



Parliament of Bhutan: checklist for organising a public hearing

This checklist is designed to assist MPs and parliamentary staff design, arrange, and run a public hearing.

An example of a completed checklist is provided in **Annex A**. Guidance on each element of the checklist is available in the [public hearing manual](#).

Before the hearing

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| 1 | Topic of hearing | |
| 2 | How was the topic chosen? | |
| 3 | Purpose, aims, and scope of the hearing (terms of reference) | |
| 4 | Type of hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Oversight hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Investigative hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Field hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation on priorities Other: |
| 5 | Time and location | |
| 6 | Public engagement methods | <input type="checkbox"/> Space in room for public audience <input type="checkbox"/> Online livestream <input type="checkbox"/> Live tweets during hearing Other: |
| 7 | Media engagement methods | <input type="checkbox"/> Press release <input type="checkbox"/> Space in room for media (including camera equipment, separate room for interviews etc) <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews with chair, MPs, witnesses Other: |
| 8 | Will a public consultation (to gather written evidence) be undertaken on this topic? | |
| 9 | Interested parties | |
| 10 | Witnesses invited to attend (at least a week before the hearing) | |
| 11 | Witnesses confirmed to attend | |
| 12 | Is there a fair gender balance in the witnesses invited? Do any of the witnesses need disability adaptations or childcare? | |



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| 13 | Preparation of witnesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Written guidance on public hearings provided <input type="checkbox"/> Suggested questions provided <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion between staff and witnesses about areas that will be covered by MPs <input type="checkbox"/> Overview of parliament and committees provided <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to committee members before session Other: |
| 14 | MPs confirmed to attend, including substitutes | |
| 15 | Briefing material provided to MPs | <input type="checkbox"/> Written evidence from witnesses <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical information about witnesses <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of other evidence collected <input type="checkbox"/> In-person briefing <input type="checkbox"/> Suggested questions/areas for discussion Other: |
| 16 | Ground rules agreed in advance | |
| 17 | Has all relevant information been provided to chairperson, committee members, witnesses, media? | |
| 18 | Agenda | |

After the hearing

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| 19 | Post-hearing outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> Report produced/shared <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendations/proposals for legislative amendments made <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence in writing (with witnesses, Ministers, public bodies etc.) to obtain further information sent <input type="checkbox"/> Thanks sent to witnesses <input type="checkbox"/> Press release sent <input type="checkbox"/> Written/oral questions sent to government Ministers <input type="checkbox"/> Transcript published on website <input type="checkbox"/> Video published on website/social media <input type="checkbox"/> Small working group/committee to evaluate success of hearing and plan next one <input type="checkbox"/> Follow up session scheduled Other: |
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Annex A: Example of completed checklist

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| 1 | Topic of hearing | Quality of teacher training |
| 2 | How was the topic chosen? | <p>There have been a growing number of reports in the media and from constituents about inconsistencies/problems with teacher training across the country.</p> <p>Two MPs on the Education Committee (from different parties) suggested the committee should investigate the issue, which was supported by the remaining three MPs and the chair. Given the wide range of views and groups involved, it is decided that a public hearing will be used to gather views and evidence.</p> |
| 3 | Purpose, aims, and scope of the hearing (terms of reference) | <p>The purpose of the public hearing is to gather a range of evidence and views from interested parties (stakeholders) to find out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How teacher training is currently delivered - The problems with the training programme, and - Possible solutions. <p>The aim to is collect evidence/views from stakeholders, present the issues to the Minister for Education and question his policy on teacher training, and then make recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>The committee will seek out the views of men and women, and collect evidence on gender as part of the hearing.</p> |
| 4 | Type of hearing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence gathering (oversight) (panels 1, 2 and 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scrutiny of Minister or public official (panel 4) |
| 5 | Time and location | The hearing will take place in conference room A in the parliament building, 9am-12pm on 9 March 2021. |
| 6 | Public engagement methods | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Space in room for public audience <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online livestream <p>The room will have space for 20 observers on a first-come-first-served basis.</p> <p>The hearing will also be broadcast on the Parliament's Twitter account.</p> |
| 7 | Media engagement methods | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Press release <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Space in room for media (including camera equipment, separate room for interviews etc) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews with chair, MPs, witnesses |



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| | | Parliament's media team will distribute a press release 2 days before the hearing. The room has space for 5 journalists, and a room for interviews will be provided. The committee chair has agreed to do an interview with the press after the hearing. |
| 8 | Will a public consultation (to gather written evidence) be undertaken on this topic? | <p>The committee invite the public to submit written evidence/views on the topic two weeks before the hearing.</p> <p>Ten submissions were received from schools, teachers, parents, pupils, and CSOs.</p> |
| 9 | Interested parties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers - Parents - Pupils - Schools - Academics specialising in education - CSOs working in education/children/ - Public bodies running teacher training |
| 10 | Witnesses invited to attend (at least a week before the hearing) | <p>MPs on the committee want to hear from a wide range of stakeholders. Researchers and clerks identify and invite a range of people to give evidence at the hearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The groups raising concerns (unions and CSOs) - Parent-teacher networks - Teachers and schools - Women's CSOs (to understand the situation through a gender lens) - Pupils and teachers - Those responsible for the teacher training programme (the head of the programme and the Minister for Education) |
| 11 | Witnesses confirmed to attend | <p>The follow witnesses agree to give evidence at the public hearing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anna Green, head of national teaching union 2. James Brown, chief executive of a CSO that represents parents 3. David Orange, headteacher at Northern School 4. Henry Yellow, training lead at Eastern School. 5. Emma Pink, pupil at Western School 6. Mary Pink, (Emma's mother) 7. Alan Red, Minister for Education 8. Helen Black, head of teaching training policy in the Government. |
| 12 | Is there a fair gender balance in | There is a fair gender balance in the witnesses invited - 4 women, and 4 men. |



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| | <p>the witnesses invited?</p> <p>Do any of the witnesses need disability adaptations or childcare?</p> | <p>One witness has requested additional space for their wheelchair, and another has requested 2 hours of childcare.</p> |
| 13 | Preparation of witnesses | <p>All witnesses have been provided with the “public hearing guidance for witnesses”.</p> <p>Witnesses on panels 1, 2, and 4, are briefed on the areas likely to be raised by the MPs (but not the specific questions).</p> <p>The pupil on panel 3 is invited to meet the committee in advance to make her feel more comfortable. She has also been provided with the suggested questions, and the committee offered to hold her session in private.</p> |
| 14 | MPs confirmed to attend, including substitutes | <p>All MPs on the Education Committee confirmed attendance at the hearing, with no substitutes.</p> |
| 15 | Briefing material provided to MPs | <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Written evidence from witnesses</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biographical information about witnesses</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summary of evidence collected</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suggested questions/areas for discussion</p> <p>Research staff will provide a briefing pack 2 days before the hearing, including: a short, impartial summary of the media reports on the teacher training programme, biographical information on the witnesses, and some suggested questions for each MP. The written evidence collected in the consultation is also summarised.</p> <p>One of the witnesses also provided written evidence in advance of the hearing, which will be provided to the committee in full.</p> |
| 16 | Ground rules agreed in advance | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MPs will be given the opportunity to make a 2-minute opening statement before questioning begins 2. The chair will decide how much time each MPs is allocated to question the witnesses, and if a second round of questions will be permitted 3. MPs will take turns to question the witnesses, and will indicate to the chair if they would like to ask supplementary questions 4. All MPs and witnesses will conduct the hearing in a respectful manner |
| 17 | Has all relevant information been provided to chairperson, | <p>Information about the date, time, location, ground rules, agenda, witnesses, and MPs attending, and topic/purpose of hearing has been shared with chairperson, committee</p> |



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| | committee members, witnesses, media? | <p>members, witnesses, and media.</p> <p>Additional information provided to chairperson and committee members (briefing pack and suggested questions) provided two days before the hearing.</p> |
| 18 | Agenda | <p>08.50-9.00: Private discussion of committee to agree ground rules, identify areas of interest, receive advice from staff</p> <p>9.00-9.10: Opening of public hearing, including an overview of the topic, and welcome to public audience (Chair)</p> <p>9.10-9.20: Opportunity for MPs to make 2-minute opening statements</p> <p>9.20 – 9.50: Panel 1: Anna Green, head of national teaching union, and James Brown, chief executive of a CSO that represents parents.</p> <p>9.50 – 10.20: Panel 2: David Orange, headteacher at Northern School, and Henry Yellow, training lead at Eastern School.</p> <p>10.20 – 10.50: Panel 3: Emma Pink, pupil at Western School, and Mary Pink, her mother.</p> <p>10.50- 10.55: Panel 4: Alan Red, Minister for Education, and Helen Black, head of teaching training policy in the Government.</p> <p>10.55-11.00: Close of public part of the hearing, thank witnesses and audiences, overview of next steps (Chair).</p> <p>11.00-11.45: Private discussion about the evidence collected at the hearing, and key points made.</p> <p>11.45-12.00: Agreement of next steps and close.</p> |

After the hearing

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| 19 | Post-hearing outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report produced/shared <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommendations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence in writing (with witnesses, Ministers, public bodies etc.) to obtain further information sent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thanks sent to witnesses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Press release <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transcript published <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Video published <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small working group/committee to evaluate success of hearing and plan next one <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Follow up session scheduled <p>Following the hearing, the committee identifies its main areas of concern and recommendations. It asks the committee secretariat to write a report for MPs' approval, which it will publish alongside a press release. The chair writes directly to</p> |
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| | | <p>the Minister to highlight the report’s findings, and requests they respond to the recommendations within 6 weeks. Messages of thanks are also sent to all witnesses.</p> <p>The transcript and video is published on the Parliament website, and promoted on social media.</p> <p>The committee meet again to evaluate the success of the hearing, and it agrees to hold another hearing in six months to check on progress.</p> |
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