



2nd NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Innovative Responses to Adaptations, Opportunities, and Challenges in Higher Education

14th – 15th May, 2023

Samtse College of Education
Royal University of Bhutan

Co-Hosted by:

- Samtse College of Education
- Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), Bhutan Qualifications and Professionals Certification Authority (BQPCA), MoESD
- Paro College of Education
- Royal Thimphu College

Key deadlines:

- March 20, 2023 - Abstract due
- April 20, 2023 - Full draft paper due

Contact details:

For inquiries related to submission of abstracts and papers, mail us at dril.sce@rub.edu.bt

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Conference objectives:

1. Provide a platform to share innovations, adaptations, and challenges in higher education teaching-learning in Bhutan;
2. Discuss ways forward for the adoption of innovative and adaptive practices in higher education;
3. Provide an opportunity to teachers, educators, researchers, and scholars to participate in higher education discourse, acquire new knowledge and expand network;
4. Provide an intellectual and educational forum for scholars, researchers and practitioners to showcase their endeavours to influence and develop higher education in Bhutan;
5. Open prospects to collaborate and partner with different national work professionals for strengthening higher education and professional practices in Bhutan;
6. Inform policy makers and stakeholder agencies of the key issues and interventions that need to be initiated to address the current challenges that plagues higher education in the country.

Conference themes:

1. Vision of Higher Education
2. Curriculum and Assessment in Higher Education
3. Inclusion in Higher Education
4. Quality and Relevancy of Programmes
5. Internationalisation of Bhutan's Higher Education
6. Learning and Teaching Approaches in Higher Education
7. Rethinking Pedagogies for the 21st Century
8. Technology and Higher Education
9. Research in Higher Education
10. Higher Education Policy
11. Leadership in Higher Education
12. Higher Education Resources and Infrastructure
13. Professional Development in Higher Education
14. Higher Education and Industry Partnerships
15. STEM Education in Higher Education

Conference background:

Tertiary education in Bhutan came a long way since its humble beginning in 1983 with the launch of an undergraduate degree programme at Sherubtse College, Kanglung. Today, Bhutan has a well-established Royal University of Bhutan with 9 federated colleges and 2 affiliate colleges offering different programmes in addition to the Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan (KGUMSB), Tango Buddhist College, Royal Institute of Management in Thimphu, and Jigme Singye Wangchuck Law School at Pangbisa in Paro.

Higher education institutions are vital for the development of skills in academics and professionals, generating the human capital needed to support the transition to sustainable development from local communities to the international arena by creating and disseminating knowledge, generating environmental awareness and critical thinking that encourage students to shape sustainable societies. Higher Education Institutions also serve as drivers of their nation's economy generating millions by contributing to the country's national exchequer.

The Royal Kasho on Education Reform issued by His Majesty Druk Gyalpo Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck, coinciding with the 113th National Day Celebrations on 17th December 2020 has already alerted the country's education system for a transformative reconceptualisation in terms of curriculum, teaching and learning approaches and assessment standards, including higher education that has been challenged to produce university graduates that are not just job ready but world ready. The Royal Kasho on Education Reform has generated a deeper sense of urgency to aim for standards and goals which are of the highest possible order in creating a teaching-learning environment that is tailored for the 21st century and beyond.

Therefore, higher education in Bhutan is in need of a new vision, a re-invention in terms of relevancy and effectiveness of curriculum design and subject matter knowledge dealt in higher education classrooms; classroom learning, and assessment approaches that uses technology as a primary enabler of quality learning; and educational approaches and practices that adequately prepares university graduates with knowledge and skills that can help them steer and navigate the challenges of the 21st century knowledge-based society.

The proposed National Conference on Higher Education will bring together all relevant stakeholders to define and prepare their roadmap for a new era of the higher education system. This roadmap will be responsive to the challenges faced by higher education institutions. Furthermore, higher education must anticipate and prepare for its role in societies that go beyond the 21st century.

This National Conference on Higher Education aims at deconstructing the traditional models of higher education and opening doors to new, innovative, creative, and visionary conceptions that not only serve the current agenda for sustainable development, but also pave the way for future learning communities that overcome barriers by taking a more collaborative approach in determining the future of higher education in Bhutan. The Conference will be jointly organised by Samtse and Paro Colleges of Education, Royal Thimphu College, and Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), Bhutan Qualifications and Professionals Certification Authority (BQPCA), MoESD with funding and technical support from UNESCO and the Republic of Korea Funds-in-Trust.

