

March (General Attitude Test (GAT)) (multiple choice) and 4) results of elective subject examinations held in October and March (Professional Attitude Test (PAT)) and the ratio of 1)–4) differ depending on the university or the department. It is different from the Japanese university entrance examination system in that it is structured so that the majority of Thai national universities do not hold their own individual examinations and students who are taking entrance examinations choose 4 universities in which they are interested and then they wait to hear from the university whether they have been successful or not. In addition to the CUAS admissions system, there are various other admissions systems including recommendations and scholarships. Furthermore, the private university admissions system is entrusted to each university and entrance examinations are generally written examinations.

3. The Present State of Education in Thailand

3.1 The present state of higher education in Thailand

Due to the increase in the rate of advancement to higher education and the number of universities since the 1990s, Thai universities have transitioned from elite institutions to mass institutions. Due to the increase in the so-called middle class in Thai economy, currently, approximately 70% of senior high school graduates aim to go on to university and the total number of students in higher education exceeds 2 million. Conversely, there is concern that the rapid increase in universities and student numbers will lower the academic abilities of the students being admitted and lower the quality of higher education. Meanwhile, there are cases in which independent rules at each higher education institution are reducing teacher ambition to teach and the learning effects of students who are being educated (e.g. maximum number of print outs for one lecture).

Higher education policy is changing based on the current state of affairs. Current higher education policy in Thailand implements the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017–2021) and the 2nd 15-year Long Range Plan on Higher Education for Thailand (2008–2022) and the main challenges are: 1) improvements in the quality of education through education reform, 2) creation and securing of equal education opportunities, 3) strengthening teacher abilities, 4) formulation of an education curriculum based on the needs of the labour market, 5) securing international competitive strength through implementing education that makes use of IT, 6) improvements in the research environment and 7) responding to AEC.

In addition, with the aim of improving quality and homogenizing higher education, the TQF (Thai Qualifications Framework for High Education) curriculum standards and evaluation were set in 2009 and applied to new students from 2012 onwards. University syllabuses are reviewed every 5 years to confirm if they conform to TQF. TQF evaluates 5 categories: 1) ethics and morals, 2) knowledge development, 3) intellectual development, 4) personal relations/self-responsibility and 5) mathematical thought/communication abilities/IT skills. In addition, as shown in Table 2, TQF has stages 1–7. TQF2 equates to evaluation standards for each major subject, TQF3 to syllabuses for each lecture and achievement objectives and

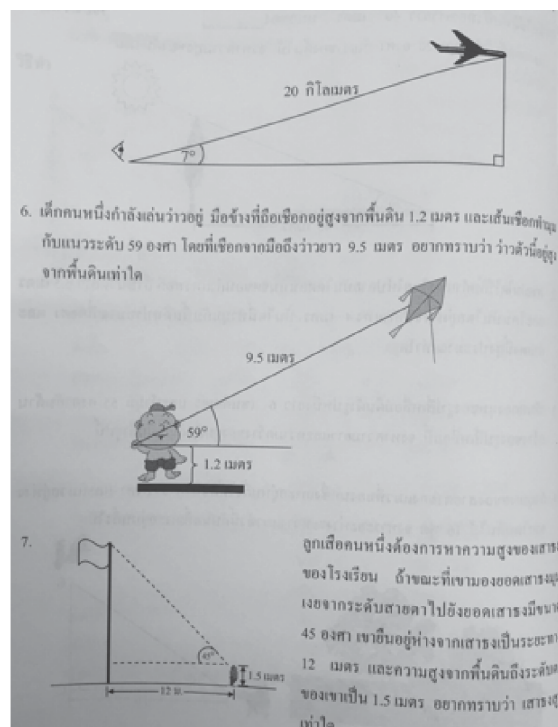


Fig. 1. Example of Thailand mathematics textbook (1st year of senior high school).

TQF5 to an evaluation report for each lecture. However, the current situation is that evaluation by TQF is losing substance.

Furthermore, since August, 2014, in order to facilitate overseas study between ASEAN countries, higher education institutions term commencement has been unified and the system which used to consist of two terms from May to September and November to March has been changed to two terms from August to December and January to May. Meanwhile, the two terms for education of secondary level