

## National Policy on Education (NEP 2020) - UPSC Notes

The Union Cabinet approved the National Education Policy (NEP) in July 2020. This policy will usher in sweeping changes to the education policy of the country, including a renaming of the Ministry of Human Resource Development as the Education Ministry. In this article, you can read all about the new National Education Policy 2020 for the UPSC exam.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development formed a Committee chaired by Dr. K. Kasturirangan for preparing the National Education Policy. The Committee was constituted in June 2017. The Committee submitted its report on May 31, 2019. This article on education in India is aligned with the [UPSC Syllabus](#) and is relevant for mains examination in General Studies Paper-II.

### What is the National Policy on Education?

The National Policy on Education covers elementary and university education in urban as well as rural India.

- The very first policy for education was promulgated in 1968 with the second one following in 1986.
- The first NPE was based on the recommendations of the Education Commission (1964-66). This policy sought to have a 'radical restructuring' of India's educational system and equalising opportunities for education for all, to accomplish national integration and better economic and cultural development.
- The NPE also called for realising compulsory education for every child until the age of fourteen, as mentioned in the Indian Constitution.
- It also aimed at providing enhanced training and improving teachers' qualifications.

Also read [State of School Education in India](#).

### National Education Policy 2020

The National Education Policy as submitted by the Kasturirangan Committee submitted an education policy which seeks to address the following challenges facing the existing education system:

1. Quality
  2. Affordability
  3. Equity
  4. Access
  5. Accountability
- The policy provides for reforms at all levels of education from school to higher education.
  - NEP aims to increase the focus on strengthening teacher training, reforming the existing exam system, early childhood care and restructuring the regulatory framework of education.
  - Other intentions of the NEP include:
    - Increasing public investment in education,
    - Setting up NEC (National Education Commission),
    - Increasing focus on vocational and adult education,
    - Strengthening the use of technology, etc.

### Key Recommendations of the NEP 2020

You can read the complete set of recommendations of the NEP 2020 in [CNA dated July 30, 2020](#).

The National Education Policy 2020 has recommendations and reforms with respect to the following items:

Early Childhood Care and Education	The Right to Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act)
Curriculum Framework	School Exams
Higher Educational Institutions [Accreditations & Structure]	National Mission on Education [Through Communication & IT]
National Research Foundation	Education Governance
Financing Education	Vocational Courses
Three Language Formula	

All of these recommendations are explained below.

### Early Childhood Care and Education

The NEP recommended that early childhood care & education be developed in a two-part curriculum consisting of:

1. Guidelines for Parents & Teachers of students up to 3 years of age
2. An educational framework for students between the ages of 3-8 years

The NEP talks about the implementation of these recommendations by expanding and improving the quality of the Anganwadi system and co-locating them with primary schools.

### The Right to Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act)

The NEP recommended extending the range of the [Right to Education Act](#), 2009 to include the following education levels:

1. Early Childhood &
2. Secondary School

This will allow coverage of RTE to all the children between the ages of 3-18 years. In addition, it suggested the elimination of detention of children until class eight.

### Curriculum Framework

Reforms in the framework of the current curriculum of school education are based on the development needs of the students. The NEP recommends the 5-3-3-4 pattern explained in the table below:

Years	Stage	Curriculum
5	Foundational	3 years of pre-primary followed by class 1 and 2
3	Preparatory	Classes 3 to 5
3	Middle	Classes 6 to 8
4	Secondary	Classes 9-12

### School Exam Reforms

Reforms in the school exam recommended by the NEP include tracking the progress of the students throughout their school experience.

- It includes State Census Exams in class 3, 5 and 8.
- Another important recommendation was the restructuring of the 10th board exam that would mainly focus and test only the skills, core concepts and higher-order thinking & capacities.

## Regulatory Structure and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions

In terms of Accreditation and Regulatory structure, the NEP recommended the following changes:

- Setting up NHERA (National Higher Education Regulatory Authority),
- Separating [NAAC](#) from UGC into an autonomous and independent body.

Read more on the [UGC](#) in the linked article.

## National Research Foundation

In order to improve the quality of research in India, the NEP recommended:

- Establishment of a National Research Foundation.
  - It would be an autonomous body that would administer the mentoring, funding and capacity building for quality research in India.

## Education Governance

The NEP recommended establishing an apex body for education headed by the Prime Minister under the name **Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog or National Education Commission**.

- It also suggested changing the name of the Ministry of Human Resources & Development to the Ministry of Education.

## Financing Education

Doubling the public investment for education was one of the important recommendations of the NEP 2020.

- NEP 2020 insisted on an expenditure of 6% of the GDP on education.
- Doubling the current 10% of total public expenditure to 20% in the next decade was recommended.

## National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology

The NEP suggested setting up an autonomous body that would facilitate decision making on the deployment, induction and use of technology. NEP said that this would be achieved by implementing the following measures:

- Establishment of National Education Technology Forum.
  - The recommended autonomous body would be administered under this mission.
- It will also include virtual laboratories in various disciplines providing remote access.

## Vocational Courses

Recommendations of NEP 2020 with respect to Vocational courses can be listed as follows:

- Students in classes 9 to 12 must receive vocational education on at least one vocation,
- Schools should build expert curriculum delivery methods that are aligned with [National Skills Qualifications Framework \(NSQF\)](#) competency levels,
- Higher Education Institutes must also provide vocational courses that are integrated into undergraduate education programmes.

### Three Language Formula

The Policy recommended that the three-language formula be continued and flexibility in the implementation of the formula should be provided. The three-language formula states that state governments should adopt and implement the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of the southern languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi-speaking states, and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the non-Hindi speaking states.

## National Education Policy 2019 Concerns

Some of the concerns expressed about the NEP 2019 are as follow:

- The report fails to address and incorporate ideas based on contemporary global thinking like the emphasis on creativity and critical thinking and the need for learning in a non-competitive and non-hierarchical ecosystem and discovering one's true passion without any sense of fear.
- Delivering the changes proposed related to Anganwadis may be difficult despite the focus given to early childhood care and schooling.
- The propositions of volunteer teachers, peer tutoring, rationalisation of the system of schools and sharing of resources do not seem like long-term solutions.
- Lack of clarity in government strategies regarding the Public Sector like municipal schools, state-run institutions, Kendra Vidyalaya, etc.
- The creation of a National Testing Agency (NTA) has generated scepticism. The NTA, though envisaged to serve as a premier, expert, autonomous testing organisation to conduct entrance examinations for admissions and fellowships in higher educational institutions may, in reality, lead to loss of autonomy among the universities and departments over admissions.

For a critical analysis of the National Education Policy 2020, check [CNA dated July 31, 2020 editorials](#).

## UPSC Questions related to National Education Policy 2020

**Who is the chairman of the National Education Policy 2020?**

K. Kasturirangan is the chairman of the National Education Policy 2020.

**When was the National Policy on Education formulated?**

There were National Education Policies in 1968, 1986, 1992 and the latest in 2020.

