

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

# Brunei Darussalam



## Policy Frameworks

**Does equity with regard to supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education feature in any government produced policy documents? If so, which government policy document(s) are these and can you provide website link(s) to them?**

- Currently, there is one scholarship scheme that provisioned in supporting students from low-income population which is Technical and Vocational Scholarship Scheme which gives opportunities for students from low-income families to continue their studies in local higher education institutions.
- Apart from that, there is also a bursary scheme known as Education Loan Assistance Scheme where students from low income families apply can latch on for assistance in continuing their studies either at local higher education institutions or abroad.
- Application for both schemes are only opened once a year which is around February and March (immediately after the release of Brunei-Cambridge GCA 'A' and 'O' Levels results). Details of the two schemes are also released through the Ministry's website: [www.moe.gov.bn](http://www.moe.gov.bn).

**What policies and actions are described in these government policy documents in terms of supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education?**

No information was available.

**Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education? If so, which document(s) is/are these? Can you provide a link(s)?**

No.

**Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents? (Please choose as many groups as apply in your own country)**

- Low-income or lower socio-economic background students
- Students with disability
- Other: The Technical and Vocational Scholarship Scheme is targeted for students who has finished their Year 11 study and obtained 3 credits or less in their Brunei-Cambridge GCE 'O' Level. Whilst this scheme is not specifically designed for students from low-incomed families, however the Ministry of Education gives priority to students from the low-income families including orphans and those with single mothers. The selection will be based on the families' net monthly income where the calculation of the net monthly income was adopted from the National Welfare Scheme's calculation. The Education Loan Assistance Scheme is more likely like a bursary where students can apply for financial assistance to pursue their studies either locally or abroad. Currently, there is no specific provision for this scheme for students from low-income families. However, there is a plan to review the scheme so that it can be used to assist students from disadvantaged groups.

**Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups in higher education?**

No.

### Which agency has responsibility for policies related to equity in student participation/success in higher education?

- Higher Education Division (HED)
- Scholarship Section

### Which stakeholder groups are consulted during the equity policy formulation? (Please choose all the stakeholders that are invited to the consultation process in your own country)

- Higher Education Institutions' Associations
- Civil society organisations
- Private sector organisations
- International Organisations
- Student Organisations/Association
- Others: Please specify

## Achieving Policy Targets

### Are there any non-monetary instruments such as outreach work between schools and universities, reforms to university admission etc. used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

No.

### Are there any financial instruments such as bursaries, scholarships and loans used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

We recently have the Vocational and Technical education Scholarship (BPTV) intended for under-privileged students.

### Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of measures used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education?

In the future, HED will be responsible.

### What instruments, methods and data are in place to carry out the monitoring and evaluation?

HED will review this and will develop the necessary action.

### What kind of autonomy do higher education institutions enjoy in reaching the policy targets set by government?

1. Academic structure and course content
2. Decide the size of enrolment

### How do you see the role of inter-governmental/international organisations in supporting higher education equity policies? In which areas would be their contribution the most valuable? (1= most valuable contribution 4=least valuable contribution)

1. Policy setting

1. Technical assistance and capacity building
1. Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships)
1. Facilitating peer learning, exchange of experience among countries

## COVID-19 and Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education

### How, if at all, has Covid-19 affected the existence and implementation of policies designed to encourage greater access and success on higher education of those from low-income/marginalized groups?

We do not have one explicitly. However, there were initiatives to help the students from the low-income/marginalized groups such as:

- ➔ Electronic devices donation
- ➔ Collaboration with Telco's in creating affordable education data packages to access the internet.

Therefore, COVID-19 allows for a review of access policy:

1. In terms of entry into HE.
2. Facilities provisions at HEIs.
3. Safety/Health, for example: Access to masks, etc. during physical classes.

## Sources

This country brief was prepared as part of the "[ASEM National Equity Policies in Higher Education](#)" report, a collaboration between the [Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#) and the [National Education Opportunities Network \(NEON\)](#). The report was launched at the [8<sup>th</sup> ASEF Regional Conference on Higher Education \(ARCS\)](#) on "*Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe*" on 10 September 2021.

All information in this country brief was provided by the Head of Higher Education Division at the Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam, as of 14 February 2021.