Overview of the Higher Education System

Egypt

February 2017
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Eurydice
The higher education system in Egypt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISCED 5</th>
<th>ISCED 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Years</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>University</td>
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<tr>
<td>▼ Bachelor</td>
<td>▼ Bachelor</td>
<td>▼ Master</td>
<td>▼ Master</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Most common length of a Bologna cycle**: ※
- **Other length of a Bologna cycle**: ※
- **Professional programme**: ※
- **Programme outside the typical Bologna model**: ※
- **Professional programme non Bologna**: ※

**ECTS**: Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>regulated at national level</th>
<th>decided at institutional level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All programmes have admission requirements</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>△</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social sciences, humanities, applied sciences, nursing and midwifery

>>> Pharmacy, veterinary, engineering, architecture

>>> Medicine, surgery, dentistry

>>> Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)
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Overview

The regularity and richness of the annual Nile River flood, coupled with semi-isolation provided by deserts to the east and west, allowed for the development of one of the world's great civilizations. Situated in Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Libya and the Gaza Strip, and the Red Sea north of Sudan, The Arab Republic of Egypt includes the Asian Sinai Peninsula, which is the only land bridge between Africa and remainder of Eastern Hemisphere. Egypt also hosts the Suez Canal, a sea link between Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea.

Populated by a rapidly growing population of over 90 Million Egyptians, mostly Muslim Sunni (90%), in 2012, the percentage of Christians in Egypt was around 10% (majority Coptic Orthodox, other Christians include Armenian Apostolic, Catholic, Maronite, Orthodox, and Anglican). Egypt is the largest country in North Africa in terms of population.

The estimated Egyptian GDP in 2015 was USD 286.4 Billion, with a growth rate of 4.2%, and a GDP per Capita of USD 11,500.

1.1 Fundamental Principles and National Policies

In accordance with the Article 19 of the Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt (2014), “Every citizen has the right to education”

Article 21 states that “The state guarantees the independence of universities, scientific and linguistic academies. It commits to providing university education in accordance with global quality criteria, and to developing free university education in state universities and institutes as per the law. The state allocates a percentage of the government expenditure that is no less than 2% of Gross National Product (GNP). It will gradually increase until it reaches global rates.”

Article 22 states that “Teachers and members of the teaching staff and their assistants are the main pillar of education. The state guarantees the development of their academic competencies and professional skills, and care for their financial and moral rights in order to ensure the quality of education and achieve its objectives.

In Egypt, the following laws and their amendments govern Higher education:

- Law on Regulation of Universities (Law no. 49-Year 1972)
- Law on Regulation of Private Universities (Law no. 101-Year 1992)
- Law on Regulation of Private and National (Non-profit) Universities (Law no. 12-Year 2009)

And (Higher Education) is offered through the following types of institutions.

- Universities (Public, Private, and National non for Profit “Ahleyya”)
- Higher specialised institutes
- Technical college
- Middle institutes
- Upper Middle Institutes
- Academies

Duration of studies in higher education ranges from two years (Middle Technical Colleges to four, five, or six years of university education and higher institutes

In order to acquire a Master's degree, a minimum duration of two years is required, as well as for PhD.

1 Egyptian Constitution 2014
By 2015, the number of universities in Egypt reached 54; out of them 23 are Public, Al-Azhar University, 19 Private and the remaining 11 Universities have mixed status (Universities attached to other public institutions, Universities operating under special laws or intergovernmental agreements, Private non-Profit Universities, etc.). Egyptian Public Universities are composed of several faculties in various disciplines, i.e. there are no specialised public universities. In addition to universities, the system encompasses also 141 private higher institutes. Al-Azhar University represent the only religious education in both Basic and Higher Education (while following the same system of education, but offering religious Islamic subjects as integral part of the curricula).

In 2014, the number of graduates of Higher Education was 308,187 compared to 462,880 in 2013 with a decrease of 33.4% compared to the year before. Males represented 56.5% of the total number of graduates. International students were 7,790 representing 2.5% of all graduates; 71.1% of the foreign students were Arab, followed by Asian students (18.8%) and by African (7.9%); 0.6% were American.

With respect to Postgraduate studies, in 2014 120,046 postgraduate degrees were awarded with an increase of 35.2% compared to 88,800 postgraduate degrees awarded in 2013. Of these, 99.8% of the total (119,775) was awarded by Egyptian universities, while 0.2% (271) was awarded by foreign universities with German universities on top followed by USA, UK and Canada.

Distribution of postgraduate degrees is as follows:

- 95,218 students obtained a Post Graduate Diploma (one or two years' specialization degree that is not equivalent to a Masters), representing 79.3% of the total postgraduate degrees awarded in 2014 with a 30.1% increase compared to 2013.
- 17,076 Students obtained a Master Degree compared to 11,037 in the previous year with a 54.7% increase.
- 7,752 Students obtained a PhD degree compared to 4,569 in the previous year with a 69.7% increase.

During the academic year 2014-2015, 2,624,705 students were registered in the Higher Education system, out of which 52.2% were males and 47.7% females. This number represents an increase of 12.3% compared to the previous academic year when 2,337,193 students were registered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Higher Education Institution</th>
<th>Registered Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Universities</td>
<td>1,642,715 (62.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Azhar University</td>
<td>304,072 (11.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Universities</td>
<td>110,859 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academies</td>
<td>27,566 (1.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Higher Institutes</td>
<td>379,525 (14.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Middle Institutes: Public and Private (Awarding Diploma)</td>
<td>111,398 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Middle Private Institutes (Awarding Diploma and BA/BSc)</td>
<td>48,570 (1.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,624,705</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Number of Students Registered in Higher Education (2014-2015)

**Academic Staff (2014-2015)**

- The number of academic staff at public universities in 2014-2015 was 75,023 in addition to 13,303 at Al Azhar University. This number includes 42,087 tenured academic staff in public
universities (57.4%) and 4,988 at Al Azhar (37.5%) and 31,936 assistant academic staff at public universities (42.6%) and 8,315 at Al Azhar University (62.5%).

- In private universities, the number of academic staff is 6,822 out of which tenured academics represent 43.8% and assistant academic staff represents 56.2%.

1.2 Lifelong Learning Strategy

Despite the fact that there have been several initiatives implementing some aspects of the concept of Lifelong Learning, the Higher Education System in Egypt has no clear defined strategy in this respect. In Egypt, two forms of education could be ascribed to Lifelong Learning initiatives:

1. Several Universities have established branches for “Open Education” or “Distance Learning”, where Open education branches accept students who obtained their General Secondary Certificate (or equivalent certificates) at least five years prior to their application. This gives an opportunity for further education to those who could not continue their higher education directly after secondary school. Open Education branches also accepts graduates from other disciplines wishing to continue their studies in other programs.

2. Centres at Faculties and Universities offering continuing education and training represent the second form of Lifelong Learning. Those centres offer training programs to the community. Training programs are usually addressing market needs and/or industrial needs in surrounding environment. The establishment of these units and/or centres is regulated by the universities and the framework provided by the Supreme Council of Universities (SCU).

On the other hand, several international initiatives and project have been active in the area of continuous education and/or lifelong learning, and some Tempus funded projects have been used to conduct/pursue pilot training programs linking university training units/centres with the society. (two examples are to be mentioned here: Tempus project labelled “EduCamp: Education for Sustainable Development”, in which centres of excellence were established at the universities to train school teachers on concepts related to sustainable development, and also the Tempus project entitled “AIP: Academic-Industry Partnership towards Development of Trainers and Educators for Technicians in Egypt”.

1.3 Organization of Private Education

The establishment and operation of Private Education institutions in Egypt is regulated by the Supreme Council of Private Universities, which is a regulatory body within the Ministry of Higher Education whose members are all presidents of Private Universities, in addition to some Presidents of Public Universities and public figures. It is headed by the Minister of Higher Education. The Supreme Council of Private Universities sets the general policies, and determines general guidelines of operation.

The establishment of private universities in Egypt requires a presidential decree after satisfying a list of requirements set by the Supreme Council of Private Universities (minimum requirements in terms of infrastructure, Curricula, and Teaching staff). Also, the establishment of National “Ahleya”2 (non for profit universities) requires a presidential decree and a different set of criteria.

1.4 National Qualifications Framework

Egypt is still in the process of developing its National Qualifications Framework. The Egyptian National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (NAQAAE) was mandated in 2010 to establish a National Qualifications Framework for the country, which is expected to be finalized and

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2 Although “Ahleya” (National nonprofit) universities and private university are both established by shareholders, all income and profit generated at Ahleya universities are reinjected into the university, while, in private universities, shareholders may receive percentages of the profits (a percentage defined by the board of trustees of the university).
endorsed by 2017, as the definition of the NQF requires a lot of consultation with stakeholders from industry, syndicates, basic and technical education.

The following eight levels were identified for education in Egypt where Higher Education spans from level 4 till level 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQF Levels</th>
<th>General Education Path</th>
<th>Technical Vocational Education TVET Path</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Technical (Professional) Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Post graduate Studies</td>
<td>Post graduate Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree (4, 5, 6 years)</td>
<td>Technical Applied Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Post-Secondary Diploma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>General Secondary Certificate</td>
<td>Technical Education Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>General Preparatory Certificate</td>
<td>Vocational Preparatory Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Primary Certificate (Illiteracy Level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Education Levels according to the NQF

1.5 Statistics on Organization and Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students registered in universities in 2014-2015*4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,057,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Universities, including al-Azhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,946,787 (F 48%; M 52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110,859 (F 43.5%; M 56.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Number of students in Egyptian Universities in 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students registered in middle and higher institutes in 2014-2015*5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>539,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Institutes (public and private)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111,398 (F 48.3%; M 51.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Middle Private Institutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48,570 (F 34.1%; M 65.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Higher Institutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>379,529 (F 28.3%; M 71.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Number of students registered in Egyptian middle and Higher Institutes in 2014-15

*3 NAQAAE (Dec 2015).
### Number of HEIs in 2014-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>195</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities 54</td>
<td>Colleges/Institutes (Non-university) 141*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 23</td>
<td>Private 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Status 11</td>
<td>Al-Azhar University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Numbers of Higher Education Institutions in 2014-15

### Number of Graduates in 2014-2015**

| Higher Institutes and Academies | 16.9% | 76,530 | - 31.9% |
| Technical Institutes | 18.1% | 47,200 | +18.4% |
| Private Universities (Bachelor) | 3.4% | 10,631 | - 22.9% |
| Public Universities (Bachelor) | 61.5% | 189,566 | - 41.7% |
| Total | 100% | 308,187 | - 33.4% |

Table 6. Numbers of graduates of Higher Education in 2014-15

### Number of Holders of Postgraduate Titles in 2014-2015***

| Diploma graduates | 95,218 | + 30.1% |
| Master graduates | 17,076 | + 54.7% |
| PhD graduates | 7,752 | + 69.7% |
| Total | 120,046 | + 35.2% |

Table 7. Numbers of Holders of Postgraduate Degrees in 2014-15

1.6 Distribution of responsibilities

In Egypt, the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research bears the overall responsibility for developing and implementing education policy. There are four executive bodies regulating the implementation of Higher Education programmes by monitoring and verifying their outcomes and the required processes. In addition, the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation for Education is responsible for accrediting Higher Education institutions and its programmes according to the national standards:

Supreme Council of Public Universities

Supreme Council of Private Universities

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9 A list of Public Universities and their websites is included as an annex.
Supreme Council of Technical Higher Institutes

Supreme Council of Al-Azhar

Figure 1. Higher Education Bodies in Egypt

The Supreme Council of Public Universities (SCU), is composed of the presidents of the public universities in addition to five members from the civil society and is coordinated by a secretary-general and chaired by the Minister of Higher Education. The main roles of the SCU according to the Egyptian law are to:

- Set out the general policy for Higher Education in Egypt and link it to the needs of Egypt
- Set up a general coordination policy between universities with respect to study periods, exams etc.
- Coordinate between equivalent faculties and departments at different universities
- Set up the internal by-laws of the universities and their faculties.

The SCU is the public body responsible for accreditation of the new universities and/or programmes. It also includes a department of equivalence for equating any foreign certificate from a non-Egyptian University.

For private universities and technical institutions, the Supreme Council of Private Universities and the Supreme Council of Technical Institutes play the role of coordination between private universities. Both have a Secretary-general and are presided by the Minister of Higher Education. The roles and responsibilities of those Councils are equivalent to that of the SCU.

Although the Ministry and its Higher Councils mainly govern the system, universities enjoy a high level of decentralisation in terms of the authorities, regulations, community service, and to some extent in their financing and fund raising. A university may therefore choose to develop a specialisation in an area of local need (petroleum engineering or tropical medicine), but such courses have to comply with the general rule indicated by the Supreme Council of Universities as to the number of years of study.

The executive bodies mentioned above are also responsible for ensuring a complete level of harmonisation between degrees offered at different universities and a level of harmonisation in courses taught at various universities, while giving some freedom of adaptation for courses targeting local, regional or specific needs.

For example, in order to create a new faculty, a university has to submit a complete set of courses and their syllabuses to the relevant Council that ensures that the years of study, number of hours and courses...
taught are in line with the whole system before issuing an approval for the creation of such a faculty.

The Higher Education Enhancement Plan 2021 seeks more autonomy for public universities, especially in terms of financial autonomy and community services.

2 Higher Education Funding

2.1 Public Education

According to the Egyptian Constitution, financing of higher education in Egypt is under the mandate of the Government; Public universities as well as the Ministry receive their budget from the Ministry of Finance (Treasury) which also controls the spending of the funds. The budget is approved based on the request of the university. Nevertheless, Higher education institutions may acquire/seek funds from various national and international projects, real estate, donations, consultancy services etc.

In 2014/2015, State Public Expenditure on Education (Pre-University and University Education) reached 94.4 billion Egyptian Pounds representing 12% of the total State Public Expenditure; this percentage was quite stable in the last years.

Expenditure on Public University Education reached 26.4 billion Egyptian Pounds in 2014/2015 representing 3.34% of State Public Expenditure and 28% of State Public Expenditure on Education.\(^\text{12}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Public Expenditure</td>
<td>789.4 billion EGP</td>
<td>742.1 billion EGP</td>
<td>533,784.8 million EGP</td>
<td>490,589.7 million EGP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Expenditure on Education</td>
<td>94.4 billion EGP</td>
<td>83.6 billion EGP</td>
<td>64,034.5 million EGP</td>
<td>51,770.7 million EGP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Expenditure on Education to Public Expenditure</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>.12 %</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Expenditure on Pre-University Education to Expenditure on Education</td>
<td>72% of total Public Expenditure on Education</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on University Education</td>
<td>26.4 billion EGP</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>13,728.4 million EGP</td>
<td>11,086.4 million EGP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Expenditure on University Education to Expenditure on Education</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Public Expenditure on Education

Public educational institutions are primarily funded from the state budget, while private educational institutions do not receive any direct or indirect public funding. They use a system of shareholders.

\(^{12}\) Source: State Information Service, Egypt (Education) Available in: [http://www.sis.gov.eg/Ar/Templates/Articles/TmpArticles.aspx?ArtID=68034#Vqj9qJp97My](http://www.sis.gov.eg/Ar/Templates/Articles/TmpArticles.aspx?ArtID=68034#Vqj9qJp97My)

\(^{13}\) Source: Official Website for Egyptian Public Budget. Available in: [http://www.budget.gov.eg/Budget20142015/Budget/2ca0bea2-0bc8-453f-adb7-cb1de74ce781](http://www.budget.gov.eg/Budget20142015/Budget/2ca0bea2-0bc8-453f-adb7-cb1de74ce781)

\(^{14}\) Source: Official Website for Egyptian Public Budget. Available in: [http://www.budget.gov.eg/Budget20142015/Budget/2ca0bea2-0bc8-453f-adb7-cb1de74ce781](http://www.budget.gov.eg/Budget20142015/Budget/2ca0bea2-0bc8-453f-adb7-cb1de74ce781)
represented within the Board of Trustees. They can acquire funds mainly from tuition fees, in addition to national and international projects (if applicable), real estate, donations, consultancy services, etc.

*Ahleya* universities (National) represent a different model of private universities since the Government may contribute to its establishment together with shareholders, while extra income (profit) is not distributed among shareholders of board of trustees. National Universities are allowed to receive tuition fees. The generated income is re-injected into the university financial system.

### 2.1.1 Financial Autonomy and Control

The higher education institution’s funds acquired from the state budget are earmarked for particular budget lines, whereas funds from other sources (own income that may come from various sources: projects, consultancy services, equipment, facilities etc.) are usually managed by the institution itself. The spending of the institution’s own income is governed by the institution’s internal acts in accordance with its strategic goals (while the state is still able to monitor such funds and their expenditure). Most often, the institution’s own income is spent on infrastructure. The ratio between of self-provided income and the one originating from the state budget varies largely from one institution to another (usually between 10-15% of the total budget of the university). Institutions that have more budget covered from their own sources are considered to enjoy larger financial autonomy than those mostly dependent on the state funding.

### 2.1.2 Fees within Public Higher Education

Public universities charge very small tuition fees as the public universities are mainly funded by the state and guaranteed by the Constitution. However, some special programmes within public universities are allowed to charge tuition fees. These fees are determined by the university and approved by the Supreme Council of Universities.

Each fiscal year (July to June), universities receive allocation of funds from the government treasury as any part of the Egyptian public budget, (university staff and administration are considered as civil servants) and are consequently audited by various central financial and administrative auditing bodies. The Higher Education Enhancement Master Plan 2007-2021 shows that many studies have tackled the issue of the funding mechanism for higher education in Egypt and many recommendations for “models” of funding were proposed. However, until now, no model has been adopted.

In 2007, a new “fee system” was introduced into public higher education, where new department could be created in existing faculties based on market needs and feasibility studies. Those new departments are sharing the same facilities of the faculty, but are fee based. Incomes from those programs are considered as self-generated funds from the faculty / university and its disbursement is regulated from the faculty and the university. Fees for those new departments vary between 400 and 1,000 Euros per semester, and teaching is based on credit hour system.

For Postgraduate studies, fees are applicable and vary according to faculty type (fees for faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences, are less than those for Life sciences). Fees amounts are set by the University Council and approved by the Supreme Council of Universities.

International students are subject to fees determined nationally by the Ministry of Higher Education. The admission of International Students is semi centralized at the Ministry of Higher Education (an approval of the Ministry of Higher Education has to be granted for each student, via the incoming “*Wafedeen*” department of the Ministry. "*Wafedeen*" department is responsible for insuring the equating foreign degree to the national one, and giving permission to the university to proceed with the acceptance of international students).

### 2.2 Private Educational Institutions

In 2016, 24 non-public universities were operating in Egypt. The financing of private Higher Education institutions is fully independent from the state.
2.2.1 Financial Autonomy and Control

Private universities autonomously provide funds for their educational and scientific work. The main source of income for private higher education institutions are tuition fees. Being financially independent from the state, private higher education institutions have full financial autonomy.

2.2.2 Fees within Private Higher Education

Fees in private higher education institutions are generally higher than those in public universities. Tuition fees in private higher education sector are determined by the university itself, in line with the policy of the university and the cost of studies. These fees, within established ranges, are approved by the Supreme Council of Private Universities.

2.3 Financial Support for Learners' Families

There are no structural measures meant to target learners' families. All of the existing structural measures apply to students only.

2.4 Financial Support for Learners

Student loans

Student loans are generally not applicable, yet, few companies and foundations, as part of their CSR strategies, are giving few student loans to undergraduate and postgraduate students. In 2015 and as part of a new agreement between the Egyptian government and the USAID (Partnership in Higher Education), a new scheme for student loans for masters’ students was proposed. Nevertheless, this agreement has not been implemented yet.

Student aid

Public universities offer student aid to underprivileged students (economically or socially). Students apply for this aid at their faculties and follow a procedure of verification. The granted aid is usually a small amount of a monthly stipend around 15 Euro in addition to the exemption of student hostel fees (if applicable). Individual faculties may also offer other economic aid to cover expenses of academic books and material.

Student grants

All Private universities in Egypt offer grants/scholarships to students with excellent accomplishments. Those grants cover tuition fees partially or completely. The allocation of these grants depends on each university and the decisions are taken by its competent authorities and Board of Trustees.

Other social benefits

In addition to the above mentioned support mechanisms, students are entitled to subsidised transportation in all cities in Egypt. Some local governorates have introduced free transportation for students in municipalities. The right to subsidised transportation is granted to all students at both public and private institutions.

The state subsidizes accommodation and meals for all students attending university dorms / hostels at public institutions.

3 The structure of the Higher Education system

In Egypt, access to higher education is open to every person who finished a three-years secondary school.
Higher education in Egypt dates back to 988 AD from the creation of Al-Azhar University (جامعہ الأزهر) by the Fatimids (الفاطميين). It can be considered the world’s oldest university still operating. Al-Azhar University conferred academic degrees and had individual faculties for Islamic Theology, Islamic Law and Jurisprudence, Arabic Grammar, Islamic Astronomy and Early Islamic Philosophy.

The growth of an educated class of Egyptians inspired a group of Egyptian leaders and distinguished persons to donate and found the first National Egyptian University in 1908 in Egypt, later known as Cairo University (جامعة القاهرة). As a private institution, it had a liberal arts focus, offering courses in economics, philosophy, history and literature, mainly taught by European teachers of Oriental Studies. This university was supported by the Khedive Abass (the Egyptian King) who nominated his son, Fouad I, as the university president. Later, in 1940, the university was renamed Fouad I University.

Another phase of higher education started in 1919, when a group of Americans who were interested in spreading American culture in the Middle East founded the American University in Cairo as an English-language university.

As belief in the importance of higher education grew, the government established two other universities in Alexandria in 1942 and in Cairo (Ain Shams) in 1950. This was also a response to the increase of secondary education graduates.

These movements continued on a wider scale after the 1952 revolution, when the education system became a fully social system. This was clearly enshrined in a constitutional amendment, which stated that all Egyptians should be given the possibility to access higher education. The socialist framework was clearly reflected in the centralised nature of the education system. There was a significant growth in enrolment at that moment. This concept was even extended to other Arab, Muslim and African countries where Egypt, despite its economic limitations, offered scholarships to thousands of students in these countries. In return, this allowed Egypt to play a crucial role in the development of these countries.

The expansion of higher education in Egypt began in 1957. Until then, there had been five public universities in Egypt. By the beginning of the 1960s, the government had adopted a policy of higher education expansion and started opening university branches across the country, which were transformed into independent universities afterwards. For example: Al-Minya University (جامعة المنيا) was the former branch of Assiut University (جامعة أسيوط). This policy of creating branches in various geographical areas which would eventually become independent universities is still in practice today. It merges different faculties and technical colleges (mainly technical studies of 4 years leading to a degree or a B.Sc.).

Higher Education in Egypt is preceded by 12 years of formal education in schools ending with a general exam that is similar to that of “High School Graduation Exam” in many countries. This exam is called Emtehan Thanawyeya al-amma (إمتحان الثانوية العامة). The exam is national and allows students to move from secondary to higher education, or to continue in technical and vocational education.

Two main paths are available for students after passing their final Secondary School exam, either to continue to university education (either public or private) or to enrol in vocational training institutes (two to four years of study). The period of study in Egyptian universities is standardised in all universities as being between four years (for most faculties and studies), five years (for engineering studies) and six years (for medical studies). Such duration of studies is regulated by the Supreme Council of Universities and the Supreme Council of Private Universities, which are the two main executive bodies under the Ministry of Higher Education, which governs the system of Higher Education in Egypt.

Postgraduate studies are allowed only for university degree (bachelor) holders and are composed mainly of two cycles and degrees:

- Master Cycle (degree) consisting of at least two years of postgraduate studies;
- Doctorate Cycle (degree) consisting of at least two years of studies after a Master degree.
In 1992, Law 101 opened the door for more private universities, in addition to the long-established American University in Cairo. As a result, new education providers have appeared and encouraged new types of institutions to emerge.

By 2015, the number of universities in Egypt reached 53 universities; out of them 23 are Public, 18 Private and the remaining 12 Universities have mixed status (Universities attached to other public institutions, Universities operating under special laws or intergovernmental agreements, Private non-Profit Universities, etc.). Egyptian Universities are diverse in disciplines and have all faculties and disciplines of research. The Higher Education system encompasses also 51 public non-university higher education technical Institutes and colleges. Out of which, 47 are two-year upper secondary-level technical institutes (MTI) and four are 4-5-year higher education-level technical colleges.

The Academic year is divided into two semesters of 15 weeks each. The academic year starts in September and ends in July.

3.1 Types of Higher Education Institutions

There are several types of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Egypt: public universities, public universities dependant of other public institutions, private universities, National no-profit universities, Universities under special laws or agreements, and Higher Institute (مئاد عالي). Universities are composed of faculties covering various disciplines. Generally speaking, public universities encompasses faculties for disciplines of social sciences, humanities and life sciences, while non-public universities and institutions are usually targeting specific disciplines and their faculties are limited in number and specialization (according to market studies).

3.2 First Cycle Programmes

First cycle studies are available at all types of higher education institutions in Egypt.

3.2.1 Branches of study

The main sectors of higher education in Egypt include:

- Engineering and Information Technologies
- Humanities and social sciences
- Natural sciences and Agriculture
- Medical sciences
- Arts
- Interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary sciences.

Bachelor of Arts/Science in Humanities, Social Sciences, Basic Sciences and Agriculture is granted after 4 years, while Bachelor of Science in Engineering, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Physiotherapy is granted after 5 years. Only Medicine faculties grant their B.Sc. after 6 years of studies.

Middle technical institutes offer professional diploma of 2-3 years while Higher institutes offer Bachelor of Arts in 4 years and Bachelor of Science in 4-5 years (duration is different according to the discipline).

Some universities apply a credit hour system in their Bachelor programmes while others do not. The applied credit hour system follows the American model, where hours are counted taking into consideration the professor’s hours not the student’s hours as in the case in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Nevertheless, the ECTS has been endorsed by the Supreme Council of Universities as a system of credit. Such recognition is largely due to the creation of joint or double degrees within the framework of the TEMPUS programme, and also is attributed to the demand raised by some universities having a European partnership (e.g. the German University in Cairo, the French University in Egypt, etc.)
3.2.2 Admission requirements

In Egypt, a condition for entering a first-cycle study programmes is the completion of three-year secondary education by obtaining the General Secondary Certificate (GSCaskaneya ‘amma). Secondary School graduates are distributed among the Public universities through the University Coordination Office of the Ministry of Higher Education, which applies rules taking into consideration the students’ grades, their choice for the type of discipline to study, the total number of secondary graduates, the places available at public universities and the geographical distribution.

The higher the grade in the final exam of the secondary school, the higher the possibility that the first choice of the student is granted. No further admission exams are applicable in public universities except for specific disciplines, such as Tourism, Applied and Fine Arts where students have to pass a special exam.

Private universities are allowed to have their own admission exams, but students have to have a minimum grade in their final secondary exam certificate (this minimum is decided yearly by the Supreme Council of Private Universities.

It is worth highlighting that in Egypt almost 100 % of the successful students in the general secondary education exam (kaneya ‘amma) continue to higher education institutions. The lower rate from the technical secondary education system (13.5 %) is explained by the fact that the majority of these graduates move into the labour market without pursuing higher education.

3.2.3 Curriculum

Higher education institutions are autonomous in the creation of the contents of their respective educational curricula within the general guidelines dictated by its bylaws and those of the Supreme Council of Universities. In every curriculum the list of compulsory and elective subjects should be indicated, as well as their descriptions, the number of hours they carry and the number of lessons they include. Within those guidelines, each faculty redefines / enhances its curricula every 5-10 years, taking into account recent development in the field of studies.

3.2.4 Teaching Methods

In most of the Egyptian HEIs in Egypt, lectures are held for large groups of students. The Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance sets the rules and regulations prescribing maximum numbers of students attending a lecture for every level and every branch of studies (technical and technological sciences, humanities and social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, medical sciences, arts). The same regulation specifies the maximum numbers of students at workshops and exercises, which are generally held in smaller groups.

There are no specific rules for first cycle studies regarding the teaching methods. Higher education teachers have to organize their lectures in compliance with the curriculum, but the teaching methods to be used are not prescribed. Teaching materials such as books and audio-visual materials are commonly used in the teaching process, but they are not always provided to students free of charge. Nevertheless, students are expected to refer to those materials when preparing their exams.

Several e-learning or blended learning modules and courses are taught across Egypt, and it largely depends on the department or the faculty to approve and endorse those courses.

3.2.5 Progression of Students

Students can move on to the next year of studies once they have completed their obligations in terms of passing the exams in the required courses and obtaining the sufficient number of credit hours in the case of programs applying the credit hour system. The assessment and qualification system may vary from one Faculty to another or from one programme to another within the same institution. It depends mainly on the applicable bylaw of the programme as approved by the Supreme Council and the Ministry.
The general rule for passing to the next year, is to acquire at least 50% of the total mark, and in other cases such as in the Master degrees, students must have at least 60% to pass to the next level. The list of obligatory and optional subjects is prescribed in the study programme.

The student has to attend the exams in the announced timetable by his/her faculty. Exams are usually held three times a year. The first one by the end of the first semester/trimester in January, while the second round of exams is held by the end of the second semester in June. In some cases, exams are held in early September for those who have failed in the first or second semester. In other cases, mid-term exams are also held within the semester for continuous evaluation of students. The most common forms of assessment of students are:

- Attendance
- Quizzes
- Oral Exams
- Mid-Term Exams
- Final Term Exams

The Supreme Council for Universities is responsible for determining the length/beginning/end and organisation of the academic year. The most common structure of the academic year is as follows:

- First semester: mid of September – January
- Mid-Year break: two weeks
- Second semester: February – mid-July
- End of Year Vacation: mid of July – mid-September

### 3.2.6 Employability

While cooperation between higher education institutions and employers is not formally regulated in Egypt, this issue has been recognized as a very important one in the recent years. Some HEIs have included internship programmes into their study curricula. Few universities organize internship for students in cooperation with state authorities, in order for students to experience work in public administration. In addition, some HEIs have career guidance centres, which help students to find jobs or improve their qualifications in order to increase their employability. It worth mentioning also that several TEMPUS project have contributed to the link between Universities and the job market through the mapping of competences required in the job market and bringing it to the University, or through helping the creation of Career guidance centres. In private universities, faculties and courses are usually based on market need. The existence of career guidance offices at those universities is considered crucial for the future of the institution.

### 3.2.7 Student Assessment

The success of students is continually evaluated. The student can earn the maximum qualification of 100% by completing his/her examination obligations and course work if applicable. The numeric value corresponds to a range of qualifications classified as:

- Excellent or A. (more than 85% of the total mark)
- Very Good. (between 75% and 85% of the total mark)
- Good. (Between 65% and 75% of the total mark)
- Pass (between 50% or 60% to 65%)

Higher education institutions may also establish other, non-numerical grading systems by relating the ratio of such marks to the one expressed through GPA.

The legal statutes of certain higher education institution include precise regulations in terms of exam taking and grading procedures.
3.2.8 Certification

The authority responsible for certification is the higher education institution. Upon completion of the first level of higher education, the student receives a certificate with his/her relevant professional title, total marks and average mark (GPA or equivalent). Students may also receive a transcript of records, which contains information regarding the level, grade, type and content of the studies successfully finished.

3.3 Short-Cycle Higher Education

This includes Post-Secondary Diplomas that usually lasts for two-three years and it is classified as Technical Middle Education and is offered through Middle Institutes (معاهد متوسطة). Short Cycle Programmes are usually offered in Business, Tourism, Agriculture or Industrial Technical Education.

3.4 Second Cycle Programmes

3.4.1 Branches of Study

In Egypt, Master studies are either academic Masters MA/MSC or Professional Masters such as the Masters of Engineering or Masters of Business Administration. Graduates of professional masters cannot continue for Ph.D. Master Programmes are organized by faculties or research institutes within the universities. The length of studies at this level has a minimum of two years and can extend exceptionally to five years. To complete a Master study programme, the student has to write and defend a Master thesis at the end of his/her studies.

3.4.2 Admission Requirements

Admission requirements and procedures at this level of studies are regulated by individual higher education institutions. A general condition for those entering the second cycle of studies is that they have completed the first cycle of studies and obtained a BA or BSc with a minimum Qualification of “Good”. Another condition is passing an admission exam if this is prescribed by the particular institution. Some institutions and programmes may apply other criteria in the selection (average grade or some other references like working experience or academic activities in the relevant field, interview, etc.).

In the case that a candidate wishes to get enrolled in a different disciplines other than the one he was graduated from, there could be an additional pre requisites. In this case, an Equivalence Committee evaluates the title and programme studied by the applicant and decides if further core courses are to be studied before admission in the programme.

The admission procedure starts with the advertisement of the higher education institution announcing the particular study programme, eligibility details, candidate rating criteria and regulations governing the competition procedure, and the number of students is determined by the higher education institution.

Master studies are usually carried out in afternoon/evening lectures taken into consideration that students might be already having permanent jobs.

3.4.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is developed at the institutional level according to the general framework defined by national regulations. Before implementing any Master Programme, a full proposal of the programme known as the programme bylaw (↳lav) is submitted for approval to the competent bodies starting from the Department Council passing by the Faculty and University Council before it reaches the Supreme Council of Universities which evaluates the programme through the Technical Sector Committees of experts. Once approved, a Ministerial Decree is issued prior to the implementation.

The design and structure of the programme is defined by the institution and may apply the credit hour system. Courses are compulsory or optional. The language of instruction is Arabic or English, although higher education institutions may organize examinations, parts or an entire study programme in a another
language. Timeframe and distribution of courses and credit hours are defined by the bylaw of each programme. Master programmes usually include one year of taught courses and a second year for the dissertation or the Master Thesis.

### 3.4.4 Teaching Methods

Comparing to the first level, smaller numbers of students enrol in the second level of studies. Lectures are mostly conducted in small groups of students with seminars and group discussions. It is more centred on the student rather than on the professor. Research methodologies modules are always taught at this level.

There are no specific rules for the second cycle studies regarding the teaching methods. Higher education teachers have to organize their lectures in compliance with the curriculum but the teaching methods they should use are not prescribed.

Teaching materials such as books and audio-visual materials are commonly used in the teaching process. Moreover, students are expected to refer to those materials when preparing their exams.

### 3.4.5 Progression of Students

Students at Master level should pass the required number of credit hours or subjects in order to go for the next step of the Master Thesis or Dissertation. Some additional requirements might apply such as a Certificate of Computer Skills and/or English Language Certificate (Typically TOEFL or ILETS). Some institutions may also require additional exams on Research Methodologies or Academic Writing before enrolling the student in the phase of the Master Thesis/Dissertation.

During the second year of Master Thesis/Dissertation, the student should present a Research Plan for the research topic. The plan outlines of the proposed Thesis/Dissertation including objectives, hypothesis, methodology, suggested structure and bibliography.

The Research Plan is submitted to the Scientific Department and is presented by the student usually within a public discussion or a so-called “Seminar” in which the student explains the proposed topic to the staff of the Department. Professors may suggest modifications to the proposed plan. Once the plan has been endorsed, it is submitted to the Faculty Postgraduate Committee that approves the proposed plan.

For obtaining the title, student usually holds defence session (some faculties endorses only one or two internationally published papers as substitution to public defence), with the participation three to four professors including the student supervisor, an internal examiner from the institution and an external examiner from another institution.

For Masters of Engineering, or Masters of Business Administration (degrees not leading to PhD), the structure of teaching is different, as the study period is divided into teaching modules with a small thesis/dissertation at the end.

### 3.4.6 Employability

Generally speaking, Masters student are considered more employable than B.Sc. students. Also many Masters students choose their masters topic in subjects related to their working environment, and therefore, it is considered as a plus by their employer. Nevertheless, information mentioned in section 4.2.6. above are still applicable to Master students.

### 3.4.7 Student Assessment

The assessment of students is a continuous process based on pre-examination activities and students’ success at the exams. Students earn a certain number of credit hours for each activity they conduct during the studies. The maximum number of points that a student can achieve is 100, out of which a
maximum of 50% points has to be earned through course works and presentations (the so called pre-
examination activities).

3.4.8 Certification

The authority responsible for certification is the higher education institution. Upon completion of all the
requirements of the second cycle including courses and dissertation, the student receives a diploma with
his/her relevant professional title, average degree. The student can also receive a transcript of records,
which contains information regarding the level, type and content of the studies successfully finished.

3.5 Programmes outside the Bachelor and Master Structure

This includes training diplomas (دبلوم) which lasts for one year and are usually professionally oriented
towards the need of the labour market and do not lead to Ph.D.

3.6 Third Cycle (PhD) Programmes

3.6.1 Organization of Doctoral Studies

Doctoral studies, PhD (دكتوراه) are organized at universities and last for at least two years, but could be
extended to five years or more. A general pre requisite for the PhD is that the student should have
completed an MSc. Ph.D. programs are based on scientific research and publication of papers in
scientific journals. A Ph.D. thesis is the final part of the doctoral study programme, except in case of
Medical studies, where candidates are required to pass an exam as part of the qualification for MD
(Medical Doctorate).

The institution where the PhD thesis is defended has the obligation to make it available to the public on its
web page, alongside a printed version of the work, which needs to be available in the institution’s library
at least 30 days prior to the adoption of the commission report and defence of the thesis.

Universities are requested to establish digital repository containing electronic versions of all MSc and
PhD, along with reports submitted by respective commissions for thesis evaluation, data about respective
mentors and commission members, and information about copyright protection. All of the foregoing
documentation must be made available to the public. A copy of each thesis has to be sent to the central
repository of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

3.6.2 Admission Requirements

Higher Education Institutions individually determine their PhD enrolment rates in line with estimated
needs of society for the development of science, education and arts, but also bearing in mind their
capacities in terms of space and human resources.

General admission requirements include having a Master Degree, a language certificate in at least one
foreign language, a Certificate of Basic Computer Skills and Academic Writing Courses.

3.6.3 Status of Doctoral Students/Candidates

Both employed and unemployed students have equal rights in terms of eligibility for any particular
programme and a state-financed status, as long as they meet all the other preconditions required.

3.6.4 Supervision Arrangements

In order to organise PhD study programmes, the higher education institution has to observe specific
selection criteria applicable to PhD teaching staff. Such criteria include the status of the staff. In Egyptian
bylaws, only Associate Professors or Full Professors are allowed to teach in PhD programs and supervise
PhD thesis. Lectures might assist as Co-Supervisors or might assist in some lectures. Supervision might
also be jointly between professors from the same department or different departments at the same faculty.
or different faculties. It might also be joint between professors from different Egyptian or foreign universities.

3.6.5 Employability

The same general information provided in BSc and MSc sections are applicable to PhD holders.

3.6.6 Assessment

Students are assessed on the basis of their overall performance and engagement, as well as on the basis of credits earned through their exams and pre-examination activities. The PhD thesis, being the final part of the studies, is assessed based on its scientific or artistic significance and scientific contribution to the field in question. Each higher education institution sets its general rules of application procedure and PhD thesis defence, which apply to all its constituent departments.

3.6.7 Certification

Once the student has completed all of their examination obligations and defended their PhD thesis, they receive a diploma stating their official title: Doctor. The competent certifying authority is the higher education institution where the PhD studies took place.

4 Teachers and Education Staff in Higher Education

4.1 Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education

Initial education, conditions of service and professional development of academic staff is regulated by the Law on Higher Education and, more specifically, by the higher education institution statutes and rules. According to the Egyptian Constitution, Article 22 states that teachers, university academics and their assistants are the corner stone for Education. The State guarantees their scientific and professional development and protects their financial and ethical rights in order to achieve the education objectives and its quality.

Admission criteria to higher education institutions for those planning to pursue academic career is regulated by the Universities’ Law and Statutes. There are two main tracks: nomination or public advertisement.

Nomination is done by offering the extraordinary students obtaining the best grades in their intake the post of Demonstrator/Teaching Assistant (معلم). Nomination is based mainly on academic records and grades. therefore, the first student(s) obtaining the highest marks in the total grades of the entire bachelor programme is usually offered this post (if the department requested new staff)

The alternative track is by public announcement, where the institution identifies the vacant posts and the eligibility criteria. Access to academic career is usually evaluated by objective criteria taking into account the grades of the applicants. In addition, research work and the publication of scientific papers are highly valued for applicants aiming for academic career.

The position of Demonstrator/Teaching Assistant is limited to a number of years stipulated by the law. If the Demonstrator does not meet the requirements including completing his/her Master degree within the given period (usually five-seven years), he/she cannot pursue academic career and is transferred to administrative career within the institution.

Higher Education in Egypt disposes of several training programs for academic staff in higher education. Likewise, there are training requirements concerning particular subjects during studies, such as psychology, pedagogy, teaching methodology or other education related subjects.
4.2 Conditions of Service for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education

There are several levels of titles within the teaching profession: The main categories of academic staff and the qualifications needed for these posts are the following:

- Demonstrators (مهندسان): must be holders of a Bachelor degree recognized by the Supreme Council of Universities, usually the appointment is made for the best students in the class or on the basis of a competition, which is advertised publicly.
- Assistant Lecturers (مدرس مساعدا): must be holders of an MSc degree recognized by the Supreme Council of Universities, usually a demonstrator who obtained a Master degree within five to seven years after the Bachelor.
- Lecturers (مدرس): must be holders of a PhD degree; usually Assistant lecturers who have obtained a PhD recognized by the Supreme Council of Universities within five years after completing a Master degree.
- Associate Professors (أستاذ مساعدا): must be PhD holders since at least five years and having made a number of publications, in addition to a teaching record of accomplishment.
- Full Professors (أستاذ): must have a grade of Associate Professor since at least five years and having completed a certain number of international publications, in addition to a teaching track record.

At Public Universities, and starting from Lecturer, academic staff is tenured, while in private universities, teaching staff are contracted for limited periods. Few private universities have tenure track for their teaching staff.

Retirement age for academic staff is 60 years. Professors older than 60 years are not allowed to have any administrative positions at Universities, yet, they are still able to teach and continue supervising research. After the age of 70, each department have to issue a request for the professor to continue serving at the institution.

4.2.1 Planning Policy

Planning policy is a bottom up approach where scientific departments are asked to state their needs of staff in a three-year plan. Those needs are propagated to competent bodies within the University and the government, in order to allocate necessary resources and posts (Academic staffs at public universities are considered as civil servants).

4.2.2 Entry to the Profession

Academic staff is considered civil servants. They are hired upon competition (rare cases) or from the best in their classes (majority of cases) and then promoted from one level to another until reaching full professorship by submitting their academic and research activities to evaluation committees from the Sector Committees appointed by the Supreme Council of Universities. In some rare cases, professionals from industry are hired on temporary contracts to supplement teaching in academic departments.

A visiting professor or lecturers from a foreign higher institution may be employed without a recruitment procedure with a temporary contract.

4.2.3 Salaries

Salaries are defined by the regulating rules and are standard for public universities. For private universities, contracts are determined by each university.

4.2.4 Professional Status

Most commonly, higher education teachers and associates are employed on a full time basis in public universities, with the possibility to have one or two days for paid work outside the university (usually in
other universities, or the industry). In private universities, they might be contracted on full time basis or part time basis.

Academic staff members are required to act in accordance with the professional code of ethics that is usually issued by each higher education institution.

4.2.5 Working Time and Holidays

Full time employees are required to be present at their faculties four full days. Lecturers they are asked to cover a teaching load of up to 12 hours per week, Associate Professors, up to 8 hours per week and Professors, up to 6 hours per week.

The institution determines the structure and schedule of teachers’ annual and weekly obligations. Staff members are entitled to vacation days per year, which are used during collective holidays and during breaks determined by the academic year calendar. A staff member may use paid absence days in situations determined by the institution (professional development, conferences, illness, leave for research stays or studies abroad, maternity leave etc.)

4.2.6 Promotion, Advancement

Moving from a lower professional title to the next in the line (from teaching assistant to full professor) is considered career advancement, although academic staff members have to formally undergo an evaluation process in order to earn a higher title. Promotion from one title to another after undergoing the evaluation process is an expected sequence of events for those who wish to continue their career at the same institution. Some incentives and privileges may apply for tenured staffs that pursue their advancement pace while other Lectures or Assistant Professors who do not follow the promotion pace may be deprived from some privileges such as funds for attending conferences.

The title of Emeritus Professor may be assigned to a retired professor for their distinguished scientific work and contribution to higher education. Professor emeritus may be involved in all teaching activities within the second and third degree levels of study.

4.2.7 Retirement and Pensions

Academic staff members retire at the age of 60. Members who, at the age of 60, have the status of associate professor or full professor have the right to extend their employment as Emeritus Professors under the terms of the particular higher education institution. After retirement, teachers are allowed to keep some of their official assignments such as membership in committees or mentorship.

The Law on Pension and Disability Insurance determines pensions.

4.3 Continuing Professional Development for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education

4.3.1 Organisational Aspects

The professional development of academic staff is in most cases, based on scientific work. There are requirements determined by the Law regarding professional development on each level. These requirements include having passed six training courses at the Faculty and Leadership Development Centre at each university (recent structures created by the end of the first decade of the 21st century). Training courses cover a wide range of topics aiming at developing skills in International Publishing, New Trends in Teaching, Communication Skills, Research Projects Management, Time Management, Quality in Education, etc. However, professional development in the form of published scientific papers and other relevant publications is extremely important for career promotion. This is one of the criteria for the employment of the academic staff (to be tenured) and its promotion (as explained in Section 5.2).

Professional development can be organized in the forms of specialization, work towards a higher level of formal education, symposia, courses, study theses, congresses, seminars, conferences and similar
activities. Institutions are required to provide conditions for the professional development of their staff, including the time for the completion of such engagement within regular working hours.

### 4.3.2 Incentives for Participation in Continuing Professional Development Activities

Hours spent on professional development can count towards working time and the institution is responsible for covering all expenses incurred in the process. A certain number of working days, as determined by the institution, is used up for professional development. If the institution budget allows so, the staff may receive additional funds for research work and participation in conferences and other important academic events. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research regularly approves funds for research work and science development, for which academic staff may apply. A special fund is available to young researchers who recently joined the academic community (PhD students, assistants and associate professors).

## 5 Management and Other Education Staff in Higher Education

### 5.1 Requirements for Appointment

According to the Law on Higher Education, the managing body and policy maker of higher education institutions is the Ministry of Higher Education. The Supreme Council of Universities (See section 2.5) is the executive body established by Law, it is composed of the presidents of the public universities in addition to five members from the civil society, and is coordinated by a secretary-general and chaired by the Minister of Higher Education. In parallel to the SCU, there is also a Supreme Council of Private Universities and a Supreme Council of Technical Institutes for coordination between private universities (see section 2.5).

At university level, the Presidents are appointed by a presidential decree after nomination from the Minister of Higher Education, who usually forms a “selection committee”. For the Deans of faculties, they are appointed by a presidential decree upon nomination from the President of the University, who usually form also “selection committees” for the deans. The term of appointment for presidents of universities is four years, while for the deans of faculties the term is three years.

The hierarchy of the University is based on a president and three vice presidents (for education and students’ affairs, for postgraduates and research, and for environment and community services). Vice presidents are also appointed by presidential decree following the same procedure as for the presidents of universities. On the level of the faculty, the same hierarchy applies; a dean has three deputies (for education and students’ affairs, for postgraduates and research, and for environment and community services), and all of them are appointed the same way.

The governing body of a university is the University Council, which is composed of the President, the three Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General of the University, all the Deans of faculties and institutes of the university, in addition to four members from the civil society.

At the level of the faculty, the executive body is the Faculty Council composed of the dean and the three deputies, the secretary general of the faculty, all heads of departments, a professor from each department of the faculty, and in some cases associate professors from departments, in addition to three members from the civil society.

At the level of departments, department heads are selected by the president of the university from the pool of professors at the Department and are selected on the basis of the professors who have the longest professorship in the department.

At university and faculty levels, there are also three other councils:

- a Council for education (composed of the Vice-Deans for education and chaired by the Vice-President for education);
- a Council for postgraduate studies and research (composed of the Vice-Deans for postgraduate studies and research, and chaired by the vice president for postgraduate studies), and
- a council for the environment and community services (composed of the Vice-Deans for the environment and community services, and chaired by the Vice-President for the environment and community services).

And the same councils are replicated on the faculty levels

Specific roles and responsibilities of various posts and councils are included in the Egyptian law governing the universities, Law number 49. These roles and responsibilities vary according to the level of the post or council, but they all guarantee the autonomous status of the university in order to ensure a level of coordination with other universities on one hand and with the Supreme Council of the universities on the other hand. Members of the council are selected every three years, in accordance with the institution statute. The institution determines selection criteria, programme of work and decision-making procedures.

The President of the university is the executive managing body of the university; the Dean has the same function at the faculty level and the head at higher schools’ level.

Under the same conditions and requirements, vice-presidents and vice-deans support the work of presidents/deans, as members of executive managing bodies.

5.2 Conditions of Service

Further details on selection of the managing bodies, their dismissal, responsibility and other conditions of service are determined by the regulating laws and by internal statutes in each higher education institution.

6 Quality Assurance in Higher Education

6.1 Responsible bodies

Improving the quality of higher education has received huge government support in Egypt over the past few years. Since 2002, within the scope of the first phase of the Higher Education Enhancement Project (HEEP), there has been a drastic change in the quality assurance system for HE institutions and universities.

Based on the Presidential Decree number (82) of 2006, the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) was founded to insure quality education at all levels in Egypt, and to give accreditation to education institutions. In the light of NAQAAE's mandates, developing National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) for higher education comes on top of its priorities. NARS are intended to set out clearly the graduate attributes and academic characteristics expected to be achieved in the academic programmes of different disciplines. It is an independent body that reports directly to the Prime Minister and the Ministry’s Cabinet. The accreditation of higher education institutions is carried out by NAQAAE.

6.2 Approaches and Methods for Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance (QA) culture has received a huge support by institutions and policy maker in higher education institutions. Since 2002, and as part of the HEEP programme, a specific project on Quality Assurance was created (Quality Assurance and Accreditation Project: QUAP), which had an objective of propagating the culture of Quality assurance in the system, and have managed to organize several awareness campaigns and self-assessment projects in various universities and faculties. It had also mandate to training academic staff on QA methodologies and procedures. This project was followed by several other initiatives aiming at raising the awareness and enhancing the situation of quality assurance in universities.
Today, each university has a Central Unit for Quality Assurance linked to the Faculty Units that in turn are linked to the Department Quality coordinators.

Each Faculty and its departments are required to complete the requirements for accreditation. Accreditation of programmes, departments or faculties requires meeting a set of criteria. The quality control units send experts to review the documents to check if they are meeting the requirements.

The defined standards for external quality assurance are described below:

- Usage of internal quality assurance results are the starting point for the external quality assurance procedures.
- External quality assurance method is based on assessing the current situation at a higher education institution in line with predetermined quality standards.
- The areas of external quality assurance are: teaching, teachers, research, students assessment, textbooks and literature, library and IT resources, space and equipment, non-teaching staff, academic ethics, management and transparency.
- Results of external quality assurance are determined on the basis of predefined criteria and they include recommendations for future quality improvement.
- Participants in external quality assurance are the higher education institutions along with its management and teaching and non-teaching staff, the Quality Committee, reviewers, students, economy representatives and foreign quality assurance experts.
- The external quality assurance principle is to be directed towards quality improvement.
- The report consists of the analysis and assessment of the fulfilment of standards, identified flaws and suggestions for quality improvement.
- External quality assurance procedures are improved and adjusted in line with changes in higher education policy and practice.

Self-evaluation and internal quality assurance of academic programmes, teaching and work conditions are defined through the general act of each higher education institution. Students' rating of academic programmes quality is part of the quality assurance procedure. Information about procedures and results of self-evaluation are submitted to the Quality Committee.

7 Educational Support and Guidance

At university level, career guidance is partially provided through university or faculty job fairs. Faculty career development centres are not available in all universities. Such centres are more common at private universities. In case these centres are running and active, they organize career workshops, provide counselling and offer internships.

7.1 Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education

7.1.1 Definition of the Target Group(s)

Secondary graduates are the target groups for Higher Education. In Open Learning and continuing Education, target groups include all the population with secondary certificate or technical certificates willing to pursue a university degree.

7.1.2 Specific Support Measures

Specific Support Measures are provided through the Ministry and entitled councils at the university and faculty levels.

Students are offered health insurance at students’ hospitals and university hospitals.

7.2 Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education

Guidance is provided through university and faculty councils.
7.2.1 Academic Guidance

Academic guidance is available at some universities, as some faculties and departments practice the system of Academic tutor, while in many faculties, and due to the large number of students, it is not practiced.

7.2.2 Psychological Counselling

Psychology counselling is provided through social support units at faculties and universities where a psychologist is entitled to assist students facing problems during their studies.

7.2.3 Career Guidance

Career guidance is available at some universities only, in particular at private universities.

8 Mobility and Internationalisation in Higher Education

Since the early 1900s, Egypt has adopted a system of “Scientific Missions” aimed at enhancing research, education and development in Egypt, based on the transfer of technology and know-how from scholars who travel to various parts of the world and obtain degrees and qualifications from abroad.

According to the Universities’ Law (1972) and its amendments, Egyptian faculty members may travel overseas both for short and long-term exchanges, which can take the form of either postdoctoral missions/grants, visiting professors or long-term sabbatical leave, and short-term participation in conferences, training and other forms of capacity development.

In addition to these governmental funds, many Egyptian scholars have benefited from bi-lateral exchange programmes with various countries of the world (US, Canada, France, UK, Germany etc.). The Ministry of Higher Education regulates such missions in order to address issues of high importance to Egypt (Strategic Research Areas). The number of students visiting Egypt under the Fulbright scheme is around 100 per year. The entire number of both foreign and Egyptian students who have benefitted from a Fulbright grant is around 5000 over the past 60 years of its support to Egypt.

In the recent years, the Ministry of Higher Education has adopted a co-funding policy with respect to outbound missions, in which the Ministry shares its resources with various funding organisations, in order to maximise the benefit from available resources. This has resulted, for example, in the creation of two schemes of co-funded mobility with Germany; one short term (3-6 months) and another long-term (2-4 years).

It is worth mentioning that no clear policy is available with respect to the mobility of undergraduate students. However, some measures have been taken to facilitate the mobility at undergraduate level by adopting more flexible approaches and by recognition of equivalent courses. Mobility for postgraduate students is highly encouraged through governmental funds for long term (Missions Department programme), or short-term programmes.

Most international students in Egypt are from the Arab world, Africa and Central Asia. The number of foreign students enrolled in all Egyptian higher education institutions is distributed across the different institutions. The number of foreign students enrolled in private universities is superseding those enrolled in public universities, while Al-Azhar University continues to host the highest number of foreign students, mainly Asian and African students, seeking theological education. Most of these students receive a grant for studying at Al-Azhar that covers study and accommodation expenses. It is also noticeable that among the public universities, Cairo, Ain-Shams and Alexandria attract most of the international students.

One feature lacking in the Egyptian Higher Education system is mobility between institutions within Egypt. Although degrees and the number of years are harmonised across institutions, it is unusual to allow students to change their university during the course of their studies. Nevertheless, mobility is available in
postgraduate studies, so that any student from an Egyptian university can register for a Master or a Doctorate programme at any other university in Egypt.

8.1 Student Mobility

The interaction with European universities fostered the concept of student mobility. The participation of Egypt in Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus + Mobility actions positively affected the mobility of students and resulted in adopting more flexible measures. Over 1000 Egyptian students benefited from Erasmus Mundus scholarships from almost the majority of Egyptian universities.

In the 2015 call for International Credit Mobility by Erasmus+, Egypt ranked among the highest 20 countries benefiting from these funds. Alexandria and Cairo Universities are on the top of the list with a total of mobility programmes (13 for Alexandria and 11 for Cairo). Erasmus Mundus exchange networks have had a systemic impact on the international cooperation of universities during their implementation.

In addition to the Erasmus+ programmes, other national and bilateral funds foster mobility.

The improvement of the system for recognition of foreign degrees is one of the most important challenges of mobility that Egyptian authorities should be working on.

The Law on Higher Education envisages possibility for distance learning. Some of the universities have reached the accreditation standards for conducting this kind of lectures, but the number of students involved is still very low.

8.2 Academic staff mobility

Different funding mechanisms exist to support academic staff mobility in higher education. Funds are available at institutional level or within inter-institutional agreements for short-term mobilities and to attend seminars and international conferences. The Ministry of Higher Education and the Academy of Scientific Research offer numbers of mobilities either short term or long term through bilaterally funded programmes with different countries all over the world.

Higher Education Institutions promotes mobility of their staff by offering flexible terms and leave for educational and research purposes.

At European level, Egypt has actively participated in the Tempus programme since 2002, when it joined the first Call of Tempus III (2001-2007), up until the Call in 2013. Throughout the entire period (2001-2013) Tempus has been among the most successful instruments of support to the modernization of higher education in Egypt and it provided, inter alia, teaching staff capacity building through mobility periods spent abroad. 121 projects have been funded with Egyptian participation since 2002.

8.3 Other Dimensions of Internationalization in Higher Education

8.3.1 Partnerships and Networks

Egyptian universities are members of several regional and international networks such as the Association of Arab Universities or the Universities of the Mediterranean.

8.4 Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation

8.4.1 Bilateral agreements

Almost all universities, and many colleges, in Egypt have established bilateral cooperation with universities in the EU countries, Arab World, Africa, USA, Canada, countries in Asia and all over the world. This cooperation aims at increasing the number of students coming to Egypt and focuses on research and delivery of some teaching programmes, sometimes as joint or double degrees.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has also signed a number of bilateral agreements related to higher education with countries from different regions at ministerial level.
8.4.2 Cooperation and participation in worldwide programmes and organizations

Egyptian universities participate in different initiatives worldwide through international projects and International Organizations, either at institutional level or at individual expert level as many Egyptian professors are part of councils and committees worldwide.

9 On-going Reforms and Policy Developments

9.1 Overall national education strategy and key objectives

A newly created presidential council for Education and Research has been established in 2015. Various initiatives are also studying the possibility of modifying and modernizing the Law regulating Higher Education and Universities in Egypt. More emphasis is put on quality assurance.

In order to achieve the education goals, specific strategic policies, activities and measures are defined separately for each level of the education system.

9.2 Overview of the education reform process and drivers

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is the main body in charge of managing all education-related activities, as well as one of the main drivers in the education reform process.

The Ministry participates in the creation of the Egyptian Government’s policies. It initiates the reforms and new legal acts, participates, and contributes to designing new trends in the field of education. It prepares and issues legal acts such as bylaws (regulations), instructions and legal orders and it oversees and evaluates the situation of the education system. It also monitors the policy and proposes reforms to the government.

The government is responsible for the final preparation and proposal of new actions, while the National Assembly approves the laws and regulations so that they can come into force.

Since 2002, the Egyptian government has been embarking on a reform process for higher education with strategic plans for 2022 and 2030. Those strategies are constantly updated, and a new updated strategy is expected to appear by middle of 2016

9.3 National Reforms in Higher Education

9.3.1 2015

The current strategy of development of Higher Education was revised.

10 Legislation

1. Law on Regulation of Universities and its Regulations (Law no. 49-Year 1972)
2. Law on Regulation of Private Universities (Law no. 101-Year 1992)
3. Law on Regulation of Private and National (Non-profit) Universities (Law no. 12-Year 2009)
4. Amendments to the Law on Regulation of Universities
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