

**STRUCTURE OF PUBLIC MEMORANDA TO THE EDUCATION POLICY  
REVIEW COMMISSION (EPRC)**

**To** : The Secretary, EPRC  
**From** : .....  
**Date** : .....  
**Subject:** Memorandum Regarding ...

**I. Introduction**

The purpose of the Memorandum is generally to provide your advice about a particular policy stance to the EPRC. the memo should start with the summary of the problem or situation it intends to address, and it should provide a summary of the conclusions and recommendations. The rest of the memo should support the conclusions or recommendations presented.

**II. Background to the Target Policy Reform Area.**

Under background, the memo should give a concise summary of any historical or technical facts on a particular issue that may help the Commission to understand the arguments in respect to the target area of policy reform or a major policy change.

**III. Policy Recommendations or What needs to Change.**

- (a) **The objective:** The memorandum should define the objective of the policy recommendation. It should set out a clear objective for a policy recommendation based on evidence to help the Commission to make key decisions.
- (b) **Target audience:** The memorandum should determine the target audience and clearly state who the key stakeholders are and their relevance on a particular policy issue.
- (c) **Policy Issues:** The memorandum should clearly define the matters on which policy decisions are required in as much detail as possible, and where possible directly link them to evidence. It should also present a clear outline of the existing situation, an analysis of issues, including details of what policy, strategy, law currently applies and why the change is needed. The memorandum should restrict its recommendations to the issues at hand and to the evidence itself.
- (d) **Options where possible:** The memorandum should clearly define the different approaches that could solve the issue, noting advantages and disadvantages of each approach, based on evidence, to enable the Commission easily make a decision on the matter.
- (e) **Recognition of the Current Economic Climate:** The memorandum should recognise the budget constraints. Thus, while suitable policy directions which could solve issues are vital, if they incur significant costs, they are unlikely to be endorsed. Recommendations should be cost-neutral where possible, or economically feasible, i.e., while money needs to be spent now, it will save large amounts of public expenditure in

the future. A policy decision that would bring benefits while reducing costs is likely to be very welcome.

- (f) **Fit within Existing Policies, or Laws:** The memorandum should acknowledge that getting a new policy or legislation is a lengthy and time-consuming process where evidence and political will have to be built up over long periods. However, a policy decision may have a bigger impact if it can fit in an existing policy, strategy, program or law. In framing decisions, it is important to be aware of the current and future developments in that policy area.
- (g) **Use Regional, Continental, and Global Examples:** The memorandum should acknowledge that, it is a good idea to check if a similar approach has been taken in another country, and to outline any successes or drawbacks using real world examples and reference to such international best practice.
- (h) **Remember the Audience:** The memorandum should be presented in clear, readable, and simple language; easily understandable to any reader with no prior knowledge of the subject area. Academic and technical language should not be used.
- (i) **Impact in the Real World:** The memorandum should present clear arguments as to why the research shows that the policy recommendations presented will benefit society, at all levels.
- (j) **Emphasize the Importance of Action:** The memorandum should present recommendations in a convincing manner that the issues highlighted are important and require urgent attention and action and that the recommended course of action will be beneficial to society if action is taken.

#### IV. Evidence /Supporting Arguments or Analysis

The memorandum should outline the evidence and information and how the analysis leads logically to the conclusions and the policy recommendations.

#### V. Opinions on Policy Implementation

- (1) The memorandum should acknowledge that policy change goes hand in hand with policy implementation. A policy decision ‘identifies the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued and structures the implementation process’.
- (2) **Factors for Successful Implementation:** While no ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy exists, the policy memorandum should come up with the most important factors required for successful policy implementation. i.e. that ‘agencies comply with the directives of the statutes, agencies are held accountable for specific indicators of success, policy goals of the statute are achieved.
- (3) **Lessons from Implementation Research:** The memorandum should recognize that policy feedback and evaluation are important to consider in the wider implementation process to consider a range of impacts.

- (4) The memorandum should assess the following critical variables of effective implementation:
- (a) **Policy Standards and Objectives:** Effective implementation depends on the nature of policy to be carried out and the specific factors contributing to the realization or non-realization of policy objectives, which vary across policy types.
  - (b) **Policy Resources:** Funds are needed for implementation, but whether the resources available are usually adequate to achieve policy objectives.
  - (c) **Inter-Organisational Communication and Enforcement Activities:** whether technical advice and assistance is provided, and whether superiors should rely on positive and negative sanctions.
  - (d) **Characteristics of Implementing Agencies** (formal structural features of organizations and informal attributes of their personnel). These include, the competence and size of staff, degree of hierarchical control of processes within educational institutions.
  - (e) **Economic, Social and Political Conditions:** general economic, social and political conditions are important for the relationship between objectives and results.
  - (f) **Disposition of Implementers:** This concerns the motivation and attitudes of those responsible for implementing the reform.
  - (g) Private sector obligations and involvement in the proposed educational policy reforms.

Brighton Barugahare  
**SECRETARY,**  
**EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW COMMISSION**