General Education Educator Policy

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Ministry of Education Head Office
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### Abbreviations and Acronyms

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<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Continuing Professional Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETSIP</td>
<td>Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme</td>
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<td>NCHE</td>
<td>National Council for Higher Education</td>
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<td>NIED</td>
<td>National Institute for Educational Development</td>
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<td>NQA</td>
<td>Namibia Qualifications Authority</td>
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<td>NSFAF</td>
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<td>PAD</td>
<td>Planning and Development</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Public Service Commission</td>
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<td>UNAM</td>
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Glossary of Terms

**Educators**
A person who educates as a teacher, head of department, principal and education officers excluding Deputy Directors

**Continuing Professional Development**
Refers to the continuing formal and informal processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators so that they will, in turn, improve student learning.

**Educator management**
Refers to the overall management of educators including processes which involve recruitment and retention, training, deployment, conditions of service and continuing professional development, etc.

**Educator professional development**
Describes a process along a continuum of learning and development that educators undergo from initial pre-service training, induction to continuing professional development.

**Learning Community**
A learning community is collaboration among members of the school, the community and other stakeholders who are united for a common purpose and strive to share understanding, knowledge and skills to strengthen teaching and increase student results. Learning communities are guided by a set of shared values which include, among others social and collective responsibility for student learning, caring for the members and the environment; shared vision and creating supportive conditions for teaching and learning.

**Social responsibility**
Describes the shared responsibility of educators and community members to develop students holistically as social beings and responsible citizenry so that collectively, they bear the responsibility to uplift both their own living conditions and those of society in general.

**Collective responsibility**
Refers to the shared collective responsibility for student learning which members of a learning community have within the school or education community.

**Shared vision**
Is a particular mental image shared by members of a school (a learning community) and what is important both to them and the school as an organisation.

**Supportive conditions**
Describe the supportive conditions that are necessary for the functioning of a school as a learning community. These include the physical structure (school size, proximity of staff to one another, time and space for staff to meet) and development of collegial relationships (respect, trust, communication and caring) among members.

**Caring**
An important value in a learning community which involves members showing respect, trust, care and compassion to one another and caring deeply about teaching and learning.

**Student**
A person who is studying at a school, college or university.
Registration
A process by which an education institution seeks approval with the existing quality assurance bodies in order to be accorded the legal status to operate in a given context.

Accreditation
The process in which an institution’s academic and professional programmes are certified by the Namibia Qualifications Authority and/or National Council for Higher Education as accrediting institutions having fulfilled the requirements of Namibia Qualifications Framework (NQF).

It can also serve as an accountability measure to provide greater assurance to beneficiaries that teachers graduating from an institution have received an appropriate education to be successful in the classroom.

Professional board
An established independent structure that oversees, amongst others, the professionalisation of teaching and arbitrate on matters concerning registration of teachers at inception of training as enrolled teachers, and after successful completion of induction as practising teachers.

CPD for updating
This is a form of non-credit bearing CPD which is formal and informal, needs-driven, practice and site-based. Its key focus is learning and provides educators opportunities to update their knowledge, skills and attitudes in the workplace without gaining a formal qualification.

CPD for upgrading
This is a form of CPD which is planned and structured taken over a period of time and have specific, designated and verifiable learning outcomes that are formally assessed by a recognized and accredited service provider. The courses can either articulate into a formal programme of an accredited provider or lend towards attainment of a formal qualification.

Through this form of CPD, educators can accumulate credits which can be used for further learning to attain certification.

Lesson study
Is a professional development process in which teachers jointly plan, observe, analyse and refine actual classroom lessons systematically to improve teaching practices.

Critical friends groups
A group of professional educators who meet voluntarily and regularly at determined intervals with the purpose of improving their teaching practice through collaborative learning. Members of the group provide each other effective feedback and strong support to improve student learning.
1. Introduction

The General Education Educator Policy for educators in Namibia is designed to equip the teaching profession with a cadre of professionals who are qualified, competent and dedicated to deliver quality education.

The policy deals with educators (teachers, school managers, education officers and inspectors of education) in the general education institutions. The policy covers four distinct themes namely educator development, educator management, learning community as well as monitoring and evaluation.

An innovation that this Policy will bring about is the retention of performing teachers in the classroom, with additional compensation, rather than aspiring to management positions. Much greater emphasis will be placed on continuing professional development so that educators are constantly updating and upgrading their skills. The creation of learning communities will add value to the education institutions and greatly enhance shared norms such as vision, collaboration, caring and collective responsibility for learner achievement.

2. Rationale

Educators are the most important role-players in the achievement of quality learning outcomes, almost irrespective of the nature of the education programme. Over the years many policies and laws have been approved concerning educators. Some gaps in these policies and their implementation have also been identified. Further, the education system must now integrate different education policies under one educator policy which is coherent and harmonised.

The purposes of this policy are to:
- provide for the professionalisation of educators and enhancement of the status of educators,
- make provisions for the education and training of educators through various pathways from initial pre-service training to continuing professional development, and;
- ensure that educators engage in the creation of learning communities.

3. Aim

The aim of this policy is to unite educators under one professional board which will be responsible for the overall governance of the teaching profession to promote quality teaching and learning in schools.

4. Legislative Base

The provisions and measures in this policy are underpinned by the following legislation:

4.1 Constitution of the Republic of Namibia
4.2 The Education Act, 2001 (Act no. 16 of 2001)
4.3 No. 15 Amendment of regulations under Education Act, 2001
4.3 The Public Service Act, 1995 (Act no. 13 1995)
4.4 The Public Service Commission Act, 1990 (Act no. 2 of 1990)
4.5 Public Service Staff Rules and Regulations, Rule B. II; Rule F. II
4.7 Labour Act, 2007 (Act no. 11 of 2007)
5. **Principles and values**

To achieve the Vision and Mission of the Ministry of Education, the educator policy is guided by the following principles and values:

5.1 *Access*

All educators have right to access quality teacher education programmes offered by training institutions that are registered and whose programmes are accredited by quality assurance regimes.

5.2 *Quality*

To assure the public that institutions have met rigorous standards and excellence in curriculum implementation, all educator training programmes shall be accredited and satisfy established national professional standards for teachers.

5.3 *Equity*

The Ministry of Education shall strive to employ qualified teachers in accordance with their subject and phase specialisation across all phase levels equitably both in rural and urban areas.

5.4 *Democracy*

Educators shall be accorded opportunities to contribute towards the advancement of education through curriculum development, education policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and conditions of service. Educators shall also enjoy the right to belong to trade unions of their choice to guard and protect their professional interests.

5.5 *Learning community*

Namibian educational institutions are expected operate as learning communities in which educators share a common vision, promote collaborative learning internally and externally with the broader community, foster partnerships and collective responsibility, share resources, care for the members and the environment in order to achieve meaningful educational outcomes.

To cater for different interests of their members, educational institutions shall create diverse learning communities such as professional learning communities, critical friends groups, communities of practice, action research teams and lesson study groups, etc.

5.6 *Continuing Professional Development*

Teachers both novice and experienced shall participate in a continuum of CPD opportunities to enhance their knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to better their classroom practice with the aim to improve student learning. The quality of student learning depends largely on the quality of teachers.

5.7 *Accountability*

Educators shall uphold the norms and codes of conduct and discharge their duties with integrity and efficiency in transparent manner.
6. **Context of the Educator Policy**

Since independence in 1990 Government has been investing heavily in teacher development. Colleges of education were built and upgraded. Numerous projects were undertaken to ensure the best possible support for our teachers. This investment brought about a dramatic change in the qualifications of teachers at different phase levels. In 1993 (three years after independence) only 12.6% (13.8% for females) of teachers were qualified to teach at primary level, and 40.7% (47% for females) were qualified to teach at secondary level. Overall the percentage of qualified primary teachers grew to 41.1% in 2001 and to 77.8% (76.7% female) in 2012, while at secondary level it grew to 73.2% in 2001 and to 93.2% (93.2% female) in 2012.

With such a high proportion of qualified teachers (compared to some of our neighbouring countries) all should be well in Namibian General Education sector. However, about the turn of the century doubts began to be expressed about whether our education system was going to help us get to where we wanted to be. The Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training of 1999 called for a sense of urgency about improving the quality of education. And when Vision 2030 was published in 2004 it was soon realised that the education system was not delivering what was required for Namibia to become an industrialised country.

In response, the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme 2005 – 2020 (ETSIP) was born. Among the many reforms was a new teacher education reform, investment in Early Childhood Development and Pre-Primary Education, vastly improved textbook provision, improved assessment of learners at primary level, and a heavy investment in senior-secondary education and vocational education and training. Of course, this increased the demand for qualified teachers.

It was also at this time that steps were instituted to hold teachers and officials accountable for the performance of learners, a move that was reinforced by the National Education Conference of 2011. One ETSIP reform that has been only partially implemented concerns the professionalization of the teaching profession. Indeed, through a long process of consultation, the National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia were approved in 2006. And in 2010, after thorough study, the colleges were merged with the University of Namibia. The establishment of a professional board for teachers got halted. This called for the need to have a well-regulated and highly respected teaching profession, like other professions.

The main outcome that is expected from the implementation of this Educator Policy is an improved quality of learning for all learners in schools. With this policy, Namibia should see greater benefits in training teachers to execute their duties with competence. It should also see most teachers being placed at the level that they have been trained for and teach the subjects they have specialised in. Once held accountable, and able to show that they are delivering quality education, educators deserve to receive competitive remunerations and benefits.

This policy is the result of widespread consultation with national, regional education representatives and other stakeholders.

7. **Policy Statements**

The Educator Policy is premised on four main themes – Educator Management, Educator Professional Development and Educator as a Member of a Learning Community and monitoring and evaluation. The Educator Management and Educator Professional Development, each has sub-themes which address varies issues including but not limited to governance, recruitment, deployment, retention and career path.
7.1 Educator Management

7.1.1 Professional Board

A professional Board shall, among others govern the practice of the members of the teaching profession and serve as the final authority on matters of professional certification and continuing registration (Namibia Qualifications Authority, 2006). Further, the Board shall set parameters for recruitment and retention of teachers; initial teacher training; CPD, registration of training institutions, the reward system and compensation, career progression and restoration of public confidence in the teaching profession. The Board shall ensure that teacher candidates are registered as enrolled teachers at the inception of initial teacher training and then register as practicing teachers after graduation soon after successfully completing induction into the teaching profession.

7.1.2 Supply and Demand

The Ministry of Education, working in close cooperation with the teacher education institutions, shall ensure adequate supply of qualified teachers at all phase levels of general education in line with the demands of the teaching profession. The Ministry shall avail resources to ensure availability of more qualified teachers to sustain provision of quality education to the Namibian child.

The Ministry shall ensure adequate supply of educators to provide professional support services to teaching and learning.

7.1.3 Conditions of Service

The Ministry in collaboration with the Professional Board and the recognised union for teachers shall engage with relevant authorities and stakeholders to ensure that teachers’ conditions of service remain attractive and competitive in order to attract and retain qualified teachers in service.

Following appointment into the public service, teachers shall be entitled to service benefits as outlined in the Public Service Staff Rules and Regulations. Furthermore, educators shall be obliged to observe ethical values of the Public Service Charter, Customer Service Charter, Codes of Conduct for Teaching Service and other relevant staff rules.

7.1.4 Recruitment

The Ministry shall recruit qualified teachers (including education officers) for posts that correspond with their phase, subject specialisation and staffing norms. The Ministry of Education shall implement the relief teacher system as provided for in the Public Service Staff Rules to ensure availability of a teacher for the learners under given circumstances.

7.1.5 Deployment

The Ministry shall ensure equitable placement of qualified teachers in accordance with subject and phase specialization in all areas (e.g. rural and urban) as determined by the needs.
Teachers who are beneficiaries of scholarships from the Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) through bursary schemes shall be bound to work for government for the years equivalent to the period of study they were sponsorship.

Teachers shall remain for a minimum period of two years at their current duty station prior to transferring to another station.

7.1.6 Retention

To retain competent teachers in the profession, the Ministry shall ensure attractive and competitive conditions of service as well as multiple career paths.

The Ministry of Education shall implement a system of awards and rewards for teachers at all levels to publicly appreciate and acknowledge teachers who perform excellently in terms of relevant national standards.

The Ministry shall ensure that health and wellness programmes of educators are in place.

7.1.7 Career paths

The Ministry shall create a career path (vertical and horizontal) model which allows an alternative promotion route to higher salary grades and management positions while allowing competent teachers to remain in the classroom.

In addition to existing requirements, promotion in the career will require participation and completion of an appropriate CPD programme.

7.1.8 Accountability

The Ministry shall implement a system of accountability in terms of the Public Service Commission to ensure that educators uphold their responsibility in rendering quality service.

Educators shall take part in the performance management system which is meant for civil servants employed by the Public Service Commission. Teachers shall therefore accept responsibility for the progress of each learner entrusted to them and shall account for the results of each learner.

The Ministry shall ensure that the Public Service Regulations are enforced upon educators at all levels. Supervisory staff shall be held accountable for ensuring that all educators are on duty and perform according to their duty sheets.
7.2 Educator Professional Development

All teacher education institutions including their programmes shall be registered and accredited by established quality assurance regimes, namely National Council for Higher Education and NQA. All educator development programmes must be subjected to thorough review within a period specified by the institution.

Educator professional development is categorised into distinct phases, i.e. initial teacher professional development and continuing professional development.

7.2.1 Initial Teacher Professional Preparation (Pre-service Education and Training)

This refers to initial teacher preparation into the teaching profession.

7.2.1.1 Attracting the best candidates

The Ministry shall implement strategies to attract suitable (in terms knowledge, aptitude and character) candidates to the teaching profession. Provision of scholarships shall be made available to prospective teacher candidates through the Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund.

The measures to be taken shall include, among others:

- Marketing of the teaching profession, for example through career fairs, road shows and multi-media advertising campaigns
- Publicity for performing teachers and the awards and rewards given to them
- Incentives such as study bursaries in response to the demand, and;
- Identification of learners who show the potential for teaching while still at school.

7.2.1.2 Rigorous selection processes for candidates

The education institutions shall set high entry requirements into teacher education programmes.

Specific requirements may be set in terms of linguistic abilities and specific subject knowledge. Institutions shall implement aptitude tests, individual interviews and other assessments to select the most suitable candidates.

Education institutions shall implement a system of recognition of prior learning as part of the entry requirement into teacher education programmes.

7.2.1.3 Quality of educator development programmes

Teacher education institutions shall ensure that student teachers develop, under supervision, a range of requisite skills in teaching.

All initial teacher education programmes shall comply with the minimum academic and professional requirements for beginner teachers to be able to teach the school curriculum effectively in different environments.
The minimum academic and professional requirement for Pre-primary and Primary Educators shall be NQF level 6 and for Secondary Educators shall be NQF level 7.

### 7.2.1.4 Continuing Professional Development

CPD provides the success of improved teaching practice, which is the key to student learning and ensure overall quality improvement in the education system. Support to teachers through CPD is not just about more training, but a continuum of opportunities for teachers to become better at their classroom practice.

CPD should focus on three critical areas of professional development: content knowledge (deep understanding of their disciplines/subjects); pedagogical knowledge (particularly subject specific instructional strategies); and pedagogical technology content knowledge (knowledge for integrating ICTs in teaching).

### 7.2.1.5 Induction and Mentoring

All novice educators shall undergo induction and mentoring at the education institution where they are appointed during the one year probationary period. Novice teachers shall be exposed to a two-year induction and mentoring programme.

### 7.2.1.6 Registration

After satisfactory completion of the two-year induction period, novice (intern) teachers shall be eligible for registration as professional teachers.

### 7.2.1.7 Continuing updating of educators’ skills and competences

Educators shall engage in continuing professional development opportunities to update their knowledge, skills and attitudes through various programmes.

### 7.2.1.8 Continuing upgrading of educators’ skills and competences

Educators shall engage in continuing professional development opportunities to upgrade their knowledge, skills and attitudes through participation in formal programmes leading towards improved qualifications in their fields.

The Ministry of Education and other stakeholders (private and public) shall invest in various forms of CPD related programmes to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
7.3 Educator as a Member of a Learning Community

A learning community is a partnership of all members of an educational institution, the community and other stakeholders that are united for common purpose to create a caring and conducive work and learning environment that strives for success.

7.3.1 Educators shall share best practice through various ways including but not limited to peer coaching, action research, meetings, open days, focus groups, mentoring, case studies, seminars and lesson study.

7.3.2 Education institutions and their members shall collaborate with the community and other stakeholders to create a caring, conducive work and learning environment through:
- Sharing knowledge, skills and resources
- Making learning processes visible and articulated
- The use of knowledge and platforms within the community (indigenous knowledge, cultural art forms and traditional life skills), and;
- Community service.

7.3.3 Educational institutions shall partner with the community in managing and utilizing the resources and the environment in which they exist in a sustainable way through collective responsibility.

7.3.4 Educational institutions and their members shall share resources internally and externally to foster good learner achievement through networking.

7.3.5 Educational institutions shall establish partnerships with other learning institutions both from within and outside of their community.

7.3.6 Educational institutions shall also embrace collaboration with all stakeholders who are involved in the development and welfare of both the individuals and the community.

7.3.7 To cater for different interests of their members, educational institutions shall create diverse learning communities such as professional learning communities, critical friends groups, communities of practice, action research teams and lesson study groups, etc.

7.3.8 Institutions of learning shall develop and implement various support systems to ensure the wellbeing of members to function at their fullest potential. Institutions of learning shall ensure safety of their members at all times.

7.3.9 Institutions shall fulfil corporate (social) responsibility role in the development of the community in which they exist.
8 Monitoring and Evaluation of Sub-sector Policies

The monitoring and evaluation of this policy will be carried out by the Directorate Planning and Development in the Ministry of Education.

Directorates shall report to PAD which will provide sub-sector report to the management on progress.

9 Implementation Plan

The Directorate PAD will develop a limited set of indicators for this purpose on which directorates shall execute planned activities and report henceforth.

10 Review of the Sub-sector Policy

This policy framework will be reviewed and revised every five years, considering especially monitoring and evaluation reports and any other relevant research findings.