

THE NEED FOR A NEW CURRICULUM FOR TRAINING TEACHERS WITH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Why do we need a new curriculum for training teachers?

There is a critical need for Ghana to improve learning outcomes and offer high quality education for all. Statistics show that only 2 out of every 100 school children in Ghana can read with comprehension (EGRA 2013). Furthermore, teaching has not yet occupied its rightful place as a profession. Professionalising teaching, through the provision of high quality teacher education is a key national priority for this government as it seeks to move beyond aid. The new teacher education curriculum will ensure that those teaching our children are inspiring, confident and knowledgeable on the quality education they are delivering.

A responsive initial teacher education curriculum, which recognises the value of teaching practice (rather than theory) and the ways in which it must accommodate for a range of abilities and needs, is necessary if learning outcomes are to improve and future prospects for this country are to go from strength to strength.

To retain teachers who are committed to nurturing pupils to be life-long learners (and not simply ensuring they pass exams) requires a system which defines quality teaching standards and rewards those who are dedicated to achieving them – shaping and inspiring the minds of the next generation. From September 2018, teachers in Ghana will need to hold a valid licence and be willing to engage in continuing professional development.

The new teacher education curriculum is the culmination of a Government of Ghana initiative which, since 2014 and through the collaboration and technical support from T-TEL and education regulatory bodies, has supported 46 Public Colleges of Education to improve their practice and prepare them to implement an improved learning environment for trainee teachers across Ghana.

The B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) curriculum gives greater focus to teaching practice from the beginning to ensure that trainee teachers are fully prepared to teach the school curriculum as soon as they take up their first teaching roles. Assessments for trainee teachers under the new curriculum will reflect this. From the second year, trainee teachers will be able to specialise in a subject of their choice which they can use to support and inspire the next generation. To achieve Qualified Teacher Status – a new professional qualification – trainee teachers must complete a fifth year, dedicated to a school placement.

The B.Ed. curriculum will be delivered by Universities and affiliated Colleges of Education working together in partnership.

The curriculum is aligned with the National Teacher Standards (NTS) and informed by the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF). Both the NTS and NTECF were approved by the Cabinet Memorandum of 28th September 2017. The B.Ed. Curriculum to be delivered in Colleges of Education will be approved by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) – all other teacher education programmes delivered by universities from October 2018 must also meet these criteria. The current Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) awarded by the Colleges of Education will cease to exist for new entrants.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What happens to the Teacher trainee allowances which were recently re-launched?

The Teacher trainee allowances are unrelated to the teacher education reform. As per current government policy, these allowances were re-introduced on 23rd March 2018 and this remains unchanged.

2. What is the fate of Universities engaging students in other education courses?

All universities offering Bachelor of Education degrees will need to ensure that these courses are aligned with the NTS and NTECF to gain NAB accreditation before October 2018. The Ministry believes that there is an important ongoing role for these courses within the reformed education system. The Ministry also anticipates that there will be significant demand for distance learning and sandwich programmes by tutors in University Colleges of Education who wish to upgrade their professional qualifications in the light of the new reforms.

3. Are the Tutors in the Colleges prepared to deliver the new curriculum?

No one is better placed than current College Tutors to successfully deliver the new curriculum. They have a good understanding of the NTS and the NTECF – both of which are the foundation of the new curriculum. The Ministry of Education and its agencies are working to ensure tutors are able to upgrade their skills and qualifications accordingly, in alignment with the new curriculum.

4. Will the Ghana Education Service continue posting students from the Colleges of Education?

The Ghana Education Service will continue to play a critical role in ensuring the supply of newly qualified teachers can meet the demand within the country's basic education schools. It should be noted that, upon completion of the four-year B. Ed, teacher trainees will be expected to work within the basic school system for a further year before being eligible to attain their "Qualified Teacher Status" and be licensed by NTC to practice as a Professional Teachers.

Over the course of the next admission cycle – 2018 – 2022, deployment will increasingly ensure that teachers are assigned to schools where their skills and knowledge-expertise are needed most.

5. How were the Colleges affiliated to the Universities?

As part of the roll-out of the new curriculum, the NCTE have allocated the 46 public Colleges of Education to one of the five Universities (University of Cape Coast, University of Education Winneba, University of Ghana, University of Development Studies and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology). During this initial roll-out, the allocation has been done centrally, using robust criteria related to areas of technical specialism and geographic distance. Only universities which have successfully produced a B.Ed. curriculum aligned with the NTECF and accredited by NAB will be able to affiliate to Colleges. The list of Colleges and affiliated Universities will therefore be published in July.

6. What was the process of writing the curriculum?

The five public teaching universities wrote the new curriculum, either individually or as a group. Four universities chose to write the curriculum as a group- with help from a technical support team led by Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah. A significant number of College Tutors were also involved in the curriculum writing process.

7. Can holders of the Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) certificate upgrade their Certificates to obtain a Degree under the new system?

Recently qualified teachers will be able to upgrade from their Diploma in Basic Education to a B.Ed. by undertaking a one-year top-up programme. Historically this requirement for professional upgrading is not a new situation for Ghana and we should remember that similar issues were raised when Colleges of Education moved from awarding 'Certificate As' to 'Diplomas' which then became the acceptable minimum standard to qualify as a teacher.

8. What are the Admission requirements under the new system?

The PRINCOF (Conference of Principals of Colleges of Education) application process is aligned with the introduction of the new teacher education curriculum. Admission requirements, set by National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), for entry into all University Bachelors courses remain the same.

9. Will Colleges increase intake?

Colleges of Education have made significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning over the past three years and the Ministry expects to see that these improvements will be recognised by the scores achieved by Colleges of Education in the upcoming Quality Assurance and Accreditation Assessment Instrument (QAAAI) inspection led by NAB. The Ministry is committed to providing resources to enable Colleges of Education to continue to develop and undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as University Colleges of Education to enable them to effectively deliver the new 4-year B. Ed programme. Colleges will work closely with their affiliated University in delivering the new curriculum. The number of students admitted by University Colleges of Education will be determined by several factors including the number of qualified candidates, the resources available, institutional capacity and the requirements for teacher numbers contained within the new Education Sector Plan (ESP).

The Ministry is confident that the introduction of the new 4-year B. Ed curriculum will ensure that Ghana is training a sufficient quantity of high quality teachers to enable the country to achieve the objectives set out within the ESP.

10. Where is the White document containing the procedural considerations before the implementation of the policy?

The Cabinet Memorandum on Policy on Teacher Education Reform which was approved by Cabinet on 28th September 2017 made provision for the following:

- Introduction of National Teacher Standards (NTS) for pre-service teachers;
- Introduction of the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF)
- Convert Colleges of Education into University Colleges of public Universities offering teacher education curriculums, and subsequent amendment of the Colleges of Education Act (Act 847)
- Design a new 4-year Bachelor of Education curriculum for initial teacher education to be offered at the University Colleges of Education from October 2018.

Cabinet approved these pillars of the reform based on a comprehensive Memo submitted by the Minister of Education. This Memo considered all the economic, social and risk factors associated with the implementation of this new policy. The Cabinet Memorandum is the official document which provides clarity over policy direction which underpin these reforms. The Ministry has subsequently developed a 'Roadmap for Implementation of Teacher Education Reforms' which sets out the practical steps needed to deliver the commitments in the Cabinet Memorandum. This Roadmap is regularly reviewed and updated by the Ministry. These commitments were subsequently re-iterated in the 2018 Budget Statement.

11. What was Parliament's role in the approval of the document for the B. Ed?

The Cabinet Memorandum on Policy on Teacher Education Reform was approved by Cabinet on 28th September 2017.

Subsequently there has been a strong level of engagement with the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education (PSCE). From the 23rd to 24th March PSCE members held a detailed briefing and information session where they scrutinised the activities contained within the Roadmap for Implementation of Teacher Education Reforms and provided useful guidance and suggestions to improve the quality of implementation. The PSCE actively participated in the in the design of the NTECF and made useful contributions to the entire design process.

Broader issues related to Ghana's national education system

The initial teacher education curriculum is a necessary step in raising the status of teachers and improving the quality of education in this country. It is one of several reforms the Ministry of Education is implementing to ensure high quality education for all across Ghana.



Ministry of Education
REPUBLIC OF GHANA