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Erasmus+ National Policy Reviews 2024 Nepal

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Nepal

Contributor

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This national policy review provides a detailed analysis of Nepal's educational policies and their alignment with the Erasmus+ programme. It offers official, first-hand information into the country's engagement with Erasmus+ from 2021 to 2024, highlighting opportunities for improvement and identifying strategies to enhance integration and outcomes. Prepared and submitted by the Erasmus+ National Focal Point, this review contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen international cooperation and to maximise the benefits of the Erasmus+ programme in Nepal.

Reviews of policies, initiatives, projects, and/or stakeholders

Background

The development and management of Nepal's education system rely on the coordinated efforts of various government bodies. The Parliament has assigned specific responsibilities to these bodies through legislation for policy formulation, operation, and management across school education, higher education, technical education, and vocational training. The key government bodies involved, particularly in higher education, technical education, and vocational training, include:

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST)

MOEST is the primary and highest government body responsible for Nepal's education sector. It coordinates and facilitates the implementation of educational reform programmes, formulates educational plans, and enforces the country's overall education policy. Additionally, the ministry oversees financing and human resource management for the entire education sector and plays a crucial regulatory role.

The Ministry has established a Higher Education Division, which coordinates HE matters through the University Grants Commission (UGC). The Ministry also works on technical and vocational education.

<https://moest.gov.np/>

University Grants Commission (UGC)

The University Grants Commission, established under the University Grants Commission Act (1993), is an autonomous government agency entrusted with promoting, facilitating, and enhancing the country's higher education quality. The Commission is an apex body of the higher education sector that formulates higher education policy, regulates higher education institutions (HEIs), develops norms and criteria for university funding, looks after good governance and advises the government in establishing new HEIs. Moreover, it manages scholarships and higher educational statistics, allocates and disburses grants to HEIs and coordinates universities.

<https://ugcnepal.edu.np/>

Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT)

Established in 1989, the CTEVT Council is a national autonomous apex body overseeing Nepal's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. It is dedicated to producing the technical and skilled human resources needed for the country. Its key functions include policy formulation, quality control, developing competency-based curricula, setting skill standards for various occupations, conducting skill testing, and conducting research studies and training needs assessments.

<http://ctevt.org.np/>

Medical Education Commission (MEC)

The Medical Education Commission was established under the National Medical Education Act 2075 to enhance state investment in medical education and align it with Nepal's national needs. The MEC's responsibilities include regulating medical education comprehensively and efficiently, overseeing the establishment and operation of medical institutions, and ensuring quality, professionalism, and institutional accountability. It also focuses on maintaining geographical balance and social justice in medical education, ensuring equal access for all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

<https://www.mec.gov.np/>

Initiatives and/or programmes that have been launched in the past three years

Foreign Study Approval Guidelines, 2079 (2023) (Related to International Credit Mobility)

The Guidelines were established to streamline the process for Nepalese citizens seeking to study at foreign educational institutions. These guidelines aim to simplify and make the pre-approval process easier, more efficient, and technology-friendly. They also address the organisation of tasks related to recommending foreign exchange rates.

Guidelines for the Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Universities in Nepal, 2022

The UGC ensures the quality and excellence of HE in Nepal. To fulfil its mandate, UGC has endorsed the «Guidelines for the Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Universities in Nepal, 2022.» These were developed to manage and maintain educational standards in universities, exercising the authority granted in Section 19 of the Act to formulate regulations.

<https://ugcnepal.edu.np/uploads///upload/dg5Qfr.pdf>

Guidelines for Poverty Targeted Scholarship, 2078 (2021)

These guidelines were implemented to address the fundamental rights provisions of the Constitution of Nepal and align with the sustainable development goals and the national HE programme. These guidelines aim to improve access to higher education for students from economically disadvantaged households, particularly in the wake of COVID-19 and other natural disasters. The Commission established these guidelines under the University Grants Commission Act, 2050 and Rule 11.9 of the UGC Rules of Procedure, 2060.

Guidelines for Providing Scholarships in Higher Education to Handicapped, Dalit, Economically Disadvantaged, Freedmen and Muslim Women Students, 2079 (2021)

These Guidelines were designed to offer scholarships for higher education students who are disabled, Dalit, economically disadvantaged, freedmen, and Muslim women. They were developed in line with the fundamental rights outlined in the Constitution of Nepal, 2072.

Standards, Operational Policies and Guidelines for Performance-Based Funding

This collection of norms was designed to support the implementation of Performance-Based Funding within the framework of Nepal's higher education policy, the 15th periodic plan, the National Higher Education Plan (NHEP), and the Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Programme (NEHEP).

The PBF system includes two types of performance indicators:

- Regular Indicators: Applied to the initial group of higher education institutions (HEIs) participating in the scheme, requiring less initial effort.

- **Extended Indicators:** Targeted at high-performing constituent and community campuses (the second group), though the first group campuses can also qualify for these indicators if they meet the eligibility and selection criteria.

The primary goal of the extended PBF is to encourage HEIs to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness by linking funding to their performance results, thus improving public expenditure efficiency.

Labor Management Procedures (LMP)

The Labor Management Procedures (LMP) aim to address resources and labour issues related to the programme. The LMP outlines how programme workers will be managed in compliance with national laws and labour conditions (ESS2). Specifically, the LMP helps to identify the various types of workers involved in the programme and define how to meet the requirements of ESS2 for each type of worker.

Standards, Operational Policies and Guidelines for Faculty Competency Development and Academic Leadership Sensitization

The Standards, Operational Policies, and Guidelines for Faculty Competency Development and Academic Leadership Sensitization by the University Grants Commission (UGC) are designed to help universities and higher education institutions (HEIs) develop a strong culture of faculty training and academic leadership. This initiative marks the UGC's first major effort in this area.

The guidelines outline:

- Standards and policies for faculty training – to enhance the skills and effectiveness of educators.
 - Academic leadership sensitisation – to prepare academic leaders who can guide institutions effectively.
- Through this programme, the UGC encourages universities and HEIs to create or update their faculty development and leadership policies, ensuring these improvements are effectively implemented.

Environmental and Social Safeguard Strategy for Strengthening Capacity of Beneficiary Institutions

This strategy focuses on ensuring that HEIs in Nepal create fair, inclusive, and equitable work environments as part of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). It details the steps and actions needed to enhance these institutions' ability to implement environmental and social safeguards effectively.

Standards, Operational Policies and Guidelines for Collaborative Research and Entrepreneurship Programmes

This guideline is designed to enhance the impact of higher education on the national economy by promoting collaborative research and entrepreneurship programmes. It encourages partnerships between public and private institutions and offers competitive funding for collaborative research. The focus is on supporting selected higher education institutions, schools, central departments, and centres of excellence (COEs) within an updated regulatory framework, particularly in STEM fields.

Guidelines regarding Minimum Standards for PhD Degree, 2080 (2023)

The Guidelines regarding Minimum Standards for PhD Degree, 2080 (2023) were implemented by the UGC to ensure quality and consistency in PhD programmes across universities and higher education institutions in Nepal. These guidelines establish minimum standards for the recognition of PhD degrees and aim to make awarding these degrees more systematic and quality-driven, in line with set requirements.

Higher Education Funding Policy, 2080 (2023)

The «Higher Education Funding Policy» of 2023 was established to improve the management of resources in educational institutions. It aims to support the growth of quality higher education by ensuring that funding is distributed fairly, transparently, and based on clear standards. The policy promotes efficiency and effectiveness in higher education, making the system more competitive and focused on delivering quality education.

Equity Grants Guidelines, 2079 (2023)

The «Equity Grants Guidelines» of 2023 were created to improve access to higher education by reducing economic and geographic disparities. The guidelines focus on enhancing teacher quality, improving online learning and connectivity, promoting resource sharing, and building capacity within higher education institutions. They also aim to mitigate the risks to education posed by disasters or pandemics, contributing to balanced economic development across the country.

Standards, Operational Policies, and Guidelines for Higher Education Digitalisation

These policy guidelines are designed to enhance the governance and implementation of digitisation and connectivity in higher education. They focus on strengthening campus networks, improving distance learning capabilities, and digitising the administration of the UGC and universities. The guidelines also aim to bolster digital learning platforms and online administration within the UGC. The UGC will provide ongoing, evidence-based guidance to universities and HEIs, helping them adapt to emerging trends in higher education digitisation, with clear standards and operational policies.

Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Programme (2021/22 - 2025/26) - NEHP

The Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Programme (NEHEP), backed by the World Bank, builds on previous projects like the Second Higher Education Project and the Higher Education Reforms Project. It focuses on four key areas: improving labour-market relevance, fostering entrepreneurship and collaborative research, enhancing governance and financing for quality in higher education, and expanding access to quality education for disadvantaged students. Additionally, the programme emphasises digitalisation, gender equality, climate change, and citizen engagement for sustainable development. NEHEP also aims to strengthen the capacity of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Tribhuvan University, and other higher education institutions in Nepal.

Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF)

Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF) is a national education framework for HE in Nepal that has been offered and will be offered by all the universities and their campuses. The main objective of the framework is to make a uniform system of naming a qualification, as well as the designators and qualifiers of each qualification identified by the framework. It further aims to standardise the overall objectives of degrees that the HEIs would award.

This framework will also support credit transfer, equivalence, and certification of qualifications and skills. The Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission are completing their final preparation.