

Myanmar's Education System and Higher Education Qualifications

Prof. Dr. Hiromitsu MUTA
Professor Emeritus, Tokyo Institute of
Technology

Structure of Contents

- Overview of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (hereinafter, “Myanmar”)
- Overview of Myanmar’s Education System
- Current Status of Basic Education
- Matriculation Examination (University Entrance Qualification Examination)
- Summary of the Higher Education System
- Quality Assurance and the Government’s Accreditation System
- Status, Challenges, and Prospects of Student Mobility

Overview of Myanmar



- Area: 1.8 times that of Japan; borders India, Bangladesh, China, Laos, and Thailand
- Population: 51.38 million (2024 Census, including estimates)
- Ethnic Groups: 70% Bamar, Multi-ethnic
- Language: Burmese
- Religion: 90% Buddhism
- Parliament
 - Upper House: House of Nationalities (168 + 56 military members)
 - Lower House: House of Representatives (330 + 110 military members)
- GDP per capita: US\$ (nominal) 1,293 (2014); 1,490 (2020); 1,243 (2021); 1,359 (2024)
- Economic Growth Rate: 7.0% (2012–18); –12.0% (2021); –1.0% (2024)

Historical Overview

- 1886: Incorporated into British India
- January 1948: Gained independence
- 1962: Ne Win regime established; pursues socialist economic policies
- 1988: Military regime established following a coup d'état by the armed forces
- April 2006: Capital moved from Yangon to Naypyidaw
- November 2010: Union Solidarity and Development Party (**USDP**) wins 80% of the seats in the general election
- March 2011: Thein Sein's civilian government takes office; transition to civilian rule. Country name changed from "Burma" to "Myanmar"
- April 2012: **NLD** (National League for Democracy) wins 43 out of 45 seats in by-elections
- November 2015: **NLD** wins a landslide victory in the general election
- March 30, 2016: Htin Kyaw administration takes office / Win Myint becomes president two years later
- November 2020: **NLD** wins a landslide victory in the general election
- February 1, 2021: Following a coup, Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Min Aung Hlaing seizes power. Interim government under the **SAC** (State Administrative Council).

- Aung San Suu Kyi and other **NLD** leaders detained, and the military regime cracks down on anti-government forces.
- Resistance from anti-government forces (including ethnic minority militants). Former administration established the **NUG** (National Unity Government) and set up its own Ministry of Education.
- Backlash from ASEAN and the international community

Kyat / Dollar: 1,380 → 3,669 (currently exceeds 4,000 at times)

- Aung San Suu Kyi and other **NLD** leaders convicted → (pardons, sentence reductions)
- December 2025–January 2026: General elections held
- April 2026: Newly elected **USDP** government

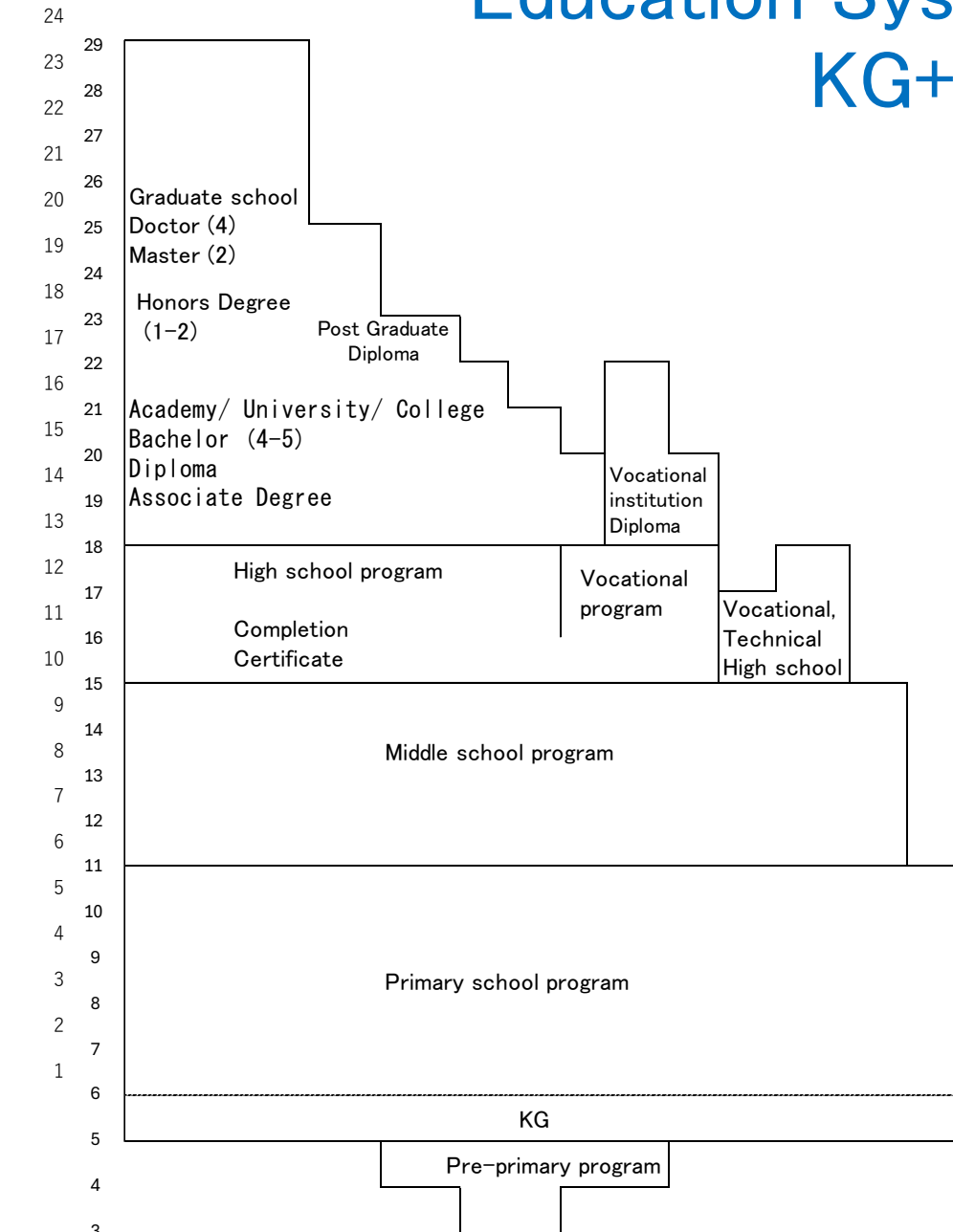
President Min Aung Hlaing

80/330 Townships under Martial Law

Grade Age

Education System in Myanmar

KG+5-4-3



Basic Education: June–March;
Higher Education: Nov.–Sept.

Higher education is overseen by the relevant ministries for Academies, Universities, Degree Colleges, Colleges, Institutes, Centers, Schools.

Students at the high school program of basic education attending schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religion and Culture are eligible to take the Matriculation Examination.

Pre-primary program is administered by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

Types of Basic Education Schools

	Primary School Program						Middle School Program				High School Program	
	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11
Branch Primary School	←→											
Primary School	←→											
Post Primary School	←→						←→					
Branch Middle School	←→						←→					
Middle School	←→						←→					
Branch High School							←→				←→	
High School							←→				←→	
	←→											

Due to the reform of educational system, there is no G4 in SY2019-20, no G3 in SY2018-19, no G2 in SY2017-18, no G1 in SY2016-17.

Chain of Command: Ministry of Education → State/Regional Education Office → District Education Office → Township Education Office → School

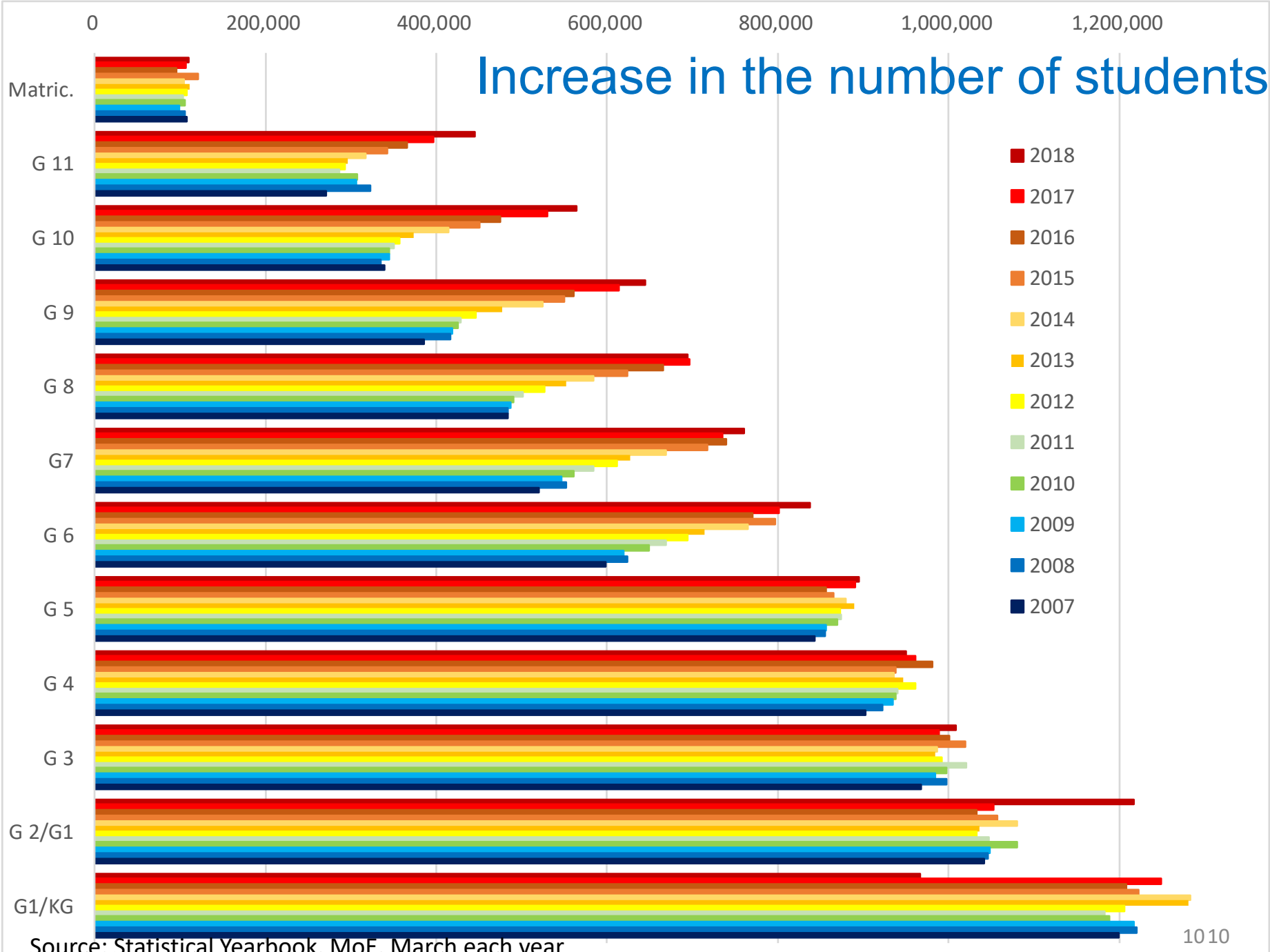
Disruption to Education Due to COVID-19 and the Coup d'état

- In the 2020 academic year, with no prospect of improvement in the COVID-19 situation, all schools—from primary and secondary schools to universities—remained closed for most of the academic year, causing all students to repeat the year.
- The coup d'état on February 1, 2021, drastically altered the situation surrounding education.
- Primary and secondary schools reopened in June 2021. By November, they had returned to normal operations without further closures.
- Many Ministry of Education officials and students participated in the CDM (Civil Disobedience Movement). 27 percent of primary and secondary school teachers (120,000) and 19,000 higher education staff were dismissed or suspended—a situation in which students did not (or were pressured not to) attend school.
- Many primary and secondary school staff and university faculty were newly hired to fill vacancies.

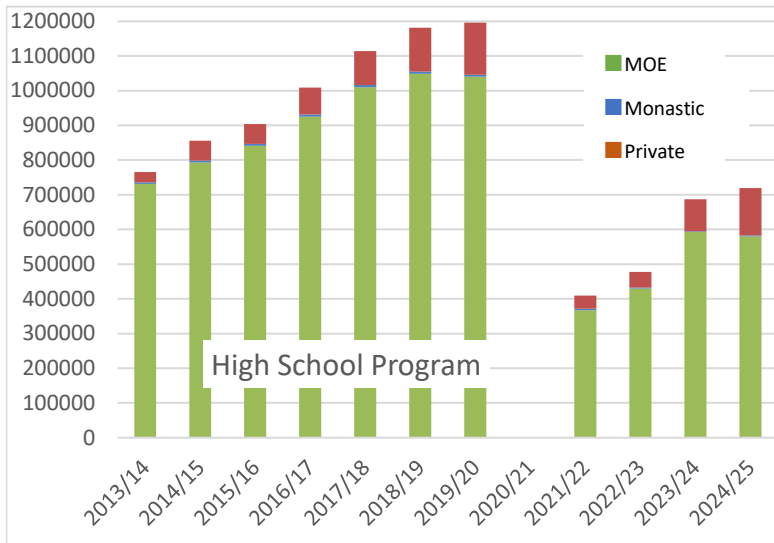
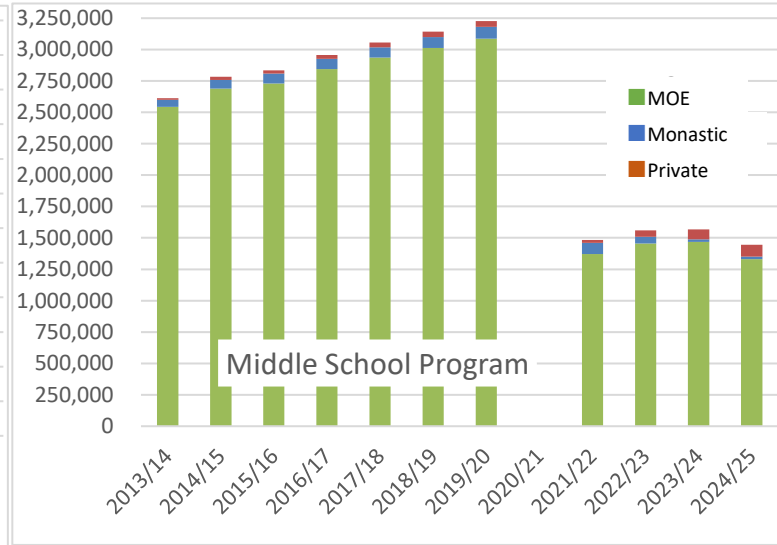
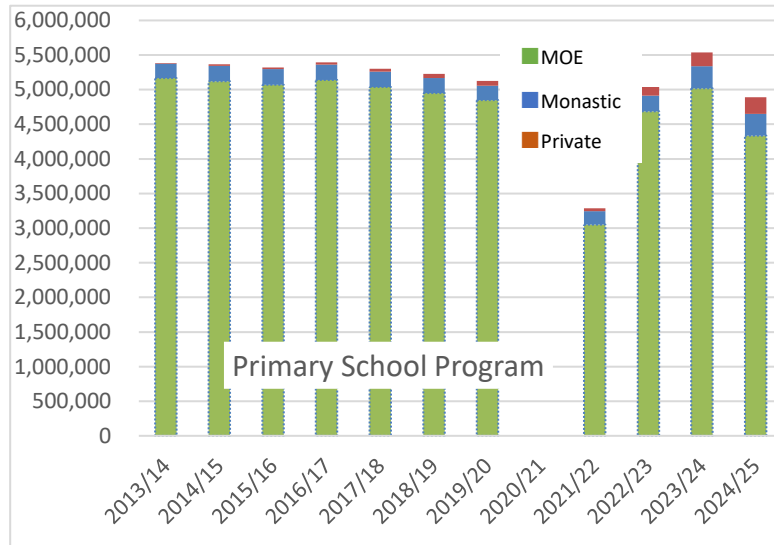
Reforms to the Basic Education System and Changes in the Curriculum: 5-4-2 → KG+5-4-3 (Parallel System)

Old	Old Primary					Old Middle				Old High					
Standard Age	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
2015/16	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Matriculation Exam			
2016/17	KG	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Matriculation Exam			
2017/18	KG	G1	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Matriculation Exam			
2018/19	KG	G1	G2	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Matriculation Exam			
2019/20	KG	G1	G2	G3	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Matriculation Exam			
2020/21	Schools were closed														
2021/22	KG	KG/G1	G1	G2	G3	G4	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Matriculation Exam		
2022/23	KG	G1	G1/2	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6/7	G8	G9	G10	G11	Old Exam, No new gradu.		
2023/24	KG	G1	G2	G2/3	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7/8	G9	G10	G11	G12	New Matric. Exam	
2024/25	KG	G1	G2	G3	G3/4	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8/9	G10	G11	G12	New Matric. Exam	
2025/26	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G4/5	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9/ 10	G11	G12	New Matric. Exam	
2026/27	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G5/ 6	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10/11	G12	New Matric. Exam	
2027/28	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G6/7	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11/12	New Matric. Exam	
2028/29	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G7/8	G8	G9	G10	G11	G12	New Exam
2029/30	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G8/9	G9	G10	G11	G12	New Exam
2030/31	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G9/ 10	G10	G11	G12	New Exam
2031/32	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G10/11	G11	G12	New Exam
2032/33	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	G11/12	G12	New Exam
2033/34	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	G12	G12	New Exam
2034/35	KG	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	G12	New Matric. Exam	
New	New Primary					New Middle					New High				

Pale colors indicate the new curriculum.



Increase of Private Schools, Monastic Schools

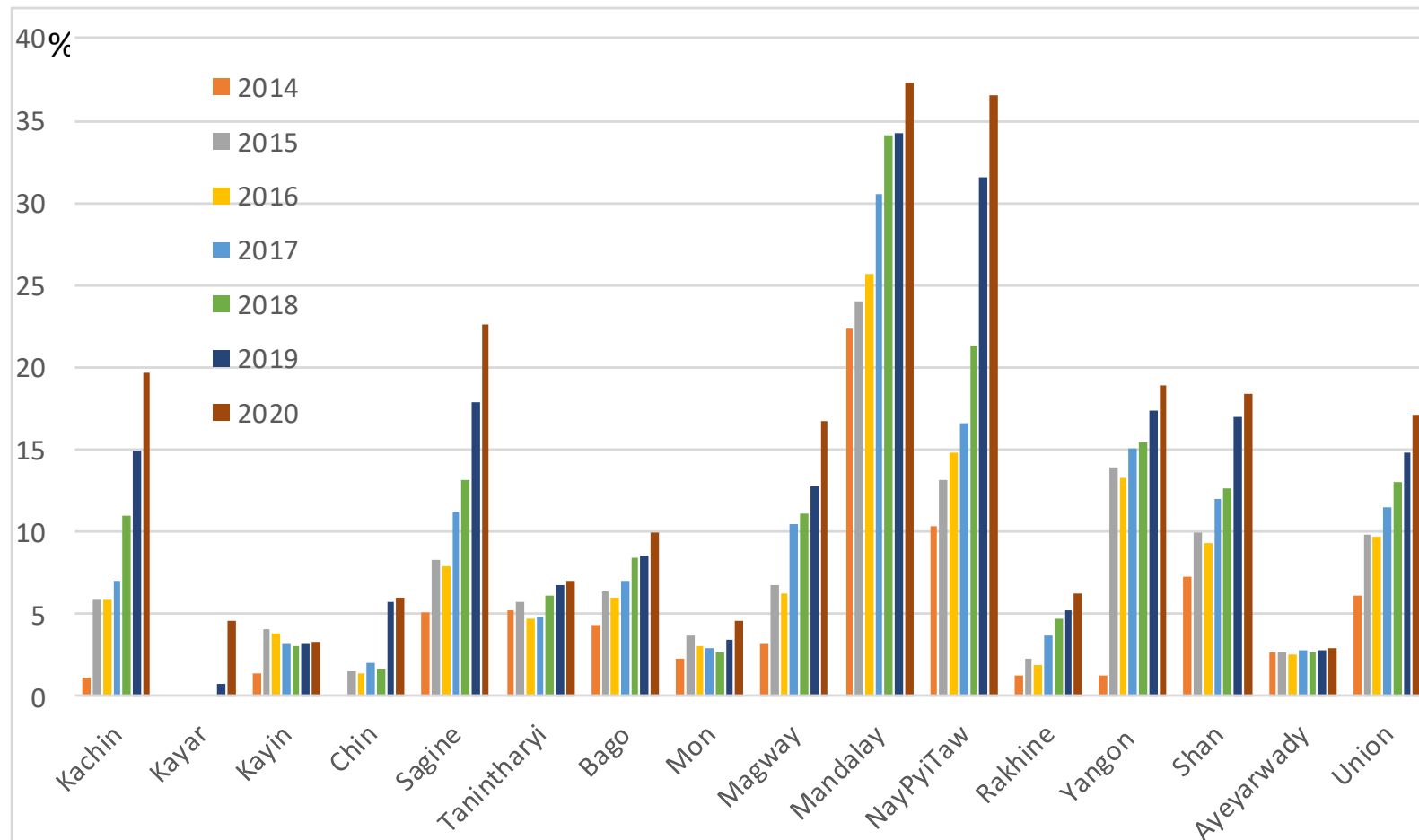


Monastic
Private

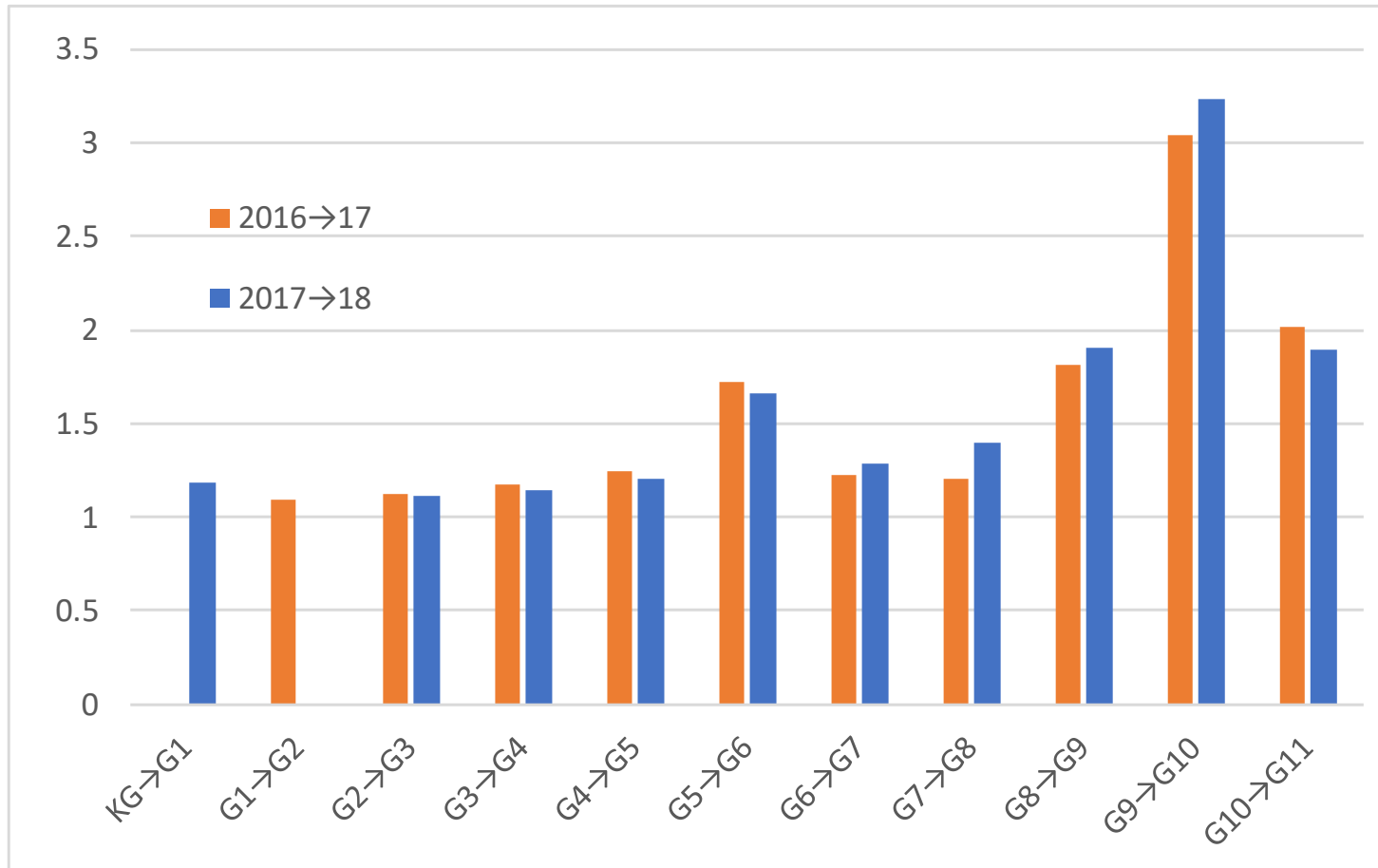
2024/25

6.4% Primary
4.9% Primary
6.5% Middle
19.0% High

Percentage of Monastic and Private School Students Among Grade 11 Students (by State/Region)



Transition Rate of Private School Enrollment (Nationwide)



Breakdown of Those who Passed the Matriculation Exam (2018)

State/region	Pass Rate % DBE Schools Exclu. Practi- cing Schools	Pass Rate % DBE Schools Inclu. Practi- cing Schools	Pass Rate % Internal Students	Pass Rate % Monastic & Private Schools	% of G11 Monastic & Private Schools	# of G11 Students Monastic Schools	# of G11 Students Private Schools
Kachin	21.95		24.36	43.89	10.93		2,191
Kayar	20.56		20.56		0.00		0
Kayin	24.97		25.29	36.28	2.98		365
Chin	10.57		10.67	19.67	1.57		89
Sagaing	26.33	26.44	29.90	50.49	13.17		8,349
Tanintharyi	24.16		26.19	55.82	6.15		764
Bago_East	22.49		24.50	46.85	7.74		2,386
Bago_West	26.08		27.91	45.02	9.49		1,619
Mon	34.09		34.64	52.86	2.59		533
Magway	24.65		26.86	44.44	11.13		5,214
Mandalay	25.34		34.77	53.18	34.15	7,693	16,429
Nay Pyi Taw	21.73		29.52	54.37	21.28		2,793
Rakhine	17.55		18.09	28.53	4.72		1,079
Yangon	32.08	32.49	35.39	51.87	15.42		11,205
Shan_South	23.85		25.73	38.77	11.42		2,497
Shan_North	25.35		28.92	46.73	15.95		1,768
Shan_East	10.33		13.07	41.94	8.65		256
Ayeyarwady	25.56		26.48	59.41	2.65		1,674
Practicing schools	80.07						
Union	25.63		28.91	49.90	13.05	7,693	59,211
	25.55	Exclu. Practicing schools					

Efforts to Promote Education

- Since the Democratic Party administration took office in 2011, it has implemented policies aimed at expanding the scale and improving the quality of education, yielding significant results over the past 9 years.
- A drastic reduction in the dropout rate from Grade 1 to Grade 2 was largely due to the **introduction of the new kindergarten system** in 2016.
- Various “**No one is left behind**” policies have contributed to this trend for Grades 2 through 9.

New schools established and existing ones upgraded (5,000 schools a year)

Thorough implementation of policies providing free education for kindergarten, primary, middle, and high school program.

Textbooks, teaching materials, stationery, and uniforms

Evaluation based on Assessment & Examination Policies

(Remedial classes, Transition from a Marks System to a Letter Grade System (A, B, C, D), Number of Exams, Flexible Determination of Promotion and Advancement, Parent Education, etc.)

Instructions for Teachers and Principals (AY 2018)

- Do not collect any money from parents.
- Do not accept gifts or money from parents.
- Do not sell school emblems or class emblems to be attached to uniforms.
- Do not sell educational materials.
- Admit all 5-year-olds to KG and all 6-year-olds to G1.
- Attend work every day and teach according to the set class schedule.
- Administer tests only 4 times a year.
- Provide remedial classes for students struggling academically.
- Ensure that all lower-grade students can read, write, and do arithmetic.

Similar instructions to be issued in May 2026

Prohibited: Accepting money or valuables, collecting fees (for school emblems, class emblems, PTA dues, sports fees, textbook fees, library fees, etc.)

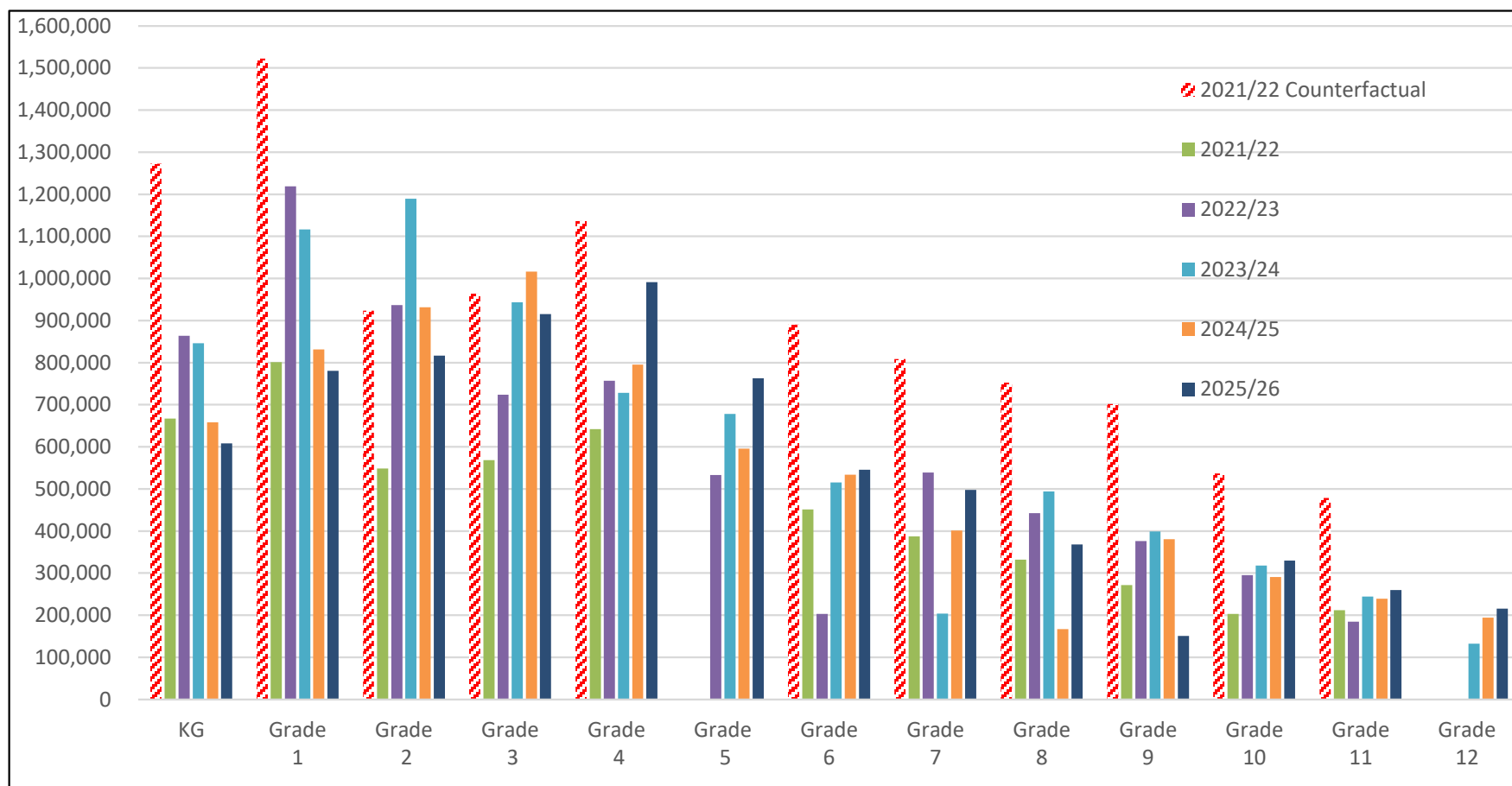
CREATE: “The project for curriculum reform at primary level of basic education in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar”

Japan's Support for the Development of All Textbooks for Grades 1–5 (10 Subjects) : 2014–2021

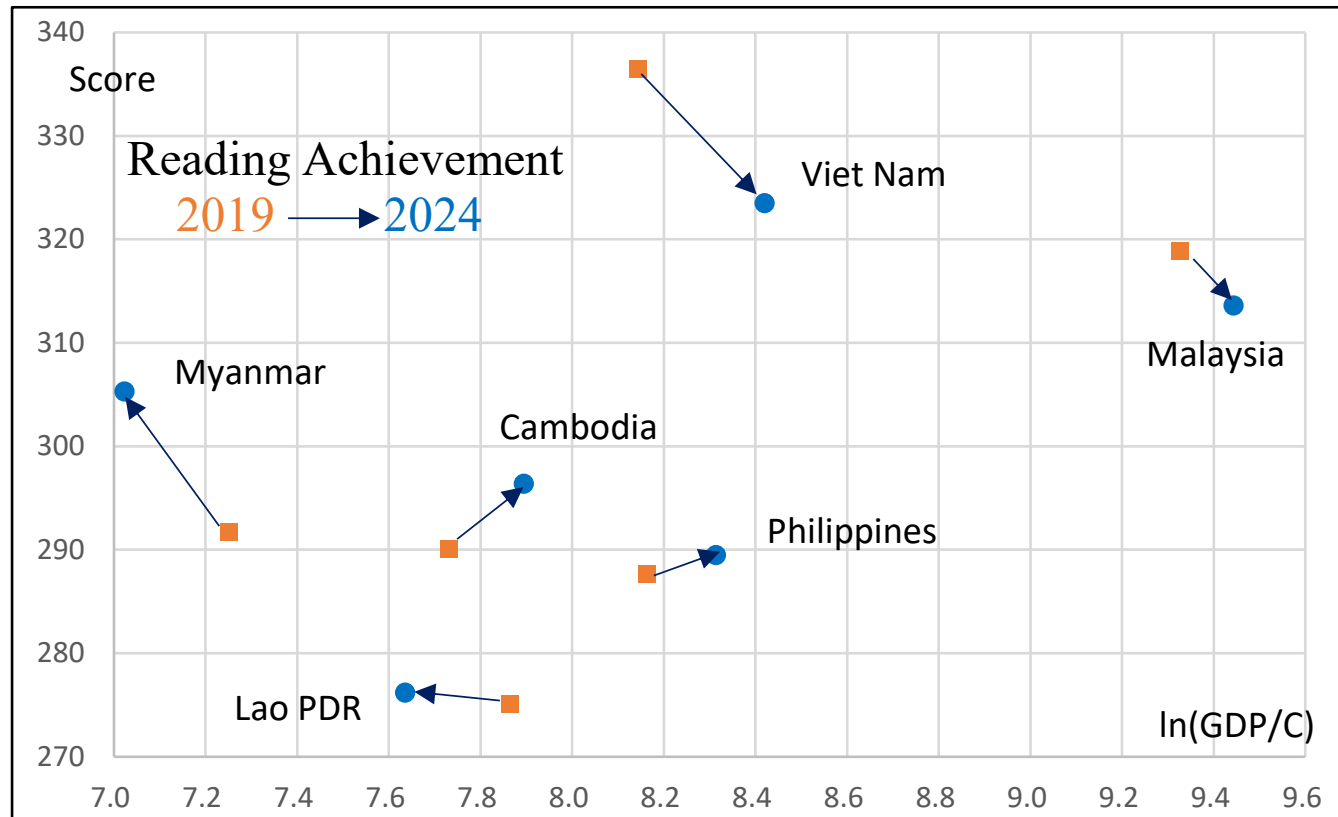


First grade textbooks developed

Recent Trends in the Total Number of Students by Grade Level in Basic Education (Including Monastic and Private Schools)

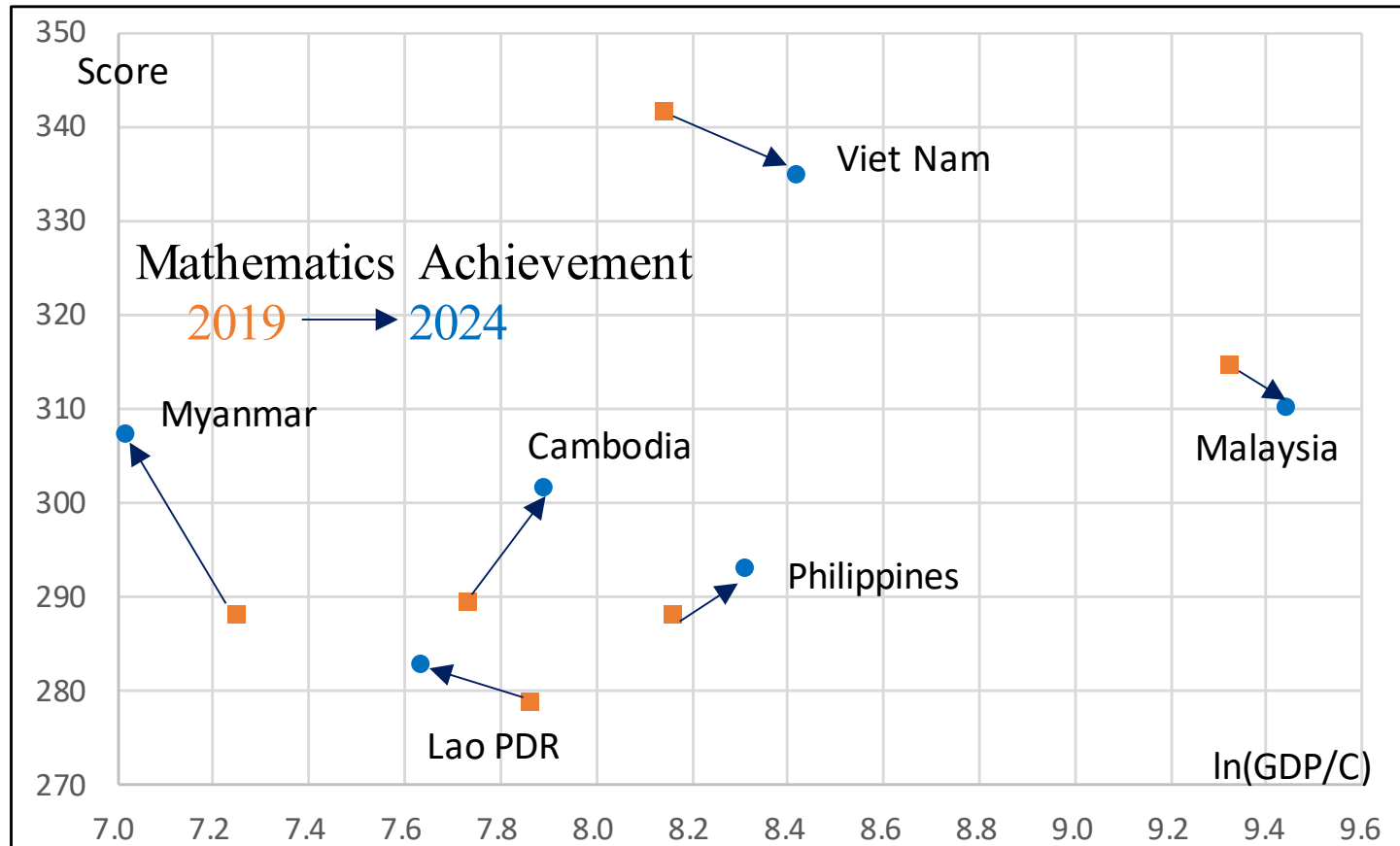


Academic Achievement in Six ASEAN Countries (Grade 5) (SEA-PLM Reading Comprehension)



It is estimated that 75% of the change in Myanmar's scores is attributed to curriculum reform.

Academic Achievement in Six ASEAN Countries (Grade 5) (SEA-PLM Mathematics)



It is estimated that 82% of the change in Myanmar's scores is attributed to curriculum reform.

Summary

- The enrollment rate (actual enrollment / projected enrollment) for basic education schools averages in the 80% range for primary, the 60% range for middle, and the 40% range for high school programs, and the 70% overall nationwide.
- The higher the education level, the lower the enrollment rate. Furthermore, significant differences were observed between states/regions.
- The total number of students enrolled in all basic education schools for the 2025/26 academic year is 7,240,771. The trend is upward.
- According to the SEA-PLM academic achievement survey results, G5 students demonstrate higher academic performance than their GDP/C counterparts. Their performance is only slightly below that of Malaysia.
- Starting in 2023/24, vocational programs in industry, agriculture, and livestock were launched in the high school programs of 85 schools across 84 districts. A special matriculation examination was administered in March 2026 (3,364 examinees).
- Enrollment in private schools is increasing, particularly at the high school program. There are significant differences between states/regions.
- The first cohort of students under the new Grade 12 system graduated in 2024. The system shifted from 5-4-2 to KG+ 5-4-3.
- The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2021–30 envisions making middle school education compulsory. Previously, the NESP was for 2016–2021.

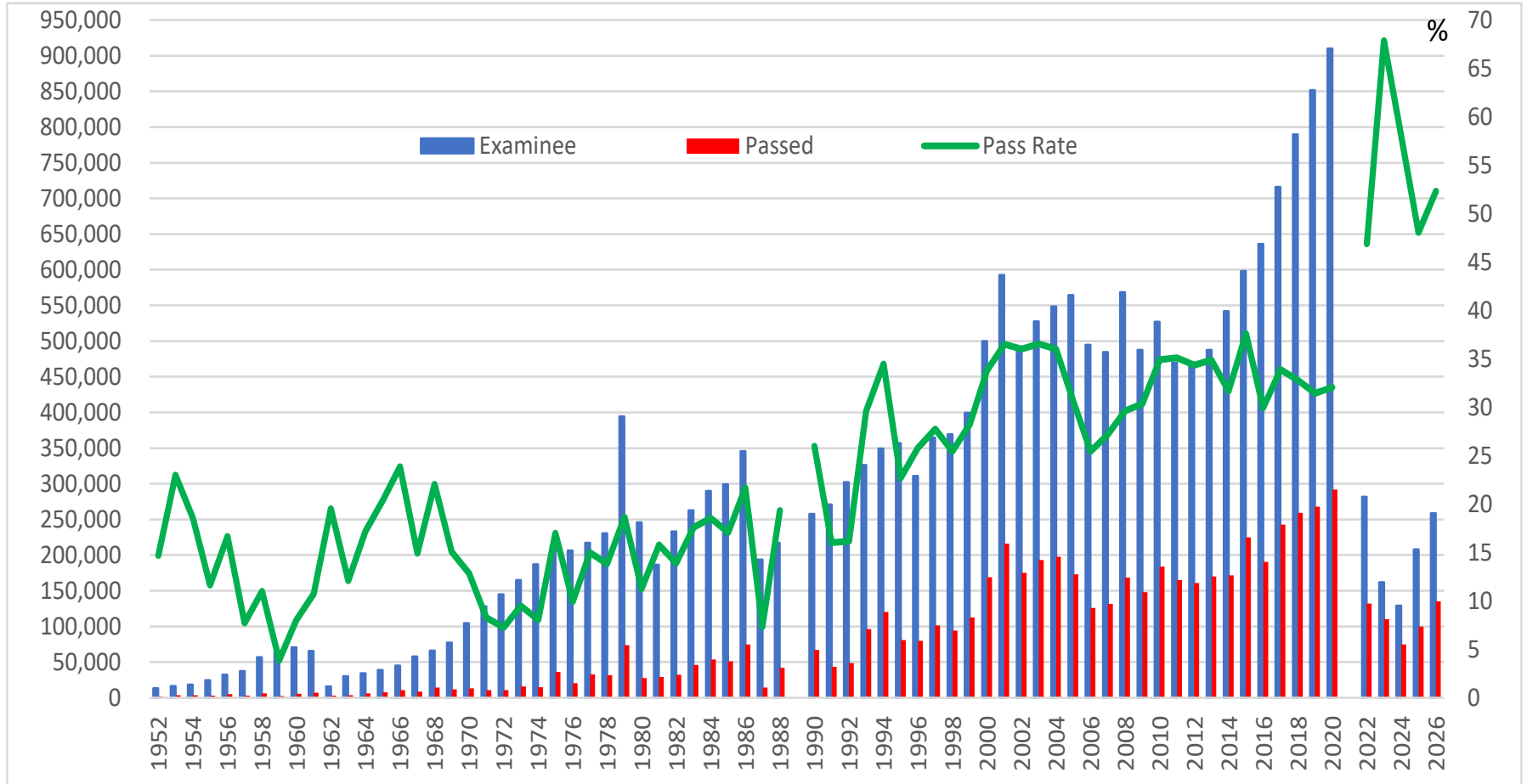
Matriculation Examination

Definition: 1. Certification of High School Completion → (Individual school certification starting with the class of 2019/20)

2. University entrance qualification

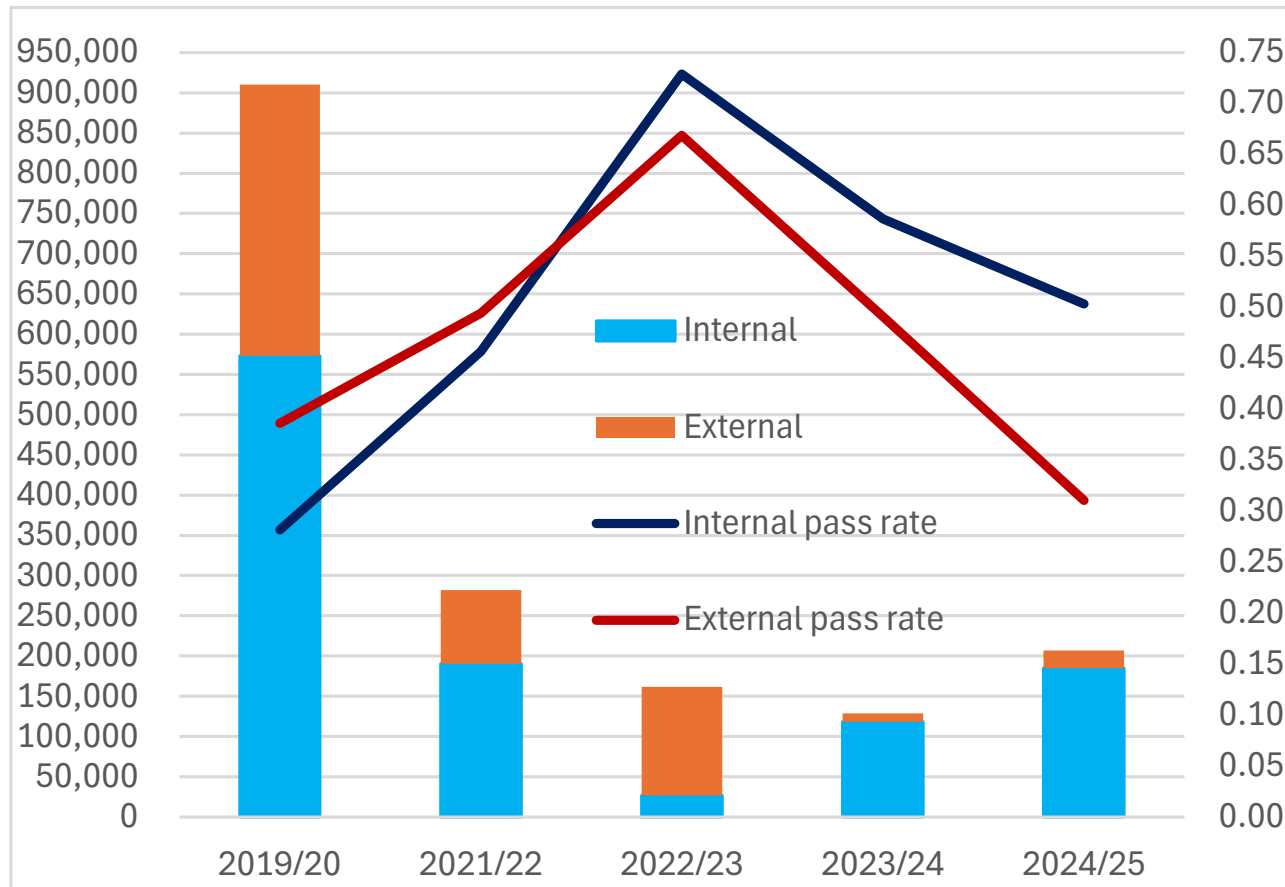
- 10 subjects: Myanmar Language, English, and Mathematics are compulsory. Students must select 3 subjects from the following electives: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Economics, and Optional Myanmar Language (until 2023). Each subject is scored out of 100; a minimum of 40 marks are required for a passing grade. Passing all 6 subjects constitutes passing the Matriculation Examination.
- Failure in even one subject results in failing the Matriculation Examination. Students may retake the exam in subsequent years. Once the matriculation exam is passed, students may not retake it.
- The 2024 Matriculation Examination followed the new curriculum (up to Grade 12). Students who had completed the old curriculum (up to Grade 11) could study the new curriculum at their own discretion and take the exam.
- A grade of 80 or higher in Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry, and 75 or higher in other subjects, will result in a D (Distinction). Students with a high number of Ds are eligible for various awards.
- Admission to individual universities is subject to examinations of the university to which you wish to apply.
- Starting in 2026, the Industrial-Agricultural-Livestock Matriculation program was introduced for vocational course students.

Trends in the Number of Examinees, Passed Examinees, and Pass Rates for the Matriculation Examination



Note: The 2026 figures include the Occupational Matriculation Examination.

Pass Rates by Internal/External Examinees



Internal: Students in their final year of high school program at the time of the exam

External: Not enrolled in high school program at the time of the exam

The proportion of internal examinees has been increasing.

The pass rate for internal examinees has been rising = Improvement in the academic ability of internal examinees

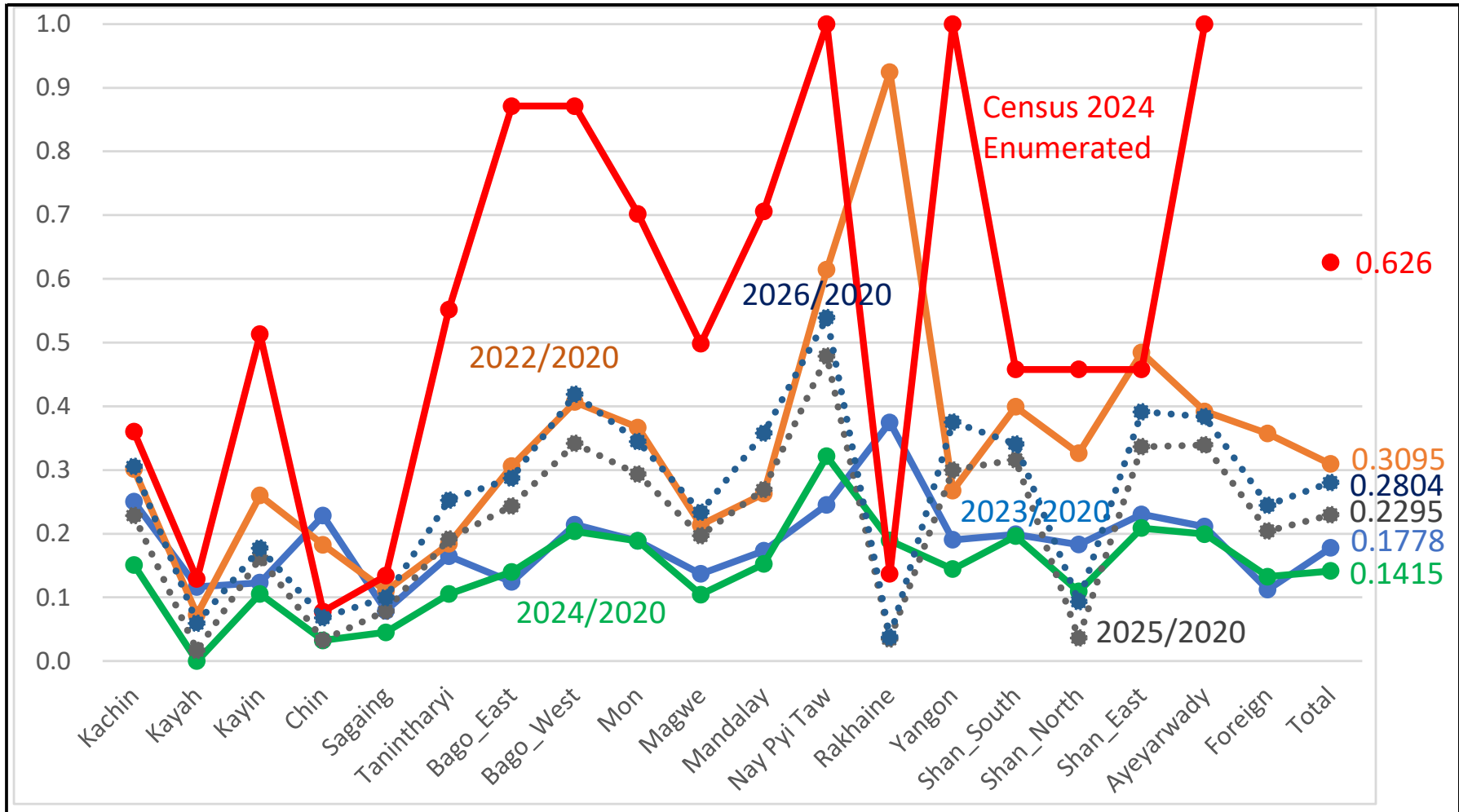
Decline in the Number of Matriculation Exam Takers and an Increase in the Pass Rate

- 910,229 examinees in March 2020, 32.06% pass rate.
- Exam canceled in March 2021 due to COVID-19.
- The number of examinees in March 2022 was 281,741: 31% of the 2020 figure.

Pass rate: 46.88%. Successful examinees only 45% of the 2020 figure.

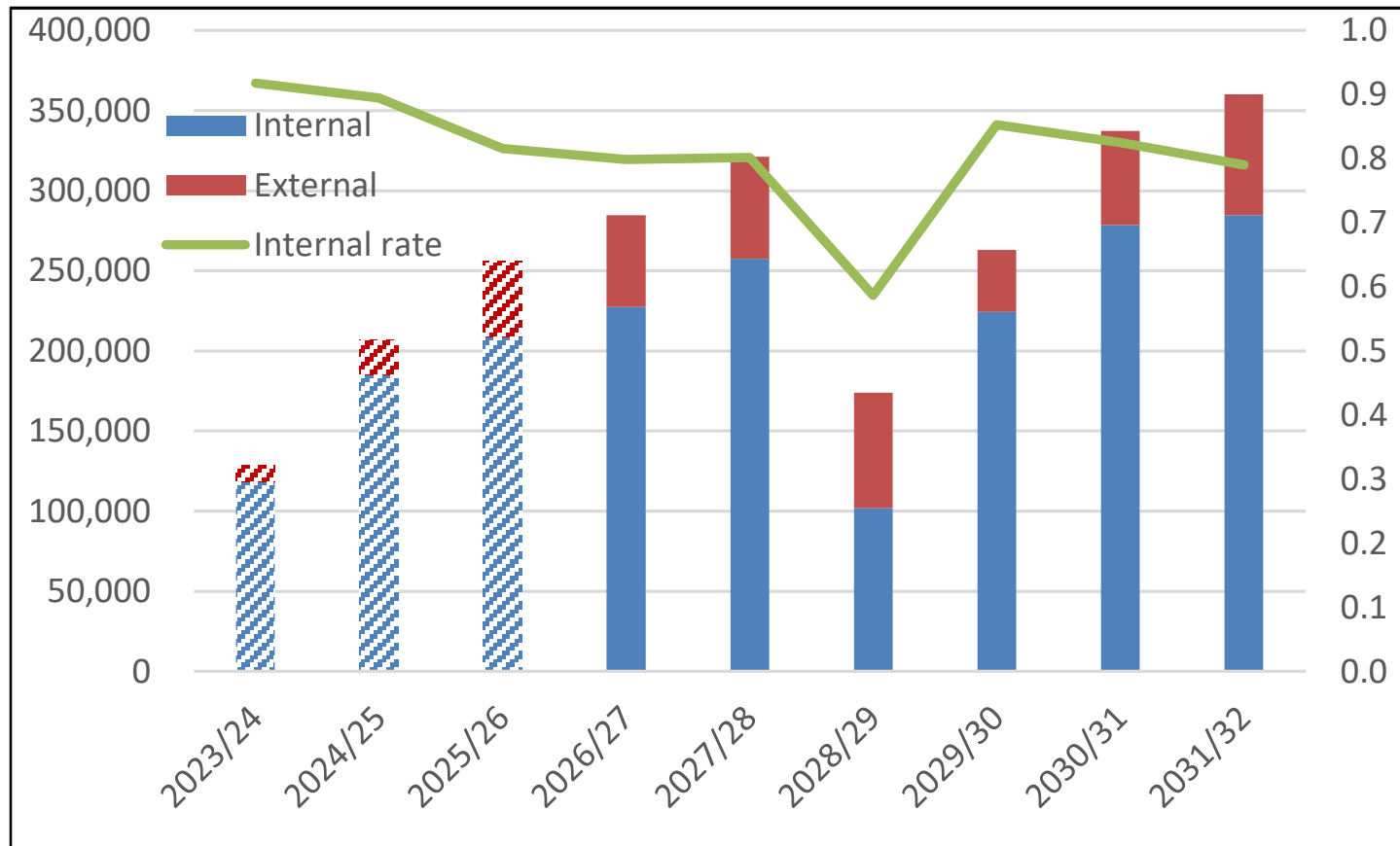
- March 2023 was the last opportunity for students in the old curriculum to take the exam due to curriculum reforms. External examinees accounted for 83%. The number of examinees was 161,851, 18% of the 2020 figure. External examinees accounted for 40% of the 2020 figure. The pass rate was 67.87%.
- March 2024 marked the first time G12 students took the exam. Internal examinee rate: 92%.
- In March 2025, the number of examinees was 206,912 (23% compared to 2020). Internal examinees accounted for 89% of the total; the pass rate for internal examinees was 50%.
- March 2026: 255,228 + 3,364 examinees (28% of the 2020 figure)

Regional Disparities as Reflected in the Decline in the Number of Matriculation Exam Takers



Significant differences shown between states/regions.

Forecast Chart of Matriculation Exam Applicant Numbers



Assumption: Grade 12 figures estimated based on recent annual transition rates
97% of Grade 12 students take the exam (2026 actual results).

Pass rate is 50%.

45% of those who fail retake the exam as external examinees the following year.

Subject Combinations

Science Combi.: C7

Mixed Combi.: C1, C5, C8

Humanities Combi.: C2

	Myanmar	English	Mathe- matics.	Physics	Chem- istry	Biology	Econo- mics	Geogra- phy	History	Optional Myanmar
C1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		☐			
C2	☐	☐	☐				☐	☐	☐	
C3	☐	☐	☐					☐	☐	☐
C4	☐	☐	☐				☐		☐	☐
C5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐				☐	
C6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐					☐
C7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐				
C8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			☐		

Note: The number of students taking the **Optional Myanmar Language** exam is in the single digits nationwide, making it a very small group. This option was eliminated starting in 2024.

G11 Students by Subject Combination (2019)

Mixed Combi.: C1, C5, C8

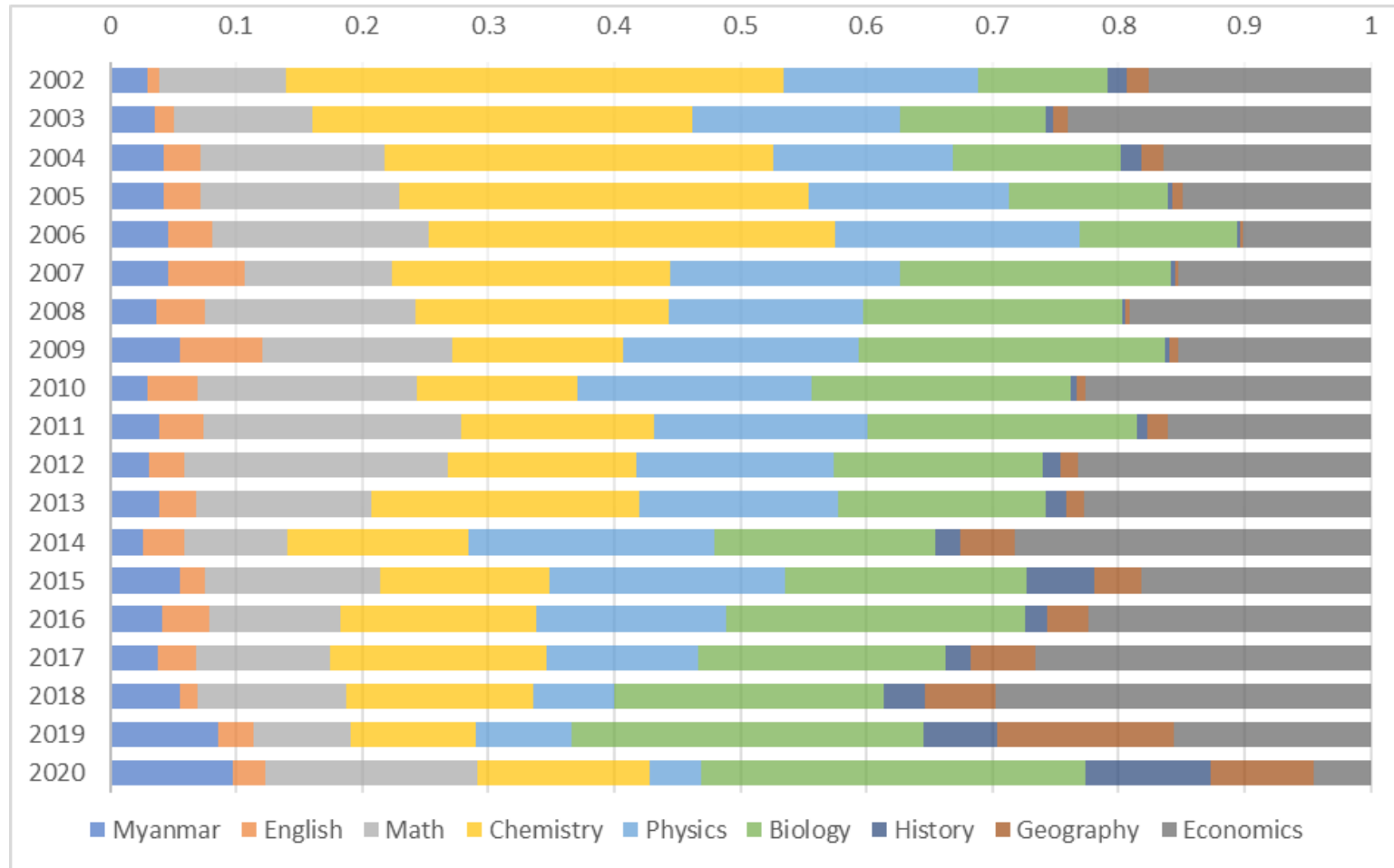
Humanities Combi.: C2

Science Combi.: C7

Combination	Male					Female				
	1	2	5	7	8	1	2	5	7	8
Kachin	61.27	30.28	0.00	7.12	1.33	63.75	23.79	0.00	11.35	1.11
Kayah	29.10	59.16	0.00	8.23	3.50	34.91	48.39	0.00	13.71	2.99
Kayin	70.35	18.97	0.00	9.91	0.76	67.81	19.19	0.00	12.17	0.83
Chin	41.71	42.96	0.00	15.33	0.00	41.73	36.90	0.00	21.37	0.00
Sagain	48.63	30.13	0.24	19.73	1.28	46.23	27.44	0.34	24.60	1.39
Taninthari	84.93	8.68	0.00	6.39	0.00	86.29	6.62	0.00	7.09	0.00
Bago(East)	67.51	14.74	0.09	17.66	0.00	65.38	12.68	0.08	21.85	0.00
Bago(West)	71.04	19.71	0.00	9.24	0.00	68.11	17.73	0.00	14.16	0.00
Magway	62.58	18.60	0.00	18.83	0.00	58.28	16.13	0.00	25.59	0.00
Mandalay	62.72	10.16	0.06	26.98	0.08	57.15	8.48	0.04	34.15	0.18
Mon	75.11	8.28	0.00	16.61	0.00	72.67	7.99	0.00	19.35	0.00
Rakhine	65.92	15.97	0.00	15.57	2.54	69.71	15.53	0.00	12.21	2.55
Yangon	61.12	15.25	0.00	23.58	0.05	56.86	10.53	0.01	32.50	0.09
Shan(South)	63.40	14.22	0.00	22.33	0.05	61.09	10.51	0.00	28.26	0.14
Shan(North)	59.95	18.92	0.00	21.12	0.00	60.89	13.88	0.00	25.23	0.00
Shan(East)	80.27	6.67	0.00	13.06	0.00	78.72	5.17	0.00	16.11	0.00
Ayeyawady	38.93	54.71	0.00	6.29	0.07	39.30	51.31	0.00	9.36	0.03
NayPyiTaw	62.93	24.28	0.74	12.00	0.04	64.39	18.14	0.56	16.90	0.00
Total	58.72	23.94	0.06	16.88	0.40	57.18	21.12	0.06	21.23	0.41

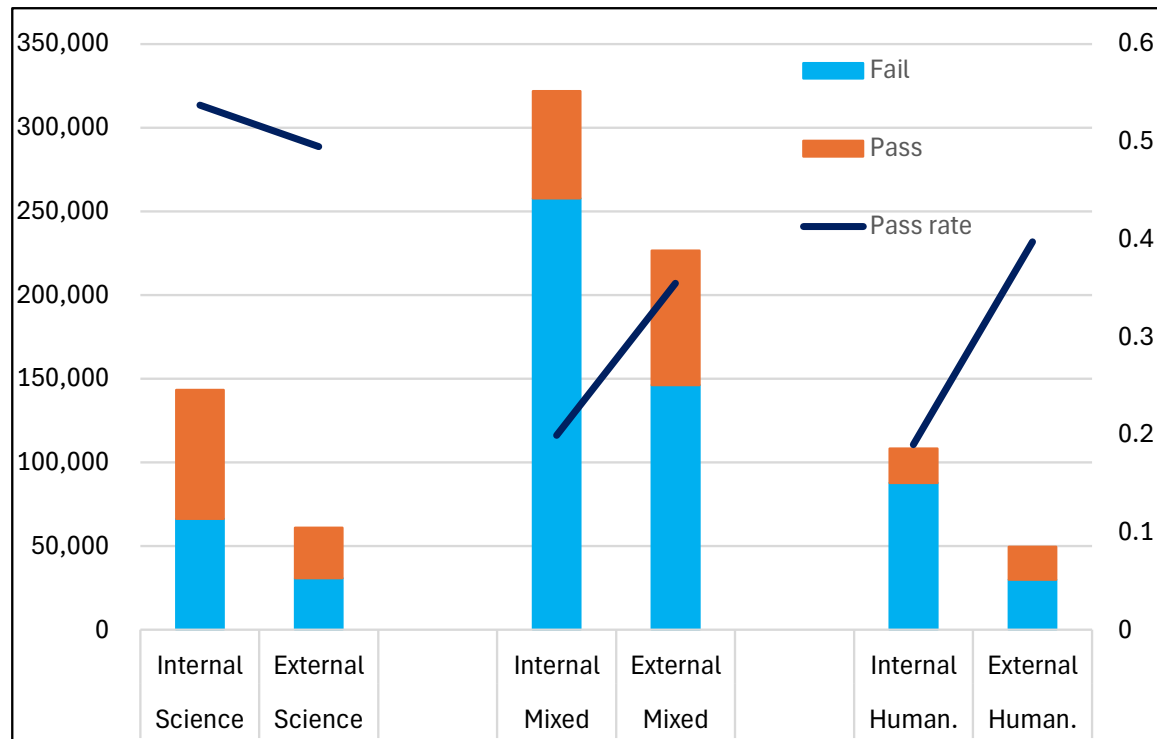
Source: Individual School Data (2019): Male 222,344 Female 279,386

Breakdown of Distinction Awards by Subject



The number of Distinctions awarded is high in science subjects.

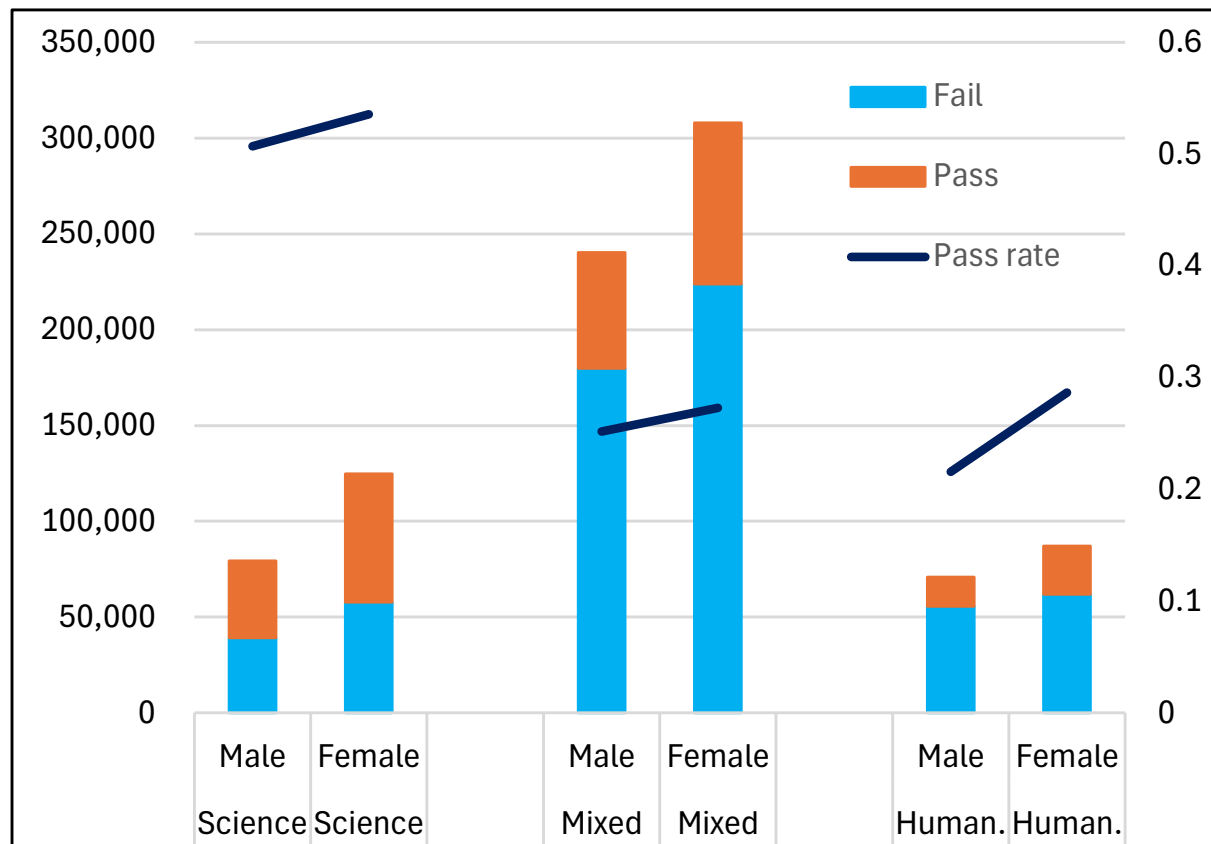
Subject Combinations and Internal/External Examinees (2020)



The science combination has a high pass rate = there are many outstanding students. The pass rate for internal examinees is high in the science combination. The opposite is true for other combinations.

Many students are taking a mixed-subject combination (majoring in physics and chemistry).

Subject Combinations and Gender (2020)



Female students accounted for 57.1% of all examinees and 60.2% of all successful examinees.

The percentage of female students among successful examinees in science subject combinations was 62.4%.

Information on Matriculation Exam Applicants

- 2020 Test Takers

Internal Examinees: (Approximately half of the same age group)

Mean: slightly below the passing threshold 223.3

SD: wide distribution from high to low scores 111.9

External Examinees:

Mean: just above the passing score: 243.2

SD: distribution within a narrow range 81.6

- Standardized score calculation using internal examinees

$$(\text{Score} - \text{Mean}) / \text{SD} \times 10 + 50$$

Out of 600, 240 points = Standardized score 51

350 = 61

460 = 71

500 = 75

Inter-Subject Correlation (Internal/External Examinees, 2020)

- Mathematics (one type) is required: Includes (calculus, vectors and matrices, probability and statistics, algebraic geometry, trigonometric functions, complex numbers, permutations and combinations, etc.)
- Science subjects that yield high scores are preferred as electives.
- The language of instruction for high school science and math subjects is English; the official language of instruction at the university is English.

	Myan	English	Math	Chem	Physics	Biology	Geogra	History	Econom
Myanmar									
English	0.7971								
Mathematics	0.6963	0.8223							
Chemistry	0.7617	0.8650	0.8617						
Physics	0.7470	0.8512	0.8621	0.9081					
Biology	0.7505	0.8278	0.7777	0.8608	0.8435				
Geography	0.7901	0.7838	0.6948						
History	0.7544	0.7231	0.6189	0.6308	0.5750		0.8101		
Economics	0.7954	0.8081	0.7400	0.8158	0.8057		0.8325	0.8089	

- Not displayed if the calculation target is 100 or less
- Maximum calculation target: 403,796
- Highlighted if the correlation coefficient is 0.8 or higher

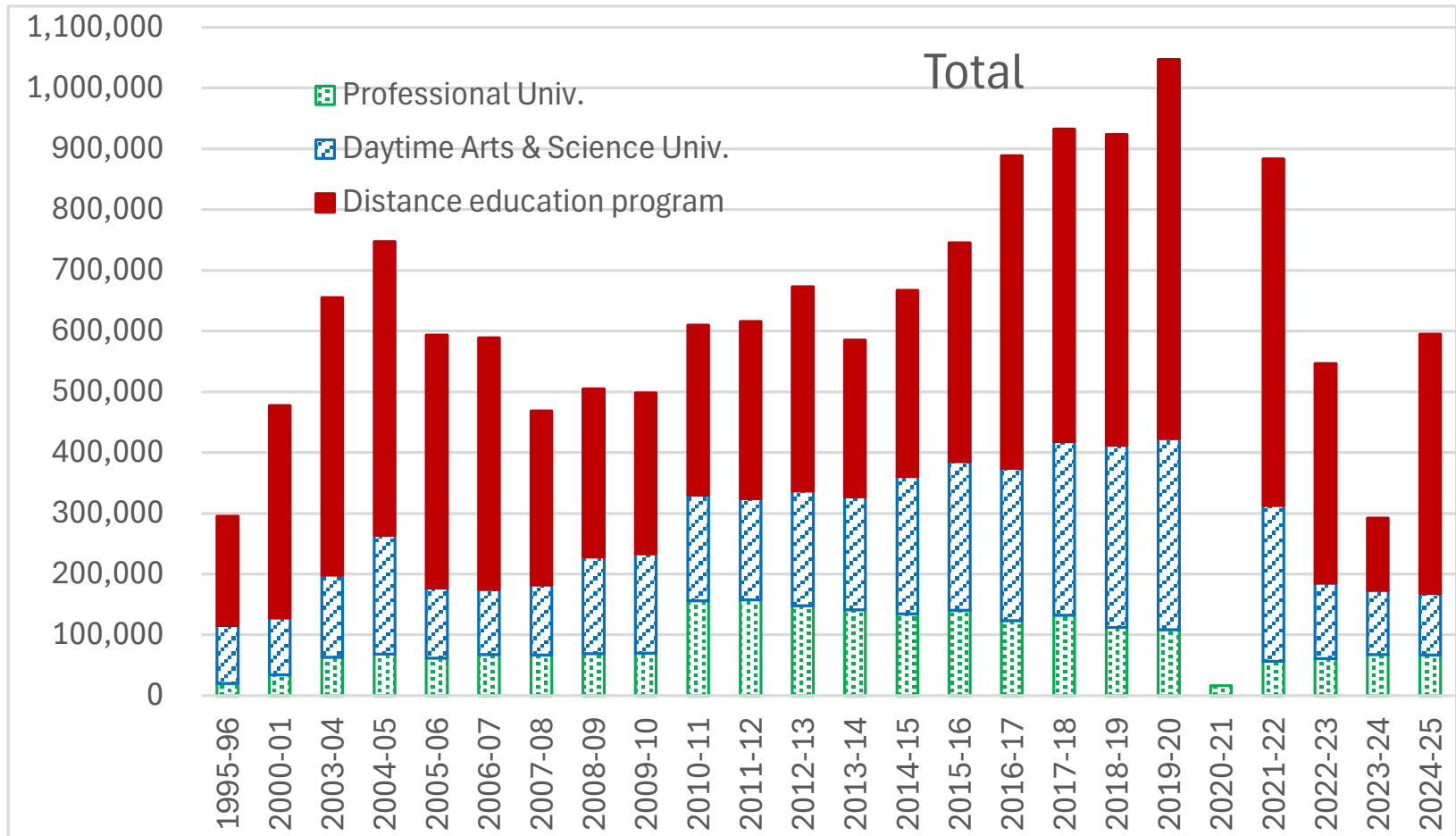
Summary

- Although the number of examinees for the matriculation examination plummeted due to the political upheaval, the pass rate rose, and the decline in the number of successful examinees was mitigated.
- When internal and external examinees are compared, the proportion of internal examinees increased after the political upheaval.
- The proportion of females among examinees was 57%. It was 60% among successful examinees, and it was 62% among successful examinees who chose science subjects combination. (2020)
- Subject combinations: Among all examinees, 22.4% chose science; 17.3% chose humanities; and 60.2% chose a mixed combination. Even in the mixed combination, students study physics and chemistry. There are significant differences by state/region (2020 national data).
- The pass rate is highest for the science combination.
- There is a trend toward a higher proportion of internal examinees.
- The number of examinees is on the rise, and it is expected to exceed the 2022 figure by 2027.

“Types of Universities” (Based on the Statistics Bureau classification)

- Specialized Universities
Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Merchant Marine, Economics, Education, Arts, etc.
- Non-specialized Universities
Daytime Programs (Campus-Based)
Arts and Sciences Universities
Buddhist-affiliated
Distance Learning Programs: 42 universities under the Ministry of Education (including 3 universities of economics)

Total Number of Students by Type of University



ပြည်ထောင်စုသမ္မတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရ

ပညာရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Education

တက္ကသိုလ်ဝင်ခွင့်စိစစ်ရွေးချယ်ရေးအဖွဲ့

(အဆင့်မြင့်ပညာဦးစီးဌာန)

University Admissions Selection Committee
(Department of Higher Education)

တက္ကသိုလ်ဝင်ခွင့်လမ်းညွှန်

Guide to University Admission

(၂၀၂၃ ခုနှစ်၊ တက္ကသိုလ်ဝင်စာမေးပွဲအောင်မြင်သူများအတွက်)

For 2023 Matriculation Exam Passers

၂၀၂၃ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇူလိုင်လ

Key Points of the “University Admissions Guide” (2025 Edition)

- The “University Admissions Selection Committee” under the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education will uniformly allocate students who have passed the matriculation examination (excluding specialized universities such as military and religious institutions).

Criteria: From among those who meet each university’s requirements (1. Preference ranking + 2. Test score)

- Admission requirements for 159 universities (degree colleges and above) under the jurisdiction of 9 ministries listed

Under the **Ministry of Health**: Universities of Medicine, Universities of Dental Medicine, Universities of Nursing, and 15 institutions such as medical technology, etc.

Under the **Ministry of Science and Technology**: 56 institutions, including Technological universities, technical colleges, and Universities of Computer Studies

Under the **Ministry of Education**: 75 institutions including universities of economics, universities of foreign languages, Education Degree Colleges, and arts and science universities

Under the jurisdiction of **6 other ministries**: 13 institutions

Note:

- The only comprehensive university is NSA (Naypyitaw State Academy). Ministry of Education +
- Including universities offering only graduate programs and other institutions granting bachelor’s or higher degrees, there are 167 universities under the jurisdiction of 12 ministries.

Application and Admission Requirements

- National universities are considered to be of equal standing and quality.
- Each university generally designates a catchment area (region from which students may apply) for each major. This is for the purpose of developing talent for the nation.

For fields of study that are common in every region, the catchment area is narrow, such as the state/region.

For fields of study that are rare nationwide, the catchment area is wide.

- Exceptionally, universities designated as COEs (Centers of Excellence) have no catchment area → Since students can apply from anywhere in the country, the required admission scores are high.
- The exam score from the current academic year is the primary selection criterion:
The intent is that admission decisions cannot be made by comparing test scores from different academic years.
- If there are few applicants, students who passed in previous years may be admitted, but they are given lower priority in the admission decision.
- Transferring schools is possible.

Examples of Application Requirements and Admission Criteria by University (2023)

Universities	Male	Female	Admission Requirements		
			6 subjects	Compulsory Elective Subject	Acceptance/ rejection Criteria
Geology and Mineralogy Programs (Arts and Science Universities)	90%	10%	360		Total of 6 subjects + 20 mi walk, color blindness not allowed
University of Forestry and Environmental Science, Yezin	80%	20%		Physics, Chemistry, Biology	Total of 6 subjects + 20 mi walk
University of Community Health	80%	20%		Physics, Chemistry, Biology	
Myanmar Maritime University	80%	20%	420	Physics, Chemistry	
Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University	70%	30%		Physics, Chemistry	Total of English, Math, Physics, Chemistry : 280 (minimum)
Arts and Science Universities (Sports Science)	60%	40%		Physics, Chemistry	
Universities of Dental Medicine	60%	40%	450	Physics, Chemistry, Biology	Total of English, Chemistry, Biology + Interview + Psychological exam
Naypyitaw Technological University	60%	40%		Physics, Chemistry	Total of English, Math, Physics, Chemistry : 300 (minimum)
Other Technological Universities (in each area)	60%	40%		Physics, Chemistry	Total of English, Math, Physics, Chemistry : 240-280 (minimum)
Mandalay Technological University	56%	44%		Physics, Chemistry	(Engineering, Architecture)
Yangon Technological University	55%	45%		Physics, Chemistry, Biology	Total of English, Math, Physics, Chemistry : 300 (minimum)
Universities of Medicine	50%	50%		Physics, Chemistry	Total of English, Math, Physics, Chemistry : 300 (minimum)
University of Technology, Yadanabon Cyber City	50%	50%	450	Physics, Chemistry, Biology	Total of English, Chemistry, Biology + Interview + Psychological exam
Yezin Agricultural University	50%	50%		Physics, Chemistry	Total of English, Math, Physics, Chemistry : 280 (minimum)
University of Veterinary Science, Yezin (Veterinary)	50%	50%		Physics, Chemistry, Biology	Total of Physics, Chemistry, Biology
University of Veterinary Science, Yezin (Animal Science)	50%	50%	410	Biology	
	50%	50%	330	Biology	
Universities of Education	50%	50%	350-380		Minimum acceptance criteria varies by subject combination
Universities of Nursing	10%	90%		Physics, Chemistry, Biology	

Notes: Most universities without high academic criteria designate applicable areas.

Most majors in each universities designates subjects (deeply related to the major) to be admitted.

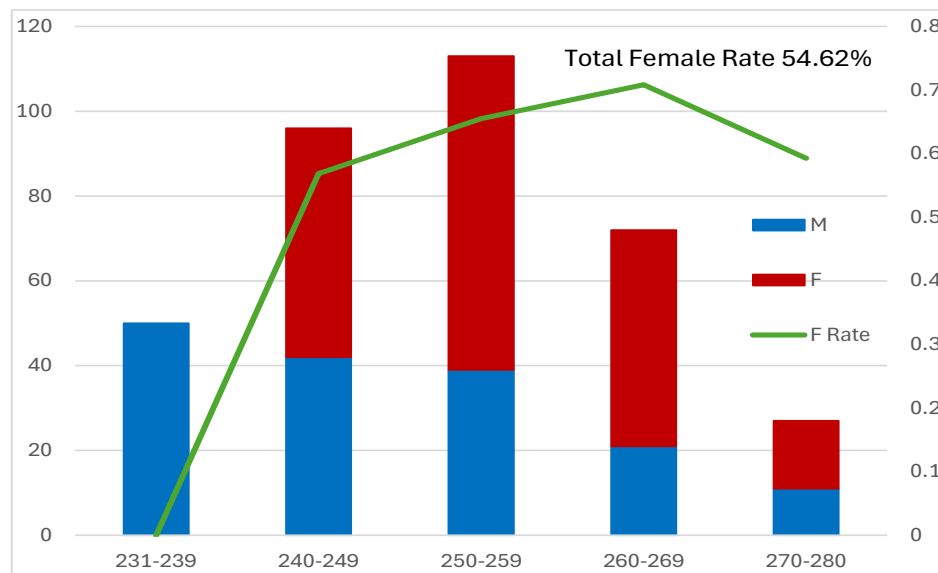
Medical, dental, and nursing universities exempt an appointment after graduation with fee for a certain percentage of students.

Enrollment Capacity (by Gender)

- Enrollment quotas are listed separately by gender depending on the university and field of study:
 - Specialized nature of the programs
(Geology and Mineralogy programs, Maritime University, Aerospace Engineering University, Nursing Universities)
 - Gender balance considerations
(Medical Universities, Technological Universities, etc.)
- Female students tend to score higher, so at highly selective universities, if the enrollment quota is equal for both genders, male applicants are given about 10-point advantage.
- Enrollment quotas vary by year.

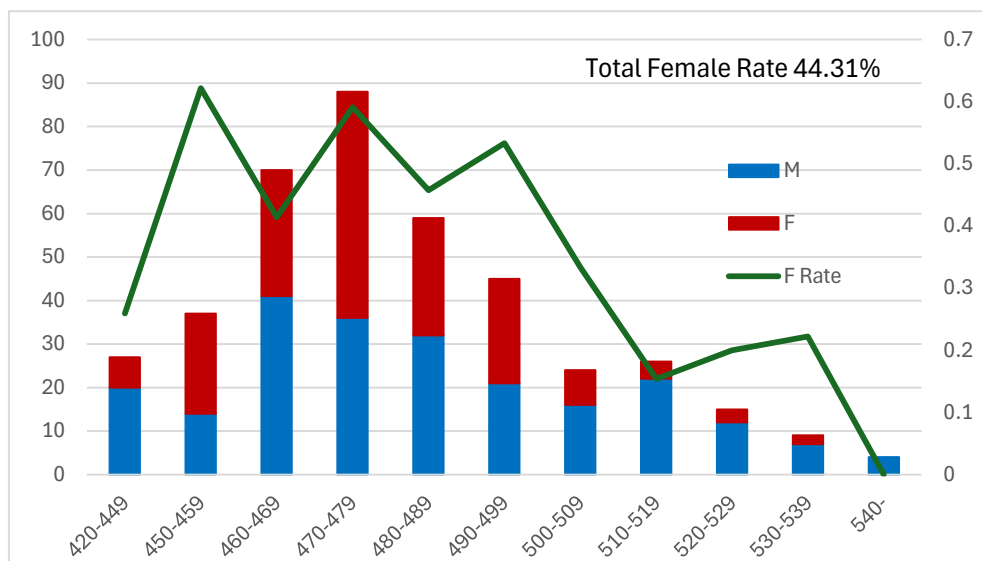
Score Distribution of Admitted Students by Gender at University of Medicine 1, Yangon (2024)

Admission decisions are based on the total score on three subjects: Physics, Chemistry, and Biology.



Score Distribution of Admitted Students by Gender at Yangon Technological University (2024)

Admission decisions are based on the total score on four subjects: English, Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry. The announced scores are the total scores on six subjects.



Minimum Application Score

- Total of 6 subjects

Medical and Dental Universities: 450 points (same as the application criteria for Japanese Government Scholarship Students) (Top 7.0% of successful examinees)

In reality, 500 points (Top 1.6%) are required.

- Yangon University, Mandalay University

360–400 points depending on the major

+ Minimum score requirements for key subjects

Example: Engineering Physics: 400 points across 6 subjects + 80 points in Physics

Geographic Information Systems: 360 points across 6 subjects + a combined total of 130 points in Math and English

Distance Learning

- University of Distance Education, Yangon (Lower Myanmar region), University of Distance Education, Mandalay (Upper Myanmar region), with Arts & Sciences University and others assisting with on-campus schooling sessions



- One University, Two Systems (2018)
 - 42 universities with distance education departments
 - Catchment areas designated according to university and specialty

Tuition (Daytime)

- Example for first-year students at universities under the Ministry of Education in 2025 (tuition increased about ten times from 2024 levels)

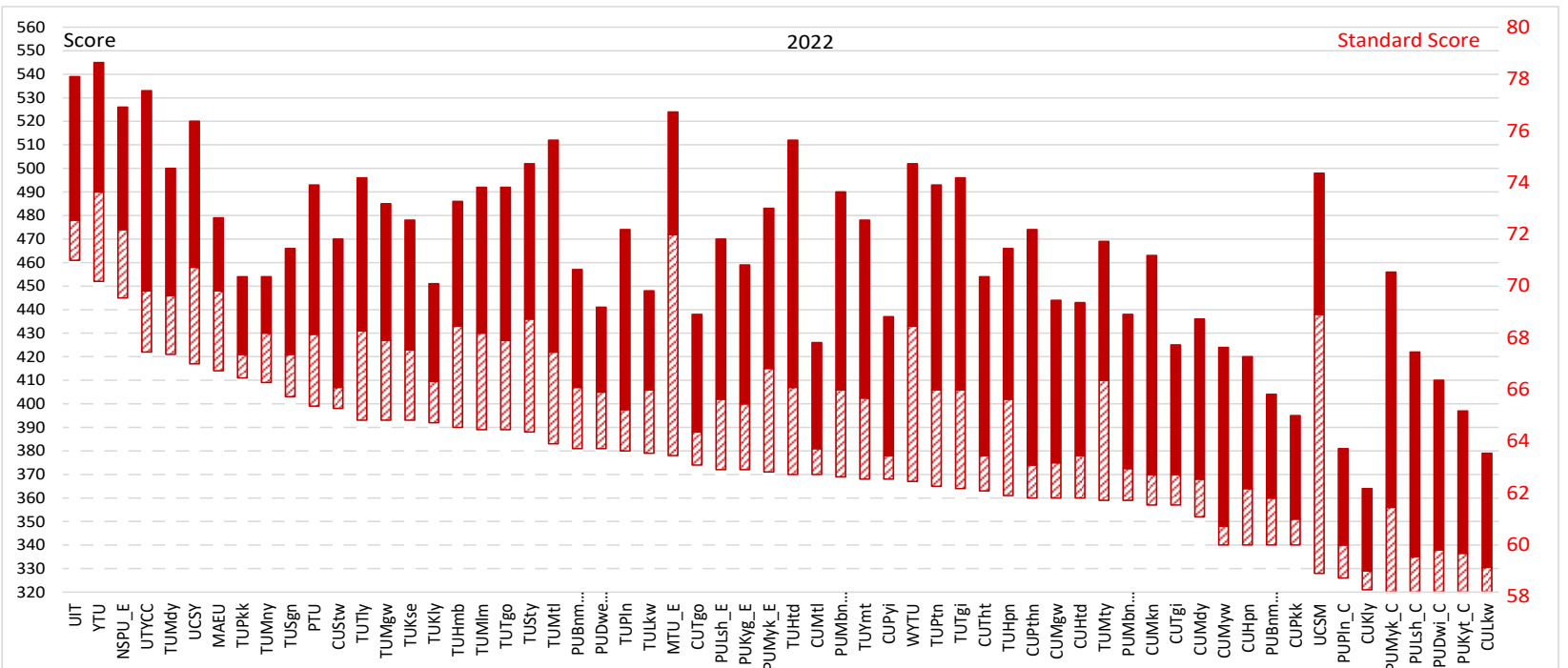
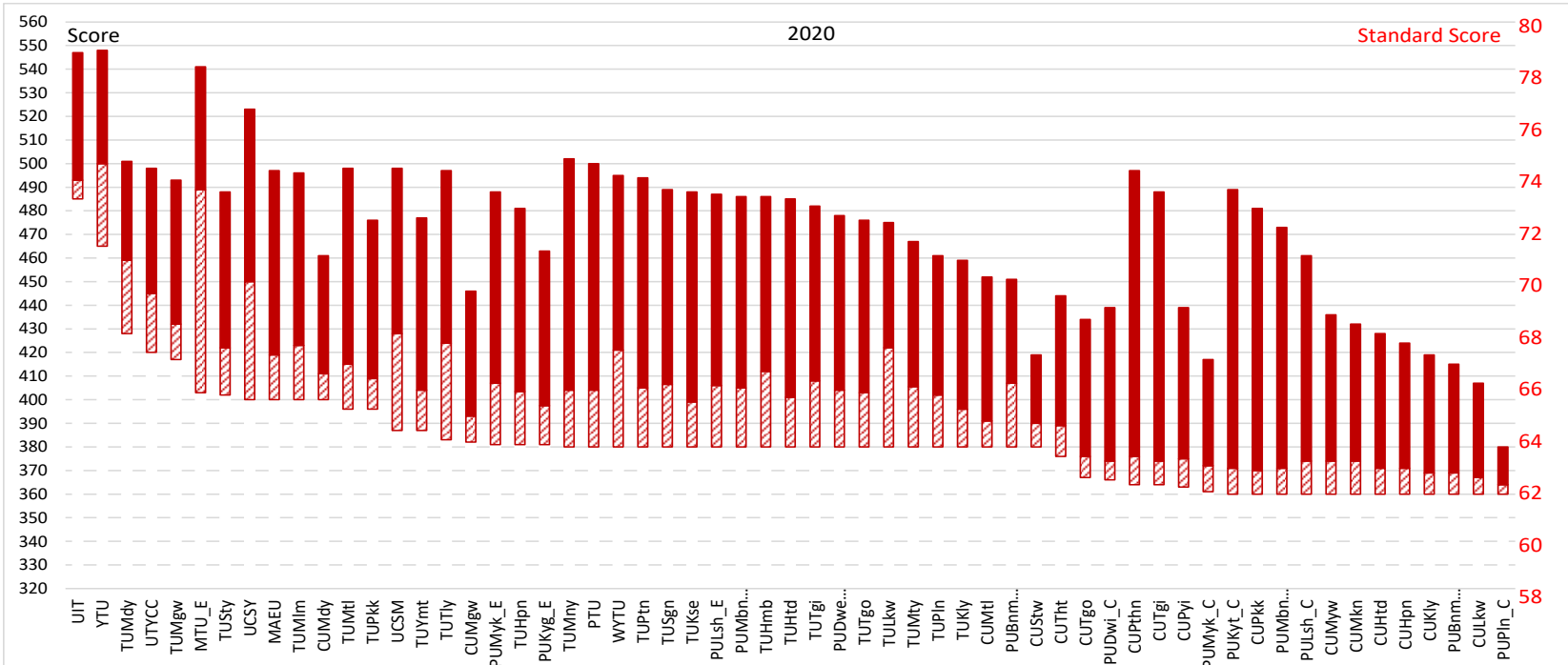
	Fees (Kyat)
• 1. Registration Fee	2,000
• 2. Admission Fee	2,000
• 3. Tuition (12 months; 5,000 per month)	60,000
• 4. Sports Fee	2,000
• 5. Laboratory and Testing Fees	
(a) For Science Subjects	6,000
(b) For Liberal Arts Subjects	3,000
• 6. Final Exam and Other Test Fees	5,000
• 7. Library Fee	5,000

US\$1.00 = Ks3,666 (May 2026)

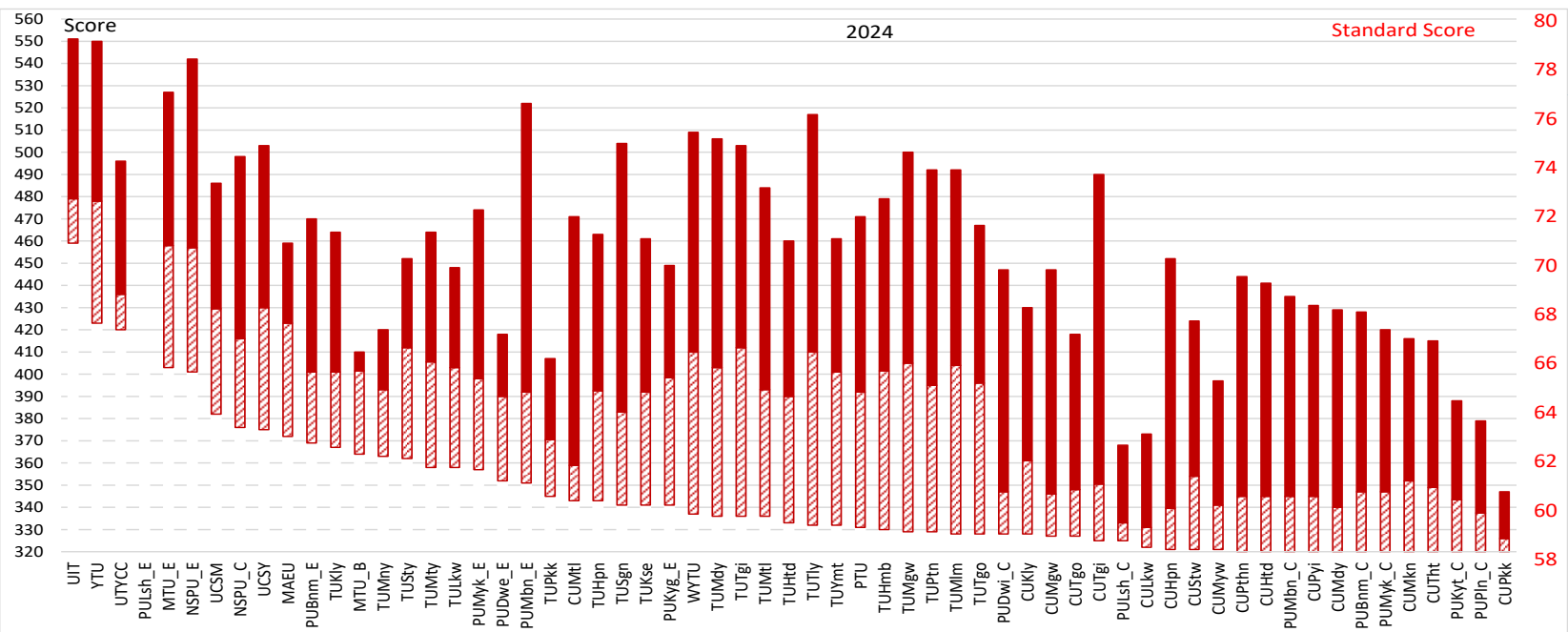
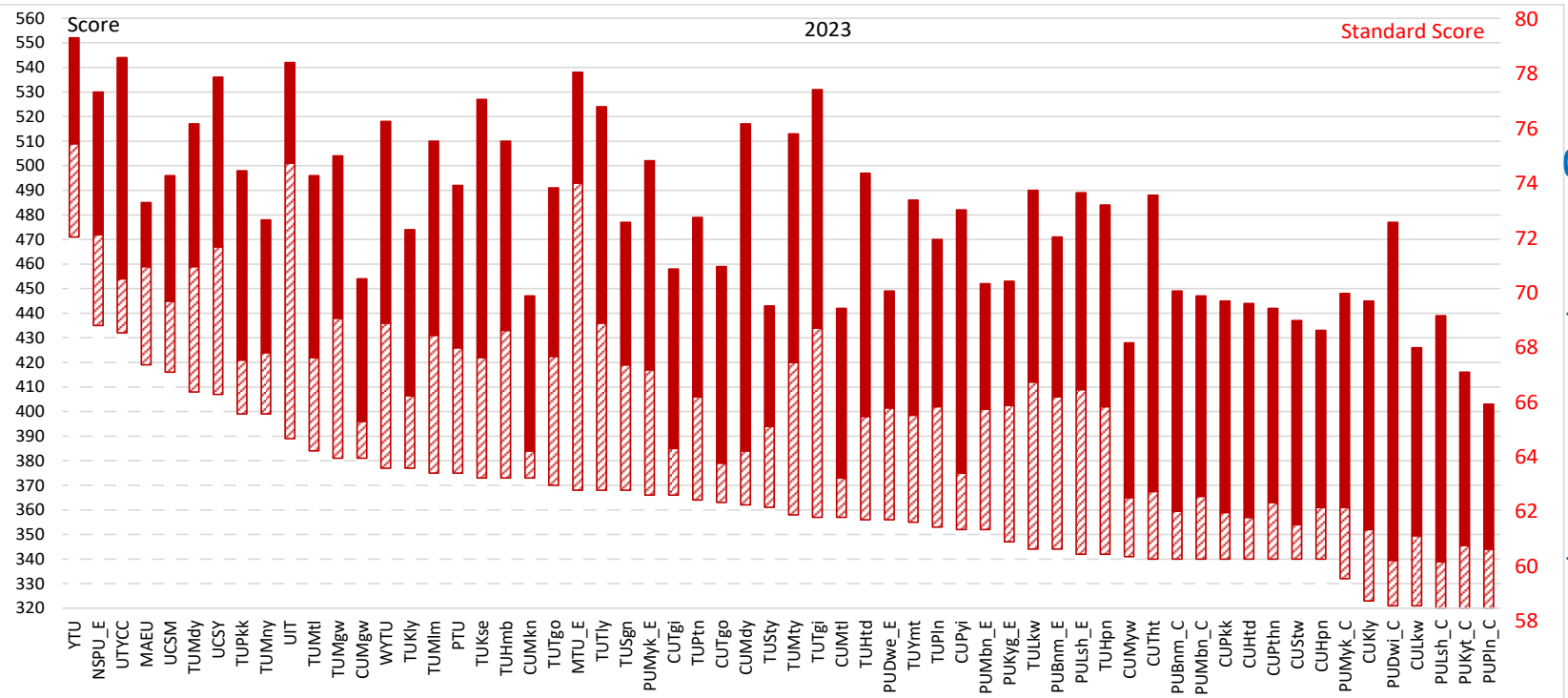
Approx. US\$22/year

Some argue that, since the collection costs are higher, it would be better to discontinue the program.

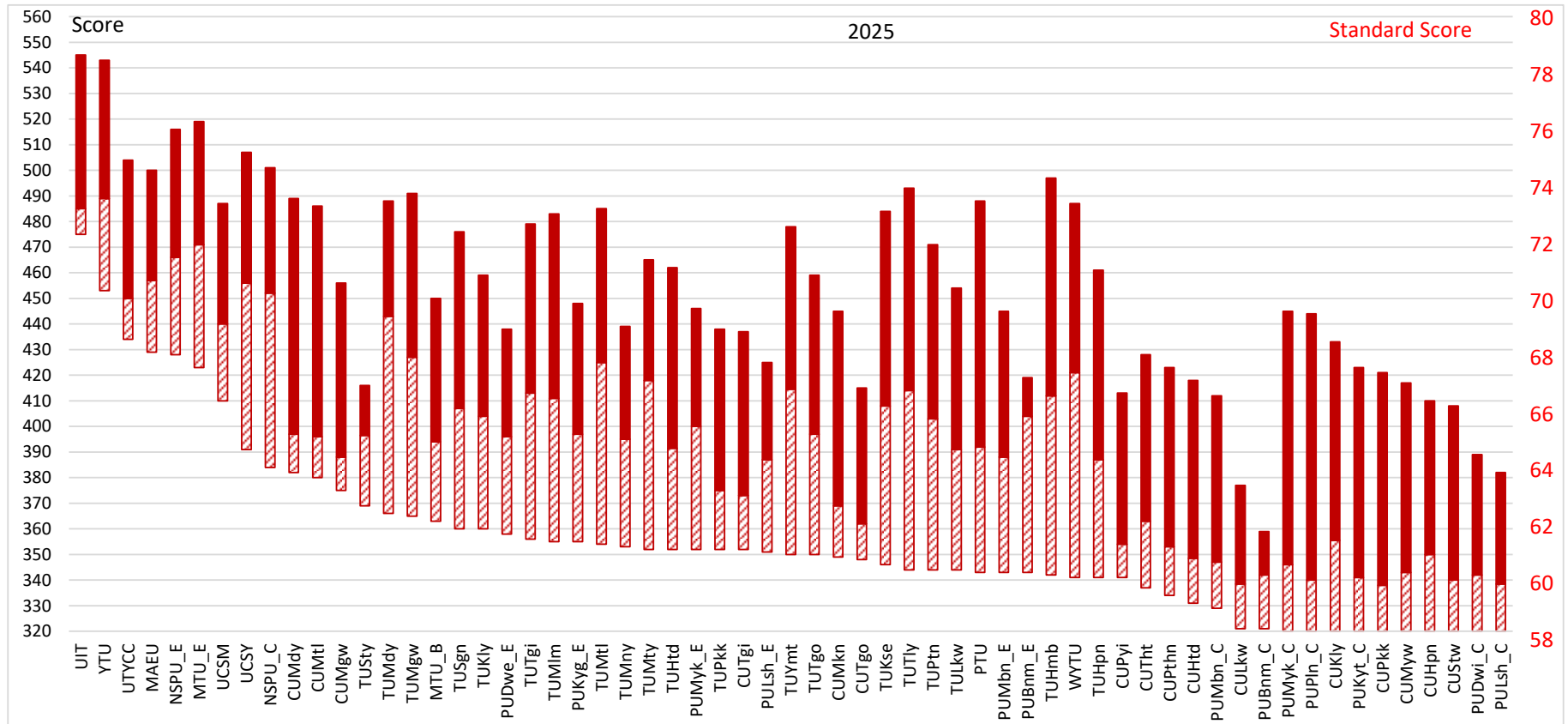
Score Distribution of Admitted Students by Technological/Computer University (Highest, Median, Lowest)



Score Distribution of Admitted Students by Technological/Computer University (Highest, Median, Lowest)

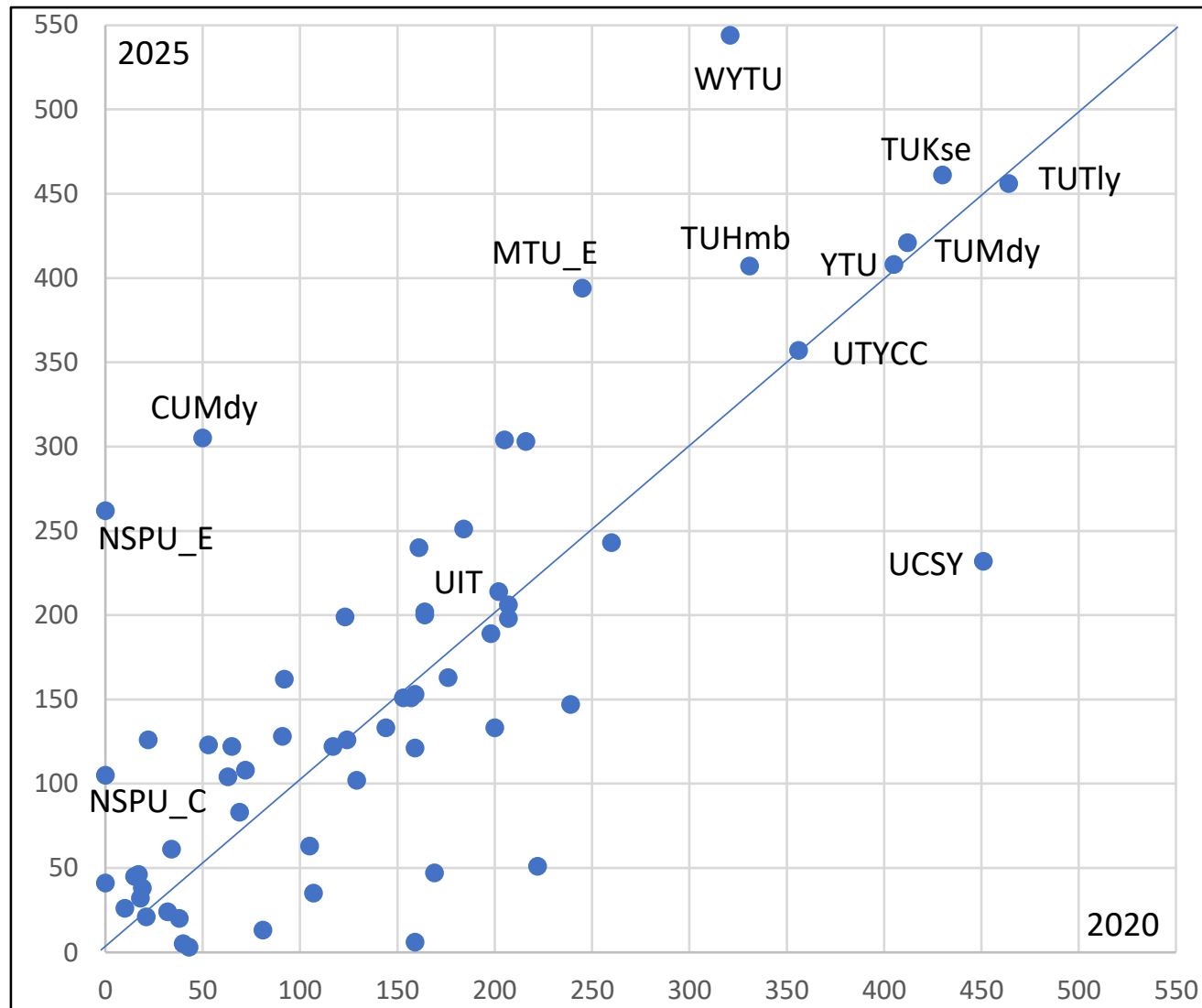


Score Distribution of Admitted Students by Technological/Computer University (Highest, Median, Lowest – 2025)



The minimum score for successful examinees is on an upward trend

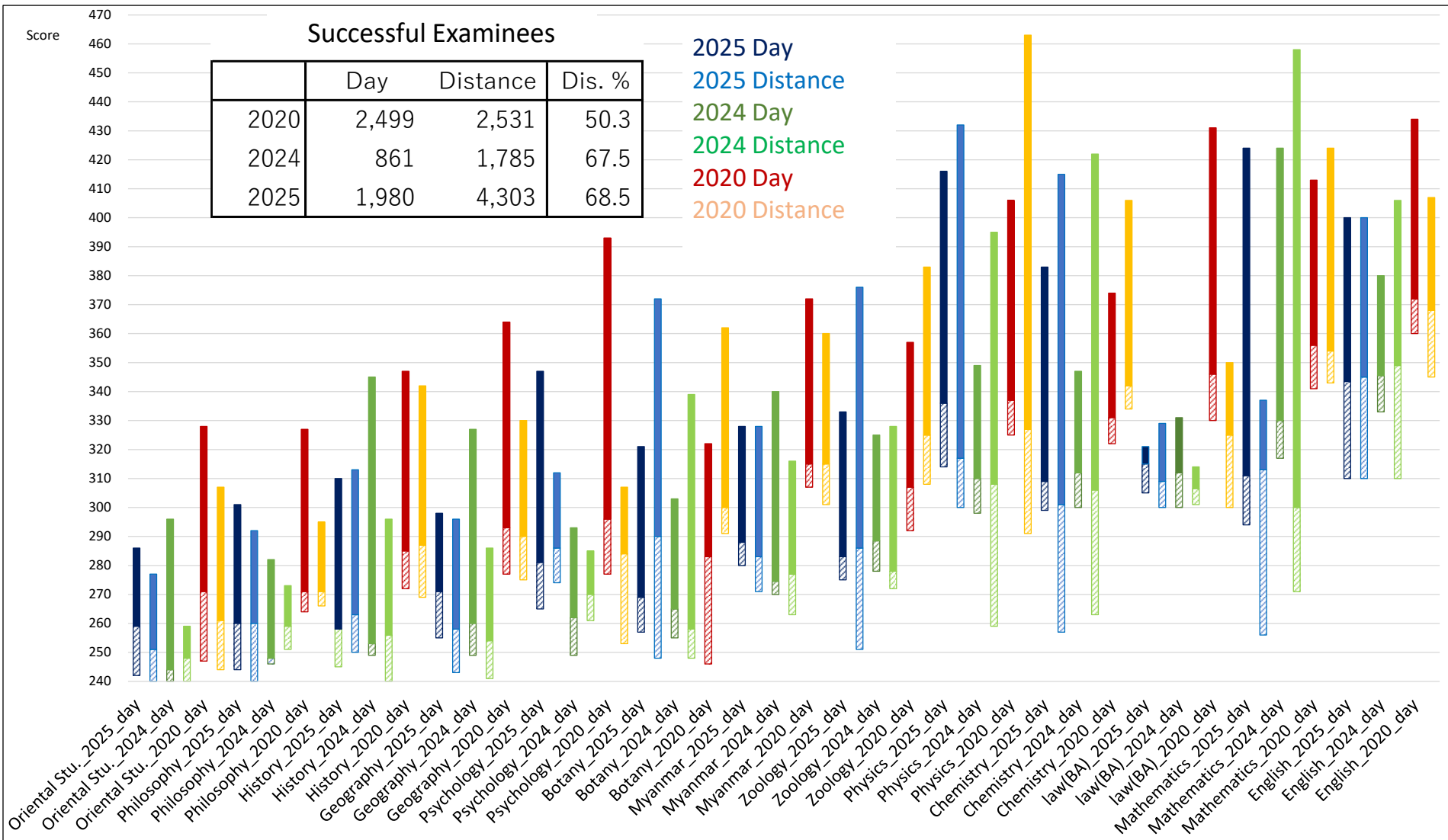
Comparison of the Number of Admitted Students by Technological/ Computer University (2020 vs. 2025)



Yangon University Admission Results by Department

Subject	2020	2024	2024	2024	2024	2025	2025	2025	Number of First-year Students
	Standard	Standard	Lowest	Capacity	Admitted	Highest	Lowest	Admitted	
1 Myanmar Language	400	350	342	100	8	412	340	28	2017 1,628 2018 1,367 2019 1,021 2020 0 2021 1,331 2022 963 2023 471 P 330 E 2024 246 P 294 E 2025 830 P 51 P: Pass E: Entry
2 Myanmar Arts	400	350		100					
3 English	450	400	403	100	16	490	372	102	
4 Geography	360	360		100		343	337	2	
5 Environmental Studies	400	360	365	100	2	359	358	2	
6 History	350	350	341	100	1	337	326	3	
7 Philosophy	360	350	359	50	2	335	322	3	
8 Psychology	400	350	341	50	14	383	322	24	
9 Oriental Studies	360	350	359	100	2	333	333	1	
10 International Relations	470	400	404	100	19	454	370	100	
11 Political Science	420	360	362	50	6	384	350	9	
12 Anthropology	420	350	357	100	1	304	301	2	
13 Archaeology	380	360	363	50	2	407	323	7	
14 Library Science	360	360	361	50	2	329	316	2	
15 Law	430	400	405	100	17	494	360	101	
16 Chemistry	400	370	350	100	19	437	350	34	
17 Biochemistry	400	370	371	50	2	422	364	14	
18 Applied Chemistry	400	380	374	80	9	433	363	34	
19 Physics	380	380	364	100	8	462	352	101	
20 Mathematics	400	370	353	100	19	486	351	37	
21 Zoology	400	360	362	100	5	451	330	20	
22 Botany	380	360	362	100	3	382	340	10	
23 Microbiology	400	360	369	100	4	428	350	7	
24 Geology	400	360	352	100	7	388	332	23	
25 Computer Science	450	360	377	50	50	473	385	50	
26 Fisheries	420	360	370	50	3	366	320	16	
27 Hydrology		360	342	50	4	369	327	20	
28 Geographic Information		360	369	30	5				
29 Engineering Physics		400	405	50	2	448	351	51	
30 Applied Entomology		360		50					
31 Environmental Science		360	363	50	3	437	368	8	
32 Food Science		360	347	50	11	439	351	19	
Total				2,460	246			830	

Distribution of Lowest, Median, and Highest Scores by Department among Students Admitted to Dagon University



Changes in the Number of Students Admitted to Yangon University of Economics

		2020	2024	2025
Hlaing Campus (Day, COE)	Number	704	426	726
	Capacity	640	720	-
	Highest	528	506	496
	Median	444	405	408
	Lowest	420	380	386
Day Ywa Tha Gyi Campus	Number	995	398	1,071
	Capacity	1,600	1,350	-
	Highest	481	457	465
	Median	397	368	367
	Lowest	380	350	350
Distance Economics	Number	170	628	680
	Highest	435	509	437
	Median	370	315	347
	Lowest	350	300	330
Distance Business Administration	Number	19	256	285
	Highest	429	453	440
	Median	371	324	347
	Lowest	350	300	330

Quality Assurance in Higher Education

- The National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Committee (NAQAC) was established under the Ministry of Education in 2017 pursuant to the National Education Law (2014, amended in 2015).
- Compliant with AUN (ASEAN University Network)-QA.
- Initial focus is on internal quality assurance (IQA) and standard-setting. External evaluation (EQA) and formal accreditation have begun on a pilot basis at some universities.

Eighty-eight out of 134 universities have submitted draft university charters to NAQAC.

Reforms were suspended due to political instability.

- A proposal was made to establish an IQA committee and resource unit at each university starting in July 2024 (All Myanmar Education Conference, June 25–27, 2024; 11 ministries participated).
- First NAQAC meeting held (September 25, 2024); second meeting on October 31

NAQAC members from 9 ministries, plus university presidents and vice presidents

The Deputy Minister of Education instructed that workshops, seminars, and training sessions be conducted using the AUN-QA Guidelines, which were distributed.

- Prepare and distribute the AUN-QA Guidelines (in Burmese and English) (by December).
- Strengthen collaboration between university internal QA teams and NAQAC external evaluation teams.
- Strengthen evidence-based decision-making.
- Review of the Self-Assessment Form
- 1st Engagement Forum December 12, 2024, at Yangon University

NAQAC's Role in Establishing External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Universities are responsible for establishing Internal Quality Assurance (IQA): Discussion about project management is necessary for building internal QA at universities and strengthening QA cooperation through the sharing of experiences among universities.

- 4th NAQAC Meeting: February 20, 2025 – Accreditation Process, Evaluation Manual

Challenges in Implementing a QA System

“The lack of university autonomy, fragmented management by multiple government ministries, insufficient internal QA capacity at universities, the absence of a standardized data infrastructure, and shortages of budgetary and human resources are making the implementation of the national QA system extremely difficult.” — Excerpt from the National Education Strategic Plan 2021–2030

Many government ministries oversee universities, making it difficult to unify QA standards; NAQAC (under the Ministry of Education) has weak authority and cannot provide unified guidance to all universities.

Curricula, faculty recruitment, budgets, and research plans are managed centrally by government ministries, preventing individual universities from autonomously establishing IQA (Internal Quality Assurance).

What is Autonomy? Administrative? Academic? Staff? Financial?

Faculty members are national civil servants; their salaries fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance and the National Personnel Authority, while foreign currency allocations fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Personnel management involves frequent transfers and rotations. There is a tendency among educational staff, including the president, to neglect efforts toward long-term planning, capacity building, and organizational strengthening, leaving these tasks to others.

Faculty members handle QA as a secondary duty, which hinders the development of expertise, and the faculty training system is weak.

Research funding is insufficient, resulting in a lack of research output.

What are the incentives for producing research achievements?

Promotion Criteria: 1. Years of service in current position, 2. Years of service as a civil servant, 3. Research achievements

↓ 1. Years of experience in current position, 2. Research achievements, 3. Years of service as a civil servant

University data are not standardized: Data on student enrollment, graduation rates, faculty qualifications, research achievements, and other metrics are not managed in a unified format.

The budget required for QA activities (external evaluation, training, data management) has not been secured.

There are many universities, but enrollment is limited to specific regions. How is inter-regional balance taken into account?

The QA system will not succeed without long-term, stable resources and incentives. Block grants?

Private Universities

- Although private institutions bearing the names “University” or “College” existed, they were not government-accredited.
- With the enactment of the Private Schools Act in 2023, 64 private universities were accredited, starting in the 2024/25 academic year (Ministry of Education).
- However, due to current shortcomings in educational standards, they were granted accreditation on the condition that they use the name “College,” rather than “University.”
- Re-evaluation is scheduled in two years.
- The Ministry of Education has a Private School Supervisory Board headed by the Minister of Education.

100–Day Plan: Key Policies of the New Administration in Various Sectors (April 2026)

- The Ministry of Education's budget for 2026/27 accounts for 6.92% of the national budget; when combined with education budgets from other ministries, it totals 9.22%. Next fiscal year, it will exceed 10%. The goal is to reach 20% in the future.
- Make KG+9 compulsory education. Strengthen the model.
- Establish Centers for Research and Innovation (CRI) at NSA, Yangon University, and Mandalay University to create research hubs.
- A nationwide placement test will be administered in June 2026.

Assess academic proficiency for G1–8. If confirmed, students will advance one grade level.

Target groups: Returning students, students from informal educational institutions (NUG-affiliated, ethnic education), graduates, students who have interrupted their studies, and others seeking transfer

Academic proficiency will be assessed, and students will be placed in the grade level appropriate for their academic ability at basic education schools.

Administered by the Township Education Office

Status, Challenges, and Outlook for Student Mobility

- Number of international students from Myanmar is increasing. (JASSO)
ALL 7,773(2023)→16,596(2024)→29,413(2025)
Higher education 3,600 6,996 13,248
- Students are eligible to take Japanese university entrance exams if they have passed the Matriculation Exam. An interview alone may be sufficient. If their certificates are questionable, contact Department of Myanmar Examinations.
- Students are eligible to take Japanese university entrance exams if they have high school completion certificate. If the certificates are questionable, contact the Department of Basic Education.
- Certificates from basic education schools located in areas controlled by anti-government forces may face authentication issues, but if they are accompanied by internationally recognized certifications such as the International Baccalaureate (IB), this should not be a problem.
- Otherwise, individual Japanese universities will have to determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

Summary 1

- Various ministries oversee various types of higher education institutions.
- The Matriculation Exam requires a score of at least 40 points in each of the three core subjects—Myanmar, English, and Mathematics—as well as three elective subjects. This requirement is intended to ensure that students have acquired a certain level of knowledge across a broad range of foundational subjects.
- It is not practical for each university to conduct its own entrance exams for several reasons: inadequate infrastructure makes travel for exams difficult, and it would limit the range of exam options available.
- Medical universities and similar institutions are able to conduct interviews and psychological assessments because they narrow down the number of applicants through document screening and then use these tests in the final stage to eliminate unsuitable candidates, which is done on a small scale.
- To help each university stand out, there is a proposal to differentiate the subjects used for admission decisions.

Rather than the total score of all 6 subjects, decisions are made based on the total scores of a smaller number of subjects, such as 4, 3, or 2.

Summary 2

- The number of applicants for the 2026 matriculation exam stands at only 28% of the 2020 figure.
- If the number of examinees decreases, even if the pass rate is raised, the number of successful examinees with a certain level of academic ability will remain limited. Although these successful examinees will be admitted to various universities, compared to before the coup, it has become more difficult for universities to secure high-quality (high-scoring) incoming students.
- Regarding new students, specialized universities with high social prestige were able to secure 77% of the 2019/20 intake for the 2024/25 academic year.
- Regarding new students, non-specialized universities' daytime programs have secured 17%, compared to 82% for distance learning programs, and the overall figure stands at 62%, indicating that securing students has become particularly difficult for non-specialized universities' daytime programs.
- While universities are stratified according to student academic ability, the academic level of incoming students has declined somewhat, even at specialized universities with high social prestige, and has declined even further at universities with lower prestige.

Summary 3

- The changes in the pass rate are the result of a combination of factors, including shifts in the distribution of examinees' academic abilities, a decline in the number of examinees due to the coup, and changes in eligibility requirements resulting from school system reforms.
- From 2027 onward, fluctuations caused by school system reforms are expected to diminish, and the pass rate is likely to return to 2022 levels relatively quickly; however, a return to the 2019 situation will require social stability and is expected to take a long time.
- Regional universities and distance learning programs, which were previously considered lower-priority destinations for successful examinees, have gained higher standing from a safety perspective, and high-achieving students are now enrolling in them, resulting in a more diverse student body in terms of academic ability.

Summary 4

- It is not true that female students are not good at science and math subjects. In fact, they are quite good at them. The policy of equal enrollment quotas for male and female students at some universities puts female students at a disadvantage.
- Under the current system in which various ministries oversee universities, the degree system is complex. Universities are fragmented, making it difficult to achieve comprehensive integration.
- Despite significant international pressure to introduce quality assurance systems, competition among universities is restricted, making the implementation of such systems difficult.
- Efforts to revitalize research functions (through budgets and personnel) exist but are insufficient.
- It is questionable whether the educational content that is being provided meets the needs of society.
- Distance learning has its own appeal, but the quality of education is an issue.
- Advantages and problems of using English as the language of instruction at universities.