



**SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT
IN
EDUCATION**

**Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council
University Grants Commission
Sri Lanka**

January 2011



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FOREWORD

The work in connection with the development of Subject Benchmark Statements was begun in August 2003 as a part of the overall quality assurance framework that supports academic standards and the furtherance and dissemination of good practice in Universities in Sri Lanka. Subject Benchmark Statements will support and promote quality and standards by:

- Providing universities with a common and explicit reference point for internal and external programme approval and review;
- Guiding and promoting curriculum development, especially in new departments and new universities, and in other institutions of higher education;
- Evolving over time to take account of changes and innovations that reflect subject development and new expectations;
- Providing an authoritative and widely recognized statement of expectations of what is expected of a graduate in a specific (or designated) subject area in a form readily accessible to students, employers and others with a stake in higher education;
- Providing a clear and transparent reference point for External Examiners;
- Assisting international comparison and competitiveness of higher education awards and student achievement.

SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT

EDUCATION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Subject Benchmark Statement – Scope and Purpose

Benchmark is a standard against which a thing or concept may be compared. Thus benchmark setting for academic standards is an integral component of quality assurance and achieving excellence in the university system.

Purpose of this subject Benchmark statement is to assist the design of undergraduate degree programmes in education studies. This yardstick is important as it describes the academic and professional knowledge landscape, capabilities and attributes of the awardees of the Bachelor of Education Degree. Further it helps the prospective employers and the society at large to gauge the range of their intellectual abilities, readiness and outlook in general. In the context of globalization and emerging knowledge society the Bachelor of Education graduates should not only fit into the local context but also to the global context. Hence the benchmark should be set considering both the local and the global scenario and moving towards international benchmarking. In this context the nature and extent of the subject of education is discussed with a view to ascertain its parameters

1.2 Nature and Extent of the Subject

Currently, Education is emerging as a discipline responsible for developing the country's human potential to its fruition, for it is the key that unlocks the door to a modern competent effective citizenry. It has to be remarked that "by nature homo sapiens are nothing, but by Education they become everything." In this context teacher becomes pivotal in the man-making and nation-building process of education. In fact, teachers were and are the greatest civilizing force in a society then and now, they being belonging to the mother of all professions. Teaching is one of the most delightful and exciting of all known activities when it is done well and it is a product of the total personality of the teacher.

However, in the present context, a Bachelor of Education graduate should not only be capable of being a teacher. Education studies have developed from its origin in teacher education to a field of its own right. Education can be broadly defined as the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life.

Generally, the traditional view of Education both in the East and West was to produce a good human being in all aspects of life to live a simple way of life in a slow moving society. Teacher himself transmitted a body of sacred knowledge landscape. However, in an ever changing scenario in society with uncertainties and complexities and with the rapid expansion of Science and technologies and a global-world view, a changing view and a style of education is in the making.

The root of **the word 'education'** is derived from the Latin 'e-ducare' literally meaning to 'lead forth' or bring out something which is potentially present. Education is an activity, an endeavor, an enterprise which is related to the notion of bringing up, rearing, leading forth. It is the human endeavor of self-development towards self-realization, self-actualization, self-fulfillment, self-transcendence - the human endeavor towards happiness and the value life.

The term 'education' is also defined as 'development of the mind' as cultivation of the human capacity for critical consciousness, for 'self-actualization'... source of love and compassion, for justice and fellowship, for humanity and joy.

Consequently Education being a social science needs to be interpreted and reinterpreted from all perspectives in space and time.

It could be summarized that Education envisages the physical, mental, linguistic, social emotional, ethical and aesthetic integration of the individual into a total human being effective in all aspects of human endeavour. In this wider perspective of education the aims of a Bachelor of Education Degree programme is defined broadly as follows.

2. SUBJECT AIMS

- Produce persons who have a sound knowledge of a subject field as well as the theoretical aspects of Education.
- Be aware of the contemporary and anticipatory issues, challenges and problems in Education.
- Understand the changing paradigms and processes of learning and their impact on educational practices.
- Make use of subject knowledge in the analysis of complex situations concerning human learning and development.
- Plan and adapt teaching and learning experiences, assessments, and interventions with reference to the learners' diverse needs and characteristics;
- Use theory and research to inform practice and use experience from practice to inform theory and research;
- Develop persons who are committed to best practices in Education.
- Imbibe positive attitudes towards learning and teaching.
- Acquire a livable philosophy of life to better the life of the educands.
- Develop creativity, initiative critical thinking, responsibility, and accountability and other positive elements of a well-integrated balanced personality.
- Reflect on their own value systems, development and practices.
- Embody the view that learning and teaching are active, social, and transformative processes that are enhanced when new learning is linked to prior knowledge;

3. SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Education studies provides an academic basis for practitioners in formal and informal contexts of education as well as a framework for understanding some aspects of human and social development. These contexts encompass a diverse range of groups such as education

administration, Community development, psycho social care, human resources in addition to the school sector.

Yet, essentially education studies are concerned with understanding how people develop and learn throughout their lives, and the nature of knowledge and critical engagement with ways of knowing and understanding. Hence it is enriched by the contributory disciplines of Educational psychology, philosophy, sociology as well as broader issues such as effects of globalization, human rights, Information communication Technology and the current policies of and practices of the country.

While not a programme of training per se, an education studies course will also provide the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for future professionals. These may be provided through a practicum in a prospective workplace.

The envisaged Bachelor of Education Degree programme should contain core features which provide the participants the knowledge and understanding of a specific subject/s, opportunities to apply the knowledge and understanding and to reflect.

Encompassing the core areas, the envisaged Bachelor of Education Degree programme is a four – year full time course and will comprise five broad areas as;

- Foundation Studies
- Professional studies
- Academic studies (subject specific)
- Electives
- Practicum and Field Experience – these units enable to contextualize the theoretical components of academic and professional Studies.

As discussed before The Bachelor of Education graduate should not only be a teacher but should be able to fit into any position in the field of education. However, any personnel in the field of Education needs to be equipped with certain core competencies. These would be provided through Foundation studies and Professional studies and needs to be divided into course units. Academic studies would provide the subject specific knowledge. For example, a person who wishes to specialize in the field of science education would study science related subjects while language related disciplines would need to major in languages. Electives would cater to teaching/ management techniques related to the specific specialization the B.ED. graduate hopes to obtain. Thus, the core areas listed above needs to be elaborated at curriculum planning level based on needs assessment of various fields in education.

4. SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

There is a repertoire of skills and attitudes that a bachelor of Education graduate should have acquired during his/her journey of learning. They are,

- Generic Skills
- Subject specific Skills
- Attitudes

Generic Skills for Education

- Communication skills – to be able to communicate effectively with students and other stakeholders
- To be able to communicate the subject matter clearly

- Information and communication technology. – integrate and utilize technology in instruction Learning and thinking skills –Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills in students as well as the teachers to be lifelong learners
- People skills – be able to work with students, teachers and parents and to develop collaborative and leadership qualities in students
- Assessment skills – be able to use multiple indicators to assess student learning

Subject specific Skills

- Creating and maintaining an effective environment for student learning.
- Making subject matter comprehensible to students.
- Assessing student learning
- Engaging and supporting student learning
- Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for students
- Self management and professional development skills to be a lifelong learner to develop as a professional educator
- Reflective skills to be a reflective practitioner
- ICT. Skills to facilitate learning
- Creativity (Skills in designing, producing and using novel materials effectively)
- Counselling skills
- Analytical skills
- Time management skills

Attitudes

Attitude is a covert response evoked by a value. Thus, the following attitudes will have to be internalized by a Bachelor of Education graduate.

- Proactive approach to teaching and learning
- Commitment to ethical and professional practices and be lifelong learner
- Compassion towards students, especially catering to all learner needs
- Enthusiasm to innovate and find best practices
- Empathy
- Work and learn in collaborative groups

5. TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Humans are learning and an enquiring species. They have an innate desire to know. From this perspective over all objectives of teaching and learning is to equip students with deep cognitive learning, skills and proper attitudes. It has to be remarked that all learning requires the learner to actively construct meaning and the teacher's primary goal is to generate a change in the learner's cognitive structure or way of viewing and organizing the world.

Progressively, an educator has to create a desire-thirst for leaning, a culture of learning and empower the student to become his/her own teacher. In fact all education is self- education.

Following teaching strategies may be used as and when necessary to bring about a variety in pedagogical approaches,

- Lectures with audio-visual material
- Interactive sessions
- Presentations
- Projects

- Problem-based learning
- Brain based learning techniques
- Field trips
- Action research
- Teaching portfolios
- Promotion of reflection through learning logs
- Micro teaching (a teaching method in a scaled-down setting with just a few students and for a short period of time usually 10 or 15 minutes)
- Group dynamics
- Debates

Teaching practicum – 10 weeks of mentor guided fulltime teaching/working in a teaching related work setting.

6. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

Evaluation is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Evaluation should be carried out at two levels, that is formative evaluation and summative evaluation.

The modalities through which teaching and learning take place in education studies should reflect and inform the principles of the subject itself. Therefore, it is imperative that assessment provides opportunities to find out whether the graduands have developed

- Knowledge and understanding of the subject/s
- Application of key principles to related contexts
- The ability to reflect on salient issues
- Transferable skills

While subject knowledge could be accessed through a written paper as summative evaluation, the strategies listed below can also be utilized as part of summative as well as formative assessment.

However, in Education studies the most effective assessment to enable the evaluation of above mentioned strand is practicum. Through ten weeks of guided mentoring in a teaching /learning related work setting both formative as well as summative assessment could be achieved.

An action research during practicum and a portfolio based on learning agreements are two of the recent developments in professional courses that can used effectively as formative as well as end course evaluation.

A variety of assessment strategies may be useful to elicit student performance in competencies. (A competency is an action / operation developed by a learner over a period of time by integrating relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes ad best practices.)

Some of the additional assessment approaches are

- Presentations
- Workshops
- Assignments

- Projects
- Learning agreements
- End – course evaluation

7. MAINTAINING STANDARDS

- Periodic review of curricula to keep abreast of the developments in the academia.
- Regular exchange of ideas with competent scholars in the discipline.
- Building linkages with similar programs here and abroad.
- Involvement of external supervisors and examiners.

8. STUDENT ATTAINMENT AND BENCHMARK LEVEL (STANDARD)

These signposts at two levels will be useful to attain continuous development of the programme.

A Bachelor of education graduate may be encouraged to do self – evaluation and progress towards excellence and quintessence.

Threshold level – Knowledge landscape

1. Demonstrates a basic level of content knowledge in the teaching specialty.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the diverse methods of presenting instruction
3. Shows an understanding of the diverse methods of assessment and providing feedback to students.
4. Has a personal philosophy and a regard for the well-being of the educands.
5. Displays a positive disposition towards knowledge.
6. Able to analyze the concepts, principles, psychological constructs, evaluative techniques into a repertoire of skills to enable practices in education.
7. Identifies/Imbibes knowledge of professional ethics and accountability principles.
8. Able to meet personal learning needs of students and cater to their uniqueness.
9. Displays the need to be a reflexive teacher.
10. Entertains a familiarity with the new technologies to improve the quality of teaching.
11. Displays a spirit of innovation in teaching and learning.
12. Shows an interest in contemporary issues and problems in education.
13. Encourages students towards self learning.
14. Develops a conducive democratic social climate in the learning environment.
15. Progresses towards autonomy in practice.
16. Appreciates a national identity and national cohesion and world-consciousness.
17. Recognizes the need for a sense of community and cultural diversity.
- 17 Understand the need for theory and research to inform practice and use experience from practice to inform theory and research;

High professional level landscape

1. Has an in depth knowledge and comprehensive understanding of the concepts and theoretical underpinnings of the discipline
2. Utilizes diverse methods of presenting instruction
3. Uses diverse methods of assessment and providing feedback to students
4. Possesses a pervasive personal philosophy regarding the well beings of the educands

- 5 Analyse and synthesise concepts, evaluative strategies into a repertoire of skills to enable best practices in education.
6. Has an understanding of professional ethics and conducts himself accordingly.
7. Master a body of knowledge and skills to meet the multiple needs of his students.
8. Caters so personal learning needs of students and cater to their uniqueness
9. She is a critically reflective teacher/practitioner.
10. Uses new technologies to enhance the quality of teaching.
11. Uses innovation in teaching
12. Displays professional excellence in all educational undertakings.
- 13 Shows an abiding interest in contemporary issues problems, and other societal problematic and takes positive steps to alleviate them.
- 14 Involves student in self-learning to empower them in his/her one learning.
- 15 Creates a conducive democratic social learning environment and facilitates students to self-rule.
- 16 Autonomous in practice and in setting standards in the discipline of education.
- 17 Develops a national identity and national cohesion and world-consciousness.
- 18 Uses theory and research to inform practice and use experience from practice to inform theory and research;

9. ANNEX1. MEMBERS OF THE BENCHMARK GROUP

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