



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim launching the National Education Plan 2026-2035 in Putrajaya yesterday. With him are Deputy Prime Ministers Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek and Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir. NSTP PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

COMPREHENSIVE ROAD MAP

PM UNVEILS EDUCATION BLUEPRINT

Standardised assessments, mandatory subjects and free tertiary education among bold initiatives introduced

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THE new National Education Plan 2026-2035 is a comprehensive roadmap by the Education Ministry and the Higher Education Ministry outlining strategic and forward-looking initiatives.

The roadmap sets out a series of measures aimed at strengthening the education system for young Malaysians, beginning from the age of 5 through to tertiary education at universities, community colleges and polytechnics.

It takes into account the importance of upholding Bahasa Melayu, fostering an understanding of the Federal Constitution and Malaysian history and expanding access to free education to uplift underprivileged communities.

Among the key highlights of the roadmap are:

A STANDARDISED assessment for Year Four pupils, covering Bahasa Melayu, English, Mathematics and Science;

FORM Three students will be required to go through assessments for the four subjects, in addition to History, starting in 2027;

THE enrolment age for Year One is lowered to 6, but parents can still opt to enrol their children in Year One at 7;

BAHASA Melayu and History will be made mandatory subjects for Malaysian students in international and religious schools, as well as those sitting the Unified Examination Certificate (UEC);

MALAYSIAN students at both public and private universities will begin learning about the Federal Constitution and Malaysian history;

A TOTAL of 3,000 students with disabilities pursuing studies at public higher learning institutions, polytechnics and community colleges will receive free education; and,

A TOTAL of 10,000 students from the hardcore poor category will benefit through the National Higher Education Fund Corporation.

The roadmap was unveiled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim in a speech lasting just

under an hour at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre here yesterday, where he acknowledged that planning was easy, but execution would be challenging.

Anwar asked the ministries and their officers to update him every three months.

"This is not a reminder from me, but a stern warning. I only worry that we launch plans but fail in the execution," he said.

The Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) and Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PT3) examinations are set to become history with the introduction of a standardised examination for Year 4 this year, covering Bahasa Melayu, English, Mathematics and Science, while Form Three students will also be required to sit for the four subjects, in addition to the History subject starting in 2027.

UPSR was abolished in 2021, while PT3 was discontinued in 2022, with both replaced by school-based assessments.

The enrolment age for Year One has been lowered to 6, and preschool will begin at 5, but parents can still opt to enrol their children in Year 1 at age 7.

"We are not ready to make it compulsory, as some parents may feel their children are not ready.

"But we encourage parents to

NATIONAL EDUCATION PLAN 2026-2035

THE new roadmap aims to ensure that Malaysia's education system remains relevant, inclusive and competitive.



WHY A NEW BLUEPRINT?

Despite gains under the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025, including lower dropout rates, higher enrolment and improved school infrastructure, challenges persist. The new roadmap seeks to address these concerns.

MAIN GOAL

The new roadmap aims to nurture Tnсан Sejahtera', students who are well-mannered, knowledgeable, skilled, resilient and confident.

7 STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Education system
- Students
- Educators
- Physical and digital infrastructure
- Synergy with stakeholders
- Sustainability
- Governance

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The plan was developed through a wide consultation process, incorporating more than 31,000 public inputs and contributions from 180 experts from the Education Ministry, universities and international organisations.

5 FOCUS AREAS

- 1. QUALITY:** Seventy per cent of students score at least Grade C in all subjects in SPM
- 2. ACCESS AND EQUITY:** Reduce urban-rural gaps by 50 per cent and socioeconomic/gender gaps by 70 per cent
- 3. RESOURCES AND EFFICIENCY:** Upgrade underperforming schools and ensure effective use of education funds
- 4. FLEXIBILITY:** Give school and teachers autonomy
- 5. SUSTAINABILITY:** Foster green and sustainable practices in schools.

INFOGRAPHIC NST

prepare their 5-year-old children for preschool, and I have asked the Education Ministry to take over and coordinate this," Anwar said.

Echoing the stance of His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia, on the status of Bahasa Melayu as the national language, Anwar announced that Bahasa Melayu and History will be made mandatory subjects for Malaysian students in international and religious schools, as well as those sitting the UEC.

Students will be required to meet and pass the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia standards for both subjects.

Local students at both public and private universities will begin learning about the Federal Constitution and Malaysian history starting this year.

"I feel it is unreasonable for Malaysian students not to know about the Constitution and to have no understanding at all of the country's history," he said.

He said the government was also aware of concerns expressed by students from minority groups about being deprived of courses of their choice in uni-

versities, despite their excellent examination results.

He said he had asked universities to add 1,500 more placements in courses of their choice from the current number, and another 1,500 more for courses such as law, Islamic banking and artificial intelligence.

Government-linked investment companies, he said, have been instructed to cooperate with universities to develop student accommodation, with a target of 5,000 additional units.

Anwar also said 3,000 students with disabilities pursuing studies at public higher learning institutions, polytechnics and community colleges will receive free education with immediate effect, while 10,000 students from the hardcore poor category will benefit through the National Higher Education Fund Corporation.

Present at the launch were Deputy Prime Ministers Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek and Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir.