

Unofficial translation



**Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity**

Ministry of Education and Sports

No.: 4125/ED.HE/2011

Vientiane Capital, dated: 03 November 2011

**Decision
on
the National Curriculum Standards for Graduate Diploma**

- Pursuant to: Law on Education of the Lao People's Democratic Republic No: 04/NA, dated 3 July (07) 2007,;
- Pursuant to: Decree on the Organization and Operation of the Ministry of Education and Sports No: 282/PM, dated 7 September 2011; and
- Pursuant to: The Request of the Department of Higher Education;

**The Minister of Education and Sports
hereby issues a Decision:**

**Chapter I
General Provisions**

Article 1 Objectives

This Decision defines the regulations, principles, and measures for the management of curricular and reference documentation for higher education institutes in their creation and development of curricula for graduate diploma so as to achieve nationwide uniformity.

Article 2 Name of Curriculum Standards

These standards shall be referred to as the "National Curriculum Standard for Graduate Diploma".

Article 3 Scope of Application

The National Curriculum Standards for Graduate Diploma are used in the research and creation of doctoral curricula at higher education institutes wishing to open courses at this level.

Article 4 Organizing Learning-Teaching Using the Credit-Based System

- 4.1 Programs for doctoral degrees at higher education institutes must be taught according to a credit-based system.

- 4.2 In the event that learning and teaching is established according to a system of hours and modules, the learning results shall be calculated according to a credit-based system.

Article 5 Educational Qualifications

Persons completing a curriculum at graduate diploma level in a given branch shall receive a bachelor's degree certificate of ... in the branch of ... stating "Graduate Diploma of ...".

Article 6 Permission to Teach Curricula

Higher level institutes wishing to open a graduate diploma program must receive permission from the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and if wishing to close the learning and teaching of an existing program, they must also receive permission from the MoES.

Article 7 Issuance of Certificates

Higher education institutes shall have the right to issue Certificates for Doctoral Degrees for a program for which they have received permission from the MoES in accordance with all conditions and stages specified in the curriculum.

Chapter II
Creation of Curricula and Conditions for Teaching

Article 8 Creation of Curricula

The creation of curricula for graduate diploma of by a State and private higher education institutes must be structured as follows:

1. Name of curriculum: (Lao and English);
2. Name of certificate: (Lao and English);
3. Responsible unit;
4. Philosophy and aims of the curriculum;
 - 4.1 Philosophy
Specification of background and reasoning for creating the curriculum, importance and vision of the curriculum, demand from society and the labor market, and the skills of its students after having completed it; and
 - 4.2 Aims
Specification of methods and student training in accordance with the three characteristics and five pillars of education and the skills of its students after having completed it;
5. Specification of the time teaching commences;
6. Expectations of plan for what students are to receive;
7. Criteria for enrollees;
8. Student selection methods;
9. Organization of learning and teaching;
10. Duration of curriculum;
11. Content and structure of curriculum:
 - Specification of credits used in the curriculum;
 - Classification of subjects into each subject area;

- Learning and teaching plans for each area of study and for each year; and
 - Brief content of subject(s);
12. Enrolment;
 13. Criteria for assessment and evaluation of study results and graduation;
 14. Teachers: (full-time, guest, and consulting, teachers and dissertation inspectors);
 15. The location of the building(s), library/ies, laboratory/ies, and learning and teaching equipment and materials; and
 16. Budget.

Article 9 Conditions for Opening a Curriculum

The opening of a graduate diploma curriculum by a higher level institute must take place as follows:

- 9.1 It must be consistent with the policies of the Party and government, the three characteristics and five pillars of education, national socio-economic development, and the scientific, technological, and environmental growth trends of the region and the world.
- 9.2 It must be aimed at catering to the needs of human resource development in various sectors, the socio-economic structure, and the labor market.
- 9.3 The buildings and locations, learning and teaching materials and equipment, library/ies, laboratory/ies, personnel, teachers, and budget must all be ready beforehand.
- 9.4 The institute must have taught a master's degree in a related field with two generations of students having graduated.
- 9.5 In order to ensure the quality of the learning and teaching, the higher education institute may invite external guest teachers to teach but these must not comprise more than a third (33%) of all the teachers teaching a given curriculum.

Article 10 Stages in Obtaining Permission to Use a Curriculum

Requesting permission to open a graduate diploma curriculum by a higher education institute shall take place as follows:

- 10.1 The request for the opening of the curriculum must involve the submission of various documents in accordance with Articles 8 and 9 and there must be a feasibility study.
- 10.2 For the creation of a curriculum in a certain branch which overlaps with some other curriculum or course at the same institute, there must be a feasibility study and an explanation in order to request permission from the MoES.
- 10.3 Institutes which have already received permission to open the teaching of several curricula must request permission for the opening of a new curriculum or the alteration of an existing one, submitting a feasibility study and the criteria to be used for student assessment and evaluation.

Article 11 Setting up a Curriculum

- 11.1 A higher education institute shall not have the right to set up the learning and teaching of a graduate diploma curriculum before receiving permission for its use from the MoES.
- 11.2 In the event that Institute B wishes to teach a curriculum for which permission has been received for its use by Institute A and issue its own certificates, it must request permission from Institute A and the MoES.
- 11.3 In the event that a curriculum is the property of a given institute and permission has already been granted for its use and the institute wishes for it to be taught at another institute and certificates issued by itself, permission must be granted from the MoES.

Article 12 Curricular Evaluation

Curricula for which permission has been granted by the MoES, after having been run and studied for 1-2 generations of students, must be evaluated and revised in accordance with the Regulations on Evaluations of the meeting of the MoES National Curriculum Standards.

Chapter III Organization of Learning and Teaching

Article 13 Duration of Study

The organization of the learning and teaching of graduate diploma degrees at higher education institutes is set at 1 year or 1 academic year or more according to the branch of study. One academic year shall be divided into two semesters, each lasting five months (twenty weeks) and shall entail sixteen weeks of study.

Article 14 Organization of Learning-Teaching

The organization of learning-teaching of graduate diploma shall be a form of education which places a greater emphasis on practical aspects and the dissertations in order to improve professionalism and technical advancement in their field of specialty.

Chapter IV Specification of Credits and Enrolment

Article 15 Principles for the Calculation of Credits

- 15.1 Theoretical subjects that take up one hour of presentations and lectures weekly, adding up to no less than sixteen hours per semester, shall be attributed one credit.
- 15.2 Practical subjects which take up two to three hours weekly, adding up to thirty-two to forty-eight hours per semester, shall be attributed one credit.
- 15.3 Work experience and internships which take up three to six hours weekly, adding up to no less than forty-eight to ninety-six hours per semester, shall be attributed one credit.

Article 16 Credit Specification

The two formats of graduate diploma curricula shall consist of 18-24 credits and the following subject types, as follows:

- Writing of technical dissertation 02-04 credits
- Mandatory subjects 16-20 credits

Article 17 Enrolment

Applicants shall be examined and/or selected according to study topics and the enrolment of researchers shall be as specified by the institute.

Chapter V

Criteria for Teachers and Enrollees

Article 18 Criteria for Enrollees

- 18.1 Employees with bachelor degree and at least 2 year working experience who pass the selection and shall have suitable qualification.
- 18.2 Students who complete bachelor degree (continuing students) must pass a selection test and have 2-year internship in the same field and shall have suitable qualification.
- 18.3 Other criteria specified by the institute itself shall also be met.

Article 19 Criteria for Teachers

- 19.1 **Teachers:** shall have a specialized area of study related to the subject they are to teach and possess a specialization level I, specialization level II, master's degrees and doctoral degrees.
- 19.2 **Consulting teachers:** shall have a specialized area of study related, with experiences and possess a specialization level I, specialization level II, or master's degrees and doctoral degrees and there must be at least one or two of these.
- 19.3 Students shall also comply with any other specifications issued by the institute.

Chapter VI

Student Assessment and Graduation

Article 20 Principles for Student Assessment

The student assessment for each subject shall be conducted according to the following scoring system:

| Grade | | Meaning | | Grade-point equivalent |
|------------|----------------|---------|-----------|------------------------|
| Lao symbol | English symbol | Lao | English | |
| ກ | A | ດີເລີດ | Excellent | 4.0 |
| ຂ+ | B+ | ດີຫລາຍ | Very Good | 3.5 |
| ຂ | B | ດີ | Good | 3.0 |

| | | | | |
|----|----|-----------|-------------|-----|
| ຄ+ | C+ | ດີພໍໃຊ້ | Fairly Good | 2.5 |
| ຄ | C | ພໍໃຊ້ໄດ້ | Fair | 2.0 |
| ງ+ | D+ | ອ່ອນ | Poor | 1.5 |
| ງ | D | ອ່ອນ ຫລາຍ | Very Poor | 1.0 |
| ຕ | F | ຕົກ | Fail | 0 |

Article 21 Conditions for Graduation

Students graduating from a 1 year graduate diploma must have accumulated the number of credits specified in the curriculum, have a GPA of 3.00 or above, and be of good character.

Chapter VII Final Provisions

Article 22 Responsibilities

22.1 Macro-Level

For the Department of Higher Education to study and issue additional specifications concerning the implementation of the curricula in practice in order to ensure quality and correctness; and

22.2 Micro-level

For the higher education institute to improve, adjust, and create their own curricula along with evaluation and assessment specifications so that they are correct and consistent with this Decision.

Article 23 Implementation

The relevant offices and departments of the MoES and higher level institutes shall acknowledge and implement this Decision in accordance with their respective duties and responsibilities.

Article 25 Effectiveness

This Decision is effective from the date of signature.

Minister of Education and Sports

To be delivered to:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Government's Office | 1 copy |
| 2. Ministries | 1 copy each |
| 3. Department of Higher Education | 3 copies |
| 4. Departments under the MoES | 1 copy each |
| 5. Universities | 1 copy each |
| 6. State and private sector higher education institutes | 1 copy each |
| 7. PESSs | 1 copy each |
| 8. To be kept | 3 copies |

Annexes

National Curricula for Continuing Bachelor's Degrees

Definitions:

- **Curricular standards:** shall refer to the quality standards specified for a curriculum in order that it may achieve its learning and teaching objectives and aims.
- **A graduate diploma curriculum:** shall refer to the implementation of learning and teaching which delve into a post-graduate specialized subject.
- **A credit:** shall refer to a volumetric unit of learning and teaching for each subject [in a curriculum].
- **A dissertation:** shall refer to a summary of theoretical and practical knowledge on a given specialized topic
- **A senior teacher:** shall refer to a person who is responsible for work experience and leading [students] through the writing of their dissertation.
- **A consulting teacher:** shall refer to a person who instructs and leads in the writing of dissertations to graduate.
- **A dissertation inspector:** shall refer to a person who checks the accuracy and quality of a dissertation to graduate.
- **A full-time or internal teacher:** shall refer to a teacher who teachers under the authority of their institute.
- **A guest or external teacher:** shall refer to a teacher who has been invited [to teach] by another institute.

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