

Context: Background Information:**Salient Features: Basic facts and salient features of teacher education in the country, including present and emerging issues and challenges**

Prior to the establishment of Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) on 27 March 2004, teacher education and training in Malaysia was entirely thought out, planned and organized by the Ministry of Education (MOE). From 2004 on, the secondary and primary school teacher education and training were separated and given to MOHE and MOE respectively. MOE trains primary teachers via the Institute of Teacher Education (ITE) (previously known as Teacher Training Colleges) and MOHE trains the secondary teachers via the government-funded universities.

Teacher Education Division (TED) is a section in the Malaysian Ministry of Education, which oversees teacher training in Malaysia. The TED has various units that help in its operations. For example, the Planning and Policy Unit plans and determines the direction of teacher education in Malaysia. The Curriculum Unit determines the curriculum for the different courses offered in the teacher training colleges – the Assessment Unit handles the setting of examination questions and marking of answer scripts as well as the awarding of the student teachers' grades, the Student-selection Unit conducts the aptitude tests and the interviews and selects the candidates for the teacher training colleges. Basically, all administrations with regards to teacher-education other than the training are administered by the TED. The TED is headed by a director and three deputy directors who manage the administration of the division. There are also several assistant directors who head the various units and these heads of units are supported by senior academic and clerical staff. Though MOE is solely responsible for primary school teachers' education and training and MOHE is responsible for secondary school teacher education and training, all other affairs in relation to schools and teachers, whether it is secondary or primary schools or teachers, fall under the jurisdiction of MOE.

Over the years teacher education in Malaysia has gone through many changes to meet the challenges of modern times. Thirty years ago, college graduates were conferred certificates in teaching after attending a two-year pre-service training program. Twenty years ago the training was extended to three years and the students were awarded a Diploma in Teaching. In the last five years efforts have been made to award a degree for those students who pass the courses and the training program has been extended to five and a half years.

Important national information/issues on politics, economics, language, etc.

The government hopes to raise education in Malaysia to world standards. For that purpose, it is making the effort to have 100 percent of teachers in secondary schools be degree holders by year 2010 and at least 70 percent of teachers in primary schools be degree holders by the same year. In 2006, teacher training colleges were upgraded to the status of institutes and they are now known as Institute of Teacher Education (ITE). The aim of establishing ITEs is to further enhance the quality of teacher education in Malaysia. Lecturers in ITEs are expected to have at least a master's degree in their respective disciplines and are encouraged to obtain a PhD in their respective fields. Other issues concern ensuring teacher trainees develop competencies to teach in the different medium schools e.g., Malay (Mandarin, Tamil, and Malay plus Arabic) as well as developing proficiency in English (see Highlights below).

Highlights

The biggest challenge for the TED division is catering to the different medium schools that coexist in the Malaysian education system. There are four major types of schools in Malaysia. The National Schools, which use the Malay language as their medium of instruction (though in the last seven years English has been used to teach science and mathematics), the Chinese Schools, which use Mandarin as the medium of instruction, the Tamil schools, which use the Tamil language as their medium of instruction and the privately managed Islamic religious schools (whose administration has been taken over by the Malaysian Ministry of Education in the last five years), which use the Malay and Arabic languages for teaching. ITEs have to provide training in the respective languages while teaching other related subjects such as sociology and psychology in the national language.

The universities have, accordingly, altered their approach to teacher education and training based on the current events and changes in the Malaysian education scenario. For instance, the Mathematics and Science teacher education are now conducted in English. Also, the education and training provided for the teachers at the universities would enable them to function effectively in the Chinese and Tamil type schools. Universities such as Universiti Islam Antabangsa Malaysia (UIAM) and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) do offer programs that train Religious and Arabic language teachers, who would be able to teach in any type of secondary school.

In addition, the ITEs and universities need to provide English language courses for would-be English teachers and non-English teachers as it is compulsory for teachers of all four types of schools to be proficient in English.

As for the teacher education programs at the universities, almost all of the programs offered are for pre-service teachers. However, there are some in-service teachers who are pursuing their bachelor's degree as part of the national agenda for all teachers to have a bachelor's degree. Under the program of Program Khas Pensiswazahan Guru (Special Program of Graduate Teachers) or PKPG, these in-service teachers undergo the first year education at selected ITEs before continuing another two years at a local university of their choice. These teachers are sponsored by MOE and given priority in placement or posting of teachers after finishing their studies.

Teacher Education Institutions:

Number of institutes

Pre-Service: There are 27 ITEs which are strategically located in all 14 states of Malaysia which provide both pre-service and in-service courses. In the past, the teacher training institutes were referred to as teacher training colleges. However, with the upgrading of the teacher training programs from holding diplomas to degrees, the status of the colleges has been raised to higher education institutes, and since 2006 they have been referred to as teacher training institutes.

In-Service: The 27 teacher training institutes. As for in-service training for practicing teachers, some of the universities do plan and organize short-term courses, seminars and conferences for these teachers to enhance their teaching abilities and their professional and personal development, as well as increase their knowledge. For example, the School of Educational Studies of USM conducts workshops, seminars and short courses for pre-school teachers. The Faculty of Educational Studies of UPM organizes off-shore and distance education programs for busy teachers who are unable to attend campus-based academic programs. Almost all faculties/schools of education of the 13 universities have organized national and/or international conferences, where in-service teachers have either presented papers or participated in the conferences. This is

a recent trend of engagement in professional development activities by teachers in Malaysia.

Enrollment

Pre-Service: The student population in the 27 institutes is about 800-1000 per institute.

Strategic faculty details

Pre-Service: Most, if not all, teacher training institutes have the following departments: The Malay Studies Department, The Department of Languages (to include the English Studies Unit, The Tamil Studies Unit and the Chinese Studies Unit), The Islamic Religion and Moral Studies Department, The Science and Environmental Studies Department, The Mathematics Department, The Education Department (sociology, psychology and pedagogy), the Social Studies Department, the Physical Education Department, and The Department of Information and Technology. Each of these departments has a Head of Department who is directly responsible for the management of their department. Each academic staff member (lecturers) is placed in one of these departments based on the subject that they are teaching. Apart from these academic departments, all of the 27 teacher training institutes also have four supporting units. They are: the Examination Unit, the Co-curriculum Unit, the In-service Unit and the Practicum Unit, which are headed by respective Unit leaders and assisted by academic and nonacademic staff. Each of these 27 teacher training institutes is headed by a director and a deputy director who manage the general administration of the institutes.

In-Service: The staff (lecturers) of the teacher training institutes provide the in-service courses.

Number of years to complete

Pre-Service: The Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching: One-year course, **The**

Bachelor in Teaching: Five and a half-year course

In-Service: The two- to three-day short-refresher courses are conducted by lecturers from the various departments for practicing teachers. "Phonology and Phonetics" for English language teachers and "Teaching using the Inquiry Method" for science teachers are some examples of such refresher courses. The teacher training institutes also provide six-week, 10-week and 14-week courses in various disciplines for practicing teachers. One very important in-service course is the three-year Diploma in Teaching conducted for practicing temporary teachers in schools.

Name and Contact of Apex Organization

Pre-Service: Teacher Education Division (TED), Malaysian Ministry of Education.

Contact Details:

Bahagian Pendidikan Guru

Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia

(Teacher Education Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia)

Aras 2-6, Blok E13, Kompleks Kerajaan Parcel E,

Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan

62604 Putrajaya, West Malaysia

Teacher Education Curricula (i.e. content of TE programs):

Who determines the content (subject matter & pedagogy)?

Pre-Service: The teacher training institutes

In-Service: The teacher training institutes

Time allocation for various courses

Pre-Service: The Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching: One year course, **The Bachelor in Teaching:** Five and a half-year course

In-Service: The teacher training institutes provide a wide range of such courses for practicing teachers, such as two- to three-day short-refresher courses (e.g., “Phonology and Phonetics” for English language teachers, “Teaching using the Inquiry Method” for science teachers); six-week, ten-week and 14-week courses in various disciplines for practicing teachers. One very important in-service course is the three-year Diploma in Teaching conducted for practicing temporary teachers in schools.

Educational Networks:

Name	Contact Person	Address/Email/Phone/Fax
Ministry of Education Malaysia	Director General of Education	Aras 8, Blok E8 Paracel E, Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan 62604 Putrajaya West Malaysia
Schools' Divisions	Pengarah Bahaian Sekolah (Director of Schools' Divisions)	Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan 62604 Putrajaya West Malaysia
Penang Reading Council	Ambigapathy Pandian	Universiti Sains Malaysia Penang, Malaysia

Additional Contacts

Apart from the MOE and MOHE, there are many other educational networks and organizations in Malaysia that have significantly contributed to the development, progress and quality of education in this country. These networks and organizations are basically nongovernmental organizations and nonprofit-oriented bodies. These networks and organizations have contributed considerably to the national educational settings in terms of professional development of teachers by organizing various programs, activities and events. Below are some of the networks and organizations with some of their programs and activities:

- Malaysian English Language Teaching Association, well-known as MELTA (www.melta.org.my) – a professional, voluntary, nonprofit organization, which was officially formed in 1982. Its stated constitutional aim is to promote English language teaching in Malaysia. MELTA has organized numerous International and national conferences on English Language Teaching. They have also conducted research in the area of ELT.
- Persatuan Teknologi Pendidikan Malaysia, i.e. Malaysian Educational Technology Association (META), which has played a key role in promoting the use of technology for educational purposes. As with MELTA, META has organized national conferences related to educational technology.
- Malaysian Association of Music Education (MAME) – www.mame.com.my, established in 2002, aims to increase the awareness of the importance of music education. MAME too has organized various national and international conferences.
- Persatuan Pendidikan Jasmani, Sains Sukan & Kecergasan Malaysia (PPJSSKM) or The Malaysian Association of Physical Education, Sport Sciences & Fitness

- The British Council was established to enhance teaching and learning of the English language. They provide various resources, expertise and advice in promoting ELT.
- The National Union of Teaching Professionals (NUTP) was established in 1974 and aims to position itself as an efficient and effective union to obtain and maintain the basic rights and privileges of teachers in Malaysia

Pre-requisites: Pre-service teacher education system entrance requirements:

Requirements for Entrance into Teacher Education Programs: Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching: The Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching is a one-year course for graduates with a degree in the relevant subject from any local or foreign university recognized by the Malaysian government. Aspiring candidates with the required qualifications apply online to the TED when an advertisement is posted. The Student Selection Unit will call the short-listed candidates to sit for a written aptitude test. Candidates will be further short-listed based on their performance on the aptitude test and be called for an interview. Based on their performances in the interview, candidates will be offered a place in any one of the ITEs or universities to pursue a Diploma in Teaching. During their one-year training the postgraduate trainee teachers are given an allowance of RM1000/- per month.

Bachelor in Teaching: The requirement for the Bachelor of Teaching course is a strong pass in the Form 5 Malaysian public examination known as 'Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia'. A minimum of six credits equivalent to the 'O' levels is the basic requirement to qualify for the course. Aspiring candidates with the necessary qualifications apply online when an advertisement is posted. Short-listed candidates will be called for an interview.

For primary school teacher education, selected candidates will complete a one and a half-year foundation course. At the end of the course the students will have to sit and pass a written examination. On successful completion of the foundation course the students proceed to do their degree program in the related disciplines, which involves four years of study. Upon completion of the degree program the successful trainee teachers will receive the Bachelor of Teaching degree and be posted to the various schools in Malaysia. During their five and a half years in college the trainee teachers are given an allowance of RM345/- per month.

As for secondary school teacher education, candidates will pursue a four-year teacher education program at local universities. In order to qualify for this program, the candidates are required to have a strong CGPA in the 'Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia' examination, which is equivalent to an A-level examination. They must have a strong CGPA in the matriculation program. Candidates are then required to undergo an aptitude test. Short listed candidates will then be interviewed by a panel of teacher educators from the local universities. Successful candidates will then proceed to do their degree program in the related discipline for four years.

Language Requirement: The institutes provide English language courses for would-be English teachers and non-English teachers as it is compulsory for teachers of all four types of schools to be proficient in English.

Numbers of Months or Years of Minimum Education: Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching: These individual candidates are university graduates. **Bachelor in Teaching:** A minimum of six credits equivalent to the 'O' levels is the basic requirement to qualify for the course.

Internships: Students from both courses have to do a stipulated period of practical teaching in schools where they will be supervised and assessed by mentor teachers and lecturers. For the Postgraduate Diploma there are three months of teaching practice during their one-year training course, while the Bachelor degree program trainees will do their practicum during their final year.

In addition, the degree program trainees have a school-based experience (like an internship) for about two weeks in each year of their studies.

6. Standards (Licensing of Teachers – Initial and Continuing):

Probationary Period: Upon successful completion of their courses, trainee teachers are posted to either primary or secondary schools in Malaysia based on the type of courses that they have undergone in ITEs and universities. In schools they have to serve for three years before they are confirmed as full-fledged teachers.

Licensure Renewal/Sustaining: Malaysian teachers are given a blue book, which is considered their license to teach. Teachers do not need to renew their license. They may be sacked on disciplinary grounds and at which point their license will be cancelled.

Evaluation and Rewards: Teachers are observed by a panel of inspectors from time to time while headmasters and their deputies make annual appraisals of performance for promotion and other corresponding rewards, such as the excellent service award which carries a one-off award of RM1000/- and a certificate of commendation from the government.

Continuing Education: In-service programs are mainly refresher courses or updated courses. They range from two- to three-day courses to six weeks, 10 weeks and 14 weeks. Currently practicing teachers who are teaching subjects for which they were not trained undergo six- to ten-week conversion courses to qualify them to teach those subjects and usually they are given a certificate of participation from the respective colleges. For example, non-English trained teachers teaching English are given a six-week conversion course while teachers teaching science who are not trained in the subject undergo a 10-week conversion course. The 14-week course is a “smart school” program focusing on the use of ICT in teaching. Apart from these courses, the three-year Diploma in Teaching in-service course is conducted during the school holidays. This course is specially designed to cater to the many untrained teachers who have been teaching in Malaysian schools for several years and have missed out on mainstream teacher training. They follow the face-to-face training component during their school holidays and the distance learning mode component during their teaching days for three years. To qualify as trained teachers, at the end of every year, they need to sit and pass written examinations and also have to pass their teaching practice. Upon successful completion of this course the temporary teachers will be reemployed as full time trained teachers in the government service.

Contact Information of Teacher Education Authority:

www.moe.gov.my

E-mail: webmaster@moe.gov.my

Other Important Players in Teacher Education in the Country and Contact Information:

- i.) Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Tanjong Malim, Perak.
- ii.) Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang.
- iii.) University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
- iv.) Universiti Putra Malaysia, Selangor.
- v.) Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor.