Qatar


**Principles and general objectives of education**

Education needs to be developed qualitatively to maintain an interaction between Qatar’s cultural heritage, values and beliefs on the one hand, and openness to scientific achievements and technological innovations on the other. Therefore, the main principles of education in the State of Qatar are the following:

- bringing up learned generations believing in God, committed to Islam, and adhering to its principles, values and morals;
- bringing up generations proud of their homeland and loyal to the Arab nation, and committed to their nation’s values and ideals and the preservation of the society’s traditions and cultural heritage;
- developing the physical, mental, spiritual and social aspects of the students personalities and helping them to become good citizens;
- providing the students with access to knowledge and science according to their age and aptitudes, and enabling them to apply, adapt and develop scientific and technological achievements;
- promoting the love and acquisition of knowledge, and encouraging self-learning in order to build an ever-learning society;
- achieving the full physical development of the students and acquainting them with balanced nutrition and principles of general and mental health, prevention, cure and safety;
- eradicating illiteracy by developing adult education programmes;
- developing students’ social skills, the practice of their liberties within limits, their ability to think critically, their respect of others views and opinions, and their positive interaction with the society;
- developing and protecting talents and aptitudes, linking them with the society’s needs and interests, and directing students to productive work in addition to training them in innovative skills and advanced technologies to help satisfy the requirements of national development;
- creating open-mindedness in the students towards other cultures, experiences and human achievements; encouraging mutual dialogue and interaction while remaining committed to Arab-Islamic cultural identity, legacy and values to shape cultural awareness.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
Current educational priorities and concerns

Education is among the top priorities of the government’s development plans. By providing better opportunities for scientific and technological advancement, while developing human skills and creative capabilities, education is economically significant. By providing the economy with the required manpower, education is also socially significant.

During the last thirty years educational policies have emerged with ambitious principles and theories, such as the human right to education; gender equity; rural and nomadic areas’ right to education; linking education with life to meet the needs of society for skilled labour at all levels; and bringing up the new citizen who can cope with the challenges of the age. All this has made it necessary to develop a new educational organization as regards administrative structure, hierarchic responsibilities, laws and regulations, decentralization, people and students’ participation, and planning and research as a basis for decision-making.

The 1990s saw many qualitative changes in education. There has been an increase in the number of schools and pupils and the establishment of private education. As regards the curriculum and educational contents, the teaching of English was introduced at the primary level and computer science at the secondary stage; there has also been a focus on the development of life skills and on the transmission of positive attitudes towards manual work.

The plans implemented in recent years include:

Developing educational objectives (1993): The document containing educational objectives was prepared by a committee comprised of representatives of the Ministry of Education and the University of Qatar. It included the objectives for each educational stage, in addition to religious, technical and commercial education, literacy courses and kindergartens. External specialists conducted an evaluation of the objectives. The document was submitted to the Supreme Council of Planning for study and submission to the Cabinet. A meeting was held comprising representatives of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council of Planning and the Ministry of Education to discuss the objectives in detail, prior to final drafting. The Supreme Council of Planning adopted the document on 18 October 1994.

Developing the structure of the Ministry of Education (1993): A survey was conducted regarding the different units of the Ministry, followed by a comparative study on this subject in the Gulf countries and some other Arab and foreign countries. A comprehensive project was then developed on the structural organization of the Ministry of Education including the tasks, competence and duties, in addition to a structural chart. The project was discussed in detail in a number of meetings at the Ministry level.

Developing and improving school curricula: The Ministry of Education has revised the curricula in recent years, in particular as regards contents and methods.
Introducing computer science in school curricula: In 1988, the Cabinet approved the Ministry’s plan to introduce computers in the educational process. The plan was structured around two five-year phases. The first phase included the establishment of a special informatics section in the Department of Educational Technology, and conducting the necessary informative, occupational, technical and preparatory arrangements. The phase also included the utilization of computers in school administration, and introducing computer science as a separate curriculum in the secondary stage. Other decisions were adopted establishing the Computer Centre and introducing computers in general education on a gradual basis. By the year 1990/91, computer science had been introduced in the curricula of seven secondary schools (six for boys and one for girls). The experiment was then generalized in other secondary schools.

Developing model schools (1990-1995): A model school is a boys’ primary school comprising four grades only, where teaching and administration are monitored by female staff. This experiment was initiated in 1978. In 1989, a five-year plan was adopted by the Ministry applying the experiment to all eligible students in the model schools by age and grade. The plan was put into force at the beginning of the year 1990. By the end of the fifth year of the plan, the number of these schools increased from 15 to 26, and the number of students therein from 5,280 to 9,627. In the implementation of the Cabinet Decision adopted in 1994, the model schools system was extended to Grade V in five model schools in 1994/95 and in four model schools in 1995/96. By 1994/95 two new model schools were opened raising the total number to twenty-six, with 9,627 boys and 1,132 teaching and administrative staff.

Developing non-governmental education (1991-1996): The Ministry of Education adopted a plan for developing non-governmental education aimed at increasing the material support and providing sufficient areas of land for establishing schools. In this context, the Ministry prepared curricula and established model kindergartens.

The most recent plans include:

The Overall Literacy Plan (1996-2006): The plan aims at eradicating illiteracy by the year 2006. The total cost of this plan amounts to 41,420,500 Qatari riyal (QR), about US$13.5 million.

The Secondary Education Diversification Plan (1993-2003): In 1990, the Cabinet of Ministers formed a committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of Education, with the membership of representatives of the Ministries of Education, Finance and Petroleum, Interior, Defence, Public Works, in addition to the Supreme Council of Planning and the University of Qatar, to conduct a study on the diversification of secondary education. The Cabinet approved the project in 1994. The ten-year plan, adopted by the Committee is composed of two phases. Under phase one, general education is divided into four sections instead of two; technical education consists of four sections comprising eleven specializations instead of six; commercial education consists of three sections replacing the general education. Under phase two, two new types of education are introduced: agricultural education and applied education. The budget amounts to QR29,262,200 (or about US$9.5 million).
Improving the system for training educational professionals: Pre-service and in-service training courses have been set up for teachers, administrators, educational leaders and other professionals in education. These courses are organized and run by the Ministry’s Training Center, the Teacher’s Qualifying Institute, and the Education Leaders’ Training Center.

Introducing computers in the central educational administration (ten-year plan, 1991-2001): A modern educational database has been developed comprised of four databases, namely a students’ database (operational since 1993/94), a personnel database, a financial affairs database, and an educational affairs database.

The School Libraries Development Plan (ten-year plan, 1993-2003): This plan aims at developing and improving the existing school libraries so as to provide advanced library services, and to serve as centres for the various types of learning sources utilizing the products of advanced technology. The plan embraces all components of the library work and facilities (i.e. contents, technologies, halls, etc.) and aims at making the school library a learning centre equipped with all audio-visual reading aids. The concept of this plan is to help the libraries interact with their communities and provide them with all sources of learning to achieve lifelong education.

The Educational Technology Plan (ten-year plan, 1993-2003). The plan aims at introducing educational technology as a curricular subject in the three stages of education, from Grade V of the primary stage up to Form III of the secondary stage.

In order to prepare competent and well-trained Qatari cadres and to minimize dependence on non-Qatari personnel, the Ministry has also been ensuring that the scholarship system meets the needs of the country, especially when the specialization is not available at the University of Qatar. The number of male and female students benefiting from scholarships was 1,163 in 2000/01, with 718 male and 445 female students.

The education reform initiative (Education for a New Era) started in May 2001. Considered as a national priority, the education reform is being implemented to ensure the quality necessary to develop a world class education system. The reform is targeting teachers as well as students, giving teachers time to upgrade their skills and learn the new curriculum standards and how best to meet those standards. The Supreme Education Council (SEC), established in November 2002, plays an integral role in the development and implementation of the education reform effort.

Through the reform, the government envisions an education system that: makes classrooms exciting places to learn; encourages all students to make the most of their talents; holds schools measurably accountable to high performance standards; involves and is responsible to parents; graduates young men and women who are in demand with universities and businesses, at home and abroad; and nourishes faith, values, and national aspirations. The new government-funded independent schools are the centerpiece of the reform. These schools, run by operators under contract approved by the Supreme Education Council, determine their own teaching philosophy and methods, and hire their own staff, as long as the schools meet rigorous curriculum standards in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science. The government is determined to offer a variety of school alternatives, but to maintain consistent

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performance standards. In the future, parents would have the freedom to choose the schools that best suit the needs of their child. In September 2004, the first group of independent schools was authorized to start operations. The Education Institute under the SEC directly oversees the independent schools and supports them in a variety of ways, from drafting curriculum standards to encouraging “best practices” through professional development programmes for teachers. The Evaluation Institute under the SEC develops and conducts periodic, standardized assessments of student learning, monitors student progress, and evaluates school performance. In addition to independent schools, the cornerstone of the reform, other key elements of the K-12 education reform include:

- **Curriculum Standards:** These are the academic goals and expectations for each grade level, i.e. what students should know and understand. The Education Institute has developed curriculum standards in four subjects: Arabic, English, mathematics and science. These standards are internationally benchmarked, based on academic expectations of countries where students achieve at high levels. For example, first graders studying science should be able to collect and classify simple sets of data; they might be asked to group, identify, and label pictures of native animals and plants. Provided they adhere to curriculum standards, independent school administrators have considerable latitude in determining how teachers help their students learn, with the freedom of using any materials and learning resources. Each student’s mastery of the knowledge, concepts and skills established in the curriculum standards will be evaluated through mandatory annual assessments. In fact, in the spring of 2004, 80,000 Qatari students participated in the first-ever assessment including four different tests in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science. Assessments are not intended for determining promotion or graduation. Rather, the assessment provides educators, parents, and the government with a clear picture of educational progress.

- **Student Assessment:** Periodic assessments are the best way to ensure that students are learning. Starting in Spring 2004, all students enrolled in all public and private Arabic schools sit an annual series of standardized tests, the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment (QCEA). These tests assess and monitor the learning of students in Grades 1-12 in Arabic, English, mathematics and science. This Assessment differs from the high school national exam and other tests currently administered in the country. It uses a multiple choice format and, for some grades, an additional essay format. Other formats may be developed for future tests. Student test scores are essential to the Evaluation Institute’s ability to measure student progress and school performance.

- **School Evaluation:** The Evaluation Institute is also responsible for another key project, e.g. ensuring that schools are accountable for providing quality education. This involves a programme of surveys (Qatar Comprehensive School Survey, QCSS) seeking the views on Qatari education of principals, teachers, social workers, parents and students. The Evaluation Institute’s School Evaluation Office has responsibility for designing, implementing and overseeing processes for evaluating all public and private Arabic schools. Data is obtained from many sources including students, parents, teachers,
principals, school social workers and school reports, as well as information independently obtained by Evaluation Institute staff during school visits. This data is analyzed and evaluated as part of a report on the overall performance of schools, individually and collectively. On an annual basis, the Evaluation Institute publishes a school report card with comprehensive information about each school’s performance and characteristics, as well as collective tests scores of the students at each school. This information will allow review and comparison of each school’s accomplishments and student performance, as an indication of the quality of teaching and the level of learning at each institution. These report cards will be available to the public online.

- Professional Development: Teachers are at the core of education reform. The new independent schools will rely on classroom leaders who possess a deep understanding of subject matter, employ proven techniques in contemporary teaching, and can motivate students to perform to their highest potential. Each independent school has the freedom to hire its own staff. To support independent school teachers in their professional growth and development, the Education Institute offers a variety of teacher training programmes. Topics being addressed include “best practices” for teaching the new curriculum standards, preparing students for annual assessments, and the special needs of new teachers. There are also programmes designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of experienced teachers, who may then be invited to develop coursework, lead training, mentor new teachers, and become master teachers.

- Data Collection and Management: Data collection and dissemination are crucial to successful education reform. Data can be used to track progress of individual children, aid parents in making appropriate school choices, identify weaknesses and strengths of schools, improve programmes and teaching methods, and evaluate school quality and the overall education system. The Evaluation Institute is responsible for all data collection, while the Qatar National Education Database System serves as the “data warehouse” for storing, analyzing and disseminating collected data from tests and surveys. To make sure documents and information remain confidential, the Institute’s Data Collection and Management Office is constructing a secure production center with facilities for printing and document storage.

Finally, one of the major goals of reform is to better engage parents in the education of their children. For the first time, independent schools have elected boards of trustees, composed of parents and other members of the community, to help oversee and provide support to these schools. Parents and other community members now can participate in all aspects of school life.

**Laws and other basic regulations concerning education**

Educational policy in the past was derived from various sources, such as the *Education Law* of 1954, the Constitution of Qatar, and the current practices prevailing up to 1981, when the Cabinet issued *Decision No. 41* forming a committee to draft an educational policy comprising the main objectives of education at all stages. The draft was then adopted by the Cabinet to be put in practice by the school...
year 1981/82. The policy document included: the general objectives of education, the language of instruction, types and stages of education, cultural relations, scientific and educational research, development strategies, educational planning, and other issues usually dealt with within such a context.

The **Ministerial Decree No. 25** of 1980 defined the selection criteria for educational and school leaderships based upon a combination of elements (personality, qualifications, date of graduation, experience, performance). A number of scores are allocated to each element, then calculated, grouped and classified in descending order. Posts are also classified in descending order and nomination is conducted accordingly. The **Ministerial Decree No. 65** of 1991 contains further elements regarding the classification of posts and the assessment of performance according to a scores system which takes into consideration staff qualifications, experience and performance.

Private education proceeds according to the **Decree No. 7** of 1980, which is comprised of seven chapters dealing with the various legal aspects organizing non-governmental schools.

The **Ministerial Decree No. 59** of 1990 establishes the major sectors of the Ministry of Education (Administrative and Financial Affairs, Educational Affairs, Cultural Affairs, and Planning and Curricular Affairs).

The Supreme Committee for Diversifying Secondary Education was created in 1994 in accordance with the **Ministerial Decree No. 53**.

The Document concerning the development of educational objectives was issued under the **Ministerial Decree No. 57** of 1994.

The **Supreme Education Council** (SEC), which plays a key role in the development and implementation of the education reform launched in 2001, has been established in November 2002 by the Emiri Decree No. 37.

In May 2006, the **Law No. 11** pertaining to independent schools has been issued. This new law gives the SEC the authority to issue licenses to individuals who wish to establish educational institutions as non-profit organizations.

In Qatar, education is free at all levels for Qatari nationals. The **Law No. 25** concerning free and compulsory education for all children was adopted in 2001.

**Administration and management of the education system**

Education in Qatar is under the responsibility of the **Ministry of Education**. In recent years, the following changes were introduced in the administrative system.

In accordance with the Ministerial Decree No. 59 of 1990, the major sectors of the Ministry of Education are: Administrative and Financial Affairs, Educational Affairs, Cultural Affairs, and Planning and Curricular Affairs.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
School administration is considered the cornerstone of the educational process as it directs, supervises, follows-up its activities, and takes part in evaluating its efforts. The schools of Qatar are distributed into four geographical zones, namely Doha (the capital city), Al-Shamal (north Qatar), Al-Khor (north-eastern parts), and Dukhan (west of the country). Each Educational Zone has a director and administrative staff. The director is responsible for all the technical, cultural, administrative and financial affairs of the zone.

Girls’ education is autonomous. Girls’ schools have their own administrators and educational guidance supervisors. However, girls’ education is linked with the central educational administration through the Girls’ Guidance Department. All services and facilities are provided through that department. The Girls’ Education Department, established in 1983/84, is comprised of the Secondary Education Unit, the Preparatory Education Unit, and the Primary Education Unit. This Department is affiliated to the Assistant Under-secretary for Educational Affairs. Each unit comprises three sections: the technical section, the cultural section, and the administrative and financial section. Through these administrative units, linkage between boys’ and girls’ education is maintained.

The Supreme Education Council (SEC) has been established in November 2002 by the Emiri Decree No. 37. It directs the nation’s education policy and plays an integral role in the development and implementation of the education reform effort, including the work of three Institutes operating under the Council. The SEC also approves the contracts for the independent schools. The Education Institute oversees and provides support services to the new independent schools in three essential areas: development of curriculum standards in key subject areas to facilitate a high level of learning; provision of professional development opportunities to teachers and principals and monitoring financial management of independent schools through periodic reports and audits. The Evaluation Institute is responsible for determining whether students and schools are attaining their goals, that is, whether students are learning and schools are educating. This Institute has two primary roles: to inform schools, teachers and students about their performance, thus helping them reflect and improve upon it; and to supply information to parents and other decision-makers on the extent to which the schools are fulfilling their role. This information is expected to assist parents in selecting the best schools for their children and allow school systems to assess the effectiveness of each individual school. The Higher Education Institute helps Qatari students to earn scholarships to the best colleges and universities in the world, advising and assisting them in the application process and supporting them during their studies and after graduation.

An independent school is a government-funded school that is granted autonomy to carry out its educational mission and objectives while being held accountable to terms agreed to in an operating contract. All independent schools must meet established curriculum standards in Arabic, English, mathematics and science, as well as comply with periodic financial audits. Tuition is free for Qatari students eligible for public education. The first group of independent schools began operation at the beginning of the 2004/05 academic year. Twelve schools opened September 2004 and 21 more schools opened in September 2005. Some additional 18 independent schools are being established in 2007/08, bringing the total number to 65 schools.
Since 1980, selection of educational and school leaderships has been conducted according to varied criteria, such as personality, qualifications, date of graduation, experience, and performance. A number of scores are allocated to each element, then calculated, grouped and classified in descending order. Performance is assessed according to the average scores obtained in five successive years. Specific qualifications have been determined for filling the posts of educational administration, cultural attaches’ offices, administrative and financial inspection, educational guidance and school administration. Every employee can thus easily identify his/her place in the promotions list by calculating the scores he/she has obtained. This method has secured occupational stability for employees and established the proper atmosphere for honorable competition among colleagues.

Since the beginning of formal education in Qatar (1956), school administration posts have been assigned to highly-qualified Arab persons regardless of their nationalities. However, in 1971/72 a decision was issued for gradual Qatariization of the administrative posts in order to maintain stability in this field. Accordingly, all vacant or new posts have been filled by Qataris only. In 1991/92, the percentage of Qataris holding top school administration posts reached 96%. In the meantime, other technical posts have been Qatariized, especially in the girls’ education sector.

**Structure and organization of the education system**

**Pre-school education**

Pre-school education (kindergarten) is run by the private sector. In general, kindergartens are attended by children aged 4-5 years.

**Primary education**

The duration of primary education is six years; children aged 6 years or more are accepted. Upon completion of this stage, pupils enrol in the preparatory stage.

**Secondary education**

The preparatory stage lasts three years and is divided into two types: general preparatory education, at the completion of which students can proceed to a general secondary, commercial secondary or technical secondary school; and religious preparatory education (for boys only). Secondary education offers the following options: (a) a general three-year course; a final general exam is held at the end of this stage and a General Secondary Certificate is granted to successful students; (b) a three-year technical course (boys only); on completion successful students are awarded the Technical Secondary Certificate; (c) a three-year commercial course (boys only), leading to the Commercial Secondary Certificate; (d) a three-year religious course (boys only) organized at the general secondary stage; a final general exam is held at the end and a secondary certificate is granted to those who pass.

The average duration of studies at the university level is four years. Qatar University is comprised of six colleges: Sharia (Islamic Law) and Islamic studies; education; arts and science; law; engineering; and business and economics.
Programmes cover over 60 specializations. Most undergraduate programmes leading to the award of a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science degree, last eight semesters (120 credits, full-time courses). Holders of a bachelor’s degree in business administration can pursue a master’s degree (36 credits, full-time courses). In addition, there are functional rehabilitation institutes, including language institutes teaching English, French and Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, and the Institute of Administration (a two-year course for government personnel).

The school year ranges from early September to the third week of June and is divided into two terms. The school year consists of 137 working days (or about twenty-eight working weeks, not including two weeks reserved for examinations) at the primary level, 149 working days (or about thirty working weeks, not including three weeks reserved for examinations) at the preparatory level, and 136 working days (or about twenty-seven working weeks) at the secondary level.

**The financing of education**

Formal education, which comprises all types and stages of general, specialized, vocational and higher education is totally financed by the State through annual budget allocations.

Non-governmental or private education comprises the pre-school stage (nurseries and kindergartens), some primary, preparatory and secondary schools in addition to community schools. The Ministry of Education provides these schools with some material assistance such as furniture, textbooks, stationery, medical care, etc.

No specific percentage for educational expenditure is allocated in the public budget. This is due to the fact that some budget items are included in other ministries budgets, such as school construction and maintenance (Ministry of Public Works); electricity and water supply (Ministry of Electricity and Water); gardens (Ministry of Agriculture); medical treatment and medicine (Ministry of Public Health); social assistance (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour); areas required for school buildings (Real Estate Department); students means of transport (Mechanical Equipment Department); etc. Other budgetary items of the Ministry of Education are allocated for expenditure on other educational services for other ministries (scholarships, training, etc.).

As far as educational current and capital expenditure are concerned, the Ministry of Education’s budget follows the same principles of classification applied in the public budget of the State. The following table shows the budget figures allocated in 1992-1995 (in Qatari riyal):

### World Data on Education. 6th edition, 2006/07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1992/93</th>
<th>1993/94</th>
<th>1994/95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>718,970,841</td>
<td>710,000,000</td>
<td>648,961,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>176,545,500</td>
<td>181,307,400</td>
<td>167,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary construction</td>
<td>10,080,000</td>
<td>12,175,000</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital constructions</td>
<td>51,609,433</td>
<td>72,326,006</td>
<td>65,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>957,205,774</td>
<td>975,808,406</td>
<td>888,961,022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the fiscal year 2006/07, the budget of Qatar University amounts to QR501.14 million.

### The educational process

Until 1970, the Ministry of Education used the curricula of other Arab countries. Since 1970, the Ministry has been continuously assessing, revising and developing its own curricula.

Concerning the curriculum development process, specialized committees articulate the objectives of education, select the subject content, and specify the methods of teaching and assessment procedures. Other specialized committees develop the textbooks according to these guidelines.

When developing the curriculum, the Ministry takes into account: the present and future needs of the country; Islamic beliefs and Arab values; the competencies to be acquired in each of the school subjects; the nature and developmental features of the learner; and new developments in various fields of knowledge particularly in education.

The curriculum follows ALECSO principles, which lay emphasis on building citizens with integrated personalities, who are able to adapt to their circumstances and to achieve a better life, and who are aware of the cultures and civilizations of other nations. In addition, curricula in Islamic education, Arabic language, social studies and other school subjects teach and encourage the principles and values necessary for living together in the twenty-first century, such as consultation and rejection of dogmatism, freedom of expression, responsibility towards the family, the country and humanity, and respect for the rights and opinions of others.

As mentioned, in the framework of the education reform launched in 2001 the Education Institute has developed curriculum standards in four subjects: Arabic, English, mathematics and science. These standards are internationally benchmarked, based on academic expectations of countries where students achieve at high levels. Provided they adhere to curriculum standards, independent school administrators have considerable latitude in determining how teachers help their students learn, with the freedom of using any materials and learning resources. Each student’s mastery of the knowledge, concepts and skills established in the curriculum standards will be evaluated through mandatory annual assessments.

Pre-primary education

Kindergartens are run by the non-governmental sector. The Ministry of Education prepared curricula and established model kindergartens in recent years. A curriculum was developed taking into account the aptitudes and skills of children. Textbooks were also developed for improving the skills of reading, numeracy and other applied capabilities. These books are now in use in all kindergartens. They have proved very successful as they introduce knowledge through games and entertainment.

In 2003/04, the gross enrolment ratio was estimated at 32.3% and the total number of teachers was 775.

To provide experience and to create an awareness regarding pre-primary education, the Ministry launched a project for establishing an ideal kindergarten equipped with all facilities, equipment and technologies to serve as a model for all existing kindergartens.

Primary education

The primary stage is the base of education and caters to children aged 6-12. The main task of this stage is to help children grow in a way to prepare them for living in their society and to enable them to carry on their study in the following stage. The objectives of primary education can be summarized as follows:

- to bring up children on the basis of the sublime principles of Islam;
- to create in children a sense of pride in their nation and their ideals, values and heritage;
- to achieve the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social growth of children;
- to help children acquire and practice the basic instruments of knowledge such as reading, writing, self-expression and arithmetic;
- to develop children’s imagination and satisfy their curiosity;
- to teach children the respect of discipline, co-operation and group work and to be apt to give and take;
- to help children understand their local environment properly, to become acquainted with its sources of wealth and to feel respect towards public property so as to be concerned with its safety;
- to help children acquire skills and sound attitudes and teach them to invest their leisure time in didactic games;
- to direct children’s interests and develop their artistic creativity.
Curricula and textbooks have undergone a number of successive developments involving a comprehensive perspective of the educational process with all its components (planning, experimentation, follow-up and evaluation). The development process has been characterized by flexibility and openness to the latest innovations in educational thinking. The experience of the Gulf States in this field, as compiled by the Arab Bureau for Education in the Gulf States (ABEGS), has also been taken into consideration. Curricula development has closely paralleled the development of textbooks, especially as concerns their layout, composition, style, study skills and teaching approach. The mental requirements of each educational stage have also been taken into consideration.

The weekly lesson timetable is shown in the table below:

**Primary education: weekly lesson timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of weekly periods in each grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic language</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and hygiene</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total weekly periods</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Information provided by the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC), November 2004. Each teaching period lasts 40 minutes (45 minutes in the case of physical education and fine arts).*

In accordance with the Educational Technology Plan, educational technology is being introduced as a curricular subject in the three stages of education, starting in fifth grade of primary education.

Assessment and evaluation of pupils’ learning achievements are among the most significant components of the educational process. In Grades I-IV, pupils sit four examinations a year as follows:

- First exam (20% of the total mark) during the first half of November;
- Second exam (20% of the total mark) during the first half of January;
- Third exam (20% of the total mark) during the first half of March;
- Fourth exam (40% of the total mark) to be held at the end of the school year according to a timetable scheduled by the Ministry of Education.
The marks obtained by each pupil are calculated by the addition of marks gained in the four exams mentioned above according to the percentage allocated to each.

Promotion grades are those grades where examinations are regularly organized, from Grade V of primary education to Form II of secondary. Students in Form III sit a general examination administered by the Ministry. The evaluation system of the promotion grades has undergone some developments in recent years: regular evaluation tests throughout the whole school year have been adopted instead of pre-scheduled exams; factors such as students growth, activity, behaviour, effectiveness, interaction and participation in the educational process are also included in the evaluation process, and the average required for passing in any subject has been raised to 50% instead of 30% or 40% in order to improve the quality of learning achievement.

The Ministry of Education has adopted a comprehensive two-semester evaluation system, as it reduces the educational burden on students, provides more in-depth study of the curricula, and promotes applied skills. The system was introduced in 1989/90 and adopted in all grades leading to the general secondary certificate, including the first four grades of primary education by 1994. All the regulations pertaining to the evaluation system are compiled in one statute covering all types of examinations. A special section for assessment and evaluation is annexed to the Department of Curricula and Textbooks. The staff recruited for this section also issued the *Teacher’s manual in examinations*.

In 2000/01, the gross enrolment ratio was estimated at 105%. The pupil-teacher ratio was 13:1. In 2005/06, there were 141 primary schools (all sectors, including independent schools), with 5,272 teachers and 47,630 pupils enrolled.

Pupils completing primary education are admitted to the preparatory stage.

**Preparatory and secondary education**

The preparatory stage is an intermediate stage between primary and secondary education. It could be considered a final stage for those whose circumstances may hinder their educational pursuit, after having received a suitable vocational training, after the completion of such stage. The objectives of preparatory education are as follows:

- to acquire a higher level of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social maturity;
- to deeply root the students’ national affiliation and promote their pride of their Arab nation;
- to provide the minimum education required by youngsters through pursuing their religious studies and providing other types of basic human and scientific knowledge;
- to acquaint the students with their local environment and the Arab World, and to develop an inclination towards aesthetic creativity.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
to prepare students to live in an Islamic society open to the world from which they take and to which they give as well;

- to prepare students for the practical life through: acquiring practical skills; respect for manual work, group work and production; being acquainted with their local and other communities.

The weekly lesson timetable for the preparatory stage is shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of weekly period in each form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic language</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene and general science</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine arts</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total weekly periods</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Ibid. Each teaching period lasts 40 minutes (45 minutes in the case of physical education and fine arts).

The general preparatory certificate was abolished in 1987. Students completing Form III of the preparatory stage have access to the secondary stage.

Secondary education has a special importance as it coincides with the intermediate and late stage of adolescence for boys and girls. Upon this stage lies the burden of satisfying their needs in the most critical stage of their life. This stage could also be a bridge to universities or higher education institutions for preparing higher cadres in the various political, economic and social fields. It also could be one of the channels of preparing skilled workers necessary for development purposes. It also could be a final stage for some students after having been prepared and trained for practical life. Due to these facts, in this stage much concern is given to the bringing up of citizens armed with the traits and requirements of their growth in a specific social pattern. The objectives of this stage can be summarized as follows:

- to help students formulate a rational philosophy for their life based upon genuine Islamic and Arab values;
- to help students identify their present and future social roles;
- to get acquainted with the students inclinations and aptitudes and in turn guide them to the most suitable type of secondary education that would furnish
them with knowledge and conduct and render them qualified for their designated vocational and social roles;

- to enable students to acquire skills of research and critical thought that will provide them with instruments for solving their problems and adopting sound decisions;

- to acquaint and guide students to the various types of higher education and the fields of occupations that correspond with their abilities, aptitudes and inclinations;

- to provide students in all specializations with a broader knowledge of general culture and to direct them to the sources of such knowledge through practice;

- to pursue national preparation of students by providing them with facts and information that enable them to understand world trends and their impact on Qatar and the Arab world;

- to provide students with the principles of educational democracy in the context of their theoretic and practical study through school daily practice;

- to provide students with the opportunity to acquire certain experiences of work in industry, agriculture and commerce and other relevant and useful activities.

In accordance with the Secondary Education Diversification Plan (1993-2003), secondary education is being reformed as follows: (a) general education, composed of two scientific sections (physics and mathematics; chemistry and biology), and two literary sections (languages; social studies); (b) technical education, composed of four sections comprising eleven specializations, namely the building and construction technology section (building technologies; carpentry and decoration); the mechanics section (light vehicles; heavy vehicles); the electricity and electronics section (industrial electronics; radio and television; air-conditioning and refrigeration; electricity); the minerals section (fitting and turning; blacksmiting and welding; metal shaping); (c) commercial education, composed of three sections, namely office administration, intermediate accounting, and banking and insurance. In addition, two new types of education are being introduced: agricultural education (which includes soil and irrigation technology, gardening, livestock, and fisheries) and applied education (which includes postal service technology, typing technologies, electronic photography technology, hotel services, and nursing).

As mentioned, in accordance with the Educational Technology Plan, educational technology is currently being introduced as a curricular subject in the three stages of education. The plan comprises sixteen practical fields. Each school chooses the fields that are most convenient to its existing facilities and to its students’ aptitudes. Informatics was introduced in 1990/91 in the curricula of seven secondary schools (six for boys and one for girls). The experiment was then generalized to other secondary schools. The plan developed for generalizing informatics as a teaching subject is currently implemented in forty-one secondary schools (first two forms) and in an additional eleven schools (Form III).
The weekly lesson timetable for the general secondary stage is presented below:

**General secondary education: weekly lesson timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>First form</th>
<th>Second form</th>
<th>Third form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Literary section</td>
<td>Scientific section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic language</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French language</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated sciences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy &amp; psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine arts</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home economics</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total weekly periods</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ibid. Each teaching period lasts 40 minutes (45 minutes in the case of physical education and fine arts). B = boys; G = girls.*

A final examination is held at the end of secondary education and the secondary (general, technical, commercial or religious) certificate is awarded to those who pass the exam successfully. In 2000/01, the gross enrolment ratio at the secondary level was 89%. The pupil-teacher ratio was 7:1. In 2005/06 there were 73 preparatory schools (all sectors, including independent schools) with 2,863 teachers and 26,500 students enrolled; the number of secondary schools was 59, with 2,612 teachers and 23,946 students enrolled. (SEC, 2007).

**Assessing learning achievement nationwide**

In the spring of 2004, 80,000 Qatari students participated in the first-ever assessment including four different tests in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science. The Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment (QCEA) includes a series of tests for assessing and monitoring the learning of students in Grades 1-12 in Arabic, English, mathematics and science. This Assessment differs from the high school national exam and other tests currently administered in the country. It uses a multiple choice format and, for some grades, an additional essay format. Other formats may be developed for
future tests. Student test scores are essential to the Evaluation Institute’s ability to measure student progress and school performance.

The QCEA was administered to some 70,000 students in 2006. As regards Arabic, the percentage of students meeting the standards ranges from 2% (grade 4) to 5% (grades 6 and 11). In the case of English, the percentage of students meeting the standards ranges from 2% (grades 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9) to 3% (grades 6, 10 and 11). For mathematics, the percentage of students meeting the standards ranges from less than 1% (grades 4-9 and 11) to just over 1% (grade 10). Finally, as regards science no students at all grade levels met the standards.

The Evaluation Institute is also responsible for another key project, e.g. ensuring that schools are accountable for providing quality education. This involves a programme of surveys (Qatar Comprehensive School Survey, QCSS) seeking the views on Qatari education of principals, teachers, social workers, parents and students. The Evaluation Institute’s School Evaluation Office has responsibility for designing, implementing and overseeing processes for evaluating all public and private Arabic schools. Data is obtained from many sources including students, parents, teachers, principals, school social workers and school reports, as well as information independently obtained by Evaluation Institute staff during school visits. This data is analyzed and evaluated as part of a report on the overall performance of schools, individually and collectively. On an annual basis, the Evaluation Institute publishes a school report card with comprehensive information about each school’s performance and characteristics, as well as collective tests scores of the students at each school.

The Evaluation Institute released the second annual report on schools and schooling in Qatar in July 2007. Key points included the following:

- Problematic student performance against the National Curriculum Standards in Arabic, English and Mathematics and Science across all grades tested (grades 4 to 11). Overall, between 2% and 5% (varying for different grades) met the Arabic and English standards, and generally 0% met the Science and Mathematics standards.

- At most grades there was some slight improvement in average test scores for Arabic which was due to improvements in the scores of private Arabic and Ministry of Education school students; the latest English score averages were about the same as the previous years with a slight decrease in independent school students’ scores being countered by minor increases in the scores of private Arabic and Ministry of Education schools’ students’ scores; variable results were observed for mathematics and science but, in general, the average scores for independent schools’ students were trending a little lower than those for the previous year.

- Overall, large proportion of parents (80%) expressed satisfaction with the education offered by the schools this was slightly lower than that of the previous year (82%).

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
• Student absenteeism, as reported by parents, increased to 8% from the 6% suggested in the previous survey.

• The average amount of homework assigned (3.1 hours a week) has increased (from 2.1 hours a week).

• Far greater access to computers, with their being an average of 38 computers per school or about 13 students per computer as compared to previous figures of an average of 29 computers per school or about 31 students per computer.

• There was a slight increase (about half an hour on average) in the amount of time spent learning at school in a typical week with primary students, depending upon grade, spending about 21 to 23 hours week and preparatory and secondary students pending approximately 24 hours a week.

• Huge increase in the time spent on teacher professional development during the school year with there being an average of 29.8 hours reported this time as compared to an average of 8.3 hours reported previously.

• Teacher qualification levels are similar with 91% of teachers having degrees this time compared to 93% reporting having degrees in the previous survey; and 65% actually having a formal teaching qualification (versus 69% having such a qualification previously).

Finally, the Evaluation Institute oversees the implementation of three major international assessment exercises in Qatar: the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). About 14,500 Qatari students participated in the PISA and PIRLS assessment exercises in 2006.

**Higher education**

Before the establishment of Qatar University in 1973, the country had to depend upon foreign universities. At present, study abroad is confined to specializations not available at the university. By 1994/95, the number of students abroad amounted to 1,135, including 721 graduate students and 414 post-graduate students.

Qatar University started with four colleges, and currently is comprised of six colleges, namely Sharia (Islamic Law) and Islamic studies, education, arts and science, engineering, law, and business and economics. Programmes cover over 60 specializations. Most undergraduate programmes leading to the award of a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science degree, last eight semesters (120 credits, full-time courses). Holders of a bachelor’s degree in business administration can pursue a master’s degree (36 credits, full-time courses). A total of 7,660 students registered in Fall 2005 (of whom 73% were female). In 2005/06 there were 587 faculty members and 792 employees, and the student to faculty ratio was 18:1.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
The task of preparing teachers has been assigned to the faculty of education. There is also an Institute for Nursing affiliated to the Ministry of Public Health.

In 2003, the University embarked on an ambitious reform initiative that aims to continuously evolve teaching and learning quality, and promote its administrative efficiency. Three fundamental principles guide the reform process: autonomy, decentralization, and accountability. The first goal of the reform has been accomplished. It aimed to make Qatar University an autonomous institution with a Board of Regents that directly reports to the Emir. This means that the University is authorized to govern itself in all respects, for example manage all finances, hire all staff, and approve the mission and vision statements. The second principle that drives the reform process is that the authority and responsibility related to a task should be devolved to the unit responsible for carrying out the function in question. This means that programme, department, and college administrators should have the ability to make a number of decisions that affect their units. Consequently, they should have control over an appropriate budget, be able to recommend personnel decisions that affect their units, and propose changes in curriculum, including assessment policies. While the Senior Reform Committee members agreed that the modern university cannot be effectively or efficiently managed solely with a top-down approach, with decentralization comes the necessity to develop new accountability mechanisms. These policies and procedures are based on the assumption that with the freedom to make decisions (that are in accordance with the University’s policies, procedures and operating principles), comes the need for assessment and evaluation of the level of performance achieved. Therefore, there is a need for new policies and procedures for faculty and administrator evaluation and budget controls, as well as for venues to review personnel, policy and procedural decisions. Furthermore, accountability requires new compensation policies to implement the results of the assessment and evaluations.

As a result of the reform, all students will have to adhere to a minimum standard of admissions. Furthermore, admission to specific degree-granting programmes will be dependent upon satisfying particular requirements for each programme. A Core Curriculum is being developed that provides a broad foundation of knowledge and skills preparing students for multiple professional careers and social roles. The Core Curriculum will be flexible, allowing students a degree of choice in selecting their courses, as well as the ability to complete its requirements across their full tenure at the University. The College of Arts and Science will be the institutional home for the Core Curriculum. In addition to improving the conditions for teaching and learning, the reform effort aims to generate a stronger University community. This dimension of the reform involves providing students with better systems of advising and registration, as well as the introduction of an Office of Career Services and a new range of student activities. In particular, the Office of Career Services will advise students on career opportunities, equip them with the required skills for their career development, and seek opportunities for students through being a link between them and potential employers.
**Special education**

The Ministry has established schools for students with special needs, such as disabled learners and low achievers. It has also established the Center for Talented Students, which aims at discovering gifted students and developing their interests.

**Private education**

The Decree No. 7 of 1980 deals with the various legal aspects organizing non-governmental (private) schools. However, some amendments have been drafted by the Ministry of Education regarding co-education, school ownership, areas of student activity, access to the private non-Arabic schools, and health services. Private education is further organized according to the internal Regulations Statute issued by the Ministry in implementing the above-mentioned Decree. Planning of non-governmental education is conducted by a special committee chaired by the Assistant Under-secretary for Educational Affairs. Implementation of the plans in this regard is assigned to the Department of Non-Governmental (private) Education, which carries out all tasks of follow-up and evaluation.

Curricula of non-governmental schools vary according to the type and nationality of the school. However, Arab kindergartens follow the curricula determined by the Ministry of Education. In Qatar, there are two types of non-governmental schools: non-Arab community schools (such as the British, French, Iranian, etc.) and the Arab schools that follow the rules and curricula, and use the textbooks of, the Ministry of Education; and the Arab community schools, which apply their own national curricula.

The Ministry of Education adopted a plan for developing non-governmental education in order to increase the material support and provide sufficient areas of land for establishing schools. The plan covered the period from 1991/92 to 1995/96. In 1991, the Cabinet approved the following arrangements in support of non-governmental education: recruiting Qatari female principals at the request of the school owners; recruiting one female teacher for every kindergarten; and pursuing the current support by providing the schools with textbooks, stationery, teaching aids, educational guidance, health care, in addition to exempting these schools of electricity and water supply charges.

These arrangements led to an increase in the number of non-governmental schools. In 1994/95, excluding kindergartens (all of which were non-governmental), there were 49 non-governmental primary schools (17,784 pupils enrolled and 1,752 teachers) and 27 preparatory and secondary schools (7,096 students enrolled and 191 teachers). 

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

School libraries have been developed so as to provide advanced library service. The aim is to help the libraries interact with their communities and provide them with all sources of learning to achieve lifelong education. The number of school libraries to be developed yearly ranges between seventeen and eighteen, based on a priority list considering the number of students and the existing facilities of the libraries concerned. The plan also emphasizes the fact that new school libraries should be established according to the international specifications of the learning sources centres. In 1992/93, seven school libraries were established to serve as models. They were equipped with all the modern facilities and technologies required for learning sources centres. In 1993/94 twelve more libraries were set up.

Furthermore, the Ministry has adopted a project for producing low-cost and locally made laboratory equipment, developed school buildings, and computerized the education system at all levels, by supplying schools with computer laboratories and establishing computer services within the Ministry.

Curricula are being improved and developed as regards contents and methods for the renewal of education. In 1994/95, after satisfactory experimentation, the Ministry of Education adopted several new secondary textbooks concerning the following subjects: sociology, Arabic language, science, Islamic education, home economics, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, and methods of research.

By the same year, the following new textbooks for the preparatory and primary stages were completed: six mathematics textbooks with their activity books for the primary stage; two Arabic textbooks for the primary and preparatory stages; five sociology textbooks for the primary and preparatory stages; and three home economics textbooks for the girls’ schools of the preparatory stage.

Adult and non-formal education

The Ministry of Education organizes literacy and adult education programmes. Evening schooling is conducted for adults through two integrated courses: a literacy course leading to the end of the primary stage, followed by an adult education course covering the preparatory and secondary stages. In 1994/95, the number of literacy and adult education students amounted to 4,616 (2,665 male students and 1,951 female students).

The Ministry has also prepared an overall plan for eradicating illiteracy by the year 2006. The plan is characterized by the following features: adopting quantitative and qualitative educational, economic, cultural and social objectives; adopting a modern concept of literacy that calls upon the integration of literacy efforts with education, guidance and societal development; recruiting the various resources of the governmental and non-governmental organizations to achieve this goal; blocking all sources of illiteracy to avoid retreat; and utilizing various types of incentives to motivate the illiterate to pursue education.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
As a result of efforts of the Ministry, the illiteracy rate decreased from 24.3% in 1981 to 16.7% in 1997 for the age group 15-24 years. A five-year plan was launched in 1998 to eradicate illiteracy among Qataris between 10 and 45 years of age. The programme consists of two one-year levels: the first is up to the second primary grade, while the second is up to the fourth primary grade.

**Teaching staff**

All teachers must hold a Bachelor of Arts degree obtained at the faculty of education after a four-year course. To achieve more orientation in the field of teaching through post-graduate courses, the Ministry of Education, in co-operation with Qatar University, has set up a course for a special diploma in education, at the completion of which holders are granted an allowance. Access to this course is available for holders of the B.A. with the mark “good”. The duration of the course is 22 credit hours and obtaining such a degree qualifies for a M.A. in education.

Due to the fact that a large number of teachers are holding university degrees not oriented to the teaching profession, one-year evening courses have been conducted at the Faculty of Education to obtain the general diploma in education. An allowance is granted to those who obtain such a degree.

In order to attain high-quality teaching, Qatari nationals and Arabs have been appointed as teachers in government schools at all stages. In order to continuously improve their competencies, the Ministry has been providing a wide database of teaching strategies through the provision of teachers’ guidebooks. It has also organized training courses on new curricula and textbooks, and exchange visits to strengthen relations between educational professionals and/or institutions.

Within the framework of the education reform launched in 2001, the Education Institute under the Supreme Education Council plans to offer a variety of teacher training programmes in order to support independent school teachers in their professional development and growth. The topics that the Institute plans to address include “best practices” for teaching the new curriculum standards, preparing students for annual assessments, and the special needs of new teachers. There are also plans for programmes designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of experienced teachers, who may then be invited to develop coursework, lead training, mentor new teachers, and become master teachers. In addition, School Support Organizations (SSOs) have been assigned to all independent schools and will help teachers develop lesson plans to reflect the curriculum standards, as well as offer guidance on effective teaching methods. The SSOs were selected for their broad range of expertise in helping communities develop and maintain successful independent schools.

Recently, the Education Institute issued new rules and policies in regard to Qatari personnel at the independent schools. The new rules specify the salaries, allowances and training that school operators must provide to Qatari staff. They also address issues of performance assessment, secondment of staff, annual leave, and end of service entitlements. These policies are based on the following goals and principles: to provide opportunities for Qatari educators to obtain well-paid jobs; to develop a system to reward staff for exemplary performance; to set minimum limits

for staff benefits and develop a means for school operators to attract and train Qatari staff; to make distinctions between full-time employees, sabbatical employees and seconded employees; to link the professional development of staff with the salary scale and promotion policy; and to ensure there is an inclusive system to evaluate and develop staff performance.

The rules require that all independent schools develop a staff organizational chart and salary scales which then must be approved by the Education Institute. The schools must identify each job by title and include a job description and the duties associated with it. Concerning staff salaries, the rules state that Qatari employees must receive a basic monthly salary not less than:

- QR6,500 for university graduates (previously QR3,750);
- QR4,400 for secondary school graduates (previously QR2,500);
- QR2,500 for employees with less than a secondary school certificate (previously QR1,500).

These salaries are in addition to any allowances to which the staff is entitled, such as for job nature, transport and housing. These allowances must not be less than the allowances offered to employees holding the same job title in the Civil Service (plus any social allowance). Full-time sabbatical employees must be offered a basic salary of not less than their current basic salary plus an allowance as incentive, if applicable. In addition, these employees must also be given a monthly amount not less than the following:

- QR2,500 for university graduates;
- QR1,800 for secondary school graduates;
- QR1,000 for employees with less than a secondary school certificate.

Employees seconded from the Civil Service will continue to receive all their entitlements from the Civil Service, in addition to a monthly allowance of not less than:

- QR2,000 for the university graduates;
- QR1,200 for the secondary school graduates;
- QR800 for employees with less than a secondary school certificate.

**Educational research and information**

Since 1974 the Ministry of Education has given strong emphasis to educational research. Research and planning are designed as successive series monitored by a number of active partners, within a context of structures and forms starting with the first level staff of any school up to the decision-makers. Educational research and planning secure regular adaptation of the objectives through comments, observations and evaluations. Developing educational research and planning and reinforcing the

concerned organs are considered as prerequisites for the educational development process. The institutions supporting the development of educational research are:

Qatar University: by 1973/74, the two faculties of education (for men and women) were established as a nucleus for the University of Qatar. This is considered an addition to the efforts of researchers in the Ministry of Education, as it has helped in developing and utilizing the various types of educational research, case studies and comparative studies.

The Educational Research Centre: in 1980, a centre for educational research was established at the University of Qatar, steered by a board formed of members from the Ministry of Education and Qatar University. The Centre has helped educational research to explore a diversity of areas and to deal with all issues of education and work out solutions for the problems that may arise.

In total, more than 200 research studies on education have been conducted by the Ministry of Education and the Educational Research Centre, dealing with the major part of educational issues (i.e. education economics, sociology, efficiency, etc.) The Ministry has notably conducted studies concerning: evaluation of the educational process; educational wastage (grade repetition and drop-out); interaction between school and environment; the role of schools as regards community service, particularly in the cultural, religious, health and sports fields; school efficiency; and many others.

The Educational Development Office was established to prepare plans, evaluate various aspects of the educational process, carry out research projects, and keep abreast of recent educational trends.

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Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
Web resources

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