



Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

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Government

No. 177 /G

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**Unofficial Translation**

**Decree  
on  
Higher Education**

- Pursuant to Law on Government of Lao PDR No. 02/NA, dated 6 June 2003
- Pursuant to Education Law (revised) No.04/NA, dated 3 July 2007
- Pursuant to the proposal of Ministry of Education and Sports No. 0402/MoES.HE.15, dated 20 May 2015

**The Government issues Decree:**

**Chapter 1  
General Provisions**

**Article 1 Objectives**

This decree sets the principles and regulations regarding the implementation and management of higher education of Lao PDR to ensure that teaching and learning, scientific research and academic services of public and private higher education institutions are unified, of high quality, effective, responding to the needs of creating new academics, specialists, researchers, and scientists who

are knowledgeable, skillful, have revolutionary ethics and who will contribute to the national socio-economic development, facilitating regional and international integration.

## **Article 2 Higher Education**

Higher education follows upper secondary education or equivalent, in which teaching and learning starts from Associate Degree to Doctoral Degree, in regular, continuous or bridging courses based on the policy of lifelong learning.

## **Article 3 Definition**

The terminology used in this decree shall mean as follows:

1. **Higher Education Institution** refers to an education institution that conducts the teaching and learning of an academic curriculum starting from Associate Degree;
2. **Higher Education Curriculum** refers to the teaching and learning of various subjects starting from Associate Degree;
3. **Academic Board** refers to the body that provides advice on academic affairs to the administrative bodies of the higher education institutions;
4. **Governing Board** refers to the body that provides advice on administrative and management to the administrative bodies of the higher education institutions;
5. **Lecturers** refer to the persons who teach, transfer knowledge, and train students in higher education institutions;
6. **Higher Education Personnel** refers to persons who work in management, administration, monitoring and inspection, and accommodation of activities in higher education institutions;
7. **Students** refer to persons who are studying or conducting research in higher education institutions;
8. **Autonomy** refers to independence, self-reliance, and having all rights stated in laws and regulations.

#### **Article 4 Policies on Higher Education**

The government, with reference to lifelong learning policy, supports all Lao citizens in gaining access to higher education based on an individual's competencies and conditions through the provision of scholarships to outstanding students, the poor, females, ethnic minorities and the disadvantaged.

The government encourages and facilitates individuals, companies or organizations, both local and international, to participate in the development of higher education.

#### **Article 5 Principles of Implementation for Higher Education**

Higher education activities shall be in accordance with the following principles:

1. Ensure that the development of higher education is of high quality and aligned with human resource development needs and the national socio-economic development plan;
2. Ensure that teaching and learning satisfies the 3 characteristics and 5 key principles of education;
3. Support continuing and bridging learning according to the lifelong learning policy;
4. Ensure that the poor, females, ethnic minorities, and the disadvantaged fairly gain access to education.

#### **Article 6 Scope of use**

This decree shall apply to individuals, companies and organizations, private and public, local and international that conduct higher education activities in Lao PDR.

## Chapter 2 Higher Education System

### Article 7 Higher Education Structure

Higher education is a component of the national education system indicated in the Education Law, which consists of the following different levels of education:

1. Associate Degree: is the basic level of academic higher education that produces academics. Persons who have completed the study at Associate Degree can pursue a continuous or bridging course for a Bachelor's Degree;
2. Bachelor's Degree: is a high level of academic education in specialized fields of natural and social science, politics and public administration, national defense and public security, etc.; based on socio-economic development needs in each period;
3. Master's Degree: is education after Bachelor's Degree, specialized in research in specific fields;
4. Doctorate Degree: is the highest form of academic education, specialized in a specific scientific research topic;

In addition, there are postgraduate levels which specialize in specific fields. Postgraduate levels include: graduate diploma, graduate diploma specialization level 1, and graduate diploma specialization level 2.

### Article 8 Qualification, Application and Accreditation in Higher Education

1. Higher Education Qualifications are certification of success in each level of higher education indicated in Chapter 7 in this decree, will be printed on the graduation award as follows:
  - Graduates of an Associate Degree receive Associate Degree. The abbreviation of the qualification is Assoc., which is equivalent to the award of Higher Vocational Diploma;

- Graduates of a Bachelor's Degree course receive a Bachelor's Degree. The abbreviation of the qualification is B.A. (Bachelor of Arts); B.Sc. (Bachelor of Science); B.Arch. (Bachelor of Architecture); etc.;
  - Graduates of a Master's Degree course receive a Master's Degree. The abbreviation of the qualification is M.A. (Master of Arts); M.Sc. (Master of Science); M.Arch. (Master of Architecture); etc.;
  - Graduates of a Doctoral Degree receive a Doctoral Degree. The abbreviation of the qualification is Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy); Dr.Sc. (Doctor of Science); Dr. Med. (Doctor of Medicine); etc., or as specified by international qualification standards.
2. Learners who complete postgraduate education receive a postgraduate certificate, specialization, postgraduate diploma, or post-doctoral degree, based on the content and duration of study indicated in each course;
  3. The application of the qualification abbreviation: learners who complete a higher education degree have the right to use the qualification abbreviation in Lao or English to be the prefix or suffix added to their names;
  4. Honorary Doctor is a qualification awarded to individuals with outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development, by local or international higher education institutions of university level or equivalent. Honorary qualification neither implies the completion of a degree nor effects salary level of the awardees;
  5. Qualifications of all levels of higher education obtained from abroad are to be recognized, certified, validated and accredited, in line with higher education levels of Lao PDR, by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set regulations on recognition, validation, accreditation, and continuing and bridging of qualifications obtained in the country and from abroad.

#### **Article 9 Duties of Higher Education Institutions**

Higher education institutions have the following duties:

1. Conduct teaching and training;
2. Conduct research and disseminate research findings;
3. Provide academic services to the society;
4. Protect and promote national culture and arts together with accepting the positive aspects of global culture and progress;
5. Cooperate with regional and international educational institutions and organizations;
6. Fulfil other duties required for community and sectoral development indicated in the law, regulations and assignments.

#### **Article 10 Categories of Higher Education Institutions**

Higher education institutions are categorized as follows:

1. A college is a higher education institution, established upon the needs of development of academics or specialized fields at the central, local and community level. Its major task is to conduct teaching and learning Associate Degree courses based on the national qualification framework, approved by Ministry of Education and Sports. A college can also be established under a comprehensive university;
2. An institute is a higher education institution established based on the specific needs of different sectors. Its status is equivalent to or higher than a college. It can open Associate Degree courses; Continuous or Bridging Bachelor's Degree courses, and regular Bachelor's Degree courses, upon the approval from the Ministry of Education and Sports. It is a place for short term professional training; scientific research, surveys, information management, and the provision of academic services in a particular or various fields as determined by the roles and duties for the establishment of the institution;
3. An academy is a higher education institution established based on the basis of specific needs of different sectors,

especially in national defense and public security or other particular fields. Its status is equivalent to or higher than that of a college. It can open Associate Degree courses; Continuous or Bridging Bachelor's Degree courses, and regular Bachelor's Degree courses, upon approval from the relevant organizations and Ministry of Education and Sports. It can conduct short term professional training; scientific research, survey, information management, and provision of academic services in different sectors based on its roles and duties indicated in the regulations of the government or of the relevant organizations;

4. University and equivalent institutions (national level) are the highest level of higher education institutions, established upon the needs of the national socio-economic development. Their roles and duties are to conduct teaching and learning in higher levels of academic courses, starting from Associate Degree to Doctoral Degree. They have the capacity to conduct research in science and technology, provide academic services and information on scientific research to society. Universities have visions, strategies and development plans to become a comprehensive university, a center of excellence in specialized fields, or in scientific research and technology.

#### **Article 11 Establishment of Different Forms of Higher Education Institutions**

The establishment of higher education institutions is based on the following different types of investment:

1. Public institutions are funded, developed and assigned by the government to the relevant central or local government for direct management according to their roles and duties as indicated in laws and regulations.
2. Public and community or collective institutions are funded and developed by the government together with the community or the collective. The relevant government

organizations supervise the institution's academic affairs, and the community or the collective are responsible for administration and management, according to their roles and duties indicated in laws and regulations.

3. Local and international private institutions are directly funded by the local or international private sector. The relevant government organization supervises and provides support for its academic content. An investor, as an individual or a firm, has the right and duties to administer and manage the institution, based on their roles and duties approved by relevant organizations, respecting the relevant laws and regulations.
4. An international education institutions or international organizations are higher education institutions funded by the government, private sector, international organizations, or international education institutions, in which the government and relevant organizations have the management rights prescribed in laws and regulations, based on bilateral and multilateral agreements.

#### **Article 12 Classification of Higher Education Institutions**

Higher Education Institutions in Lao PDR are classified by their administrative system, geographic and specific sectoral features as follows:

- A. Type 1: National and International Higher Education Institutions
  - National higher education institutions are established by the government, based on the national human resource development plan and the national socio-economic development plan. They have a diversity of courses, academic content, and research areas. They have sufficient and highly qualified personnel and appropriate infrastructure to accommodate a large student intake. They can provide a wide range of



academic services and are autonomous in terms of academic affairs.

- International higher education institutions are a particular type of education institutions established as indicated in Article 11 in this decree. They can conduct teaching, scientific research, provide academic services at international level, and respond to the government's policy for regional and international integration.

B. Type 2: Regional Higher Education Institutions

Regional higher education institutions are education institutions established by the government based on the needs of human resource development to produce human resources as well as technical staff that are appropriate to the socio-economic development in each region of the country, ensuring that the features and real needs of each region are taken into consideration for the provision of higher education services.

C. Type 3: Provincial or Community Higher Education Institutions

Provincial or community higher education institutions are education institutions established by the central level together with local authorities or the community. Their role is to conduct teaching and scientific research appropriate to and aligned with the features and the real needs of the particular province or community.

D. Type 4: Specialized Higher Education Institutions

Specialized higher education institutions are education institutions established by the relevant sectors, as needed, to produce academics in specified fields at the central or local level. Their roles and duties are to conduct teaching and learning, and scientific research in specific fields to accommodate the development of the relevant sector.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall cooperate with the relevant central and local organizations to set detailed regulations for management and administration, standards and conditions of each type of higher education institution.

**Article 13 Principles and Conditions for the Establishment, Expansion, Merger and Splitting of Higher Education Institutions**

1. General Principles:

The establishment, expansion, merger, and splitting of higher education institutions shall be in accordance with the following general principles:

- (1) Respond to the needs of the human resource development plan and the national socio-economic development plan in each period;
- (2) Facilitate, create conditions and opportunities for all Lao people to access higher education in an equitable and fair manner;
- (3) Ensure the diversity and specialization of academic content in different fields;
- (4) Have visions, short and long term quality development plans; ensure sustainability and appropriate investment.

2. Conditions:

The establishment, expansion, merger, and splitting of higher education institutions shall meet the following conditions:

a. General Conditions:

- (1) Having alignment with the national socio-economic development plan, sectoral development plan, and local development needs;
- (2) Having sufficient education personnel and an appropriate number of students;

- (3) Having sufficient investment in infrastructure, technical equipment, and budget for effective administration and management.
- b. Specific Conditions:

The establishment of higher education institutions of type 3 and 4 indicated in Article 11 in this decree and all types indicated in Article 12 in this decree, must satisfy the General Conditions mentioned above and the following specific conditions:

1. Have a detailed investment plan for infrastructure and appropriate certified documents from the relevant government organizations to safeguard the investment;
2. Have certification of financial capacity;
3. Have the capability to finish the construction of the compound, and have basic technical equipment installed within 5 years after obtaining official approval from the government or the relevant government organization.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set detailed principles and conditions for the establishment, expansion, merger and splitting of higher education institutions.

#### **Article 14 Conditions for Suspension and Dissolution of Higher Education Institutions**

Higher education institutions of all types shall be suspended and dissolved in the following cases:

- (1) Violating the policies, laws and regulations;
- (2) Conducting activities against the institution's roles and objectives;
- (3) Not improving its quality as suggested by relevant organizations;
- (4) An individual, a firm or an organization requesting to suspend or dissolve the institution for particular reasons;

- (5) An individual, a firm or society lodging a complaint against the institution due to negative phenomenon.

**Article 15 Authorization to Establish, Expand, Merge, Split, Suspend and Dissolve Higher Education Institutions**

Authorization to establish, expand, merge, split, suspend, and dissolve a higher education institution takes place according to following:

- (1) The Prime Minister shall approve the establishment, expansion of campus, merger, separation, and dissolution of Type 1 higher education institutions (national and international) based on the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Sports and relevant organizations;
- (2) The Minister of Education and Sports shall approve the establishment, expansion of campus, merger, separation, and dissolution of higher education institution Type 2, 3 and 4 (regional, provincial, community, and specialized institution) based on the recommendation of relevant organizations and sectors; order a temporary cessation or operation suspension of all types and forms of higher education institutions due to cases mentioned in Article 14 of this decree and following the recommendation of the relevant organization.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set detailed regulations and application procedures for the establishment, expansion, merger, splitting, suspension, and dissolution higher education institutions of all types and forms.

**Chapter 3  
Teaching and Learning**

**Article 16 Conditions for Conducting Teaching and Learning in different specialized subjects**

Higher education institutions of all types and forms shall meet the following conditions in order to conduct teaching and

learning in different majors or specializations at Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree, and Master's Degree, Doctoral Degree or Post Graduate degree levels.

- (1) Produce academics in different specialization, according to need who will contribute to socio-economic development at macro and micro levels (local level);
- (2) Have sufficient personnel, lecturers, and scientists with suitable qualifications for the level of the courses and research offered by the institution to ensure high quality;
- (3) Have sufficient infrastructure, classroom buildings, laboratories, libraries, equipment, and textbooks for teaching and learning;
- (4) Have curricula that meet the national curriculum standard and ensure that learners have sufficient knowledge to pursue continuous or bridging courses;
- (5) Have a general plan and timetable for each curriculum certified and approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports, based on the proposal from higher education institutions and relevant organizations.

The President of the University or Director of the university-equivalent institution (national institution) shall conduct teaching based on the curriculum indicated in the general plan, which has been approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

#### **Article 17 Student Admission**

##### **1. Admission Targets:**

- (1) Admission targets of all types and forms of higher education institutions shall be set according to the needs of socio-economic development in each period, and shall align with central and local human resource development plans. They shall also take into account the teacher capacity, as well as conditions in terms of

infrastructure and teaching equipment and materials. The enrolment target shall be certified by the relevant organizations and approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports;

- (2) Each higher education institution determines its enrolment target in each academic year based on central and local human resource development needs, and the actual capacity of the institution. The institution shall be responsible for announcing the details of student admission, based on the institution's conditions and standards;
- (3) In the event that the institution violates the admissions targets by over admitting students or not correctly admitting students as announced, it shall be inspected as prescribed by laws and regulations;
- (4) The student selection includes the 3 following methods:
  - a. Quota as identified in the plan at the macro level. Students are selected based on their performance in upper secondary school or equivalent (final examinations cores, test scores in each semester, and discipline rating);
  - b. Conduct entrance examination to select the high ranking scores;
  - c. Combination of entrance examination and the performance in upper secondary school or equivalent (a + b).
- (5) Higher education institutions have the right to determine which method of student recruitment to use, exercise their rights and duties to recruit and enroll students as assigned by the Ministry of Education and Sports and relevant organizations, in a fair and transparent manner;

- (6) Enrolment: students, who have been accepted through one of the above mentioned recruitment methods, will be notified by the relevant higher education institution and be informed on enrolment details as scheduled for each semester.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall certify and approve student admission targets of all types and forms for higher education institutions across the country and shall set detailed procedures for student selection and admission and promulgate such information packages.

#### **Article 18 Duration of Study and Academic Calendar of Higher Education Institution**

1. Duration of study: is based on national curriculum standards as follows:
  - (1) Associate Degree: a regular course takes two years or more, a continuous course takes one and a half years or more;
  - (2) Bachelor's Degree: a regular course takes four years or more, a continuous course takes two years or more;
  - (3) Graduate Diploma takes one year or more;
  - (4) Graduate Diploma Specialization Level 1 takes two years or more;
  - (5) Graduate Diploma Specialization Level 1 takes three years or more;
  - (6) Master's Degree takes two years or more;
  - (7) Doctoral Degree takes three years or more.
2. Academic Calendar:
  - (1) The first year of the Associate Degree and Bachelor's Degree (new intake) starts on 15<sup>th</sup> of October.
  - (2) The second year and onwards of Associate Degree and Bachelor's Degree starts on 1<sup>st</sup> of October.

- (3) The academic calendar for postgraduate degrees is implemented based on the approved teaching and learning plans and scientific research plans included in the curriculum or program authorized for the use and implementation in the institution.

**Article 19 Curriculum, Textbooks, Teaching Documents and Language for Teaching and Learning**

1. Higher Education Curriculum:
  - (1) Curriculum development of each level of higher education must follow national higher education curriculum standards, set by the Ministry of Education and Sports;
  - (2) The content of the curriculum must refer to the national qualification framework, which identifies the level of knowledge, skills, applied learning and practical training (internship) through the descriptors in each course at each level of education;
  - (3) The Minister of Education and Sports shall certify and approve the implementation of the higher education curriculum of all levels, as proposed by higher education institutions and relevant organizations;
2. Textbooks and Teaching Documents:
  - (1) Textbooks and teaching documents used in higher education institution must satisfy the students' needs for knowledge and skills acquisition, and the teachers' purpose for teaching at all levels;
  - (2) Higher education institutions of all levels must have their own libraries, which carry books, documents, scientific and academic textbooks, as well as an electronic library to accommodate teachers and students in pursuing general education and specific research;



- (3) University presidents or directors of higher education institutions are obliged to conduct a selection process to approve the use of textbooks, teaching documents produced by their own teachers and scientists; upon the proposal of the relevant faculties or scientists and the approval of the academic council in that institution;
- (4) Higher education institutions must preserve the copyright of textbooks, teaching and documents, as prescribed in the intellectual property law and the institution's regulations.

3. Language used in teaching and learning:

Language used in teaching and learning in higher education institutions is Lao. Foreign languages can be used in the teaching and learning of foreign language subjects; in some international courses or courses that have been developed in cooperation with foreign institutions; and can be used for conducting research under projects that have been approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports and relevant central and local government organizations.

**Article 20 Forms of Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and learning in higher education institutions shall be carried out in the following forms:

- (1) Formal education consists of regular courses, continuous course or bridging courses;
- (2) Non-formal education consists of distance learning through various types and means, or as preferred by students;
- (3) Open learning which focuses on practical training in socio-economic sectors, enables and broadens life-long education.

**Article 21 Facilities for Teaching and Learning**

Higher education institution of all types and forms must be equipped with teaching and learning facilities in order to effectively

and efficiently achieve the objectives of the curriculum; and to ensure that general principles and conditions indicated in Article 13 and Article 16 in this decree are satisfied.

#### **Article 22 Management of Teaching and Learning**

The management of teaching and learning in higher education institutions shall be practiced as follows:

- (1) Teaching and learning in each academic year must strictly follow daily, weekly, monthly, semester and academic year timetables and plans;
- (2) Teaching and learning must fulfil the number of hours required by the course, or fulfil the credit system (semester/week/hours), or the modular system;
- (3) There must be a quality assurance system, assessment and evaluation system of teaching and learning;
- (4) Regulations regarding teachers and students must be strictly practiced.

Higher education institutions in each form shall have their own teaching and learning regulations certified and approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports and relevant organizations.

#### **Article 23 Assessment and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning**

Higher education institution of all types and forms shall perform the assessment and evaluation of teaching and learning based on the following general principles:

- (1) Regular assessment and evaluation of teaching and learning performance, using tests or examinations at the end of each period, such as end of chapter, semester, academic year or course; or through thesis or project reports, ... as specified in the curriculum of each level;

- (2) Use of grade system, which is the assessment unit of knowledge acquisition, or use of score system as prescribed in national higher education curriculum standards;
- (3) Use of the institution's own assessment and evaluation system;

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set and unify details of grading and scoring systems for the assessment of acquired units of knowledge.

#### **Article 24 Certification**

Certification of graduates of all levels of education must meet the following general principles and regulations:

1. General Principles:
  - (1) Graduates of all levels of education are entitled to be awarded the academic degree from the institution they graduate from;
  - (2) Presidents of university, heads and directors of institutions, or the assigned persons, have the right to sign and confer the graduation award on the graduates of their institutions in a truthful, fair and transparent manner.
2. General Conditions:
  - (1) To be conferred the graduation award students must complete their courses, obtain the results of their studies and examinations, or complete thesis defense, as required by the course, as well as obtain good discipline ratings;
  - (2) The list of graduates who will be conferred a graduation award must be certified and registered at the Ministry of Education and Sports and relevant organizations.

3. Forms of Graduation Awards:

- (1) Higher education institutions of all levels can design their own graduation awards (certificate cover and paper) to include the institution's identity such as emblems and codes, which is also for the purpose of verification of authentic and counterfeit certificates;
- (2) The Ministry of Education and Sports shall set the general content in the graduation award for higher education programs at all levels.

4. Honorary Doctor Award:

Universities or higher education institutions with university-equivalent status of all forms are able to award Honorary Doctor degrees to people outside their institutions who have met their criteria based on Higher Education Council approval, upon the certification of the institution and the endorsement of the relevant organizations.

Higher education institutions shall set regulations, principles, conditions and standards for the conferral of the Honorary Doctor award.

5. Revocation, Cancellation, Counterfeit, and Trade of Qualification Certificates

- (1) Any individual with any wrong behavior in the higher education institution, breach of code of conduct or laws and regulations in relation to the course indicated on the award, shall be subject to punishment as prescribed in the laws and regulations such as suspension, revocation, and cancelation of the individual's certificate or the rights to be awarded with the certificate.
- (2) Any individual engaged in the counterfeiting or trade in academic qualifications at any level of higher education at national or international level shall be subject to punishment as prescribed by laws.

## Chapter 4

### Scientific and Technological Research and Academic Services

#### Article 25 Scientific and Technological Research

##### 1. Goals

- Promote scientific and technological research to upgrade the capacity of higher education personnel including teachers, students, and researchers.
- Promote and support the creativity of teachers, students and researchers and academics, which will contribute to national socio-economic development and national defense and public security.

##### 2. Scientific and Technological Research Content

- Research shall be in the fields of natural sciences, social sciences, applied science and technological transfer, in order to accommodate the socio-economic development in various sectors such as industry, agriculture and forestry, environment, services, economics, political science and governance, education, sports, public health, national defense and public security, etc.
- Conduct research to support, and expand local knowledge of all ethnic groups, and disseminate research findings, turning them into national, local, community and individual intellectual property.

##### 3. Duties and Authority of Higher Education Institutions in Scientific and Technological Research

- Formulate strategies and short and long term scientific and technological research projects that are aligned with national and local socio-economic development plans;
- Own the initiation and conduct of scientific and technological research prescribed in the institution's roles and responsibilities.

- Build and develop research facilities such as laboratories, research centers, research stations, libraries, laboratory equipment, and other facilities.
  - Own and participate in the selection of research topics, conduct consultations, and implement agreements on scientific and technological research collaboration within the scope of their respective responsibilities, conduct scientific research based on the needs and prioritized topics.
  - Ensure and protect the copyright and benefits gained from the scientific and technological research, and the intellectual property of the institution.
  - Mobilize funds and effectively utilize them to conduct scientific and technological research, for the benefits of the country.
4. Government Responsibilities in Scientific and Technological Research
- The government shall formulate general strategies and investment plans for each period to promote scientific and technological research;
  - The Ministry of Education and Sports shall collaborate with the Ministry of Science and Technology and relevant organizations in formulating regulations, principles, plans and priorities for the scientific and technological research of higher education institutions.
5. Funding Sources for Scientific and Technological Research
- Higher education institutions with capacity to perform scientific and technological research shall obtain financial support from various sources such as the government budget (national, local and institutional levels), funds, projects, and assistance from local or international organizations, and donations from individuals or groups of people.

6. Scientific and Technological Research Management

Each higher education institution has duties and responsibilities in managing scientific and technological research according to their role and authority. There shall be mechanisms for implementation, monitoring, inspection, and evaluation that are effective and aligned with the laws on science and technology and other related laws.

**Article 26 Academic Services**

Higher education institutions of all types, forms and levels are obliged to provide academic services to the community according to their role and authority. They can earn financial benefits from the provision of academic services and have the right to use such revenue as prescribed in the laws and regulations.

**Chapter 5**

**Quality Assurance**

**Article 27 Implementation of Quality Assurance**

Higher education institutions of all types and forms must have a quality assurance unit and network in their institutions to ensure the quality of education in their institutions. It shall be independent in terms of academic management and is under the guidance of the board of directors of the institution.

Higher education institutions of all types and forms shall follow the conditions and standards of higher education quality assurance set by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

**Article 28 Responsibilities of Higher Education Institutions on Quality Assurance**

Higher education institutions have the following responsibilities:

1. Create internal quality assurance systems, perform inspection and evaluation using the standards set by the Ministry of Education and Sports;
2. Produce information documents and reports on quality assurance to inform the relevant government organizations;
3. Be accountable to and accept the results of the evaluation of their institutions conducted by external quality assurance organizations;
4. Establish the plan, timing, and record in writing the performance of quality assurance procedures in higher education institutions;
5. Disseminate and make public the results of the quality assurance evaluation through different media;
6. Translate and apply recommendations from the evaluation;
7. Lodge complaints against or handle as appropriate, those who wrongfully accuse, criticize, or distort the truth of the quality assurance of the institutions, including government organizations, individuals, or groups of people.

#### **Article 29 Principles, Contents and Methods of Quality Assurance**

Principles, contents and the methods of quality assurance of higher education institutions of all types and forms shall follow the conditions and regulations on higher education quality assurance prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

### **Chapter 6**

#### **Lecturers and Personnel in Higher Education Institutions**

#### **Article 30 Lecturers**

Lecturers are individuals who perform the teaching and transfer of knowledge to students through various teaching methods. They are people of good ethics, health, professionalism,



specialization and qualification, as required by curriculum standards and professional standards set by the institutions;

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set detailed standards and conditions in relation to the ethics, qualification, professionalism, health and other special features of lecturers in higher education institutions.

#### **Article 31 Permanent Lecturers and Guest Lecturers**

- a. Permanent lecturers are government staffs who perform teaching in higher education institutions. The proportion of permanent lecturers shall be as follows:
  - (1) Public higher education institutions of all types: the proportion of permanent lecturers shall be at least  $\frac{2}{3}$  of all lecturers in the institution;
  - (2) Higher education institutions of type 3 and 4 indicated in Article 11 of this decree and all types indicated in Article 12 in this decree: the proportion of permanent lecturers shall be at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all lecturers in the institution;
- b. Guest lecturers are individuals invited from outside of the institution to teach, and transfer knowledge to students through various teaching methods set by the institution. Guest lecturers shall possess knowledge, ability and high experience in teaching in specialized subjects. They could be local or international scientists, business people, politicians, or academics in national defense and public security or other fields, based on the demands of the higher education institutions and upon the approval of the relevant organizations.

## Article 32 Academic and Honorific Titles

Lecturers in higher education institutions of all forms, levels and types have the right to apply for academic titles and honorific titles for teachers prescribed in the relevant conditions and regulations. The academic titles include:

a. Academic titles of permanent lecturers:

- (1) Professor (Prof.) and Associate Professor (Assoc. Prof.) are appointed by the Prime Minister, upon the proposal of Minister of Education and Sports, and endorsed by the National Higher Education Council;
- (2) Lecturers and Assistant Lecturers are appointed by the Minister of Education and Sports, upon the proposal of the university council or related higher education institution council;

Professors, Associate Professors, Lecturers and Assistant Lecturers are entitled to receive incentives and professional support funds prescribed in the government regulations.

b. Academic title for non-permanent lecturers:

Non-permanent lecturers who have outstanding teaching experience in a single or several institutions; have conducted research, written, edited and translated documents or textbooks for teaching and learning; have scientific research achievement; or contributed to educational as well as to socio-economic development; are entitled to request special academic titles as follows:

- (1) Emeritus Professor (Emer. Prof.) is an honorific title applied to retired, senior, and highly qualified Professors, and Associate Professors who have numerous achievements and outstanding contributions to the profession.

The Emeritus Professor title is awarded by the Prime Minister, based on the recognition of the Minister

of Education and Sports, and upon the approval of the National Higher Education Council. Emeritus Professor is a lifetime title.

- (2) Honorary Professor (Hon. Prof) is awarded to praise individuals with outstanding achievement in a particular institution; and is appointed by the university's president or the relevant higher education institution's director upon the approval of the university council or the institution's council;
- (3) Adjunct Professor is an academic title awarded especially to a non-permanent lecturer who is a specialist or distinguished lecturer of a higher education institution equivalent to university. The title is awarded by the university's president or relevant institution's director upon the approval of the university council or the institution's council.

Emeritus Professor, Honorary Professor, and Adjunct Professors are not entitled to incentives or professional support funds.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set the standards, conditions, and procedures in appointing and withdrawing all types of academic titles.

- c. Lecturers in higher education institutions of all forms, types and levels are entitled to request the status of teacher as prescribed in the Decree on Public Teachers.

### **Article 33 Duties and Authority of Lecturers**

Lecturers in higher education institutions must perform their roles and authorities as prescribed in the Education Law and Decree on Public Teachers no. 177/G, dated 05 April 2012.

#### **Article 34 Policies on Lecturers**

Lecturers in higher education institutions are entitled to benefits as prescribed in the laws and specific regulations of individual higher education institutions.

#### **Article 35 Development of Lecturers**

Higher education institutions of all levels must have a lecturer development plan to continuously upgrade the academic capacity, pedagogic skills, information, foreign language skills, knowledge of political theory, and other relevant skills of lecturers, in order to enhance teaching performance, research and academic service, and the capability to integrate with the region and internationally.

#### **Article 36 Personnel**

Personnel working in higher education institutions of all types and forms shall be proportionate with the workload. They shall possess qualifications, knowledge, ability and social behaviors that satisfy the conditions and standards set by the institution. Personnel working for public higher education institutions shall be recruited on the basis of the laws on public servants of Lao PDR.

### **Chapter 7**

#### **Student Management**

#### **Article 37 Organization and Management**

All higher education institutions must have a student management system that manages and looks after the students' daily life, including activities in the classroom, dormitory, extra-curricular activities, sport activities, social, cultural and political activities, and participation in mass organizations; based on the rules of the institution and government law.

### **Article 38 Rights, Duties and Obligations of Students**

All students in higher education institutions have rights, duties and obligations as prescribed in the Education Law and student management regulations set by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

### **Article 39 Policies on Students**

Students undertaking studies in higher education institutions of all forms and levels are entitled to the benefits indicated in the Education Law, and regulations set by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the relevant higher education institutions.

## **Chapter 8 Investment in Higher Education**

### **Article 40 General Policies**

The government shall support investment in higher education institutions of all levels, types and forms indicated in Article 10, 11 and 12 in this decree, in relation to national socio-economic development in each period.

### **Article 41 Investment of the Government**

Investment of the government in the development of higher education shall be well-planned, focused on priorities, and aligned with the demands of the national socio-economic situation in each period. In particular, the government shall invest directly in the construction of infrastructure, buildings, technical equipment, vehicles, teaching and learning materials, facilities, as well the development of lecturers and other personnel in higher education institutions. Investment shall be of the type and form that the government considers appropriate.

#### **Article 42 Investment by the Private Sector**

Investment by the private sector is direct investment of individuals, firms, and businesses in the country or from abroad to establish higher education institutions. Investment shall follow laws on investment promotion, other laws and regulations relevant to Lao PDR, and follow the government's policies to improve education in each period.

#### **Article 43 Joint-Venture**

The government encourages joint-ventures between public and private sectors, community and individuals or groups of people in the country or from abroad, to develop various aspects of higher education such as infrastructure, equipment, technology, human resource development, academic service, and scientific research; in relation to relevant policies, laws and regulations.

### **Chapter 9**

#### **Finance and Property of Higher Education Institutions**

#### **Article 44 Revenue Sources**

1. Main revenue sources of public higher education institutions include:
  - (1) Government budget: based on the budget allocation in each year, grants, national or international loans;
  - (2) Tuition fees, registration and enrolment charges, graduation award fees collected from students;
  - (3) Revenue from academic services: conduct of scientific research, consultation services, provision of training, conduct of experiments and trials, production, development and use of technology, rental fees of rooms and locations, etc. as prescribed in relevant laws and regulations;

- (4) Donations from individuals, firms, groups of people, organizations in the country and from abroad.
2. Main revenue sources of private higher education institutions include:
  - (1) Property, capital of the investors or the loans obtained;
  - (2) Tuition fees, registration and enrolment charges, graduation award fees collected from students;
  - (3) Revenue from academic services: conduct of scientific research, consultation services, provision of training, conduct of experiments and trials, production, development of technology, rental fees of rooms and locations, etc. as prescribed in the relevant laws and regulations;
  - (4) Lawful contributions from other sources.

#### **Article 45 Financial Status of Higher Education Institutions**

Public higher education institutions type 1 and type 2 have the financial status of Unit Level 1 prescribed in the National Budget Law. For other types of higher education institutions, their financial status is based upon the administration of central and local level government organizations.

#### **Article 46 Financial and Property Management**

Financial and property management of higher education of all types shall follow the relevant laws and regulations.

#### **Article 47 Inspection and Auditing**

Higher education institutions of all types and forms must be inspected and audited every year as prescribed in the National Budget Law, State Audit Law, and other related laws and regulations.

## Chapter 10

### National and International Cooperation

#### Article 48 National Cooperation

Higher education institutions of all types have the right to cooperate on academic development with other institutions, government or private organizations, businesses, and production units, indicated in the institutions' roles and in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations.

#### Article 49 Cooperation with Foreign Countries and International Organizations

Higher education institutions have the right to undertake academic cooperation with foreign institutions and organizations, in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations and upon the approval from the government or relevant organization.

## Chapter 11

### Organization and Management of Higher Education

#### Article 50 State Management of National Higher Education Development

1. Government:
  - (1) Formulate strategies and policies for higher education institutions that are aligned with the national socio-economic development plan in each period; ensure continuity and sustainability to satisfy the demand of specialized personnel for the development of all domains: economy, society and culture, politics and governance, national defense and public security, science and technology and others;
  - (2) Clearly focus and prioritize investment in infrastructure and human resource development of



- higher education institutions; improve the effectiveness and efficiency of higher education to increase its regional and international integration;
- (3) Encourage private sectors and local and national non-profit organizations to invest in higher education in priority fields, in accordance with policies, laws and regulations;
  - (4) Implement policy to congratulate individuals, firms, groups of people and organizations that have outstanding achievements and contributions to the development of higher education; and strictly punish those who violate laws and regulations.
2. Ministry of Education and Sports:
- The Ministry of Education and Sports is the overarching organization that oversees all activities of higher education institutions of all types and forms; develops tools, mechanisms, and legislation to monitor, inspect and evaluate the government's policies and strategies of higher education development.
  - Directly manage higher education institutions that are in the education sector, including the private sector, local and international organizations, as prescribed in their roles and as assigned by the government.
  - Manage the academic content of higher education institutions of all types and forms that are under the vertical management of the ministry, ministry-equivalent organizations, and local authorities.
  - Establish mechanisms to manage colleges of all forms based on the implementation of curriculum. The higher education sector supervises the curriculum of Associate Degrees, and the technical and vocational education sector supervises Higher Vocational Diplomas.

3. Ministries, ministry-equivalent organizations and local authorities have the duty to manage higher education institutions that are under their authority, based on their roles prescribed by the government and based on the assignment of the related organizations.

#### **Article 51 National Higher Education Council**

1. Roles and Duties:

The National Higher Education Council is a non-permanent organization. Its role is to act as a secretariat that provides advice to the government regarding academic affairs of national higher education institutions. Its duties are to consider, certify, and recommend to the government for approval the following important education issues:

- (1) Establishment, expansion, and dissolution of national and international higher education institutions;
- (2) Nomination of academic titles including Professor and Associate Professor;
- (3) Approval of national scientific research topics of higher education institutions

2. Organizational Structure:

The National Higher Education Council structure consists of:

- (1) Governing Board including: President and Vice President;
- (2) Permanent Board of Management including President, Vice President and some committees;
- (3) Commission for different sectors as needed; and
- (4) The National Higher Education Council office (Secretariat) is a unit that is equivalent to a center or institution under a department, in the Ministry of Education and Sports.

### 3. Personnel Structure:

The National Higher Education Council consists of no more than 21 members as follows:

- President and 2 Vice Presidents;
- Governing Board Members: 7 persons (including President and Vice Presidents);
- Commission: 14 persons (selected from higher education institutions and highly qualified persons);
- National Higher Education Council office (Secretariat) consists of a Director and one Deputy Director and a number of academic staff as appropriate.

### 4. Appointment and Formulation of Regulations:

#### (1) Appointment:

- The Prime Minister shall appoint the President, Vice President, and committees of National Higher Education Council, based on the recommendation of the Minister of Education and Sports;
- The Director of National Higher Education Council Office (as the Director of the secretariat) is a government official whose position is equivalent to a deputy director general of department, and is appointed by the Minister of Education and Sports;
- The Deputy Director of the National Higher Education Council Office (as the Deputy Director of the secretariat) is a government official whose position is equivalent to head of division in the department, and is appointed by the Minister of Education and Sports;
- Commission of different sectors are appointed by the President of the National Higher Education Council;

#### (2) Formulation of regulations: The President of the Council shall formulate the regulations of the National Higher Education Council.

**Article 52 Organizational and Personnel Structure of Higher Education Institutions**

1. University and institutions equivalent to university:
  - a. The organizational structure consists of:
    - (1) University Council or institution Council;
    - (2) University or Institution Office, which includes an appropriate number of offices, whose status is equivalent to departments for the university, or includes an appropriate number of departments for the institutions with the university-equivalent status. Offices and departments are also divided into sub-offices, divisions, sections, and units;
    - (3) Administrative board and academic board;
    - (4) Faculties for different subjects consist of departments, divisions, units, and subject units;
    - (5) Institutions, colleges, centers, libraries, schools, hospitals and other service units that are under the university or the institution, shall follow the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Sports or the relevant organization.
  - b. The personnel structure consists of:
    - (1) President, Vice President of the Council and an appropriate number of committees;
    - (2) University President or institution's Director and 4-5 University Vice Presidents or institution Vice Directors;
    - (3) Dean or Head of Department and no more than 3 Vice Deans or Deputy Heads of Department;
    - (4) Head of Office and several Deputy Heads as appropriate;
    - (5) Head of University Department and several Deputy Heads as appropriate;
    - (6) Head of Division and several Deputy Heads as appropriate;
    - (7) Head of Sector;

- (8) Head of Unit, Head of Subject Unit;
  - (9) Director and Deputy Director or Head and Deputy Head of the institution, college, center, central library, hospital and other units;
- c. Appointment:

- (1) The Prime Minister shall appoint the university President or institution's Director, university Vice President or institution's Deputy Director, and Dean of faculty/Head of the department and other equivalent positions, based on the proposal of Minister of Education and Sports or other relevant organization;
  - (2) The Minister of Education and Sports or the minister of other line ministries or equivalent organization, shall appoint the university council or higher education institution's council; administrative positions including Vice Dean of faculty/Deputy Head of a department; Head of subject department or Head of office, and other administrative equivalent positions, based on the proposal of university President or Director of the institution.
  - (3) University President or institution's Director shall appoint administrative positions including Deputy Head of Office and equivalent, Head of Division or Deputy Head of Division, Deputy Head of University Department, Head of Unit, Head of Subject Unit and other equivalent organizations under the organizational structure and management of that university or that institution.
2. University President or institution's Director College, Academy and College-Equivalent institutions:

The Minister of Education and Sports, other line ministries, ministry-equivalent organizations and relevant authorities shall establish the organization structure, roles,

duties, authorities and the appointment of administrative positions in higher education institutions, including colleges, academies, college-equivalent institutions of all types and forms indicated in Article 11 and Article 12 of this decree; prescribed in their roles, authorities, duties and responsibilities, Law on government of Lao PDR, and law on local administration.

**Article 53 Autonomy of Higher Education Institutions**

Higher Education Institutions of all types and forms shall gain autonomy on the basis of the following principles and conditions:

1. Principles: obtain approval from the government or relevant organizations, in line with related policies, laws and regulations.
2. Conditions: a higher education institution must (1) be a university or equivalent higher education institution, and have an outstanding academic content; (2) be prepared for administration and management; and (3) have certification of its quality assurance ranking.

The Minister of Education and Sports shall set the standards, conditions and regulations regarding the autonomy of higher education institutions.

**Chapter 12  
Prohibitions**

**Article 54 Prohibitions for Lecturers and other Personnel**

Prohibitions of lecturers and other personnel in higher education institutions shall follow the Education Law, and other related laws and regulations.

**Article 55 Prohibitions for Students**

Apart from prohibitions indicated in the Education Law, students must follow other related laws and regulations.

**Chapter 13**  
**Final Provisions**

**Article 56 Implementation**

The Ministry of Education and Sports, other line ministries and ministry-equivalent organizations, local authorities, public and private higher education institutions and other related organizations shall strictly acknowledge, elaborate and implement this decree.

**Article 57 Effectiveness**

This decree is effective from the date of its signature and 15 days from its promulgation.

Any regulations and provisions that are in conflict with this decree shall be abrogated.

**Government of Lao PDR**  
**Prime Minister**

Thongsing Thammavong