid developments in media and the emergence of social media. Education plays a central role in building positive attitudes towards these issues in a way that is consistent with the Islamic faith and the Omani national identity.



# The Principles and Objectives of the Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman



The Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman includes a set of principles from which various objectives are derived. The principles and objectives are guidelines on how to build and develop all elements of the education process. They include:

## **First: The Integrated Growth of Learners**

1. Develop integrated personality of learners.
2. Meet requirements of different stages and characteristics of growth.
3. Enable learners to acquire appropriate knowledge and skills to deal with present developments and challenges.
4. Develop abilities, skills, talents and interests of learners.
5. Develop aesthetical taste among learners.
6. Promote physical and health education of learners.
7. Reinforce moral and social education of learners.

Education aims at providing opportunities to help learners to grow in an integrated way. This growth includes spiritual, psychological, intellectual, moral, physical and social aspects in accordance with learners' aptitudes and potential and in the light of the philosophy, culture, identity and aspirations of Omani society. Education also endeavours to create a balance between the development of self on the one hand, and preparing individuals to participate in building their societies on the other. The integrated growth of learners is achieved through the following objectives:

## **Second: Identity and Citizenship**

Citizenship involves a feeling of belongingness to the country and to its Arabic and Islamic identity as well as to its resulting rights, duties and common societal responsibilities. Omani citizenship and identity are developed according to the following objectives:

1. Provide a sound background in Islamic ideology and in the middle approach to Islam "Wasatiyyah"<sup>1</sup> among students.
2. Help students master the Arabic language and to feel pride in it.
3. Encourage students to feel proud of their Omani identity and history.
4. Reinforce a sense of belongingness to Islamic and Arab nations.
5. Maintain and develop Oman's civilization heritage.
6. Reinforce citizenship values.

<sup>1</sup> Moderation and balance

7. Develop self-responsibility and the values of social participation.
8. Ensure a balance between tradition and modernity in the social development process.
9. Support the family as the core component of society.
10. Consolidate rights and duties towards the country and society.

### **Third: National Prestige and Respect**

It is important for any education system to encourage young students to love their country, be loyal to its leadership, respect its national figures and maintain its achievements to promote national prestige and respect through the following objectives:

1. Reinforce a sense of belongingness to Oman and loyalty to His Majesty the Sultan.
2. Promote belief in the prestige of the State and the Rule of Law.
3. Reinforce a feeling of national unity among Omani citizens.
4. Encourage respect for the flag and national anthem of Oman and demonstrate their symbolic and national significance.
5. Promote awareness of the importance of defending the country and protecting its achievements.
6. Put national interests above personal considerations.

### **Fourth: Good Values and Behaviours**

Omani society is based on a set of values and behaviours which form its entity and draw from its Islamic and Arabic identity. Educational institutions work to consolidate and develop these values and behaviours. The following objectives are achieved through this principle:

1. Consolidate Islamic values.
2. Reinforce a commitment to Omani customs and traditions.
3. Appreciate common human values.
4. Encourage good behaviours among learners.
5. Encourage a culture that recognises the academic and social prestige of teachers.
6. Deepen respect for good manners and common sense.

## **Fifth: Education of Human Rights and Duties**

Education of human rights and duties is emphasized in Islam. It informs individuals of their national and international rights and duties and aims at forming a society in which all people are appreciated and respected. This is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Reinforce a culture of human rights and duties.
2. Develop awareness on issues of global concern.
3. Develop positive attitudes towards oneself and to others.
4. Consolidate the right to receive an education.
5. Promote the principles of equality and justice in accordance with public order and law.
6. Develop awareness on the rights of women and children.
7. Develop awareness on the needs of the disabled and of the need to pay them respect and to positively interact with them.
8. Reinforce the right of individuals to political and societal participation.

## **Sixth: Responsibility and Accountability**

An important principle is to educate learners of their religious obligations and their social and legal responsibilities in the learning environment, work and society and in their relationships with themselves and others. This principle is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Reinforce a sense of responsibility towards oneself and others.
2. Consolidate the principle of the Rule of Law and the commitment towards it.
3. Deepen understanding of learners' rights and duties and reinforce the need for their positive participation in their communities.
4. Promote awareness of the importance and respect for social controls and public order.
5. Develop the concept of "positive exemplar" as a societal practice.
6. Deepen understanding of the concept of the "State of Law and Institutions".

## Seventh: Education of “Al Shura” (Consultation)

The aim of ethics in education is to develop learners into good citizens who are able to express themselves and contribute in a positive manner in societies in which social justice and equality are granted to everybody. The principle of consultation “Al Shura” is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Develop the ability to contribute to public issues through expressing opinions and accepting constructive criticism.
2. Reinforce the principles of “Al Shura” and freedoms by enacting laws to regulate practices.
3. Encourage diversity of expression in accordance with ethical and legal regulations and controls.
4. Develop and reinforce awareness of an election culture.
5. Reinforce constructive approaches and methods to express ideas.
6. Reinforce practices of public consultation “Al Shura”.

## Eighth: Education for Sustainable Development

Achieving sustainable development has been prioritized in many countries, including Oman, and the Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate is based on raising the next generation through integrated education, preparing learners and equipping them with the knowledge, values and skills to enable them to benefit from other cultures and rapid technological developments in order to meet present and future needs. Education for sustainable development will be achieved through the following objectives:

1. Provide teachers with knowledge, skills and values related to issues of sustainable development.
2. Contribute to the achievement of the comprehensive development objectives of Omani society.
3. Build and develop national capacities in different fields.
4. Contribute to the protection and conservation of the environment.
5. Develop knowledge and skills related to water and food security and confronting of natural disasters.
6. Promote awareness of the wise use of natural resources and wealth.
7. Contribute to the preservation of Omani cultural heritage.
8. Promote sustainable healthy lifestyles among learners.

9. Develop awareness of the importance of all elements of nature, particularly the green environment.
10. Develop traditional knowledge systems towards sustainable development.
11. Reinforce a culture of wise consumer behaviour.

## **Ninth: Education is a National Responsibility and Partnership**

Education is a societal responsibility for families, schools, mosques, media, the private sector and other concerned bodies of society. Realization of this partnership ensures success of the following educational objectives:

1. Support the role of families in the nurturing and education of young people.
2. Develop societal responsibility towards education.
3. Encourage societal partnership in education.
4. Establish a culture of voluntary work.
5. Consolidate the role of the private sector in the development of the education sector.
6. Promote the role of the media in education.

## **Tenth: High Quality Education for All**

The Sultanate of Oman emphasizes the importance of providing learners with quality learning experiences and quality standards in all elements of the teaching and learning process in its educational institutions and in establishing a culture which will apply these standards. To achieve the targeted educational objectives and goals emphasis is placed on the following objectives:

1. Appreciate education and educational institutions.
2. Develop aspiration and motivation towards education.
3. Enable learners to acquire essential knowledge and basic skills.
4. Develop a sense of the importance of education for all.
5. Work towards achieving high quality education.
6. Establish a culture of continuous appraisal and development in all aspects of the teaching and learning process.



7. Improve the efficiency of educational institutions and of their management.
8. Promote efficiency of teachers and improve standards in the quality of their preparation and training.
9. Enable the supervisory, accreditation and quality assurance bodies to perform their duties.
10. Enable education institutions to improve their performance.

## **Eleventh: Education and Work**

The alignment of the mission and goals of education with the requirements of social development and the needs of the labour market is among of the most important pillars of education in the Sultanate of Oman. The aim of education in this regard is to equip generations with the values, ethics, science, culture and skills that will enable them to contribute to the betterment of the country and to the development of society. Besides previously mentioned principles and objectives dealing with education and the integrated growth of the learner, this principle links the mission and aims of education with the requirements of comprehensive development and the needs of the labour market. This can be achieved through the following principles:

1. The practical application of theoretical knowledge.
2. Reinforce the values of work and production.
3. Appreciate all professions.
4. Develop basic job skills.
5. Align educational outcomes with the requirements of comprehensive development of society and the needs of the labour market.
6. Develop work skills for local and international competitiveness.
7. Encourage a culture of professionalism and reinforce its effectiveness in the professional lives of individuals in the labour market.

## Twelfth: The Society of Knowledge and Technology

Knowledge supported by technology is an important aspect in modern societies. It is an essential requirement of all developments, especially those related to sectors that depend on a large amount of knowledge and information such as education, culture and economics. This principle is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Reinforce the ability to deal with current information and modern technology.
2. Encourage the production, dissemination and utilization of knowledge and technology.
3. Increase awareness on the importance of information security and of issues relating to technology and networking.
4. Instil concepts related to building intellectual capital.
5. Build awareness on the need for a knowledge-based economy.
6. Encourage the production and development of local knowledge.
7. Encourage the development of information technology in Oman and the building of capacity in research and technological development.
8. Acquire competencies and skills required for the knowledge society.

## Thirteenth: Research and Innovation

The development of research skills is considered to be among the most important principles in modern educational philosophy. The aim is to train learners to observe, analyse, experiment and explore in different learning situations. This principle is derived from the following objectives:

1. Develop high order skills.
2. Provide learning environments that stimulate thinking, exploration, researching and innovating.
3. Develop skills of research, inference and investigation.
4. Encourage a culture of research and innovation among learners and society.
5. Appreciate and support young people who are talented researchers and innovators.

## **Fourteenth: Entrepreneurship and Initiatives**

Entrepreneurship is regarded as one of the main drivers of economic growth and sustainable development. It encourages young people to take the initiative and contributes to job creation. It is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Reinforce entrepreneurship principles and values.
2. Develop entrepreneurship skills.
3. Appreciate and support innovations and initiatives among young people.
4. Support the inclusion of entrepreneurship skills in different fields.
5. Reinforce the value of initiative-taking among learners.

## **Fifteenth: Education for Peace and Mutual Understanding**

Education for peace and mutual understanding is achieved through reinforcing the values of tolerance, understanding, acceptance of other people, dialogue, rapprochement and mutual respect. This is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Develop respect for differences in opinion and cultural diversity.
2. Promote understanding and solidarity among different groups in society.
3. Promote positive patterns of behaviour to reinforce the values of peace and co-existence.
4. Support positive dialogue and rapprochement between different cultures.
5. Develop a culture of respecting the opinions of others.
6. Promote awareness on issues of international mutual understanding, respect and cooperation.

## Sixteenth: Life-Long Learning

Education is a continuous process that does not end at a certain stage but continues throughout life. It is essential for every individual to constantly refresh his or her knowledge and skills through life-long learning. This principle is achieved through the following objectives:

1. Reinforce opportunities for life-long learning.
2. Develop positive life skills.
3. Develop independent-learning and life-long learning skills.
4. Develop long-term planning skills.
5. Promote the role of culture centres and public libraries for learners and the wider society.

Finally, the Philosophy of Education in the Sultanate of Oman is considered as a cornerstone for the setting of educational policies, strategic plans and education reform projects. It aims at improving all aspects of education, directing educational bodies towards achieving the targeted goals, and contributing to the advancement of society. All educational institutions should consider the Philosophy of Education as a main reference which acts as a national framework that guides the development of education in the Sultanate.



**General Secretariate  
of the Education Council  
2017 (1438 AH)**



