



University of Bahrain  
BAHRAIN TEACHERS COLLEGE  
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## School Attachment Journal Semester 1

Teacher Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Turning the lens to sharpen the focus : from School Student to School Teacher***

Congratulations! You are beginning the initial School Attachment, a first step to becoming a full member of the Ministry of Bahrain teaching profession. Part of this journey is documenting your own growth over time. In this journal, you will observe, reflect, and record your experiences.

Accountability has become an accepted part of the educational landscape, even more so with the renewal of education in the Kingdom of Bahrain. By the end of this teacher education programme at the Bahrain Teachers' College, at the University of Bahrain, and in partnership with the Ministry of Education, it will be your responsibility to develop and demonstrate competencies in areas such as curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, civic values, developmental levels of learners, subject specific content knowledge, managing learning, leadership and team work.

Learning to teach is more than a set of techniques; it is about building a professional set of knowledge, skills and values that are your tool-kit for success and satisfaction in teaching. In your programme, you are expected to *undertake and maintain* a record of a number of tasks and this *Attachment Journal* is one of those requirements. Completing the journal will help you to appreciate aspects of the school from a teacher's' perspective including the purposes of schooling, responsibilities and roles of teachers, ways that teachers provide quality education, and routines that are used to manage learning more effectively.

Engaging in reflection, particularly with a community of practitioners sharing the same practices, is one of the guiding principles of teacher education programmes. The *Attachment Journal* will assist you to establish *reflection* as an essential professional practice.

**What is reflection and how does it assist you?** Reflection helps teachers to think about their practice, solve problems and learn from experience. Educators must continually reflect on and evaluate practices in order to build the knowledge, skills and values that are the basis of quality education.

**How do you reflect?** Reflection is the process of assessing information and events, thinking about and analyzing them to use the results to change or enhance future events. Of course, the initial step in reflection is describing the current situation.

The *Attachment Journal* provides ways to describe what you have observed, often by comparing it with what you experienced when you were a pupil. If you have had previous teaching experience, you will be able to refer to that knowledge. The *Attachment Journal* is a useful step in documenting your professional journey and it will be used at various times in the programme.

**Note:** The *Attachment Journal* tasks may be completed in a different order based on a variety of circumstances at the schools. The expectation is that you will complete all the assigned tasks satisfactorily following the rubric provided. Be sure to make notes while you are in the classroom and to share your observations with other Teaching Candidates.

BTC Supervisors will visit schools randomly to follow up on your progress. Please make the BTC staff welcome and include them in your day. Remember that satisfactory completion of the School Attachment is a prerequisite to taking up your place as a teacher candidate in the Bahrain Teacher's College.

Should you have any questions, we are here to help you.

*Important : You must complete and retain a copy of this journal*

## Preparing for Day 1 New Directions for Education

### Answering the Call to "Raise your Hand" for Bahrain's Future

Over the course of this School Attachment, you will undertake focused tasks and complete the daily journal entries. Keep your journal and answer all the required questions as you will be asked to reflect on these entries at various times during your studies at the Bahrain Teachers' College.

**Task: Clarify who you are as you set out on your journey of professional growth as a member of the BTC teacher cohort.** The *BTC Prospectus* outlines new directions for Bahraini teachers, calling for changes in the way that things are done. This initiative is called, "Raise your hand for Bahrain".

What qualities make you a suitable person to "Raise your hand for Bahrain"?

What do you expect as you observe teachers in the classroom? If you've had formal or informal teaching experience, how might that experience be a strength or weakness as you observe others? What are your expectations for your first day as Teacher Candidate?

Reflection: **How will you present yourself as a prospective teacher and as a learner?** As you depart for school on Day 1, take your photograph or sketch yourself (attire/posture/expression), and describe yourself (attire/posture/expression) in a short paragraph. Insert below.

## Day 1 Orientation to the School and its Goals

**Task: Outline the introduction you received to the school placement on-site. Include key points made by school administrators, teachers or students about the functioning of the School.** First impressions can provide clues to the functioning of a school. Particularly note:

- The history of the school and its achievements
- General expectations of teaching staff
- First impressions of hallways, cleanliness, attitude of students, noise, staff relations

List what you did during the morning, at break, in the afternoon, and at the end of the school day.

What kinds of routines did you notice? Include details that demonstrate ways that you are acting like a teacher at the school and the reactions that you receive. Are these in some way different from what you had expected, or the same? How did you react to the people you met? How did they react to you? Explain in a few sentences.

**Reflection:** What are some of the differences between what you had expected and what you are experiencing at this school? Is it the same or different? Why?

Name your Attachment Partner for School Attachment \_\_\_\_\_

During the next 4 days you will spend time shadowing your Cooperating Teacher.

## Day 2: The School Mission and Vision in Action

**Task: Find out the Attachment School's purpose.** Where could you look? Is it posted? Is it in a handbook, on posters, or posted at the entrance? What are the mission and/or vision of your Attachment School?

**Mission:**

**Vision:**

What evidence can you find that demonstrates your Attachment School is dedicated to their mission? What behaviors can you find that support these? List some things that you might look for that give a snapshot view of this school.

Choose a random two-minute period and observe a student. Write a description of what *you observe*. *Try not to guess or infer - stick to documenting what behaviours you see and hear.*

Choose a random two-minute period and observe a student. Write a description of what you *imagine the student is thinking or feeling*.

Toward the end of the lesson, *write from the student's point of view* what happened in the lesson. Have you enjoyed it? Did you learn something? What helped you? What would you have preferred? How are you feeling?

Burning Question I want to ask:

## Day 3

### The School Attachment Site

Arrive at the school early enough today to do the second observation task.

**Task: Describe your Attachment School (building, grounds, surrounding).** Take a tour with your partner and make notes on the flow of students, sounds of classes, tidiness and cleanliness of the area, parking and safety routes.

**During the tour, I noticed:**

**During the tour, I wondered:**

At various points during the school day, observe the students in the school during the non-teaching time (during changes of classes, at breaks, at lunch, bus pick-up, etc).

**During these times, I noticed:**

**During these times, I wondered:**

**Reflection:** Compare your attachment school with schools you attended (primary, intermediate or secondary). What are the similarities or differences? How do students use school spaces during free time?



## Day 4

### The Teacher's Life in the Classroom

**Task:** Observe your Cooperating Teacher in action in the classroom. Gather the information indicated in the table below. What do you see as the qualities your Cooperating Teacher displays in order to effectively carry out her/his teaching responsibilities in the classroom? Fill in the chart.

Responsibilities	Professional Qualities Needed to Undertake Each Role	Reflection on Own Current Abilities for the Role

What teacher behaviours do you observe? Does the teacher smile? Is she loud or quiet? Does she talk a lot? Are instructions clearly given? How does the teacher address the students?

**Reflection:** What experience have you had in leading young people? Can you identify some of the same skills that your CT uses to engage students in active learning?

## Day 5

### The Uniqueness of Children/Adolescents

**Task: Describe the characteristics of the students in your Guiding Teacher's class.**

What age range are you observing? What special characteristics do you notice about the students? Are there certain students who stick out in your mind? Why? Note how the teachers react to those particular students.

What sorts of behaviours in the classroom do you notice? Are learners generally engaged or passive? Do students follow instructions? Do some learners dominate the lesson?

Note the seating arrangement of learners. How are they grouped?

What visual aids are available? How are activities set up? Do students move in the class?

What are students required to do if they are late, need to use the washroom, or leave early?

**Reflection:** Identify student behaviors that drew your attention. Do some students sit quietly and listen? Do others call out and disturb the others? What was their significance?

### Pupil Management

**Task for Day 5: Find out the Attachment School's expectations of students, including:**

- Arrival at/entry into school
- Punctuality - lateness
- Movement in the school
- Leaving the class
- Recess time
- Departure from school

**Observe ways that the Cooperating Teacher puts these expectations into practice in his or her classroom.**

- Movement within the room - on a paper track the path that the teacher follows/walks during the course of one lesson. Do you note anything specific?
- Pupil-pupil interpersonal expectations - What is posted around the school or in the class? What do you think is missing?
- Pupil-teacher interpersonal expectations - Who is talking?
- Learning task expectations - Who is doing other things? Who is on task?

**Reflection:** How are the student management expectations made clear to learners?

This is your final day of the Attachment. As a professional courtesy, draft a 'thank you' letter to the School Staff from your attachment group. Send an individual 'thank you' letter to your Cooperating Teacher. Attached a copy of these letters here.

**Reflection Topic: The School as a Learning Community**

What were the ways that teachers supported each other in the various aspects of their work?

What ways did you observe teachers helping each other?

What are some structures that the school has for teachers to help each other?



What are the formal ways that teachers offer each other support?

What are the informal ways that teachers support each other?

**Reflection:** What do you enjoy about working with others? In what ways was a collegial climate evident among the school staff members? What helped create a supportive atmosphere? What aspects didn't help?

*Important : You must complete and retain a copy of this journal*