

Chapter-7

Learning outcomes and Vocational Education

Learning outcomes and Vocational Education**7.1 Introduction**

Paragraph 6.2 of SSIF emphasises that quality in education is a systemic characteristic rather than just an aspect of instruction or achievement. Achieving this requires schools to be well-equipped to cater to the diverse learning needs of all students. Effective learning depends on a holistic approach, integrating a suitable curriculum, engaging teaching methods, ongoing formative assessments, and strong student support.

7.1.1 Formulation of State Curriculum Framework

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was tasked with developing a National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for school education under NEP 2020 and SSIF guidelines. This framework provides broad guidelines for pedagogy, curriculum, assessment and examinations, and incorporated local and indigenous influences from across India.

To support this, state-level State Curriculum Frameworks (SCFs) were to be developed and fed into the NCF. In May 2021, NCERT directed all State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to begin work on SCFs and submit the same to NCERT by December 2022. Consequently, the School Education Department directed SCERT to develop four SCFs in alignment with the NEP 2020. It was expected that the finalised SCF-SE (School Education) would be submitted to NCERT once approved by the State Government. However, while NCERT completed the NCF-SE in July 2023, the SCF-SE had not been formulated as of March 2025. Due to this delay, the local and indigenous elements from the State could not be incorporated into the national level curriculum framework.

SCERT in reply (March 2025) stated that since the formal drafting of the State Curriculum Framework for school Education (SCF-SE) is yet to begin, it had not yet been forwarded to NCERT. The process is awaiting the formation of the Steering Committee, that will oversee the drafting and finalisation of the SCF-SE. SCERT further stated that it was awaiting necessary approvals and notifications regarding committee formation from the School Education Department.

Thus, as corroborated from the reply of the SCERT, the fact remains that formulation of SCFs in line with NEP 2020 were yet to be initiated for want of formation of Steering Committees by the Department.

7.2 Learning outcomes

Improving the learning outcomes of children required strategic interventions at the district, sub-district and institutional levels to address gaps in outcomes.

Audit analysed performance of students in the final examinations of Class X and Class XII over a period of six years and noticed the following.

7.2.1 Performance of students in Class X examination

Analysis of the Class-X examination conducted by West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE) for the years 2019 to 2024, showed that out of

55.86 lakh students who appeared in the examination, 50.80 lakh students passed the examination, while 5.06 lakh students could not pass the Class-X examination during these years as shown below:

Table 7.1: Performance of students in Class X examination during 2019-24

Year	Number of students appeared in 10th Board Exam			Number of students passed in the Exam			No of students failed in the Exam (per cent)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2019	4,37,750	5,32,731	9,70,481	4,06,305	4,70,389	8,76,694	31,445	62,342	93,787 (10)
2020	4,19,093	5,15,772	9,34,865	3,87,474	4,55,831	8,43,305	31,619	59,941	91,560 (10)
2021	4,65,866	6,13,883	10,79,749	4,65,866	6,13,883	10,79,749	0	0	0 (0)
2022	4,86,679	6,05,524	10,92,203	4,32,640	5,17,287	9,49,927	54,039	88,237	1,42,276 (13)
2023	2,94,203	3,42,902	6,37,105	2,69,931	2,95,497	5,65,428	24,272	47,405	71,677 (11)
2024	3,94,705	4,77,134	8,71,839	3,56,196	4,09,056	7,65,252	38,509	68,078	1,06,587 (12)
Total	24,98,296	30,87,946	55,86,242	23,18,412	27,61,943	50,80,355	1,79,884	3,26,003	5,05,887 (9)

Source: Information furnished by WBBSE; * In the year 2021 no examination could be conducted due to Covid pandemic and all the students who appeared in the examination were declared successful

It is seen from the above that during the years 2019-2024 (except in 2021), 10 to 13 per cent of the students remained unsuccessful out of the students who appeared in the examination.

7.2.2 Performance of students in Class XII examination

Audit analysed the marks secured by the students in the Class XII examinations conducted by the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) and found that 12 to 17 per cent students were unsuccessful in the examination during the period 2019-24. Of the students successful in the examination, only 16 to 38 per cent students secured 1st division. Thus, majority of the students secured less than 60 per cent in the examination.

Table 7.2: Performance of students in Class XII examination during 2019-24

Year	Appeared	Successful	Students passing with 1 st division (percent vis-à-vis successful)	Un-Successful (percent vis-à-vis appeared)
2019	7,91,087	6,60,433	1,12,975 (17)	1,30,654 (17)
2020	7,75,397	6,80,145	1,44,833 (21)	95,252 (12)
2021	8,20,317	8,20,317	1,42,926 (17)	0*
2022	7,45,730	6,50,672	2,44,139 (38)	95,058 (13)
2023	8,53,123	7,37,735	1,25,746 (17)	1,15,388 (14)
2024	7,89,941	6,92,192	1,07,710 (16)	97,749 (12)
Total	47,75,595	42,41,494	8,78,329 (21)	5,34,101 (11)

Source: Information furnished by WBCHSE; * In the year 2021 no examination could be conducted due to Covid pandemic and all the students who appeared in the examination were declared successful

This is indicative of the fact that despite the launch of Samagra Shiksha there were a significant percent of students who were unable to pass the Class X and Class XII examinations. The percentages of unsuccessful candidates, highlighted that there was a need for further improvement in the quality of education being imparted especially in terms of deficiencies such as lack of teachers, insufficient infrastructure, etc.

7.3 Assessment of learning levels of students

Audit assessed the learning levels of 1,145 children across all the 72 sampled schools, by conducting a test in the presence of teachers. Ten students from each class (III, V, VIII & X) participated, answering questions in Bengali, English,

Mathematics, Science, Environmental Studies (EVS) and Social Science. The test aimed to gauge fundamental knowledge in language, basic science, and arithmetic skills essential for daily life. The State Achievement Survey (SAS) 2022 question papers were used to evaluate students from Classes III, V, VIII and X. The results of the test are summarised in **Table 7.3**:

Table 7.3: Result of learning outcome tests conducted in sampled schools

Class	No. of students tested	Subject	No. of students who secured marks		
			Below 40 per cent (percent)	Between 40 and 70 per cent (percent)	Above 70 per cent (percent)
Class- III	119	Language	50 (42)	43(36)	26 (22)
		Mathematics	68 (57)	46 (39)	5 (4)
		EVS / Social Science	61 (51)	43 (36)	15 (13)
Class- V	484	Language	133 (27)	236 (49)	115 (24)
		Mathematics	175 (36)	202 (42)	107 (22)
		EVS / Social Science	128 (26)	200 (41)	156 (32)
Class- VIII	409	Language	40 (10)	160 (39)	209 (51)
		Mathematics	145 (35)	196 (48)	68 (17)
		EVS / Social Science	225 (55)	174 (43)	10 (2)
		Science	178 (44)	192 (47)	39 (10)
Class- X	133	Language	2 (2)	65 (49)	66 (50)
		Mathematics	83 (62)	45 (34)	5 (4)
		EVS/Social Science	64 (48)	55 (41)	14 (11)
		Science	65 (49)	68 (51)	0 (0)
		English	71 (53)	60 (45)	2 (2)
Overall performance of the students with respect to all subjects					
		Students scoring below 40 per cent (percent with respect to total students)	Students scoring between 40 and 70 per cent (percent with respect to total students)	Students scoring above 70 per cent (percent with respect to total students)	
Total	1,145	404 (35)		536 (47)	205 (18)

Source: Test conducted in presence of Audit

The assessment revealed concerning gaps in students' learning outcomes across different grade levels. Out of total number of students tested (1,145), a significant number of students (404 students i.e. 35 per cent) did not secure 40 per cent marks in their respective classes. While performance in Bengali was relatively better, proficiency in English, Science, EVS and Mathematics lagged behind. Mathematics, in particular, showed the lowest learning levels, with 35 to 62 per cent of students struggling with fundamental concepts essential for daily life.

For Class X, overall learning quality was poor except for Bengali. Additionally, three per cent of students in Class III (13 out of 119) and V (8 out of 484) combined could not score any marks in the evaluation test. These findings indicate that the overall learning outcomes were weak, highlighting possible deficiencies in pedagogical approaches within schools.

In reply the Department stated (July 2025) that efforts would be made for betterment and improving the quality of students in future.

Recommendation 12: The Department may ensure identification of Children below desired level of performance and take appropriate measures including additional classes in order to raise their learning levels.

7.4 Vocational Education

Paragraph 16.5 of NEP 2020 states that at least 50 *per cent* of learners should have exposure to vocational education by 2025, with a structured action plan in place. According to the SSIF (Paragraph 11.3), vocational education focuses on improving employability and entrepreneurial skills by familiarising students with various career options. Paragraph 11.4 states that vocational courses should be integrated into the curriculum from Classes IX to XII, either as additional or compulsory subjects at the secondary level and compulsory (elective) at the higher secondary level.

7.4.1 Vocational Education introduced in a limited manner

The Technical Education and Training Department (TE&TD), GoWB, implements vocational education in Secondary and Higher Secondary schools in the State. There are 9,608 Schools (Secondary- 2,747 and HS- 6,861) under Government management categories in the State. As of March 2024, as per information provided by the Department, vocational education was introduced in 761 Secondary/HS schools (7.92 *per cent*) in the State. However, most of these schools (691 out of 761) had already introduced vocational education by 2018-19 (i.e. prior to audit period), while vocational education was added only in 70 new schools during 2019-24, showing slow progress. In the six test-checked districts, vocational education was introduced in 195 out of 2,406 Secondary and Higher Secondary schools. The State remains significantly short of the NEP 2020 goal of providing vocational education to 50 *per cent* of students by 2025.

7.4.2 Inadequate laboratory facilities for vocational education

Each of the secondary/HS schools generally teaches between two to three vocational trades. In the State, out of 1,452 schools imparting vocational education, 345 schools (24 *per cent*) did not have functional laboratory facilities (with tools and equipment) related to nine trades⁵⁴ as of March 2025, affecting the quality of education being imparted.

7.4.3 Non-linkage of secondary schools with ITIs and Polytechnics

Paragraph 11.7.2 of SSIF emphasises the need for strong collaboration between secondary schools, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and polytechnics to enhance vocational education and student mobility. This linkage would allow institutions to share infrastructure, curriculum and ultimately improving employability of students. However, Audit found that such connections were lacking, preventing students from gaining better exposure and job opportunities. Moreover, the State had no system to track the placement and employability of students who had passed out after availing of such vocational education. Thus,

⁵⁴ Agriculture, Apparel, Automotives, Beauty & wellness, Plumbing, Power, Retail, Tourism and Electronics

the State could not enhance employability and entrepreneurial abilities of the students.

The Department in reply stated (July 2025) that GoI withheld its share of Samagra Shiksha from 2023-24, which resulted in deficiencies as mentioned by Audit, however, the reply is not acceptable, as funds for vocational training were available during the entire period except in 2023-24.

Recommendation 13: The Department may ensure introduction of Vocational Education in all the Secondary and Higher Secondary schools to enhance entrepreneurial skills and employability of students.