



UCAS

International qualifications

For entry to university or
college in 2015

This publication contains information relating to a wide range of international qualifications offered for undergraduate admission in the UK.

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Preface

This guide is primarily intended as a working document for selectors and staff involved in admissions and associated activities in higher education providers (HEPs). The publication contains information relating to a wide range of international qualifications offered for undergraduate admission in the UK. It will also be of interest and relevance to guidance staff in schools, the further education (FE) sector and careers services that advise overseas applicants on entry to higher education (HE).

Its purpose is to provide up-to-date information which is easy to access and use, and which will promote the effectiveness and quality of the admissions process. The publication therefore contains details of a range of qualifications available from many countries throughout the world. All entries have been submitted to the appropriate authority of the country concerned to allow an opportunity for comment and update.

UCAS is particularly grateful for the care and attention taken by correspondents in the updating and constructive suggestions they have given for this publication. Extensive reference has been made to additional sources and publications, including UK and overseas education and examination authorities (see Appendix I).

The aim of the publication is to provide objective information, on the basis of which HEPs can make their own decisions about the admission of international students. The inclusion of qualifications does not imply recognition or endorsement on the part of UCAS or HEPs for the purpose of entry to HE programmes.

UCAS would be pleased to receive comments and suggestions about the format and content of this publication for the benefit of future editions.

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Introduction

Welcome to the UCAS International Qualifications Guide 2015.

Globalisation is leading to a greater mobility of students across the world, and UK HE is benefiting from the recruitment of students from other countries. It is therefore important that HE admissions officers, staff and tutors are fully aware of the qualifications that may be offered by international applicants. The main aim of this publication is to provide clear and up-to-date information that allows international students to be assessed fairly, and promotes an understanding of the value of their qualifications, giving higher education providers (HEPs) the ability to make realistic offers to international students.

Just as in the UK, the political map of the world is constantly changing. This affects educational systems and the qualifications offered by potential applicants to UK HE. It can also make it difficult to obtain information from some countries.

PRESENTATION OF MATERIAL

The layout of this edition is similar to previous editions, with the entries arranged in alphabetical order of country, and provides the following.

- **Evaluation** – how qualifications offered by applicants compare with UK qualifications
- **Grading system** – how the examinations are marked or graded by the awarding body or educational system. Where possible, the distribution of grades is given
- **Education system** – a brief outline of how the system works in each country to inform the assessment of qualifications
- **Access to higher education** – an insight into the requirements within each country.

It should be noted that some entries that have been reviewed for the 2015 guide remain the same as for 2014. In these cases, the details of the education systems in those countries do not need updating.

The Appendices include the following information:

- Appendix A covers a number of UK awarding organisations offering examinations to overseas centres
- Appendix B covers information on the European Baccalaureate
- Appendix C covers the International Baccalaureate with information on the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and certification
- Appendix D covers the Option International du Baccalauréat
- Appendix E covers international foundation programmes
- Appendix F covers English language proficiency and embodies information on a wide variety of examinations and tests, which applicants may present as evidence of competence in English
- Appendix G covers the ECL European modern languages examination
- Appendix H provides information about the UCAS Tariff
- Appendix I includes useful email addresses and websites, as well as postal addresses and telephone and fax numbers.

The information in this publication is also available on the UCAS website.

UCAS also provides Qualification Information Profiles (QIPs) which include a range of comparable information about qualifications such as size, grading, assessment, structure and content. QIPs for selected EU and international qualifications can be found on the UCAS website at www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/advisers-and-referees/guides-and-resources

UCAS would welcome any feedback on the qualifications guide. Any comments or questions should be sent to quals@ucas.ac.uk.

COMPARABILITY WITH UK QUALIFICATIONS

Wherever possible, comparisons have been drawn with UK qualifications. In considering applicants with non-UK qualifications, it is worth bearing in mind that many countries have broadly based school-leaving examinations. The 'group certificates' obtained in such countries usually cannot be readily converted into 'single-subject' equivalencies in terms of UK qualifications; the most appropriate way to evaluate performance may be to look for high marks in subjects of particular relevance to the candidate's application. Further information about the comparability of overseas qualifications can be obtained from UK NARIC at <http://ecctis.co.uk/naric/Organisations/Default.aspx>

The Bologna Declaration (1999) includes in its objectives the adoption and promotion of a Europe-wide system of comparable degrees based on two main cycles of study, leading to bachelor's and master's awards respectively. The knowledge and capabilities of a graduate from a European bachelor's programme should, generally, equip them to progress to master's level study. It is important to note, however, that the selection of candidates to programmes at UK HEPs is determined solely by the institution concerned and is not an automatic right. Progress towards the two-study-cycles system is being made at different rates across the signatory countries.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE QUALIFICATIONS

English language proficiency has a particular importance for international applicants to enable them to cope with study at a UK HEP. For many English is not the primary language of communication and, in some instances, the English language syllabus of their school-leaving examination may be regarded as less than rigorous or inadequate. Details of some of the main English language proficiency tests can be found in Appendix F.

Applicants from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland also need to prove their knowledge of the English language, in addition to meeting other requirements, when applying for a Tier 4 student visa for study in the UK. The level of English required is CEFR level B2 for courses at NQF/QCF Level 6 or SCQF Level 9 or above. Information about approved language tests can be found on the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website at www.gov.uk/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration



**Qualifications
currently offered
listed by country**

Albania

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Certificate of Maturity (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)

Considered to be equivalent to GCSE grade A*–C, with the exception of English language.

GRADING SYSTEM

10	excellent
9	very good
8	good
7	very satisfactory
6	satisfactory
5	almost satisfactory (lowest pass mark)
4	unsatisfactory
3	very unsatisfactory
2	poor
1	very poor

The highest mark: 10

Pass/fail level: 5/4 the lowest pass mark 5.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory education lasts from age six to 15. Basic education lasts five years from age six to 11 and lower secondary education lasts four years from age 11 to 15.

Higher secondary education lasts from age 15 to 18. It is divided into three streams, general, social and natural. Upon completion of higher secondary education students are awarded the Maturity Diploma.

Also available is Professional School Education which generally lasts three years and successful candidates are awarded the Maturity Diploma and the Professional Skills Certificate for Qualified Workers.

Technical School Education lasts five years from age 15 and upon successful completion candidates are awarded the Maturity Diploma and the Professional Skills Certificate for Secondary Technicians.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to Higher Education is by State Maturity exams, which involves undertaking four exams, of which two are compulsory and two are optional and is based on average marks of secondary school years.

The subjects for the compulsory exams are set for secondary school, whereas the subjects for the two optional exams are chosen by the student from groups of optional subjects, of which there were eight for the academic year 2007–2008. All students undergo compulsory exams. With these two compulsory exams the pupils complete secondary school and receive the Maturity Certificate.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The higher education system in Albania consists of public and private universities, and academies divided into faculties.

Since 2005, universities and higher non-university schools started the system of studies with bachelor's and master's cycles in Albania.

Due to Albania's inclusion in the Bologna process in September 2003, the structure of cycles at doctorate level has not yet been implemented. For this reason, this level of studies continues with former programmes not being adapted to Bologna process requirements. Normal duration of doctorate studies (full-time) is three to five years.

Algeria

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Baccalauréat or Baccalauréat Technique

Considered to be between the BTEC First Diploma and BTEC National Diploma.

Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Secondaire

May be accepted as a group qualification by some institutions as satisfying general entrance requirements, provided that an overall grade of at least 'bien' has been achieved. May usually need to be supplemented with GCE A level.

Diplôme de Technicien Supérieur

Considered to be comparable to BTEC National Diploma/N(S)VQ.

GRADING SYSTEM

20–16	très bien	(very good)
15–14	bien	(good)
13–12	assez bien	(fair)
11–10	passable/moyen	(pass)
9–0	insuffisant	(fail)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory education is nine years, ages six to 15, followed by three years secondary. The medium of instruction is Arabic throughout. French or English are taught as the first foreign language. At the end of the nine years of compulsory primary education, pupils may be awarded a Brevet d'Etudes Fondamentales (BEF) and the more able will transfer to secondary education. At a secondary school, pupils will follow a common curriculum in the first year, then select an arts, science or technology option and take either the Baccalauréat d'enseignement secondaire (arts or science stream) or Baccalauréat de Technicien (technology stream) after three years.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Baccalauréat is the basic university entrance requirement in Algeria at grades from 10 according to the type of degree to be pursued. Some institutions and courses may stipulate study within a particular stream of the Baccalauréat. Algeria is moving towards a three-tier system (Licence-Master-Doctorat) to bring them in line with the European Bologna process. The undergraduate degree, the Licence, is awarded after three years of study.

Australia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

In general, senior secondary certificates of education, which meet the matriculation requirements of universities in Australia, are acceptable in satisfying the general entrance requirements for UK universities.

GRADING SYSTEM

All grades reported on the senior secondary certificates achieved by students are based on curriculum statements that are developed through accreditation procedures and are community endorsed.

School-based assessments are moderated through statistical and consensus-based moderation procedures to ensure comparability.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

All aspects of primary and secondary education are the responsibility of the individual state or territory government.

Each state and territory system has distinctive features that are comparable in leading to a reasonably broad matriculation-type examination in most instances.

These examinations, together with school assessment, are seen as the appropriate basis for entry into a three-year degree or a four-year honours degree in Australia. Although curriculum statements are accredited separately in each system, there is significant and increasing national comparability.

The Senior Secondary Certificate of Education is known by different titles according to the State or Territory issuing authority:

Australian Capital Territory (ACT) – ACT Year 12 Certificate

New South Wales (NSW) – Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Northern Territory – Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE)

Queensland – Queensland Certificate of Education

South Australia – South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)

Tasmania – Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE)

Victoria – Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)

Western Australia – Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)

These certificates are underpinned by quality assurance processes managed by boards of studies in each state/territory. Each board of studies is a member of the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and implements the ACARA guidelines for certification and for assessment quality and equity. Each certificate is also part of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) – a national system of learning pathways covering a number of different levels of qualification linking universities and vocational education and training with school education.

Student scores for all subjects used for university entrance are placed on the one scale to ensure that students are

not disadvantaged by their subject choice or the school they attend. There is separation of university ranking and standards reporting at the end of year 12.

Each senior secondary certificate is associated with an overall ranking of students' achievement in years 11 and 12. For all states and territories, except Queensland, the nationally agreed common index is expressed out of 100 and calculated at intervals of 0.05. It is a percentile rank of that year's cohort, not of the students completing the requirements. For Queensland, Overall Positions (OPs) are reported as one of 25 bands in which Band 1 is the highest.

These measures, calculated in some states by the tertiary admissions centres and in others by the relevant board of studies, allow students to be placed in an academic 'order of merit' for selection to tertiary courses via a nationally agreed common index. This allows comparisons to be made across states and territories. Since 2010, this common index has been called the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) in all states and territories except Queensland. These indicators of overall achievement are the same in all states except Queensland, e.g. an ATAR of 81.00 in Western Australia is equivalent to an ATAR of 81.00 in New South Wales. Queensland reports students' overall achievement in terms of OPs.

Studies include a range of academic disciplines and vocational courses. The format is a mix of directed classroom studies, extensive written assignments and formal examinations, and may include common assessment tasks. Depending on study alternatives, students may also apply skills, demonstrate understanding and undertake performance, project, group and fieldwork activities.

A comprehensive summary of the various year 12 systems is contained in the web-based publication *Leaving School in Australia – Year 12 State by State* published by ACARA and updated regularly. This publication can be accessed at www.acara.edu.au.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The universities in Australia are autonomous institutions and set their own faculty and course entrance requirements. Specific subjects and levels of achievement may be prescribed as prerequisites for entry to individual courses. A university's entrance requirement is most clearly linked to the school leaving certificate system in its own state. In New South Wales, the Universities Admissions Centre calculates an ATAR score for students who have completed the Higher School Certificate. This is reported out of 100 at intervals of 0.05 for each eligible student. On this basis, cut-off points for the University of New South Wales in 2010, for Commonwealth-supported students, were: law 99.55, science 78.00, arts 79.00, architecture 95.40, commerce 96.00 and engineering 91.05.

The South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) calculates ATAR for students who have completed the South Australian Certificate of Education. In 2011 cut-off points for the University of Adelaide were: arts 65.05, commerce 80.00, civil and structural engineering 80.45, and law 95.25 (undergraduate entry), science 70 and architecture 70 (design studies). Since 2000 entry to the University of Queensland, the following OPs have been required for courses: arts OP12, commerce OP7, engineering OP8, architecture OP5, science OP12 and law OP3.

Recent information can be obtained from each state's University Admission Centre website.

Austria

This entry was last reviewed for the 2014 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Reifeprüfungszeugnis/Maturazeugnis

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Pupils who pass the school-leaving examination at the end of academic secondary school receive a matriculation certificate (*Reifeprüfungszeugnis*).

Five-year courses at technical and vocational colleges end with a *Reife-* and *Diplomprüfung*.

These certificates entitle the learner to enrol in study programmes.

Alternatives comprise the *Berufsreifeprüfungszeugnis* and the *Studienberechtigungsprüfungszeugnis*, the latter being valid for a given study programme. Depending on the programme chosen, supplementary examinations may be required.

GRADING SYSTEM

1	sehr gut	(very good)
2	gut	(good)
3	befriedigend	(satisfactory)
4	genügend	(sufficient)
5	nicht genügend	(insufficient)

Candidates must achieve grade 4 or better in every subject.

Students are entitled to promotion to the next higher year if he/she has successfully completed the previous year, i.e. if the end-of-year report shows grades for all compulsory subjects and none of them contains the grade insufficient.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is compulsory for nine years and starts at the age of six.

Compulsory full-time education:

Volksschule or Grundschule (primary school)	6–10 years of age
– Hauptschule (general secondary school)	10–14 years of age
– Neue Mittelschule (new secondary school)	
– Allgemein bildende höhere Schule – Unterstufe (academic secondary school – lower level)	
First year of an upper secondary school	14–15 years of age

Upper secondary education

Upper secondary level	Age
Allgemein bildende höhere Schule (Oberstufe) (academic secondary school – upper level)	14–18
Polytechnische Schule (pre-vocational school)	14–15
Berufsbildende mittlere Schule (technical and vocational school)	14+
Berufsbildende höhere Schule (technical and vocational college)	14–19
Bildungsanstalt für Kindergartenpädagogik/ Sozialpädagogik (training schools for kindergarten school teachers and educators)	14–19
Berufsbildende Pflichtschule (part-time compulsory vocational school)	15+
Gesundheits- und Krankenpflegeschulen (health and nursing schools)	16+ – 19+
Ausbildungseinrichtungen nichtärztlicher Gesundheitsberufe (paramedical schools)	16+

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In Austria, higher education is provided by public universities, private universities, Fachhochschulen (universities of applied sciences) and University Colleges of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschulen). The public universities are legal entities under public law having their own legal standing. They act free from any instructions and regulate their specific matters autonomously in their statutes. The performance of each university and its budget is negotiated every three years between the respective university and the Federal Minister and laid down in performance agreements. Students at Austrian public universities have to pay tuition fees, which amount to EUR 363,36 per semester. The fee is waived for Austrian students, EU/EEA nationals, students with Swiss nationality as well as other third country long term resident students as long as they do not exceed the duration of study regulated in the respective curriculum plus two additional semesters for a bachelor's and a master's programme.

Admission to a bachelor's programme requires:

- the general university entrance qualification at public universities
- the specific university entrance qualification for the chosen study programme
- knowledge of the German language
- proof of artistic aptitude in case of artistic programmes
- proof of aptitude for physical/motor skills for teacher training programmes in physical education (Leibeserziehung) and for the degree programmes in sports sciences (Sportwissenschaften)
- legally based admission procedures at public universities for several study programmes
- admission procedure for universities of applied sciences degree programmes
- proof of aptitude for teacher training programmes at university colleges of education.

Admission to a bachelor's (diploma) degree programme

is granted upon the basis of the Austrian higher secondary school leaving certificate (Reifezeugnis), its foreign equivalent, or the successful completion of a special university entrance qualification examination (Studienberechtigungsprüfung). Students of compulsory lower schools who have completed additional schooling in the form of apprenticeships as skilled workers may take a vocationally based examination acknowledged as equivalent to the higher secondary school leaving certificate (Berufsreifeprüfung).

In some fields of study admission is based on a selective admission process. This applies in particular to universities of applied sciences' bachelor's and master's degree programmes, study programmes at university colleges of education and some diploma and bachelor's degree programmes at universities in accordance with respective legal authorisation. This is the case for the study programmes Human Medicine, Dental Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Psychology and Communication Studies and Journalism. In Wintersemester 2013/14 a new admission process started for demanded study fields as Architecture and Urban Design, Biology and Biochemistry, Nutritional Science, Pharmacy and several Business Studies. For more information visit: www.studienbeginn.at/

Admission to a master's degree programme is granted on the basis of the successful completion of a relevant bachelor's degree programme, university of applied sciences bachelor's degree programme or other equivalent programme at a recognised domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institution. The curriculum of a master's degree programme at public universities may determine specific qualitative conditions for admission to the respective programme.

Admission to a doctoral programme is done by the university. In general, compliance with the general university entrance qualification for doctoral programmes is provided by the successful completion of a relevant diploma or master's degree programme, university of applied sciences diploma or master's degree programme or other equivalent programme at a recognised domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institution.

Whenever an applicant has obtained a foreign admission title, its equivalency to the corresponding Austrian admission titles must be reviewed. In many cases, equivalency is given by multilateral and/or bilateral agreements. In all other cases, equivalency must be decided on a case by case basis; if necessary, supplementary examinations may be required as an admission condition.

For more information visit:
www.bmwf.gv.at/home/studies/academic_mobility/

Bahrain

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Tawjahiya (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)

Acceptable at 60% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English Language).

Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

Marking varies between subjects; the maximum and minimum marks per subject are shown on the certificate.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Arabic is the medium of instruction in schools. English is the first foreign language studied, and is taken from the third year of primary school, remaining compulsory until the end of secondary education. Six years of primary education leads to three years of intermediate education. The Intermediate School Certificate or its equivalent is a prerequisite to proceeding to three years of upper secondary education culminating in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate. In upper secondary education, students can choose between a scientific, literary, technical, commercial or applied stream. The award of the Secondary School Certificate involves a credit-hours system and requires 156 credit-hours, except for technical, which requires 180.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to four-year degree courses in Bahrain is on the basis of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate with an average mark of 70% or more. Those who achieve lower scores can undertake additional study at university to improve their chances of admission.

Bangladesh

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

Bachelor of Arts, Science and Commerce (Honours)

Satisfies the general entry requirements for entry into a UK higher education provider (HEP) and may be eligible for entry with credit (advanced standing). Students with high grades may be considered for master's programmes.

Bachelor of Arts, Science and Commerce (Ordinary)

May satisfy general entrance requirements for UK higher education.

See also **Overseas Examinations of UK Awarding Organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Marks Obtained
A+	5.00	100–80
A	4.00	79–70
A-	3.50	69–60
B	3.00	59–50
C	2.00	49–40
D	1.00	39–33
F	0.00	32–0

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Five years of primary education leads to the Primary Final Exam (introduced in 2009), which must be passed in order for the student to enrol in class VI, the first of three years of junior secondary education. At the end of class eight (the final year of junior secondary education), students take the Junior School Exam or Junior Dakhil Certificate (introduced in 2010). This then leads to two years of secondary education, at the end of which (Class 10) students take the Secondary School Certificate. Two further years (higher secondary) lead to the Higher School Certificate (HSC) in Class 12. The medium of instruction is predominantly Bengali, but English is used in a small number of schools. English is taught as a compulsory subject at secondary and higher secondary levels.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The HSC gives access to undergraduate studies in universities, colleges and other institutions of HE in Bangladesh. Such studies include three-year pass degrees, four-year honours degrees, four-year engineering, agricultural and business administration degrees, and five-year medicine and architecture degrees. Pass degrees can be undertaken only in affiliated colleges, although the degree is granted by the National University (www.nu.edu.bd) on the basis of examinations administered by the university.

Belgium

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

French-speaking community

Certificat d'Enseignement Secondaire Supérieur
Diplôme d'accès à l'enseignement supérieur (previously
Diplôme d'aptitude à accéder à l'enseignement
supérieur)

Flemish-speaking community

Diploma (previously Getuignschrift) van Hoger
Secundair Onderwijs

German-speaking community

Abschlusszeugnis der Oberstufe des
Sekundarunterrichts

All acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

Various, with details on certificates.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Due to the federal state structure of Belgium, the Dutch-speaking (Flemish), French-speaking and German-speaking communities have had a very considerable measure of autonomy in educational policy since 1989.

Nonetheless, there are certain broad national guidelines. Six years of primary education is followed by six years of secondary education leading to the school-leaving certificate: Diploma van Hoger Secundair Onderwijs/ Certificat d'Enseignement Secondaire Supérieur/ Abschlusszeugnis der Oberstufe des Sekundarunterrichts.

Secondary education is arranged in four tracks: general, technical, artistic and vocational. The certificate will record the specialisation. In the vocational track, an extra seventh year of secondary education is needed to obtain the Diploma van Hoger Secundair Onderwijs.

Compulsory education covers a period of 12 years, from the age of six.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Flemish Parliament adopted a new HE Act in April 2003, implementing the principles of the Bologna Declaration. The general admission requirement for a bachelor's programme is the Flemish secondary school leaving certificate: Diploma van Hoger Secundair Onderwijs. Entry examinations must be passed by any student who wishes to take up study in civil engineering, nautical sciences, dentistry, medicine or fine arts.

For the French-speaking community in Belgium, if students do not hold the Certificat d'Enseignement Secondaire Supérieur or its equivalent, universities arrange an admissions examination, which gives entry to HE at universities and Hautes Ecoles, Ecoles supérieures des Arts and Instituts supérieurs d'architecture. There is an exam for entry on to engineering courses.

In order to access the first year of 'Ecole supérieure des arts', the student has to pass an 'épreuve d'admission'.

The institution boards may admit persons who cannot meet the general admission requirement taking into account the relevant legal regulations.

Since 2004/2005, the traditional cycle programmes previously offered by universities in Belgium were gradually replaced by Bologna degrees. Since 2008/2009, the change to bachelor's and master's degrees was fully implemented. Most universities now use the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Some professional bachelor's degrees (180 ECTS) give access to subsequent programmes (at least 60 ECTS), possibly after a preliminary examination. The boards of the university colleges stipulate which bachelor's degrees give access to these subsequent professional specialisation programmes.

Academic bachelor's degrees (180 ECTS) give access to master's programmes (at least 60 ECTS). Some master's degrees will give access to subsequent advanced programmes (at least a further 60 ECTS), possibly after a preliminary examination. The boards of the universities stipulate which master's degrees give access to these specialised and advanced master's programmes.

Professional bachelor's degrees give access to some master's programmes after a bridging course. The programme of the bridging course is determined by the university board.

The master's degrees give access to doctoral programmes, possibly after a preliminary examination (dependent on field of study).

Botswana

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

At the end of form 5, students have attained either BGCSE or IGCSE (the UK equivalent of O levels, GCSEs and Standard Grades).

Very few students go on to do A levels at private schools; however for those who do these are equivalent to UK A levels.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The education system in Botswana is structured as follows:

- Primary is for seven years: Standard 1–7
- Junior Secondary is for three years: Form 1–3
- Senior Secondary is for two years: Form 4–5.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University of Botswana

Entry to the University of Botswana (UB) is on BGCSE results.

Entry to UK universities

As UB does not offer all subjects, some students are sponsored overseas to countries including the UK – students who are granted sponsorship to the UK first complete two years at UB.

UK universities accept two years at UB (part one of a degree course, e.g. BSC part one) as equivalent to A level for entry purposes – that is to say if a student has done part one of a degree course at UB they may enter into year one of a UK degree course. In some Scottish universities they may enter into year two of the degree course.

UK universities also accept Botswana A levels as entry requirements to join year one of a UK degree course.

Botswana students who have done neither A levels nor two years at UB usually need to go on to foundation access courses in UK universities; BGCSE are accepted as entry requirements into foundation courses.

UB degrees are accepted as the required entry to get on to UK master's courses and UB master's degrees are sufficient to allow access to UK PhD courses.

UB has undergraduate degrees, master's and PhD level courses but not in all subjects.

For entry to UK colleges: those colleges accepting UK students on GCSE results would also be able to accept Botswana students on BGCSE/IGCSE results as they are equivalent.

Brazil

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Certificado de Conclusão de Ensino Fundamental

Considered to be below GCSE standard.

Certificado de Ensino Médio

Considered to be below GCE A level standard. Acceptable for entry to a foundation year in UK higher education institutions.

English language requires official proof of knowledge, such as an IELTS exam certificate or other relevant qualification.

Compulsory subjects, as set in the national curriculum, include: Portuguese, mathematics, biology, geography, chemistry, physics, history, sociology, philosophy, arts, physical education and a foreign language.

Students can also opt to study the three years of ensino médio following a vocational route. Subjects studied vary according to the career path chosen. Students can also follow the standard ensino médio route and the vocational route simultaneously.

GRADING SYSTEM

Marking systems vary between states. However, in general terms:

Either graded on a scale of 10 (maximum) to 0 (with decimals), or

(SS)	10.0 – 9.0
(MS)	8.9 – 7.0
(MM)	6.9 – 5.0
(MI)	4.9 – 3.0
(II)	2.9 – 0.1
(SR)	0

The pass mark varies from institution to institution. It generally is stated at 5. Some institutions establish it at 6 or 7. The two-letter system (in parentheses above) is only used in the Federal District (where Brasília is located). The numeric system is common in the whole country.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Organisation of the educational system in Brazil is decentralised: local and state authorities share the responsibility for primary education (Ensino Fundamental); states are responsible for secondary education (Ensino Médio); and the Federal Government has responsibility for HE. The Ministry of Education issues guidelines for curricular content at primary and secondary level, but there are still some regional variations. In addition to the state system, there is a broad network of private schools and HEPs. The medium of instruction is Portuguese.

Brazilian education is organised in two main blocks: basic and HE. The first is basic, compulsory education from age four to 17, which comprises pre-school, primary education and secondary education. On completion of primary education successful students are awarded the Certificado de Conclusão de Ensino Fundamental. This is followed by three years of secondary education. The school leaving qualification is the Certificado de Ensino Médio.

Students may take the Exame Nacional Do Ensino Médio (ENEM). This is a test designed to enable the Ministry of Education to assess national standards. It is not a qualification, but is being increasingly used in Brazil to gain university entrance. Vestibular are university entrance examinations, which are broadly equivalent to GCSEs. Students with higher grades in Vestibular gain access to the universities. The ENEM is often given a percentage weighting with the Vestibular for the purposes of university entrance. ENEM is also a selection criterion for the Science Without Borders mobility scheme. The Programa De Avaliação Seriada (PAS) is another university entrance examination gained over the last three years of secondary education and adopted by some universities.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Demand for HE and competition for places is high. Entrance to HE is based on possession of the Certificado de Ensino Médio (or Certificado de Conclusão de Segundo Grau) and performance in the entrance exam (ENEM and Vestibular). The first degree, Bacharel or Licenciado title usually takes from four to six years depending upon the specialisation.

Brunei

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Brunei-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (B–C GCE O level) examination (at upper secondary level).

Grades A, B and C (grade A = grades 1 and 2, grade B = grades 3 and 4, grade C = grades 5 and 6) equivalent to GCSE grades A, B, C.

Brunei-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (BC–GCE A level) examination

Examination equates to UK GCE Advanced standard (at pre-tertiary level). Grades A to E equivalent to UK GCE Advanced level grades A to E.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Brunei Darussalam Education System provides schooling in a 7+3+2+2 pattern, representing primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and pre-tertiary levels respectively. Pre-school education begins at the age of five. This is preceded by primary school for six years, at the end of which, students sit the Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (PSR)/Primary School Assessment. The students who pass the examination will continue on to three years of lower secondary education and two years of upper secondary education. In the third year of secondary education, students must sit for the Penilaian Menengah Bawah (PMB)/Lower Secondary Assessment and on meeting the criteria of promotion will qualify for the next level which will allow them to proceed to another two years of secondary education where, in the fifth year, they will sit for the Brunei-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (B–C GCE O levels) examination. There are two languages of instruction, Malay for subjects such as Bahasa Melayu, Islamic Religious Knowledge and Malay Literature, and English. Students who have adequate and relevant O level qualifications may proceed to the pre-university level. At this level, the students follow a two year course leading to the Brunei-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Advanced level (B–C GCE A level) examination.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Students who have completed the PMB or the BC–GCE O level examination can pursue vocational education in a Technical or Engineering College offering two- to five-year crafts or technician programmes. Those who complete A level courses with adequate and relevant passes may be eligible for entry to The University of Brunei Darussalam or other tertiary institutions or be awarded scholarships for further studies abroad.

Bulgaria

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Diploma za zavarsheno sredno obrazovanie (Diploma of Completed Secondary Education) is issued to students who have completed grade 12 and have passed the state matriculation exams.

Awarded by standard secondary schools and acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Completed secondary vocational education is certified by a **Diploma for completed secondary education and certificate of professional qualification and competence**.

Awarded by vocational secondary schools and acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entry requirements. The certificate for professional qualification and competence is issued upon completion of vocational training, granting the right to practise a profession, issued for license requiring professions.

GRADING SYSTEM

6	otlichen	(excellent)
5	mnogo dobur	(very good)
4	dobur	(good)
3	sreden	(fair) [minimum pass mark]
2	slab	(poor)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The education system in Bulgaria is structured as follows:

- Pre-school education (age three to six/seven)
- Basic education (grades one to eight – ages six/seven up to age 16)
- Secondary education (grades nine to 12) is also offered in vocational and technical schools.

Education is not compulsory after the age of 16.

Education in Bulgaria is regulated by the state and is offered by state schools and by the private sector.

Successful completion of secondary education culminates in the award of the Diploma.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Diploma of Completed Secondary Education is a prerequisite for entry to higher education providers (HEPs) in Bulgaria. In the past entry was also based on competitive entrance examinations, but following the introduction of the compulsory general education state matriculation exams at the end of 12th grade, the results of these are often used as an alternative. The autonomy of HEPs allows them to define their own entry requirements for enrolment each year. The length of the first degree course varies and ranges from a minimum of three years, according to subject. Private higher education is also available in Bulgaria. Both state and private HEPs are regulated by law.

Cameroon

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Baccalauréat**

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements provided that an overall grade of at least 'bien' has been achieved.

Cameroon GCE Ordinary Level

Acceptable at grade C or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis.

Cameroon GCE Advanced Level

Acceptable at grades A–E in lieu of GCE A level on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM**Baccalauréat**

20–18	excellent	(excellent)
17–16	très bien	(very good)
15–14	bien	(good)
13–12	assez bien	(fair)
11–10	passable/moyen	(pass)
9–0	insuffisant	(fail)

Cameroon GCE Ordinary level A–C (pass), D–F (fail)

Cameroon GCE Advanced level A–E (pass), F (fail)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Republic of Cameroon has an educational system unique in Africa, with English and French as the languages of instruction in both educational sub-systems. Six or seven years of primary education lead to national examinations in which a pass is a prerequisite for secondary education. Secondary education in the

English-medium system involves a first cycle of five years leading to O level and a second cycle of two further years to A level. In the French-medium system, the first cycle of four years leads to the Brevet d'Études du Premier Cycle and the second cycle of three years to the Baccalauréat, which is a group examination requiring passes in all eight/nine subjects.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to the six state universities in Cameroon is based on the Baccalauréat or two A levels and a minimum of four O levels. However, each university is entitled to impose its own entry qualifications which may be quite specific, especially in relation to bilingual degrees. The initial qualification after a minimum of three years is the Licence or BA/BSc.

Canada

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF THE PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES OF CANADA

There is no single system of education in Canada: education is the responsibility of the provinces and territories. Although systems resemble each other in a number of aspects, each provincial and territorial system has different characteristics. Elementary education in most provinces covers the first eight years of compulsory education and is followed by four years of secondary education. While some provinces and territories use a form of uniform examinations, this varies across jurisdictions in terms of subjects and grades, and students' marks are determined mostly at the school level.

In some provinces, the award of standing is shared between the Department of Education and the local educational authorities.

In all jurisdictions, except Quebec where the secondary school leaving diploma is awarded after 11 years of study, students must have completed 12 years of study to be awarded the certificate or diploma marking the end of secondary education.

EVALUATION

In all provinces and territories (except Quebec, where the completion of secondary school occurs in grade 11), the certificates or diplomas awarded on the completion of secondary school studies (usually in grade 12) normally satisfy general entrance requirements to universities and other post-secondary institutions.

GRADING SYSTEM

Most of the provincial certificates or diplomas awarded by provinces and territories on the completion of secondary school studies (usually in grade 12) provide individual subject marks on a percentage basis (50% pass), often linked with a literal grade.

Diplôme d'études collégiales (DEC, Québec): On a percentage basis (60% pass).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Canadian universities have individual admission requirements based primarily on the secondary school qualifications awarded in their own province. With the

exception of Quebec, where the two-year Diploma of Collegial Studies (DEC) is the normal requirement for general university admission, for a total 13 years of schooling, most universities require a grade 12 qualification with a minimum average mark which varies from province to province and by institution and programme. Faculties with limited enrolments, usually 'professional' faculties, will require higher averages.

PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES

Alberta (AB)

Alberta has three years of senior high school, grades 10 through 12, leading to an Alberta high school diploma. Secondary school qualification is awarded by meeting provincial education department requirements.

At the post-secondary level, there are six types of publicly funded institutions, each with a range of academic programming, research activity, and learner focus. The six types of institutions are:

- comprehensive academic and research institutions
- baccalaureate and applied studies institutions
- polytechnical institutions
- comprehensive community institutions
- independent academic institutions
- specialised arts and culture institutions.

Publicly funded institutions normally require a high school diploma for admission to certificate and diploma programmes; however, academic requirements vary by programme. Prospective students should consult the institutions of their choice for details.

Each degree-granting institution in Alberta sets its own admission requirements as well as criteria for recognising academic qualifications obtained in Canadian jurisdictions and abroad. Admission averages required to enter an undergraduate degree programme, either directly from high school or through transfer from another post-secondary institution, vary by institution, faculty, and programme. Normally five grade 12 courses (or equivalent) are required. Admission to programmes that have enrolment limits may require competitive marks higher than the minimum admission requirements set out in the institution's academic calendar. Mature applicants who do not meet normal admission requirements may be considered with different qualifications. Competency in English is required of foreign students. Prospective students should consult the institutions of their choice for details. Contact information for all of Alberta's publicly funded post-secondary institutions is available at eae.alberta.ca/post-secondary/institutions/public/pscontact

British Columbia (BC)

Each university in BC determines its general entrance requirements for graduating grade 12 students. Generally, graduation from grade 12 is required. In some cases, the best four or five courses from a defined list of grade 12 level courses are used. The acceptable percentage in these courses can vary from year to year, depending on the number of students applying in a given year and depending on the faculty. Science programmes usually require a higher overall percentage than arts programmes. For admission to BC's colleges,

and institutes offering academic and career/technical programmes, including programmes leading to degrees, entry requirements vary depending on the institution and the programme but they generally require students to have graduated from grade 12. More information is available on admission to BC post-secondary institutions at www.educationplanner.ca/ and www.aved.gov.bc.ca/find_an_institution/welcome.htm

Manitoba (MB)

Universities and colleges in Manitoba set their own admission requirements and criteria for recognising academic qualifications obtained in Canadian jurisdictions and abroad. Successful completion of high school (secondary education) is normally required for university entrance. Admission to university faculties and programmes that have enrolment limits may require competitive marks higher than the minimum admission requirements set out in the academic calendar. All universities and colleges make special provisions for mature students, who are normally at least 21 years old. College admission requirements vary by programme. Most college certificate and diploma programmes require high school graduation, and many have specific course requirements. The colleges also make special provisions for mature applicants who do not meet the normal entrance requirements.

Manitoba has five general programmes of study at the high school (secondary) level:

- English Programme
- Français Programme
- French Immersion Programme
- Technology Education Programme
- Français/French Immersion Technology Education Programme.

Graduation requirements from the English Programme are a total of 30 credits (equivalent to 30 full-year courses) over the course of their grade 9 to grade 12 studies, including three grade 12 compulsory credits (one each in English language arts, mathematics and physical education/health), plus 13 optional credits, at least three of which must be one grade 11 and two grade 12.

Graduation requirements from the Français and French Immersion Programmes are a total of 30 credits (equivalent to 30 full-year courses) over the course of their grade 9 to grade 12 studies, including four grade 12 compulsory credits (one each in Français, English language arts, mathematics and physical education/health), plus nine optional credits, at least two of which must be one grade 11 and one grade 12.

Graduates from the Technology Education Programme must have a total of 30 credits (equivalent to 30 full-year courses) over the course of their grade 9 to grade 12 studies, including three grade 12 compulsory credits (one each in English language arts, mathematics and physical education/health), plus an approved cluster of eight to 14 compulsory technology education credits, at least four of which must be two grade 11 and two grade 12.

Graduate from the Français/French Immersion Technology Education Programme must have a total of 30 credits (equivalent to 30 full-year courses) over the

course of their grade 9 to grade 12 studies, including four grade 12 compulsory credits (one each in Français, English language arts, mathematics, and physical education/health), plus an approved cluster of eight to 10 compulsory technology education credits, at least two of which must be one grade 11 and one grade 12.

Manitoba also offers a Mature Student High School Diploma for individuals who begin their mature student studies when they are 19 years of age or over, who have been out of school six months or more, and who have been out of school long enough for the class of which he or she was last a member to have graduated from grade 12. Eight credits are required, at least four of which must be grade 12 credits (including one English language arts and one mathematics). Français and French Immersion graduates also require one grade 12 credit in French. Students intending to pursue post-secondary studies in a scientific discipline are normally required to have taken, as one of their optional grade 12 credits, a full-year credit in one or more of the foundational sciences (biology, chemistry and physics).

New Brunswick (NB)

New Brunswick is officially bilingual, with approximately 32% of the population French-speaking and 64% English-speaking. The province's education system reflects this linguistic duality by operating two school systems – one English, one French – with slightly different curricula and graduation requirements. In both systems, high school incorporates grades 9 through 12, and students graduate with a high school diploma. For Anglophone schools 60% in 17 of 20 credits, including seven compulsories in grades 11-12 and at least five credits at the grade 12 level, are required for graduation. In Francophone schools 24 credits out of a possible 30, 17 credits of which are associated with the core courses and seven credits selected from the elective courses, are required.

Although each university determines its general entrance requirements, successful completion of secondary school with specific "academic" level courses (N.B. Level 1 or 2) is the minimum requirement for admission to the province's four public universities (St Thomas University, University of New Brunswick, Mount Allison University and Université de Moncton). A more detailed list of post-secondary institutions in New Brunswick is available at the following: www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/post-secondary_education_training_and_labour/post-secondary_education.html

The New Brunswick Community College and Le Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick both require high school graduation or its equivalent for entry into its diploma and certificate programmes, although some programmes have specific course requirements. Adult learners who have not completed high school can enter academic upgrading and may acquire a high school equivalency diploma (i.e. GED) or a New Brunswick Adult High School Diploma.

The New Brunswick College of Craft and Design and the Maritime College of Forest Technology require a high school diploma for admission, although both institutions have provisions for accepting students who have not completed the high school programme.

Newfoundland and Labrador (NL)

University entrance requirements for NL students entering the NL university are as follows:

Completion of graduation requirements for high school as set down by the Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, or equivalent from other Canadian jurisdictions, and a 70% average in grade 12 (Level 3) academic and/or advanced courses from the following categories: English, maths, laboratory science, social science/modern or classical language, and two credits from elective(s).

From the British system, applicants must have completed the General Certificate of Education (GCE) or the Scottish Leaving Certificate with Lower-Level or Ordinary passes in five acceptable subjects deemed equivalent to the requirements for Canadian applicants. The Advanced Level subjects of the GCE will generally be considered for transfer credit to a maximum of 12 credit hours in each subject provided a minimum grade of 'D' in each subject claimed for credit has been obtained. The Higher Level subjects of the Scottish Leaving Certificate will generally be accepted for first-year university level credit.

Applicants wishing to be considered for Advanced Standing or Transfer Credit must submit in addition to the Application for Admission/Readmission, an Application for Transfer Credit Evaluation which can be obtained at the Office of the Registrar or online at www.mun.ca/regoff/forms.php. Students with General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications, normally acceptable for UK university admission, and passes in five acceptable subjects deemed equivalent to Canadian applicant requirements, are advised to contact the International Admissions Officer, Registrar's Office, Memorial University of Newfoundland, for further information about admissions and credit transfer (www.mun.ca).

Public college entrance requirements vary depending on programme; however, high school graduation is the minimum requirement. British applicants should present the GCSE.

Programme specific requirements are available in the College Calendar which can be found at www.cna.nl.ca. Applicants who do not meet the educational prerequisites for the programme they wish to enter may be considered for admission on an individual basis (e.g. as a mature student) provided the following conditions are met:

1. Applicants are at least 19 years of age at the time of application.
2. Applicants have been out of high school for at least one year.
3. Applicants present a certified copy of grades for the highest educational level attained.
4. Applicants complete the standardised assessment instrument at a level approved by the college.

Northwest Territories (NT)

NT primarily uses the Alberta curriculum established by that province. Aurora College's admission requirements vary depending on the programme; however, in most cases grade 12 is the minimum requirement. Mature applicants who do not meet normal admission requirements may be eligible through consideration of other qualifications and/or assessments. Further information is available on the Aurora College website at www.auroracollege.nt.ca

Nova Scotia (NS)

The minimum level of achievement for admission to Nova Scotia universities varies by institution from a low of 60% to a high of 70% in five acceptable subjects at grade 12.

Nunavut (NU)

General admission requirements: 65% in five acceptable subjects at grade 12.

Ontario (ON)

In Ontario, there are provincially assisted universities, provincially assisted colleges of applied arts and technology (CAATs), and private career colleges. Entry requirements vary depending on the type of institution and the specific programme.

For university, students are required to have successfully completed the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSS) with six grade 12 university preparation (U) or university/college (M) preparation courses. Each Ontario university sets its own admission standards. Further information on the marks schools are looking for is available on the Council of Ontario Universities Common University Data website (www.cou.on.ca/statistics/cudo.aspx)

For entrance into an Ontario college, admission requirements vary between specific colleges and programmes. In most cases, the successful completion of an OSSD or the equivalent is required. However, colleges may establish programme-specific admission and eligibility requirements.

Admission into a private career college in Ontario varies. In most cases, the successful completion of an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or the equivalent is required.

Prince Edward Island (PE)

Holland College is the community college of Prince Edward Island. The college offers more than 70 full- and part-time post-secondary programmes to train students in a wide variety of areas, including culinary, policing, marine training, applied sciences and engineering technology, trades and industrial technology, health and community services, communications and media studies, computer studies, business studies, sport and leisure studies, performing arts, and tourism. The college has 14 campuses and delivery sites across P.E.I. About 2,330 full-time students attend Holland College, 250 students attend part time, and about 4,200 enrol in continuing and adult education programmes. The Atlantic Police Academy, The Culinary Institute of Canada, and the Marine Training Centre are all part of the college. For information regarding programme prerequisites, visit www.hollandcollege.com

The University of Prince Edward Island requires successful completion of grade 12 examinations in a University Preparatory Programme (academic or advanced courses) with an overall average of at least 70% in five subjects. From the British education system, this would normally be a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE or IGSCE) with five O level subjects with minimum C grade or better; General Certificate of Education Advanced levels or Advanced Supplementary (GCE A level or AICE or GCE AS) with at least 2 A levels (two AS subjects may be substituted for one A level). A minimum C in each and all AS and A levels to be used for admission. Transfer credits may be awarded for A level subject results with a

minimum grade of 'C' or better. Applicants are eligible for entrance scholarship with minimum 'B' grades in two A levels or four AS subjects. The subject combinations required for specific fields of study are as follows: Arts – English, one social studies or language, any three other academic subjects. Business – English, mathematics, any two social studies, languages or sciences, and one other academic subject; Science – English, mathematics, two science subjects, and one other academic subject.

Prince Edward Island is also home to a French-language post-secondary institution: le Collège Acadie ÎPÉ. More information in French is available on its website, at <http://collegeacadiepe.ca/>

Quebec (QC)

In Quebec, elementary and secondary education covers 11 years – six at the elementary level, five at the secondary level. The secondary school leaving diploma (diplôme d'études secondaires, or DES) is awarded at the end of grade 11 (5e secondaire). All secondary school graduates who want to pursue higher education studies enrol in a college-level institution (either a public collège d'enseignement général et professionnel, or cégep, or a publicly subsidised private college) opting for either a two-year pre-university diploma programme, or a three-year technical diploma programme similar to those offered by community colleges in other provinces; in both cases, the diploma is called diplôme d'études collégiales (DEC). Most universities require the two-year general college-level diploma for admission; the three-year technical diploma is also admissible. Other secondary school graduates can choose to enrol in a Diploma of Vocational Studies followed by an Attestation of Vocational Speciality; up to one year of the Diploma of Vocational Studies could be credited towards the three-year technical diploma.

Quebec's Diploma of Collegial Studies (diplôme d'études collégiales, or DEC) awarded after two years of study at a public or private college (for a total schooling of 13 years) is the normal requirement for general university admission; the three-years DEC is also acceptable. College education comes after secondary school; it is the first level of higher education, the second being university. Secondary school students from outside Quebec may be required to complete bridging courses before admission to a bachelor's programme.

Saskatchewan (SK)

Each university determines its general entrance requirements for graduating grade 12 students. The University of Saskatchewan requires a minimum 72% average for Early Admission based on first term grade 12 marks. The average calculation includes English, mathematics and three acceptable academic subjects. The University of Regina requires a minimum 65% average for Early Conditional Admission based on a combination of grade 11 and 12 marks. Students must present a minimum number of approved high school courses for admission consideration. The number of courses required will vary by province/territory.

Yukon (YK)

Yukon uses the BC curriculum and graduation requirements established by that province. Admission requirements vary between programmes. The general admissions criteria for acceptance into post-secondary

studies are completion of academic grade 12 including grade 12 English and grade 11 mathematics. Admission to some programmes that have enrolment limits may require competitive marks higher than the minimum admission requirements set out in the academic calendar. Mature applicants who do not meet normal admission requirements may be eligible through consideration of other qualifications and/or assessments.

China

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Senior High School Entrance Examination (Chuzhong Huikao)

Considered to be between GCSE and GCE A level standard. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to access or foundation level programmes.

Vocational Secondary School Diploma (Zhixiao)

Considered to be comparable to BTEC First Diploma/NVQ level 2.

University Entrance Examination (Gaokao)

Considered to be between AS and A2 level standard. It is generally considered more advanced than the Senior High School Examination. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to access or foundation level programmes.

GRADING SYSTEM

Senior High School Examination

Nine subjects are taken and graded A–D (with A being the highest).

A	100–80%
B	79–70
C	69–60
D	Fail

University Entrance Examination

The examination includes three core subjects, each of which is marked out of 150 points, and a comprehensive subject (arts route or science route) with 300 points maximum, adding up to a total score of 750 for the examination.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Primary and secondary education in China comprises three stages: six years of primary school, three years of junior middle school, and three years of senior middle school. Primary and junior middle school education is compulsory, and commences at age six. To progress from junior middle school, students must pass locally organised entrance examinations. Results of these entrance examinations are used to stream students into a general academic route or a technical and vocational route.

The technical and vocational schools offer the Vocational Secondary School Diploma which includes general knowledge, basic technology and a subject specialism. Senior secondary schools offer the Senior High School Entrance Examination, which is usually taken in five or six subjects. As it is taken across the country, but organised on a provincial basis, curricula and standards may vary.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Graduation from Senior Secondary School is a prerequisite for sitting the University Entrance Examination. The upper age limit of 25 was abolished in 2001. The University Entrance Examination format can vary between provinces, but is taken nationwide. There are three compulsory core subjects, namely Chinese, mathematics and a foreign language (English, Japanese, Russian, French, German or Spanish). In addition, students need to take a test on a comprehensive subject which is basically a combination of three courses: biology, chemistry and physics for science route students; and politics, geography, and history for arts route students. Specific examination arrangements may be organised by the local government according to their existing policies.

HE is structured into four-year bachelor's programmes (xueshi), two to three-year master's programmes (shuoshi) and three to five-year doctorates (boshi).

Croatia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

State Matura (secondary school leaving qualification) State Matura (Državna matura) was introduced in Croatia in 2009/2010. It is taken in three compulsory subjects (Croatian, mathematics and a foreign language), which can be taken at an advanced (A) or basic (B) level, and one or more optional subjects (no more than six). The examinations are conducted by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education. It is acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Medjunarodna Matura (International Baccalaureate)

A baccalaureate style qualification offered by some grammar schools (gimnazija) in Croatia, which satisfies the general entry requirements for UK HE.

GRADING SYSTEM

5	excellent
4	very good
3	good
2	sufficient
1	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Eight years of primary education, with a foreign language introduced in year one, are usually followed by one of the following:

- Four-year grammar schools (gimnazija), which may be classified as general, linguistic, classical or scientific, with appropriately different curricula
- Four-year art schools (art and design, music, dance)
- Four-year vocational schools (engineering, healthcare, economics, agriculture, etc.)
- Three-year vocational schools (industrial, crafts, etc.).

Apart from IB programmes, where the language of instruction is English, the language of instruction in all other schools is Croatian.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Starting from the academic year 2010/2011, admission procedures for enrolment at higher education institutions in Croatia are centralised and managed by the Central Application Office which is a part of the Agency for Science and Higher Education. The bases for the admissions ranking are secondary school grades and success at the newly introduced State Matura, implemented at state level. Higher education providers (HEPs) are autonomous in deciding on the weight given to the results of the state graduation examination.

In addition, some HEPs require entrance classification exams, so prospective students should contact the HEP they wish to enrol in to find out whether this is a requirement.

The higher education system in Croatia has undergone a comprehensive reform within the framework of the Bologna Process. The Croatian higher education system is now structured according to three cycles (undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate) and higher education studies in Croatia are organised according to the system of transferable credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System [ECTS]).

Cyprus

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Greek-Cypriot System****Apolytirion (School Leaving Certificate)**

Acceptable in lieu of GCSEs (grades A–C) on a subject for subject basis (except English language), where a mark of at least 10 has been achieved. Some HEPs may additionally require one or two UK Advanced Level qualifications to satisfy specific entry requirements; others accept the Apolytirion as satisfying general entry requirements.

Turkish-Cypriot System**Devlet Lise Diplomasi (State High School Diploma) and Lise Bitirme Diplomasi (High School Finishing Diploma)**

Considered to be at a standard of at least GCSE level. Students with an overall average of five are eligible to receive a school leaving certificate.

GRADING SYSTEM**Greek-Cypriot System**

Graded 1–20 (with 20 being the maximum), pass mark 10.

Turkish-Cypriot System

Graded 1–10 (with 10 being the maximum), pass mark 5.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Under the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, the two communities, the Greek and the Turkish community respectively, are responsible for dealing with educational affairs.

The Cypriot education structure follows the Greek system in the south providing students with an Apolytirion or School Leaving Certificate, and the Turkish system in the north providing students with a Lycée Diploma.

Greek-Cypriot System

Education is co-educational and compulsory until the age of 15. As of academic year 2004/5, pre-primary education also became compulsory, followed by six years of primary education and six years of secondary education. Secondary education is divided into two cycles of three years; three years Gymnasio (compulsory lower secondary), followed by three years Eniaio Lykeio (upper secondary) or Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (SVTE). In 2000/1, the Eniaio Lykeio replaced the former Lykeio of optional subjects which had functioned for 20 years. The students of the last two years of Eniaio Lykeio have the flexibility to form their own timetable according to their interests; at primary, lower secondary level and in the first year (Class A) of Eniaio Lykeio, a core curriculum is followed.

Since 2001/2, STVE is offered in two streams: theoretical and practical. The content of the revised STVE aims to provide technical school graduates with the necessary educational background to enable them to enter the labour market or pursue further studies.

Turkish-Cypriot System

The education system follows a similar model to Turkey, and has equivalent standards. Education is compulsory from the ages of five until 14 years. Kindergarten education is taught from age five to six years; primary education level I from seven to 11 years; primary education level II from 12 to 14 years. Classes are grades as 1–12 and education is compulsory from grades 1 – 8. Optional education is taught at high school (lycée) from age 14 to 18 years. Students completing primary levels I and II can choose to attend high school. There are six different types of high schools – vocational lycee; multi-programmed lycee; science lycee; fine arts lycee; anadolu lycee (science and mathematics courses are taught in English and they have IGCSE classes); and Maarif College (all courses except Turkish literature and Turkish history are taught in English, and they have IGCSE and A level classes).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Greek-Cypriot System

Higher education in Cyprus is provided by public and private institutions of higher education at university and non-university level. The University of Cyprus was established in 1989 and accepted its first students in 1992. The Open University of Cyprus and the Cyprus University of Technology accepted their first students in September 2006 and September 2007 respectively.

In September 2007, the first private universities were established after a relevant decision of the Council of Ministers. Nowadays, the following five private universities are operating in the Republic of Cyprus:

1. Frederick University
2. European University – Cyprus
3. University of Nicosia
4. Neapolis University
5. University of Central Lancashire – Cyprus.

Access to state higher education institutions of Cyprus (university and non-university) and Greece is done through the Pancyprian Examinations, organised by

the Examinations Service of Ministry of Education and Culture. The Pancyprian Examinations have replaced, since 2006, the Eisagogikes Exetaseis (Entrance Examinations) and are organised for the purposes of both graduation from secondary education and access to state higher education institutions of Cyprus and Greece.

For access to the Open University of Cyprus, interested candidates need to apply directly to the institution and their applications are evaluated by a special committee.

Public and private institutions of higher education (university and non-university) accept the Apolytirion as a minimum entry requirement. As the medium of instruction is English in all private HEPs, candidates have to provide proof of their proficiency in English. Private HEPs have their own English placement test, and if judged necessary, students have to follow an English foundation programme.

Turkish-Cypriot System

Access to the higher education universities and institutions of Cyprus and Turkey is through a competitive central entrance examination. Students who have successfully completed high school and gained the Lise Diploması need to take the University Entrance Examination to gain entry to universities. This exam is organised by Higher Board of Education (YOK). Local universities also accept students without the YOK Entrance Exam (OSS) on condition that they pass an entrance exam administered by the institutions themselves. Universities in Turkey have now started to accept students with AS, A level and IGCSE qualifications.

In most universities in Turkey, and in all universities in Cyprus, the medium of instruction is English. Therefore, students are obliged to provide proof of at least intermediate level of English (TOEFL or IELTS) or to pass the institution's own English proficiency test. Students who are unsuccessful will study a year's English foundation programme, which has an ongoing assessment process in addition to a final proficiency test at the end of the academic year.

Czech Republic

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Maturitní Zkouška/Maturita Vysvědčení o Maturitní Zkoušce (Maturita from vocational/technical schools)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

1	vyborný	(excellent)
2	chvalitebný	(very good)
3	dobry	(good)
4	dostatecný	(pass)
5	nedostatecný	(fail)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Elementary school has two levels: the first stage now covers the first to fifth grade, and the second stage the sixth to ninth grade. Nine years of elementary education are followed by four years of secondary education.

Successful completion of compulsory school and meeting the entrance requirements (usually including entrance examination) are prerequisites for admission to secondary schools.

Secondary education is newly structured into three levels depending on the length of the programme:

- a Secondary education (1–2 years) (ISCED 2C).
- b Secondary education completed by attaining an apprenticeship certificate (výuční list) – two to three years or a shortened study programme for those having completed secondary education with school-leaving certificate (ISCED 3C).
- c Secondary education completed by a school-leaving examination (maturitní zkouška) – study programmes of various length, e.g. after completing a four-year study (ISCED 3A) or, for those with an apprenticeship certificate, a two-year follow-up course (ISCED 4A).

According to the Education Act (of 24 September 2004), the results of the education of a pupil included in a school report is expressed by a classifying grade, verbally or by a combination of both. The head teacher shall decide upon the manner of evaluation with the consent of the School Board. This concerns both elementary and secondary schools. There is no final examination at the end of elementary school, but in the last year of compulsory school attendance, each school issues to its pupils a final evaluation stating how the pupil concerned has achieved the educational goals stated by the law. Study at a secondary school leads to the traditional matriculation examination, Maturitní Zkouška or Maturita. The passing of the Maturitní Zkouška is a prerequisite for admission to a higher education institution (and also to a tertiary professional school).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

There are now 26 public institutions, two state institutions and 46 private institutions of HE in the Czech Republic.

By law, higher education institutions are of two types – university type, providing all levels of study programmes, and non-university type, usually offering only bachelor's degree programmes. Due to the historical development, all existing higher education institutions established before the Education Act came into force are university type institutions. Recently established higher education institutions have been accredited as non-university types. This refers to all private institutions as well as to the first newly established public institution 'College of Polytechnics' (Vysoká škola polytechnická). All accredited bachelor's degree study programmes provide education of ISCED 5A Level, i.e. education that enables students to continue in follow-up master's degree study programmes.

The minimum requirement for admission to a higher education institution is secondary education completed by the maturitní zkouška examination. The requirement for admission to a master's programme is successful completion of a bachelor's programme. The requirements for admission to a doctoral programme are successful completion of a master's programme.

Students may apply for admission to several faculties. Each higher education institution decides on the number of admissions and on specific admission procedures (secondary school results, approval of credits from previous studies of other fields of study or of tertiary professional school, etc). The admission procedures usually include an entrance examination, in particular, a written test, an oral examination or both. If the number of applicants who meet the conditions is higher than the maximum number that can be enrolled, applicants are rank ordered based on the examination results.

Denmark

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Folkeskolens 10 Klasseprøve (formerly Folkeskolens Afgangsprøve) (after Class 10)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Studentereksamen (STX)

Højere Forberedelseseksamen (HF)

Højere Handelseksamen (HHX)

Højere Teknisk Eksamen (HTX) and EUX

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

12:	For an excellent performance
10:	For a very good performance
7:	For a good performance
4:	For a fair performance
02:	For an adequate performance
00:	For an inadequate performance
-3:	For an unacceptable performance

12 is equivalent to A in the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

10 is equivalent to B in the ECTS.

7 is equivalent to C in the ECTS.

4 is equivalent to D in the ECTS.

02 is equivalent to E in the ECTS.

00 is equivalent to Fx in the ECTS.

-3 is equivalent to F in the ECTS.

Prior to 2006/7, the following grading scale was used:

13	exceptionally independent and excellent performance
11	independent and excellent performance
10	excellent but not particularly independent performance
9	good performance, a little above average
8	average performance
7	mediocre performance, slightly below average
6	just acceptable performance
5	hesitant and not satisfactory performance
3	very hesitant, very insufficient and unsatisfactory performance
0	completely unacceptable performance

The Danish Ministry of Education has created a conversion scale between the old and the new grading scale:

Old grading scale	New grading scale
13	
	12
11	
10	10
9	
	7
8	
7	4
6	2
5	0
3	
	-3
0	

Pass level is 6 (old scale) and 2 (new scale).

Expected distribution of grades on the new scale:

- 10 percent grade 12
- 25 percent grade 10
- 30 percent grade 7
- 25 percent grade 4
- 10 percent grade 02

Mark	Gymnasium%	HF%
13	00.9	00.5
11	07.2	05.2
10	14.1	11.0
9	19.5	16.9
8	21.2	19.7
7	18.1	19.3
6	11.1	13.8
5	05.9	09.4
3	01.8	03.9
0	00.1	00.5
Average Mark	08.06	07.59
No of Marks	156,634	62,044

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory pre-school (one year) and nine or 10 years in a basic comprehensive school (Folkeskole), with English Language compulsory from Grade 1, may be followed by three years at a gymnasium culminating in the Studentereksamen STX (Upper Secondary School Leaving Examination). Subjects within the Studentereksamen can be taken at three levels (A–highest, B and C). In addition to Danish and history at A-level, pupils must take at least two other subjects at A-level to obtain the Studentereksamen, which consists of oral and written examinations administered by the Ministry of Education. A total of 10 examinations must be taken in order to pass the complete examination, of which up to three may be taken after the first and second years. From 2008 the examinations in the A-Level subjects, the English B-Level and physical education B-Level can only be passed after the third year. 'HF Højere Forberedelseseksamen' (Higher Preparatory Examination) is a two-year course building on the 10th (voluntary) year of the Folkeskole. To pass the Studentereksamen or the HF requires a minimum average of 6.0 (old grading scale) and 2.0 (new grading scale) in the mark (GPA) for final result in the subjects shown as class performance or at the 10 examinations. The 'HHX (Højere Handelseksamen' and the 'HTX (Højere Teknisk Eksamen)' are broadly comparable final examinations from a business college and a technical college

respectively. They also contain 10 exam subjects and a number of final subject grades based on class performance.

Pupils attending vocational education can get an upper secondary qualification (EUX) along with the vocational diploma by extending their studies with a number of general subjects from the STX/HHX/HTX. The total duration of the general subjects correspond to the duration of the Højere Forberedelseseksamen (HF). A separate diploma is issued.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The five examinations noted above are the usual university entrance qualifications in Denmark. Usually, a university course consists of a three-year programme leading to a bachelor's degree, followed by a two-year programme leading to a master's degree. The university sector includes eight universities, consisting of multi-faculty universities and specialist institutions in particular fields. In addition, there are a number of specialist university-level institutions in fields such as architecture, art and music. University Colleges require the same entrance qualifications and issue mainly professional bachelor's degrees of up to 3.5 to 4 years of duration. Academies of professional higher education require the same entrance qualifications and issue mainly academy profession degrees of up to two years of duration.

Egypt

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Thanaweya A'ama (General Secondary School Certificate) Al-Azhar General Secondary School Certificate

Acceptable at 70% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Will need to be supplemented by acceptable qualifications that are widely used for entry to HE, e.g. GCE or SQA awards.

Diploma (Two years)

Comparable to the BTEC National Diploma.

GRADING SYSTEM

The minimum pass mark is 40% except for Arabic and religion, where 50% is required.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

All school education is under the centralised control of the Ministry of Education. A nine-year system of 'basic education' is followed by three years of secondary education culminating in the School Certificate examination in 13 subjects.

Candidates are required to take the examination over two years. The second and third years of secondary education are considered as two stages of the Thanaweya A'ama. There is a core of compulsory courses plus electives, which must include at least one course from arts and one from science, chosen according to the student's intended career. The medium of instruction is Arabic apart from language schools which use both Arabic and English.

Al-Azhar schools are open only to Muslim children and place additional emphasis on religious education. Boys and girls are strictly segregated. Completion of secondary education leads to the award of the Al-Azhar General Secondary Certificate.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Entry to university in Egypt is based on the results of the School Certificate and is highly competitive. An average mark of 70–75% is required to meet matriculation requirements and some university faculties (eg engineering and medicine) may demand higher grades. The first degree may take from four to six years depending upon specialisation.

Eritrea

This entry was last reviewed for the 2012 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Eritrean Secondary Education Certificate Examinations (ESECE) – a standard Matriculation examination given to high school (grade 12) completed students. The ESECE is at the moment serving as high school leaving examination and at the same time as an entrance examination to post-secondary institutions of higher education (IHE) in the country.

GRADING SYSTEM

All subjects in the ESECE are marked as a percentage and grades are then assigned as follows:

A	75–100	excellent
B	65–74	very good
C	50–64	good
D	40–49	satisfactory
F	below 40	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The National Board for Higher Education (NBHE) is the body mandated to oversee and manage the overall policies on higher education in the country. Recently the NBHE has been made to function under the Ministry of Education. The current system of education in the country follows the 5 + 3 + 4 system (five years of elementary education, three years of middle school education and four years of high school education). Students may opt to join technical and vocational schools after completing grade 10. At primary school level students are taught in their mother language but also take English as a language from the very beginning. After completing elementary education, however, the medium of instruction at all levels is English.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education in Eritrea is under the jurisdiction of the NBHE, which is again encompassed under the Ministry of Education. The national examination, the ESECE, is conducted and administered by the NBHE after students complete their high school (grade 12) education. Students are therefore admitted to the various institutions of higher education in the country at degree and diploma levels on the basis of the grades they earn in the national

exam (ESECE). Admission to highly competitive fields of specialisation like medicine, pharmacy, engineering, computer science, law, etc. might require higher grades in the ESECE.

Access to higher education has improved during the last five to six years with the opening of new IHE but remains limited. Female and blind students are admitted to IHE with a grade one scale lower than the other students in order to encourage blind students and increase the percentage of female students in IHE, which remains about 25% currently.

A bachelor's degree is the first degree offered by IHE after a student earns between 140–145 credit hours in an IHE about four years (8 semesters) after passing the ESECE. Bachelor's degrees in engineering, pharmacy and law (LLB) require between 175–180 credit hours in five years (10 semesters). This degree is considered to be a standard degree by western standards and students earning bachelor's degrees from IHE in Eritrea are directly enrolled in postgraduate programmes in Europe, USA, Canada and other Middle East and African universities. MD degrees in medicine and dentistry require eight years and qualifying exams are given to students from partner universities in the west in addition to the rigorous evaluation system used in the School of Medicine and Dentistry every semester.

Estonia

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Riigieksamitunnistus (National Examination Certificate)

Gümnaasiumilõputunnistus (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)

Gümnaasiumilõputunnistus (Secondary School Leaving Certificate) and Riigieksamitunnistus (National Examination Certificate) may be considered acceptable as satisfying general entrance requirements of UK HEPs (with the exclusion of English language proficiency requirement).

GRADING SYSTEM

All national examinations are assessed on a 100-point scale. From 1997 to 2001 the national examination score of at least one point was a passing score. From 2002 to 2013 graduation, the minimum passing score was 20 points. Since 2014 graduation the passing score is back to one point. The Riigieksamitunnistus is only valid in conjunction with a Gümnaasiumilõputunnistus (Secondary School Leaving Certificate), listing all subjects taken in secondary school with final grades. The marking system used at general secondary level is as follows, with 3 as the pass mark.

90–100%	5	very good	(väga hea)
75–89%	4	good	(hea)
50–74%	3	satisfactory	(rahuldav)
20–49%	2	unsatisfactory	(puudulik)
0–19%	1	poor	(nõrk)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory basic education, commencing at the age of seven, takes nine years resulting in the Põhikooli lõputunnistus (Basic School Leaving Certificate). There are two options at secondary level, general secondary school, also called gymnasium (grades 10–12), or vocational education institutions (kutseõppeasutus). Primary and general secondary education are provided in unified schools or separated institutions, where each year of study is directly based on the previous, and enables transfer from one school to another without hindrance. Some general secondary schools also offer specialised courses in commerce, technology and other studies or foreign language courses as part of a largely academic programme.

General secondary school students have to take the school examination, three national examinations and complete student research or practical work. School examination and student research paper or practical work are organised by the school.

The national examination in the Estonian language or Estonian as a second language, mathematics and foreign language are obligatory for all secondary school leavers. In mathematics, the national examination can be chosen between the narrow mathematics and broad (extensive) mathematics. In the case of the foreign language examination the student has a choice between German, English, French or Russian. National examination of a foreign language may be replaced by an internationally recognised language examination on the conditions established by the Minister of Education and Research.

Until 2013 students were required to pass at least three national examinations (in 1997 two national examinations) to complete secondary education.

National examinations are taken by all pupils of general secondary schools at the end of grade 12 but can be taken also by all pupils of vocational schools. Completion of general secondary education is on the basis of the Gümnaasiumilõputunnistus (Secondary School Leaving Certificate).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The general requirement for HE study is the Gümnaasiumilõputunnistus (Secondary School Leaving Certificate) or a corresponding recognised qualification attesting the completion of secondary school education, like vocational secondary education certificate giving access to higher education – Lõputunnistus kutsekeskhariduse omandamise kohta (Certificate of Vocational Secondary Education).

In addition, since 1997, it has been compulsory for secondary school students to pass the national examinations administered by the Foundation Innove (Sihtasutus Innove). Until 31 July 2012 administration of national examinations were the responsibility of the National Examination and Qualification Centre (Riiklik Eksami- ja Kvalifikatsioonikeskus).

National examinations usually qualify as entrance examinations to HEPs. Since 1998, the minimum requirement for eligibility for entry to HE in Estonia has been raised from two to three national examinations. Specific requirements depend on the higher education provider and the study programme.

They may include the entrance examinations (written/oral examination or interview) and additional requirements such as the average grade on the secondary education leaving certificate; the grade in a given subject.

Estonia has adopted a two-cycle system in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. After completion of at least three years' study, students are awarded a degree of Bakalaureus (bachelor's degree) or Rakenduskõrghariduse diplom (Diploma of Professional Higher Education). The present HE system in Estonia is binary and consists of universities and professional higher education institutions.

Ethiopia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Ethiopian General Education Certificate Examination (EGSLCE)**

Considered to be below GCSE standard.

Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Examination (EHEEE)

Considered to be equivalent in standard to GCSE grade A*–C, with the exception of English Language.

Bachelor's Degree

Considered to be between the standard of GCE A level and British bachelor's degree. May be given advanced standing within UK HE.

GRADING SYSTEM

Ethiopia uses a norm reference which varies from year to year. Subjects are marked as a percentage, with 50 as the minimum pass-mark.

Ethiopian General Education Certificate Examination (EGSLCE)

A	100–90	excellent
B	89–80	very good
C	79–60	satisfactory
D	59–50	average
E	below 50	fail

Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Examination (EHEEE)

Until 2010, five subjects were examined, using the following grading system (no descriptor is given for a grade between 401 and 500):

301–400	excellent
251–300	very good
201–250	good
101–200	satisfactory
0–100	poor

From 2010, students take seven examinations which are marked out of a total of 700.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Minister of Education is the Chief Executive in charge of overall educational policies of the country. Ethiopia has restructured the educational system. The 6+2+4 school system has been phased out and replaced by an 8+2+2 school system. The change in the primary school curriculum was completed in September 1999; the curriculum covers different mother tongue languages

as a medium of instruction in various primary schools throughout the country. At post-secondary and tertiary levels, English is the medium of instruction. At the end of lower secondary school in grade 10, students sit for the Ethiopian General Education Certificate Examination.

Following completion of general secondary education, students may proceed to Technical and Vocational Education at different levels (10+1, 10+2, 10+3 (Diploma)), and preparatory programmes. After completing grades 11 and 12 (pre-college or preparatory), students sit for the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Qualification Certificate.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Higher Education Sector of the Ministry of Education is responsible for co-ordinating HE activities. The medium of instruction is English. Students are admitted on the basis of their performance in the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination. Only those with high scores are admitted due to the limited capacity of HEPs. In order to improve the opportunity for access to those students with poor educational facilities, a discrimination scheme is applied for admission. However, students still have to fulfil the minimum entrance requirements.

Faroe Islands

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Education System in the Faroe Islands is based on that of Denmark. The upper secondary school leaving certificate is referred to in Faroese as Studentsprógv.

Finland

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Ylioppilastutkintotodistus/Studentexamensbetyg (Matriculation Examination Certificate)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

A scale of 4–10 is adopted in upper secondary school, with 4 as a fail, 7 as satisfactory and 10 as excellent.

The following grading is used in the Matriculation Examination:

7	(L) laudatur	(outstanding)
6	(E) eximia cum laude approbatur	(excellent)
5	(M) magna cum laude approbatur	(very good)
4	(C) cum laude approbatur	(good)
3	(B) lubenter approbatur	(satisfactory)
2	(A) approbatur	(barely satisfactory)
0	(I) improbatur	(below satisfactory)

Note: 1 is not used.

There is no overall grade for this qualification.

It is anticipated that the grade distribution will be approximately as follows: grade L 5%, E 15%, M 20%, C 24%, B 20%, A 11%, I 5%.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

On completion of nine years of basic education (perusopetus/grundläggande utbildning), students can continue studies in the three-year general upper secondary school (lukio/gymnasiet), which can be completed in two to four years, or in vocational upper secondary education and training, which takes three years and leads to upper secondary vocational qualifications. In the lukio, after passing certain compulsory courses in different subjects, the general upper secondary school student can take the corresponding tests in the national Matriculation Examination (ylioppilastutkinto/studentexamen). These tests, four compulsory and one or more optional, can be taken in up to three consecutive examinations (which are arranged in spring and autumn). The test in the candidate's mother tongue is compulsory for all candidates. The three other compulsory tests are chosen from among the following four tests: the test in the second national language, a foreign language test, the mathematics test, and one test in the general studies battery of tests (sciences and humanities). On completing the upper secondary school curriculum, for which an Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate (lukion päättötodistus/gymnasiets avgångsbetyg) is awarded, and after passing all the compulsory tests in the examination, the student gains the Matriculation Examination Certificate, i.e. ylioppilastutkintotodistus/studentexamensbetyg.

Approximately 99% of general upper secondary school students study English at some level. Although the Swedish-speaking population is a small minority (circa 5%), the State guarantees equality of educational opportunity and both language groups have their own institutions from pre-primary to university.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

General eligibility for higher education is given by the Matriculation Examination or the vocational qualification. These qualifications require at least 12 years of study. Equivalent foreign qualifications also give general eligibility for higher education. A numerus clausus is in use in all fields and universities or their faculties apply differing selection procedures. Most commonly, students are ranked according to their grades in the Matriculation Examination (and the Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate) plus entrance tests. In practice, students applying direct from school compete not only against each other, but also against applicants who passed the Matriculation Examination at an earlier date and applicants with other qualifications. Overall, about 50% are admitted either to university or polytechnic the same year as they pass the Matriculation Examination, but there are considerable differences between disciplines in this respect. Selection by universities has improved, through an evaluation of the selection process, to accelerate placement of students. A new joint online university admissions system was introduced in spring 2009 to improve study placement, to reduce the number of selection units and to lighten selection procedures.

Admission to polytechnics is based on a joint online system for application. Polytechnics determine their own entry requirements and select their own students. Selection is based on the applicant's school achievement, work experience and often also an entrance test.

University and polytechnic studies are measured in credits (opintopiste/studiepoäng). Study courses are quantified according to the work load required. One year of studies is equivalent to an average of 1,600 hours of student work and is defined as 60 credits. The credit system complies with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The bachelor-level/first-cycle polytechnic degree (**ammattikorkeakoulututkinto/yrkeshögskoleexamen**) is 210 or 240 or 270 credits (3.5 to 4.5 years of full-time study), depending on the field of study. The curriculum comprises basic and professional studies, optional studies, a practical training period and a diploma project.

The master-level/second-cycle polytechnic degree (**ylempi ammattikorkeakoulututkinto/högre yrkeshögskoleexamen**) consists of 60 to 90 credits (1 to 1.5 years of full-time study) master's-level degrees are aimed at polytechnic graduates with relevant work experience.

The bachelor-level/first-cycle university degree, usually called **kandidaatti/kandidat**, is a minimum of 180 credits (three years of full-time study). The master-level/second-cycle university degree usually consists of a total of 300 credits including a first-cycle degree of at least 180 credits, plus an additional 120 credits (minimum total of five years of full-time study). This degree is usually called **maisteri/magister**. As a rule, students are admitted to study for the higher degree. Universities also arrange separate master's programmes with separate student selection, to which the entry requirement is a bachelor-level degree or corresponding studies.

In medicine and in dentistry, the higher academic degree takes six years of full-time study to complete. The degree in these fields is called **liseniaatti/licentiat**.

After completion of a maisteri/magister, students can undertake doctoral studies of approximately four years' duration, culminating in the award of **tohtori/doktor**. In most fields, a pre-doctoral degree of liseniaatti/licentiat may be taken before the doctorate degree. In general, two years of full-time study after the liseniaatti/licentiat can result in achieving the award of tohtori/doktor. In addition to the required studies, doctoral students prepare a dissertation, which they defend in public.

France

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Diplôme National du Brevet (previously Brevet des Collèges)
(Lower Secondary School Certificate)

Generally considered to be comparable to four GCSEs.

Baccalauréat Général

Baccalauréat Technologique (BTn)

Option Internationale du Baccalauréat (OIB)

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements to UK HEPS.

Brevet de Technicien (BT) (Technician's Certificate) Baccalauréat Professionnel (Vocational Baccalauréat (BacPro))

Approximating to the BTEC National Diploma standard. Aimed at entering directly into employment, and/or onto Foundation Degrees. The vocational baccalauréat (reformed as a three year qualification in 2008) is now also considered as a route to higher education in France, mainly to Higher Technician Certificate (BTS) courses.

Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS) (Higher Technician's Certificate)

Comparable to BTEC HND/N(S)/VQ level 4.

GRADING SYSTEM

Baccalauréat Général and other Baccalauréats

20 (maximum) ... 0 (minimum), 10 being the minimum pass.

The immediate award of the Baccalauréat, usually regarded as a prerequisite for HE, requires a weighted mean mark of 10 or more in written and oral examinations. Less successful candidates, whose mean mark is between eight and 10, may sit a second set of examinations. The Certificat de Fin d'Etudes Secondaires (CFES) is awarded to pupils who obtain a mean final mark of between eight and 10 in this second set of Baccalauréat examinations.

In the Baccalauréat Général, the percentage of candidates achieving specific 'Mentions' has increased over the last few years: In 2013, 10.5%, received a Mention 'Très Bien' 17% a Mention 'Bien' and 26.4% a Mention 'Assez Bien'. For the Baccalauréat Technologique, a total of 35% of students achieved a specific 'Mention'.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

There are five years of primary education (although most children attend three years of Maternelle before entering primary education) and seven years of secondary education, the last three years being at a Lycée, of which the final two are in preparation for a specific Baccalauréat. There are three series in the Baccalauréat Général – (L) emphasis on literature, history and geography, philosophy and languages; (ES) emphasis on economics, social sciences and history and geography; (S) emphasis on mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology. In all general Baccalauréats, the study of two languages is compulsory and they are both required to take the exam. Usually the more able students take the Baccalauréat Général in which at least eight academic subjects are studied. The Option Internationale du Baccalauréat is the international version of the Baccalauréat Général taken by bilingual students (see separate entry, Appendix D). The Baccalauréat Technologique has seven series, of which the best known are STISD (science and industrial technologies and sustainable development); and STL (science and laboratory technologies).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In theory the Baccalauréat admits to all faculties in French universities, but in practice, the specialisation can be important and thus a 'science-type' Baccalauréat is almost essential for medicine and the Baccalauréat Technologique admits to certain faculties only. Some high profile universities also require an admission interview. It is

expected that competitive entrance examinations, which involve two years' post-Baccalauréat study (the Classes Préparatoires), will continue to be normal for admissions to the 'Grandes Ecoles'. The first phase of university studies leading to the Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales (DEUG), usually awarded after two years of study, has been phased out and replaced by the LMD system.

The L = Licence is awarded after three years of study, and the M = Master takes a further two years of study after the Licence. The Master replaced the Maitrise and the Mastère qualifications in 2006 although a Maitrise can still be awarded as an interim qualification after the first year of a Master's programme. Finally the D = doctorat is equivalent to a PhD and takes a further three years after the Mastère. Thus the LMD is known as the 3/5/8 system.

Gambia

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)

Regarded as being below the standard of UK A levels. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to a bridging programme.

See also **Overseas examinations of UK awarding organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

1	excellent
2	very good
3	good
4–6	credit/minimum acceptable pass
7	pass
8	pass
9	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Gambia has now adopted the 9+3 educational structure which has become common to West African Anglophone countries. Six years of lower primary education and three years of upper primary education lead to the Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination. A further three years of secondary education culminate in the WASSCE. English is the medium of instruction. The School Certificate and A level examinations, a legacy from the previous system, were phased out by 1999.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The University of Gambia was inaugurated in September 1999. Admission to a four-year degree is on the basis of passes at credit level (at grade 6 or better) in five subjects including English, mathematics or a science subject and an arts subject in the WASSCE.

Georgia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Sashualo skolis atestati (secondary school leaving certificate)

Considered to be equivalent to GCSE grades A*–C

GRADING SYSTEM

The most common grading system is the following, though two other systems are in use:

1	excellent
2	good
3	satisfactory
4	failed

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Elementary School comprises six years of education from 6 to 12.

Basic School comprises three years of education from 12 to 15.

Secondary Education comprises three years of education (study) from 15 to 18. After completion of this the student obtains the secondary school leaving certificate. Basic school students also have access to Primary Vocational Education or Secondary Vocational studies, leading to the Primary and Secondary Vocational Education Diplomas respectively. These diplomas and certificate give access to higher education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

There are four types of higher education institution: university, institute, academy and conservatory. In most higher education institutions there are three levels of study: bachelor's programme that lasts three to four years; master's programme that lasts two years and doctoral programme that lasts three years. There is also the Certified Specialist's Programme in the areas of medicine, dental medicine and veterinary medicine, that lasts five to six years.

Bachelor's Programme – for admission to this level of studies candidates must hold the secondary school leaving certificate, and pass the Unified National University entry examinations. After completion of this programme students are awarded a bachelor's degree (Diploma).

Master's Programme – students who are awarded a bachelor's degree or an equivalent Certified Specialist's Degree may take the master's programme. After completion of this programme students are awarded a master's degree (Diploma).

Doctoral Programme – students who are awarded a master's degree or an equivalent academic degree may take the Doctoral programme. After completion of this programme they are awarded a Doctor's Degree.

Certified Specialist's Programme – for admission to this level of studies candidates must hold the secondary school leaving certificate. After completion of this programme students are awarded the Certified Specialist's Diploma.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Only students who have passed the Unified National Examinations may enrol in a state accredited programme at an accredited higher education institution, based on the ranking of scores he/she received in the examinations.

Germany

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Realschulabschluss; Mittlerer Schulabschluss: Lower secondary education

Acceptable at grades 1–4 in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife (Abitur) Upper secondary education

Zeugnis der Fachgebundenen Hochschulreife (Fach-Abitur)

Zeugnis der Fachhochschulreife

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

Realschulabschluss

1	sehr gut	(very good)
2	gut	(good)
3	befriedigend	(satisfactory)
4	ausreichend	(adequate)
5	mangelhaft	(poor)
6	ungenügend	(very poor)

Abitur

15, 14, 13	sehr gut	(very good)	15 = 1+, 14 = 1, 13 = 1-
12, 11, 10	gut	(good)	12 = 2+, 11 = 2, 10 = 2-
9, 8, 7	befriedigend	(satisfactory)	9 = 3+, 8 = 3, 7 = 3-
6, 5, 4	ausreichend	(adequate)	6 = 4+, 5 = 4, 4 = 4-
3, 2, 1	mangelhaft	(poor)	3 = 5+, 2 = 5, 1 = 5-
0	ungenügend	(very poor)	0 = 6

The scale (15–0 or 1–6) used depends on the type of school the student attended, and the year they left education.

Both **poor** and **very poor** constitute a fail.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The role of the Federal government in education is limited and specialised. Legislative and administrative responsibility rests firmly with the Länder (states). There is a broad uniformity in the educational systems of the 16 Länder, although nomenclature and periods of study may vary. Lower and upper secondary education usually covers eight or nine years to grade 12/13. At present, in most Länder, the Allgemeine Hochschulreife (Abitur) may be obtained after the successful completion of 13 consecutive school years. In most Länder a gradual conversion to 12 years of schooling is being implemented. In some Länder, this conversion to a 12-year course of education to obtain the Allgemeine Hochschulreife at the Gymnasium (grammar school) will be completed by 2010, in others the changes will not take place until 2016 and beyond. Also, in a number of Länder it will still be possible to obtain the Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife after 13 years of schooling at comprehensive schools.

The Realschulabschluss is awarded in grade 10 (examinations are taken in the majority of the Länder). The Zeugnis der Fachhochschulreife is usually achieved after 12 school years at the Fachoberschule, a vocational secondary school (grades 11/12). The Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife is awarded in grade 12/13

and represents the assessment of the two final years of upper secondary schooling including final examination (Abiturprüfung). Subjects are chosen from three subject areas, all of which must be represented and studied throughout the school career up to, and including, the Abitur examination itself: I languages, literature, arts; II social sciences; III mathematics, natural sciences, technology. At least two subjects are taken as main intensive courses (Leistungskurse) of which one must be German or a foreign language or mathematics or a natural science; the other subjects are taken as basic courses (Grundkurse).

The Abitur examination comprises at least four and at most five components (in most Länder, three written examinations and one oral). The first and second written examinations are in subjects taken as main intensive courses; the third written examination and the oral one are taken in one of the subjects taken as basic courses. Depending on the legislation in place in some Länder, a fifth subject can be examined in either written or oral form, or particular achievements (eg a year paper or results of a project) may be incorporated into the Abitur examination. The final grades of the Abitur are based on the marks obtained in the examinations and on class performance in all subjects (up to 10) during the last two years of upper secondary education. For marks up to the Realschulabschluss, a six-point scale is used in which grade 1 is the highest and grade 4 is adequate. Marks on this scale are converted to the 15-point scale, used for grades 11–13 (or grades 10–12 depending on the Länder) and for the Abitur examinations. The overall result (the assessment of two years' work and the examinations) involves a maximum of 840–900 points depending on the Länder and whether the Abitur examination covers four or five examination subjects, of which at least 280/300 must be achieved to pass. The overall result is also given in terms of an average grade according to the six-point scale, e.g. 2, 3.

English (in some Länder, French) is compulsory to Realschulabschluss level but need not be a major component of the Abitur examination. Nonetheless, one foreign language must be studied during the final two years to the Abitur level and is part of the overall result.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife admits to all courses offered by German HEPs. The Zeugnis der Fachgebundenen Hochschulreife admits only to subject specific courses at universities or Fachhochschulen (universities of applied sciences), depending on the focus of the courses taken at school.

When applications are expected to substantially outnumber the places available, the number of places will be restricted (numerus clausus) and a selection process will take place. The centralised selection process for 2005 admission included medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, psychology, pharmacy and biology. From 2005 on, the centralised selection process includes three main quotas: for 20% of the places, the average grade (Durchschnittsnote) of the entry qualification is the criterion, for another 20%, the waiting time after gaining the HE entry qualification. The remaining 60% are selected by the universities themselves. The average grade of the

entry qualification must have a major significance among the selection criteria. Complementary criteria are, e.g. the final grades for specific subjects, the results of admissions tests, professional experience and interviews. The majority of the other courses are covered by similar local or in some cases regional selection processes.

Following the Bologna Process most German HE institutions have now adopted the two-cycle bachelor's/master's degree system for the majority of their courses, though some still continue with traditional programmes: Diplom/Erstes Staatsexamen/Magister qualifications.

Within this two-cycle degree system, the first qualification after three to four years is the bachelor's. Graduate second degree programmes (one to two years) lead to master's degrees. For acceptance in the labour market and international co-operation, it is necessary to ensure transparency and clarity by restricting the number of different qualification designations. In designating degrees, no distinction is made between the profile types 'more practice-oriented' and 'more research-oriented'. These degree programmes are offered by Universitäten and Fachhochschulen as well as by Musikhochschulen (colleges of music) and Kunsthochschulen (colleges of arts). The total standard period of study for consecutive bachelor's and master's study courses is a maximum of five years.

To ensure the equivalence of degrees, examination grades and qualifications and the possibility of their transfer from one HEP to another, the Länder have set up an independent Accreditation Council. The accreditation of degree programmes involves a formalised, objective review process, which is used to assess whether a course meets the required standards in terms of academic content and vocational relevance.

Ghana

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)

Regarded as being below the standard of UK A levels. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to a bridging programme.

GRADING SYSTEM

A1	excellent
B2	very good
B3	good
C4–C6	credit/minimum acceptable pass
D7	pass
E8	pass
F9	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Before the radical revision of state education began in 1987, six years of primary education and (following a

Common Entrance Examination) five years of secondary education led to the West African School Certificate examinations (WASC) and two further years to the WAHSC. The current education structure is 6+3+4. Six years of primary school is followed by three years of junior secondary school leading to the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), which is below GCSE standard. Those pupils then admitted to senior secondary school follow one of seven options: agricultural science, business, general arts, general science, home economics, technical, and visual arts; and after four years take the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE). The senior secondary school leaving examination is currently being harmonised throughout the sphere of the West African Examinations Council as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). The SSSCE has two components: continuous assessment (30%) and external examination (70%). English is the medium of instruction, except in the first three years of primary school when a local language is used as a medium of instruction and English is taught as a subject.

From 2014, the education structure will change to 6+3+3.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to university in Ghana is on the basis of achievement at SSCE. In addition to the SSCE results, admission may also require a University Entrance Examination. The first degree is of a minimum of four years' duration.

Greece

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Apolytirion of Gymnasio

Acceptable at marks of 11 or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Apolytirion of Geniko Lykeio (Previously Apolytirion of Eniaio Lykeio)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements at a mark of 15 or above, normally for entry to year one of a degree programme. Students with marks below 15 may be considered for entry into a foundation year.

GRADING SYSTEM

20 (maximum) ... 10 (minimum pass) ... 1.

As a guide to performance, the following figures give an idea of the distribution of marks for various pathways in 2013 vs 2012:

Distribution of marks										
Guide to performance in pan-Hellenic (national) examinations – distribution of marks for various pathways in 2013 (vs. 2012)										
A/A	Subject	Marks' range	Year			A/A	Subject	Marks' range	Year	
			2013	2012					2013	2012
1	Greek Language General Education	18–20	1,39	2,04	12	Physics Science Pathway	18–20	9,82	9,10	
		15–17,9	28,06	23,44			15–17,9	19,12	16,22	
		12–14,9	41,73	33,85			12–14,9	20,98	17,71	
		10–11,9	15,81	17,81			10–11,9	12,63	11,90	
		5–9,9	11,72	19,72			5–9,9	25,62	29,81	
		0–4,9	1,26	3,10			0–4,9	11,80	15,24	
2	History General Education	18–20	7,94	7,14	13	Chemistry Science Pathway	18–20	22,26	28,57	
		15–17,9	8,87	12,76			15–17,9	25,68	22,66	
		12–14,9	11,37	12,31			12–14,9	17,72	15,48	
		10–11,9	11,68	10,18			10–11,9	7,89	7,66	
		5–9,9	35,66	32,06			5–9,9	15,73	15,73	
		0–4,9	24,45	25,53			0–4,9	10,69	9,86	
3	Mathematics & Elements of Statistics General Education	18–20	11,09	22,23	14	Applications Development in Programming Technological Pathway	18–20	28,23	43,17	
		15–17,9	15,36	17,41			15–17,9	33,50	20,93	
		12–14,9	19,65	13,84			12–14,9	16,75	12,94	
		10–11,9	12,05	7,43			10–11,9	7,13	5,76	
		5–9,9	23,29	18,11			5–9,9	8,99	11,52	
		0–4,9	18,53	20,95			0–4,9	5,37	5,66	
4	Physics General Education	18–20	42,66	31,15	15	Mathematics Technological Pathway	18–20	1,86	9,21	
		15–17,9	23,60	27,33			15–17,9	11,58	12,95	
		12–14,9	14,19	15,05			12–14,9	17,37	17,20	
		10–11,9	5,25	5,73			10–11,9	11,37	12,24	
		5–9,9	8,07	11,39			5–9,9	29,36	28,74	
		0–4,9	6,19	9,32			0–4,9	28,43	19,63	
5	Biology General Education	18–20	23,72	20,99	16	Physics Technological Pathway	18–20	10,96	8,66	
		15–17,9	23,33	21,10			15–17,9	17,37	12,99	
		12–14,9	14,53	14,68			12–14,9	14,58	16,01	
		10–11,9	7,89	8,53			10–11,9	12,61	12,28	
		5–9,9	18,87	22,26			5–9,9	30,40	30,81	
		0–4,9	11,63	12,43			0–4,9	14,06	19,23	
6	Ancient Greek Theoretical Pathway	18–20	1,70	3,81	17	Chemistry Biochemistry Technological Pathway	18–20	29,67	43,57	
		15–17,9	11,85	14,93			15–17,9	22,64	21,33	
		12–14,9	19,86	18,24			12–14,9	20,26	10,71	
		10–11,9	14,68	13,60			10–11,9	9,10	7,48	
		5–9,9	30,70	29,17			5–9,9	14,78	11,22	
		0–4,9	21,19	20,22			0–4,9	3,51	5,66	
7	Latin Theoretical Pathway.	18–20	18,27	16,89	18	Mathematics Technological Pathway 2	18–20	0,65	2,47	
		15–17,9	18,42	21,61			15–17,9	4,55	6,21	
		12–14,9	15,48	15,51			12–14,9	8,88	9,32	
		10–11,9	8,83	8,70			10–11,9	7,86	8,16	
		5–9,9	15,85	15,55			5–9,9	26,68	28,25	
		0–4,9	23,12	21,72			0–4,9	51,35	45,56	
8	Modern Greek Theoretical Pathway	18–20	5,07	7,17	19	Physics Technological Pathway 2	18–20	2,55	2,16	
		15–17,9	21,41	27,71			15–17,9	6,20	4,81	
		12–14,9	25,78	26,12			12–14,9	10,39	7,60	
		10–11,9	16,13	13,42			10–11,9	8,88	7,07	
		5–9,9	26,54	19,47			5–9,9	36,63	34,51	
		0–4,9	5,04	6,08			0–4,9	35,33	43,81	
9	History Theoretical Pathway.	18–20	18,71	19,18	20	Principles of Business Management Technological Pathway 2	18–20	20,90	30,56	
		15–17,9	17,94	20,08			15–17,9	22,55	17,16	
		12–14,9	13,30	14,34			12–14,9	18,50	14,98	
		10–11,9	8,61	8,44			10–11,9	12,22	10,23	
		5–9,9	23,81	22,50			5–9,9	23,47	23,36	
		0–4,9	17,60	15,43			0–4,9	2,34	3,67	
10	Biology Science Pathway.	18–20	22,64	31,04	21	Applications Development in Programming Technological Pathway 2	18–20	13,14	16,74	
		15–17,9	35,01	32,97			15–17,9	16,44	17,91	
		12–14,9	19,15	14,54			12–14,9	11,48	14,52	
		10–11,9	7,18	6,14			10–11,9	7,90	9,51	
		5–9,9	10,92	9,94			5–9,9	26,67	19,81	
		0–4,9	5,07	5,34			0–4,9	24,34	21,48	
11	Mathematics Science Pathway.	18–20	2,47	9,79	22	Principles in Economic Theory Selective	18–20	18,69	33,80	
		15–17,9	14,61	18,51			15–17,9	20,48	19,98	
		12–14,9	21,42	19,30			12–14,9	15,46	13,69	
		10–11,9	13,65	11,79			10–11,9	8,67	6,95	
		5–9,9	27,59	24,14			5–9,9	21,13	14,93	
		0–4,9	20,23	16,44			0–4,9	15,55	10,61	

(source: Greek Ministry of Education , www.minedu.gov.gr)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education in Greece is compulsory for six to 15 year olds. Compulsory education comprises six years of primary education (Dimotiko), followed by three years of lower secondary (Gymnasio). Three-year post-compulsory education consists of two school types: Eniaia Lykeia (Upper Secondary School), which culminates in the Apolytirion of Genito Lykeio, and the Technical Vocational Educational Schools (TEE).

Mutual student transfer from one type of school to the other is possible. Post-compulsory secondary education also includes Vocational Training Institutes (IEK), which provide a formal but unclassified level of education (as they accept both Gymnasio and Lykeio graduates, according to the relevant specialisation they provide).

The Apolytirion of Genito Lykeio is based on the performance of the student's final year, which includes the average of two oral and one written examination. Main subjects are examined throughout Greece by a written external examination; other subjects are internally examined and set by the individual schools. Students take external examinations in their third year that are set and marked nationally on six out of 16 subjects.

Only 15 of these subjects count towards a student's average grade for the Apolytirion. Physical education, although a requirement, is not included.

The second and third years of the Eniaia Lykeia have three option streams: theoretical (ancient and modern Greek, Latin and history); science (mathematics, science and biology); and technological (mathematics, science, information technology). The curriculum of all three streams has a common course of general education.

Since 2011, pupils of Unified (Eniaio) Lykeia can also obtain Apolytirion without participating at the panhellenic examinations. These pupils take part in examinations set and marked by the school itself. Although the Ministry of Education claims that the two types of Apolyteria (with and without panhellenic examinations) are equivalent, it is clear that the Apolytirion without panhellenic examinations does NOT allow access to Greek Higher Education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

With a pass (a minimum mark of 10 out of 20 in all subjects) in the Apolytirion of Genito Lykeia, pupils are eligible to enter Greek universities and Technological Education Institutes/ions (TEI). University entry is highly competitive. Scores are generally lower for TEI entrants. Entry to HE is based on the marks obtained in the six special subjects depending on the pupil's choice of stream.

To determine whether a Greek candidate is suitable for admittance into a UK university, it is strongly advised that admission tutors evaluate his/her Apolytirion scores (including panhellenic examinations) along with his/her Certificate of Access (Vevaiosi Prosvasis). These two documents will provide a better understanding of the candidate's qualifications.

The overall average grade of Vevaiosi Prosvasis takes into account the following.

- i) The oral grade (this is the average of the Apolytirio oral grade adjusted by +2 or -2 so that its difference to the written grade is not more than two units/monads).
- ii) The written grade (the final grade achieved in the six specialised subjects as explained above).

For the admission grade, the oral grade counts for 30% and the written for 70% of the overall mark.

An example to demonstrate how it will work for a candidate who has an oral grade of 15 in maths and 10 in the written exam. S/he will get the following average grades for the Apolytirio and the Certificate of Access to HE.

For the Apolytirion: $(15 + 10) / 2 = 12.5$

For the Certificate of Access, the calculation will be: adjustment of two points within the written grade sees the oral grade at 12.

The new oral grade will be multiplied by 0.3 (oral mark is 30% of the overall mark) and the written by 0.7 (the written exam is 70% of the overall mark).

Therefore, we will have $(12 \times 0.3) + (10 \times 0.7) = 3.6 + 7 = 10.6$ i.e. the candidate in the example will score 12.5 in the Apolytirio Maths but 10.6 in the Certificate of Access. Thus, Apolytirio scores will appear higher than the Greek Certificate of Access scores, as the two are calculated differently.

Calculation of general mark for entry into tertiary level education

Vevaiosi Prosvasis (Certificate of Access) is a document given to students soon after exam results are released. Based on the VP outcome, students fill in their application (michanografiko deltio) in which they state their preferences for the AEIs/TEIs (in priority order) or any other institutions of their preference. Along with this application, they must submit a copy of their Apolytirio and a copy of the Certificate of Access (VP).

They can tick as many institutions as they want in one or maximum two of the five epistimonika pedia.

Students are selected according to their stated preferences, the determining factor being the total number of units (moria) which come out from the general admission grade (Genikos Vathmos Prosvasis) and the grades of the two subjects of increased importance which are different for each Pedio.

The calculation of units (moria) is the final configuration phase of the entry requirements to HE. This is the conversion of the general admission grade (Genikos Vathmos Prosvasis) and the grades of the two most important subjects (for each pedio) from marks into units (moria).

The example below shows how the conversion is made from a 0–20 scale into thousands for moria needs. The entry score is worked out as follows:

8 x general mark for entry into tertiary level education plus

1.3 x subject mark of first specialised subject
(e.g. mathematics for engineering) plus

0.7 x subject mark of second specialised subject
(e.g. physics for engineering) x 100

Therefore, the top score could be:

$[(8 \times 20) + (1.3 \times 20) + (0.7 \times 20)] \times 100 = 20,000$ points.

Hong Kong

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)

Starting from 2012, the HKDSE is accepted as a qualification satisfying the general entrance requirements to the British tertiary institutions. Candidates will take the HKDSE after completing a three-year senior secondary education. Full details of this qualification can be found on the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) website at www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/

Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCEE)

A grade of 'C' or above is equivalent to a pass in GCE O-Level examination conducted by a British awarding organisation, except English language (Syllabus A), accommodation & catering services and fashion & clothing.

Starting from 2007 HKCEE, standards-referenced reporting was adopted in Chinese language and English language. Candidates' levels of performance are reported using levels with reference to a set of standards for the subject. The results in the two language subjects are recognised as equivalent to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) results as follows:

Levels attained in HKCEE	5*	5	4	3
Grades attained in IGCSE	A*	A	B	C

The last HKCEE for school candidates was conducted in 2010.

Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE)

For A level subjects, a grade of 'E' or above is equivalent to a pass in GCE A level examinations conducted by a British awarding organisation. HKCEE and HKALE qualifications are recognised by British universities for entrance purposes. The HKCEE and HKALE were discontinued in 2012 and 2014 respectively.

GRADING SYSTEM

Achievements below level 1 or grade F are designated as 'unclassified' and are not recorded on the certificate.

Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)

The HKDSE comprises three categories of subjects: Category A New Senior Secondary (NSS) subjects, Category B Applied Learning subjects and Category C Other Language subjects. Achievement in HKDSE Category A NSS subjects is indicated by five levels, of which level 5 is the highest and level 1 is the lowest.

Candidates with the best performance in level 5 are awarded 5** (10% level 5 candidates); the next top level 5 candidates are awarded 5* (next 30% level 5 candidates).

This qualification has been allocated UCAS Tariff points as follows:

Level	NSS subjects, except Mathematics	Mathematics Compulsory Part	Mathematics Extended Part
5**	145	65	80
5*	130	60	70
5	120	45	60
4	80	35	50
3	40	25	40

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

For further information about the UCAS Tariff, please see Appendix H.

As a general reference to performance, the following figures provide percentages in the levels achieved in selected 2013 HKDSE Examination subjects for day school candidates:

Category A: New Senior Secondary Subjects

Subject	Percentage of levels awarded					
	5**	5*	5	4	3	2+
Chinese Language	0.9	3.6	8.8	27.5	52.3	80.7
English Language	1.0	3.9	9.6	25.6	48.8	77.8
Liberal Studies	0.8	3.2	8.1	35.6	69.3	88.5
Mathematics (Compulsory Part)	1.2	4.8	11.8	34.7	57.3	80.8
Biology	1.7	6.9	17.2	43.3	70.9	89.7
Business, Accounting and Financial Studies	1.2	4.6	11.4	37.5	66.8	88.5
Chemistry	2.4	9.5	23.2	48.9	75.1	87.5
Economics	1.5	6.1	14.7	41.0	65.7	84.2
Geography	1.0	4.0	9.5	33.6	61.3	84.0
Physics	2.7	10.6	26.2	49.5	73.2	90.3

Full details of the examination statistics can be found on the HKEAA website at: www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/HKDSE/assessment/exam_reports/index.html

HKCEE and HKALE

From 2007 HKCEE, for the subjects of Chinese language and English language, achievements in the examination are indicated by five levels (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) of which 5 is the highest and 1 is the lowest. In addition, top performing level 5 candidates are awarded 5*. For other subjects in HKALE and HKCEE, achievements in the examination are indicated by six grades (A, B, C, D, E and F), of which A is the highest and F the lowest.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Under the New Academic Structure (NAS) of Hong Kong, all students receive six years of secondary education comprising three-year junior secondary and three-year senior secondary education, and take the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination, conducted by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) starting from 2012.

With the exception of language-related subjects, all subjects can be taken either in English or Chinese with the syllabuses, examination papers and marking systems common to both languages. The language in which the subject is undertaken is not recorded on the certificate.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

For HKDSE, the entrance requirements for admission to undergraduate programmes of universities in Hong Kong are set as level 3 for Chinese language and English language; level 2 for mathematics and liberal studies.

Individual institutions and programmes may determine the attainment levels required and other specified admission requirements.

The Associate Degree is a two- to three-year programme of study which may be a terminal qualification, or act as a bridging programme to further higher education.

Details of the recognition of HKDSE can be found on the HKEAA website at: www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/recognition/hkdse_recognition/

Hungary

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Érettségi

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

School Evaluation	Standard Maturity Exam	Higher Maturity Exam
5 – jeles (excellent)	100–80%	100–60%
4 – jó (good)	79–60	59–47
3 – közepes (average)	59–40	46–33
2 – elégséges (pass)	39–20	32–20
1 – elégtelen (fail)	19–0	19–0

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Since the major reforms in 1993, an 8+4 system of primary and secondary education has predominated (but not to the exclusion of other variants such as 6+6 and 4+8). Admission to secondary education, both academic and vocational, is based on selective examinations. The school leaving examination (Érettségi vizsga) taken at age 18 combines written and oral assessments and consists of at least five subjects, of which four are prescribed (Hungarian language and literature, mathematics, history and a foreign language) and one is optional. From the 2004/5 academic year, secondary school students have the option to take either standard 'középszintű' or higher 'emelt szintű' maturity examinations, both in the prescribed and the optional subjects.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to bachelor's programmes is selective, with the Secondary School Leaving Certificate as a prerequisite for admission. From 2004/5, entrance examinations are no longer being held (with a few exceptions where practical examinations or aptitude tests are required).

The minimum requirement for admission to master's programmes is a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, with the exception of a few undivided programmes (e.g. in the field of medical studies, where the prerequisite for admission is Secondary School Leaving Certificate). The minimum requirement for doctoral programmes is master's degree or its equivalent.

Iceland

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Stúdentspróf (Matriculation Examination)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements to higher education.

GRADING SYSTEM

Unit credit system:

Minimum credits for Stúdentspróf: 140.

Individual subject grades: 10 (maximum) ... 5 (minimum pass) ... 1.

Exceptionally, grade 4 in a final or a single course unit of a subject may be regarded as a pass.

Traditional class system:

Subject grades: 10 (maximum) ... 1.

Average of all subjects – minimum grade 5.

Pass for individual subjects – grade 4 but exceptionally grade 1, 2 or 3 may be regarded as a pass in not more than two subjects.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Ten years of compulsory education may be followed by four years of upper secondary schooling leading to a matriculation examination (Stúdentspróf). This can be awarded on the basis of internally set fourth year examinations or from the accumulation of internally set unit-credits. There are three academic programmes of study leading to the matriculation diploma: languages, social sciences and natural sciences. Icelandic is the medium of instruction. English language is a compulsory subject from grade 5 (age 10). Within any given academic programme of study, three groups of courses are offered: core subjects, elected fields and free selection.

Vocational education is offered in comprehensive schools, industrial-vocational schools and specialised vocational schools. The length of course varies but the most prevalent are four-year courses. Many forms of vocational education give the students legal certification for certain types of employment. This applies, for example, to the skilled trades where students must finish the Journeyman's Examination (Sveinspróf). Within vocational education, students can choose between training for a skilled trade or training in another area, for example, in the field of fisheries, the travel industry, health or commerce. Additional studies for those who have finished vocational programmes of study and wish to finish the matriculation examination have been defined in the National Curriculum Guidelines.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University admission in Iceland is generally open to those who have passed the Stúdentspróf but some institutions operate a system of restricted entry. First degrees (BA and BSc) require three to four years of study. Those students who have completed vocational education would be required to undertake additional studies and finish the matriculation examination prior to being eligible for study at HE level.

India

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE)**

May be considered acceptable at grades 1–6 in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis.

All India Senior School Certificate Examination (SSC) Higher Secondary School Certificate**All India Senior Secondary School Certificate Indian School Certificate (ISC)**

Students with high scores (75%) at Standard XII from the Central Board of Secondary Education and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination may satisfy entry requirements, provided an appropriate standard of English has been attained.

Higher Secondary School Certificate; Intermediate Certificate

At least 80% from state boards of education may satisfy entry requirements, provided an appropriate standard of English has been attained. It should be noted that there is no national level quality assurance system (see Education System below).

GRADING SYSTEM**SSC**

Externally assessed subjects are given numerical scores, with 33% being the pass mark. All students that pass the SSC are given a rank order with A–1 representing the top eighth, ranging down to D–2 representing the bottom eighth of candidates that have passed within the cohort. E indicates a failed candidate.

ISC**1 (maximum) – 8 (pass) – 9 (fail)**

School examinations are marked on a percentage basis and the award is indicated in grades 1 to 8. All subjects are assessed externally. The pass mark is at 40%. The Certificate is awarded with grade 1 to 8.

The Indian School Certificate (ISC) is acceptable at grades 1–3 in lieu of Scottish Highers on a subject for subject basis.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Educational responsibilities are split between the Union Government and state governments. Differences exist between states, but the most common pattern is of 10 years of general education (Standard X) followed by two years of higher secondary education (at Junior or Intermediate Colleges in some regions) and terminating in examinations for one of the various school-leaving certificates (Standard XII). There may also be two- to two-and-a-half-years' pre-schooling available. School

courses are commonly taught in the medium of Hindi, the regional language or English. In many cases, whilst flexibility is offered by examination boards, due to the pressure of numbers in schools, students may be streamed with little option to mix subjects. For the ISC, there is no streaming of students or clustering based on numbers. Students are free to select their combination of subjects, apart from English, which is compulsory.

It should be noted that there is no national quality assurance system in place in India and that the National Council of Educational Research and Training has highlighted that a 'widespread disparity in standards of examinations among 34 boards conducting examinations at the end of Classes X and XII has been experienced and no common or national standards of achievement are available for equating them'.

The ISC involves 12 years of schooling. The award of a Pass Certificate in the ISC requires a pass in four or more subjects, including English, at one sitting. In the ISC, English is the medium of instruction.

In addition to undertaking Indian qualifications, some centres may offer students the opportunity to sit A Levels through attending after-school classes. A number of international schools are also offering GCSE/IGCSE and GCE examinations from UK Exam Boards. Students may have also taken College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) SATs (see entry for United States of America). The International Baccalaureate is becoming increasingly popular (see Appendix C).

Several school examination boards have started to offer vocational courses to students, for example, Certificate of Vocational Education Examination offered by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE). However, as the learning culture is geared towards HE, only a small proportion of students choose to take this option.

Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) offer craft and skills programmes, of between one and three years' duration, to instruct students in skilled labour.

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), formerly known as National Open School (NOS), was established as an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India in 1989. The NIOS is a National Board for Secondary and Senior Secondary Examinations similar to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE). NIOS follows a learner-centric approach to teaching through Open and Distance modes. It offers a wide range of subjects in comparison to any other formal school. The learners are free to choose subject combinations as per their needs and goals, and study at their own pace from specially designed self-instructional materials. There is a provision of credit accumulation and the registration of the learners is valid for a period of five years. The focus of the National Institute of Open Schooling ranges from elementary education to courses at the pre-degree level, both academic and vocational. It attempts to reach out to physically, mentally, socially and geographically disadvantaged groups through suitable learning material and delivery mechanisms.

For more information visit www.nios.ac.in

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In theory, university admission in India is open to all students passing a Standard XII examination from a recognised Examination Board in at least four subjects. In practice, however, there is fierce competition. Places are awarded with reference to academic merit in the 12th-year examinations and/or in special university entrance examinations, which are often linked to particular degree courses such as business, medicine and engineering. First degrees, both Honours and Pass, of a duration of three years are generally undertaken at colleges affiliated to a specific university. Undergraduate professional degrees, for example, medicine, engineering and architecture, can be between four and five years' duration. Due to the geography of the country, some HEPs offer students multimodal study, including remote teaching utilising computer-aided instruction and multimedia packages. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), an autonomous body, provides quality assurance for HE.

A couple of state governments have enacted the Private Universities Bill. All such universities that have been set up by individual acts passed by state legislature have been evaluated by the Universities Grants Commission (UGC, which regulates universities in India) and are now recognised as legitimate universities. The Supreme Court of India has struck down an act passed by Chhattisgarh state that resulted in a large number of institutions being designated as universities. The Court has ordered that such institutions should seek affiliation to existing universities. These institutions are now in the process of seeking affiliation to existing universities or are working with state government to pass individual legislation for these universities.

Indonesia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Surat Tanda Tamat Belajar Sekolah Menengah Umum Tingkat Atas/STTB: SMA (Senior Secondary School Certificate of Completion)**

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English Language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

10	excellent
9	very good
8	good
7	above average
6	average
5	below average
4–1	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Indonesian Education System recognises two different paths of education: school education and out-of-school education. Nowadays, Indonesia basically adopts a 6–3–3–4 school education system, which consists of six years of primary (age six/seven–12), three years of junior secondary (age 13–15), three years of senior secondary (age 16–18), and four years of tertiary education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to public higher education in Indonesia is mainly by the UMPTN (Entrance Examination to State Universities) in either sciences or social sciences.

The Sarjana Satu (S1) degree (144–160 credits) is awarded after four years of study. Professional disciplines require an additional two to six semesters.

The Magister (S2) (180–194 credits) is awarded after two further years of study.

The Doktor (S3) (230 credits) requires additional coursework and a dissertation after the Magister.

Non-university higher education is offered by polytechnics and academies.

Iran

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Diplom-Motiveseteh (National High School Diploma)**

Considered to be above GCSE standard (grades A, B, C) on a subject for subject basis, provided minimum marks of 50% have been obtained, subject to English Language proficiency. Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, a SQA Award or equivalent qualification.

Pre-University Certificate

Acceptable as satisfying general entrance requirements in related subjects, provided a minimum mark of 60% has been obtained, subject to English Language proficiency.

National Entrance Examination (Kunkur)

Acceptable as satisfying the general entrance requirements, subject to English Language proficiency.

Kardani

Acceptable in lieu of BTEC HND (but not necessarily appropriate for direct entry to the third year of an undergraduate course).

GRADING SYSTEM

Graded on a scale of 20 (maximum) to 0, where 10 is a minimum pass. Grades can also be expressed as letters:

A	20.0–17.0
B	16.9–14.0
C	13.9–12.0
D	11.9–10.0

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The first nine years of education are compulsory. The education system comprises a six-year primary education cycle, followed by a three-year middle (guidance/junior high school) cycle and a secondary education cycle (high school), which has been reduced from four to three years (grades 10–12). English is available as a second language from grade 7. There are qualifying examinations at each break point and national examinations are conducted at the end of each grade of the secondary cycle. There are three main branches of the secondary (high school) cycle: theoretical, vocational and technical. Students must complete 96 units within the three years to be awarded the High School Diploma. Candidates for HE must undertake a post-Diploma preparatory year. On successful completion of this, they are awarded the Pre-University Certificate and become eligible to sit the university entrance examination (Kunkur). Far si (Persian) is the medium of instruction throughout.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission is basically related to a candidate's ranking in the Kunkur. The Kunkur is highly competitive, with university places available for less than 30% of applicants. The first degree is associate degrees (HND is the Kardani/Technician) which usually takes two years, or BA/BS degrees (Licence/Kar-Shenasi) which usually takes four years, another two years for MA/MS/MD degrees (Kar-Shenasi Arshad), and three to four more years for PhD degrees (Doktora). They are awarded on a credit system (72 credits, 135 credits, 28–32 credits and 36 credits respectively, an overall GPA of 12 or better out of 20 for associate and BA/BS degrees, and 14 or higher out of 20 for MA/MS/MD and PhD).

Iraq

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Sixth Form Baccalauréat/Certificate of Preparatory Education (Adadiyah)**

Acceptable at 60% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would require to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

There are six years of primary and six years of secondary education in Iraq. Secondary education is divided into two three-year phases: the Intermediate Cycle (on completion of which students are awarded the Certificate of Intermediate Studies) and the Preparatory Cycle (which leads to Sixth Form Baccalauréat). There is a measure of specialisation in scientific, literary or vocational studies in the last two years of study. Tuition is in Arabic throughout secondary education and mainly so in HE.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Baccalauréat is the basis of admission to university study in Iraq. The four-year general arts degree has a limited intake and competition is even stronger in the 'professional' areas.

Ireland (Eire)

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Teastas Sóisearach (Junior Certificate) Considered to be below GCSE standard

Ardteistimeireacht (Leaving Certificate)

Considered to be between GCSE and GCE A level standard.

GRADING SYSTEM	
A1	100–90 %
A2	89–85
B1	84–80
B2	79–75
B3	74–70
C1	69–65
C2	64–60
C3	59–55
D1	54–50
D2	49–45
D3	44–40
E	39–25
F	24–11
No Grade	10–0

For the Irish Leaving Certificate, the following table shows the percentage of candidates gaining each grade in 2009 in certain selected subjects.

Subject	Level	Number of students	A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1 and below
Irish	H	14,796	5.8	7.8	10.3	12.6	14.1	13.9	11.9	10.4	13.3
	O	26,016	0.7	3.4	8.2	13.2	15.6	15.2	12.6	9.8	21.3
English	H	32,864	3.8	6.5	5.2	8.8	13.0	10.3	13.5	14.8	24.1
	O	18,169	2.7	6.3	4.4	9.4	16.4	10.5	14.0	14.2	22.1
Mathematics	H	8,420	6.9	8.1	9.4	11.5	12.2	11.7	11.8	9.0	19.4
	O	37,273	5.8	6.9	8.3	9.2	9.7	9.5	9.3	8.6	22.7
History	H	7,851	6.3	6.7	8.2	9.9	12.5	11.5	11.8	10.5	22.6
	O	4,141	9.1	9.8	7.0	10.2	12.0	9.2	9.5	10.5	22.7
Geography	H	19,024	3.7	5.3	7.4	10.3	11.9	12.8	12.5	11.3	24.8
	O	6,037	0.6	3.1	2.2	7.1	13.4	15.2	18.3	14.6	25.5
French	H	13,676	4.9	5.8	7.7	8.6	11.0	11.5	12.0	11.4	27.1
	O	13,999	0.2	1.4	4.5	8.6	11.8	13.2	12.7	12.2	35.4
Physics	H	4,694	10.6	9.9	10.1	10.1	8.9	8.6	8.6	6.1	27.1
	O	2,230	5.7	11.3	9.3	9.9	13.5	8.2	8.2	8.2	25.7
Chemistry	H	6,037	12.5	9.4	10.4	10.8	10.0	8.4	8.1	8.0	22.4
	O	1,366	3.0	6.2	5.9	8.6	11.0	10.7	8.6	9.1	26.9
Biology	H	20,102	8.2	8.3	8.4	9.0	9.6	9.0	9.0	8.8	29.7
	O	7,999	1.0	2.6	5.2	7.5	10.0	11.0	11.3	10.5	40.9

The Irish Leaving Certificate has been allocated UCAS Tariff points as shown in the table below:

Grade	UCAS Tariff points
Higher	
A1	90
A2	77
B1	71
B2	64
B3	58
C1	52
C2	45
C3	A1
D1	33
D2	A2
D3	B1
	B2
	1

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

For further information about the UCAS Tariff, please see Appendix H.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is compulsory for children from the age of six to 16, which includes six years of primary and three years of lower secondary education. On completion of three years of secondary education (junior cycle), the Junior Certificate is usually taken, and the Leaving Certificate after a further two or three years of study (senior cycle). The Junior Certificate is below GCSE standard and is not used by the Irish universities for entrance purposes. The Leaving Certificate is examined at two levels that are used for the purposes of selection to higher education, Ordinary and Higher. In general, the standard is somewhere between GCSE and GCE A level. Pupils normally take six to nine subjects, of which six or more would usually be at Higher level in the case of potential university candidates. Instruction in post-primary schools is in English and Irish. Study of the Irish language is compulsory but students are not required to take an examination in the subject.

A variation of the Leaving Certificate is the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) which concentrates on technical subjects with additional vocationally focused modules. An alternative to these is the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA) which is a stand-alone pre-vocational programme designed to prepare students for working life through a two-year cross-curricular course. Certification in the LCA is not recognised for direct entry to HE courses.

Further education is the responsibility of the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). FETAC offers a range of qualifications at levels 1–6 of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications. For more information visit www.fetac.ie.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Responsibility for managing access to third level places in Ireland rests with the Central Applications Office (CAO) www.cao.ie and the third level institutions generally. Course offers are made by the CAO on the basis of a points system linked to performance in the Leaving Certificate Examination. The minimum entry requirements for full-time undergraduate programmes are matters for individual higher education institutions. It is recommended that potential students consult the website of the relevant institution for information on their minimum entry requirements.

The supply and demand situation between university courses is broadly similar to that in the UK. Overall demand exceeds supply in certain disciplines and competition is strong. This is reflected in stringent entry requirements for areas such as medicine and law, which may involve five or six passes at grade A in Higher level subjects. A two stage mechanism applies for entry to undergraduate medical education consisting of the results obtained in the Leaving Certificate and a standardised admissions test called HPAT- Ireland. HPAT measures a candidate's logical reasoning and problem solving skills as well as non-verbal reasoning and the ability to understand the thoughts, behaviour and/or intentions of people. Further information is available on www.hpat-ireland.acer.edu.au

In practice, a rank order of candidates who satisfy eligibility requirements is established by converting Leaving Certificate grades for the six best subjects into a points score. A detailed system, with possible additional bonuses, awards 100 points for grade A1 at Higher level and 60 points for grade C3. On this basis, examples of minimum levels at which places were offered in 2013 include: University College Dublin – veterinary 575, law 500, Trinity College Dublin – dental science 575 and University Limerick – languages, literature and film 340, applied languages 445.

University admission may also be obtained on the basis of the Higher Certificate or Ordinary Bachelor's degree awarded by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), formerly the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), which are broadly comparable to the corresponding BTEC awards. Most higher education providers have developed entry routes and quotas of reserved places for mature applicants who are over 23 years of age. Providers vary in their criteria for mature student admission; the majority of third level institutions

require mature students to apply in the first instance through the CAO. However applicants are also advised to contact relevant colleges directly, to establish if there are any additional admission requirements.

Israel

This entry was last reviewed for the 2014 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Bagrut

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

10	excellent
9	very good
8	good
7	above average
6	average
5	below average
4–1	fail

Successful candidates must take a minimum of 20 study units in seven required subjects and in additional optional subjects. The required subjects are: Hebrew/Arabic, literature, bible, civics, history, English and mathematics. The additional optional questions are selected from prescribed lists, at least one of which must be a five-unit subject. At least one option must also be a general culture subject. Students must receive at least an average grade in physical education and must not receive more than one grade of 5 or below, and this is not permitted to be in Hebrew or Arabic.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Six years of primary education are followed by three years of lower and three years of upper secondary schooling. The medium of instruction is Hebrew or Arabic. There is some specialisation in the final two years. Although eight is the minimum number of subjects taken in the Bagrut examination, in 12th grade, the number may be higher. Pupils can take a subject at one of three levels, basic, normal and high points/units. The Matriculation Certificate is then awarded based on the Bagrut examinations.

Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority pupils on the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and on the Gaza Strip take the Palestinian Matriculation Certificate.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Matriculation Certificate is the basic requirement for admission to HE in Israel. In practice, however, considerably more than the minimum points are needed for university entry. Minimum required points/units in English is 4 points/units. University applicants must pass the nationally administered Psychometric Entrance Examination (a multiple-choice aptitude test), have proficiency in Hebrew, and in some cases be interviewed. The bachelor's degree normally lasts three years but is longer for professional specialisms (such as engineering and similar BSc degrees).

Italy

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Diploma di esame di Stato conclusivo dei corsi di istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary school leaving certificate formerly known as Diploma di Maturità) Opzione Classica/Linguistica/Scientifica/Tecnica/Professionale/Magistrale/Artistica

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

100 (maximum) ... 60 (minimum pass) ... 0.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Five years of primary education are followed by eight years of secondary education of which the final five years (upper secondary) are spent at a specialised secondary school. In Italy, two main branches of secondary schools can be identified:

First of all, those aimed at providing a general humanistic and scientific education, that traditionally represented the privileged route to access university, among them the following types of schools are included:

Liceo Classico: with a focus on humanistic subjects;

Liceo Scientifico: with a focus on scientific subjects;

Liceo delle Scienze Umane: with a focus on the education of teachers, providing students with fundamental knowledge on sociology, psychology and pedagogy.

A second branch of secondary schools includes vocational and technical schools, aiming at providing students with practical skills for immediate access to the job market. In this group there are:

Istituti tecnici: technical upper secondary schools.

Istituti professionali: vocational upper secondary schools.

Despite what happens in other countries in the world, students obtaining the upper secondary school leaving qualification from this group of institutions also satisfy the minimum requirements to access to university

Final examinations, are organised by the Ministry of Education University and Research (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca: they are taken in the last year of upper secondary school and consist of three written tests and an oral one covering all subjects. The final mark of the examination comes from the sum of the average notes achieved by each student in the last three years of upper secondary school and the marks achieved in the three exam tests.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In Italy, all students who have obtained an upper secondary school leaving diploma are entitled to access university. However, in some faculties, such as Architecture or Medicine, there are restrictions on admissions and it is necessary to pass an entrance examination.

At Italian universities various types of degree courses at various levels are available: first cycle or bachelor's courses, last three years and they grant 180 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System)

credits. At the end of these courses students are awarded a Laurea. Students have then got the possibility to attend second-cycle degree courses of the duration of two years, which award a second-level degree, called Laurea Magistrale and granting 120 ECTS credits.

Finally, Italian doctorates last a minimum of three years and are called Dottorati di Ricerca.

Japan

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Kotogakko Sotsugyo Shomeisho (Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE Advanced Levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

Associate Degree from a Junior College (Jun-Gakushi) Vocational Degree (Senmon-shi) from a Vocational College

Acceptable in lieu of BTEC National Diploma or NVQ Level 3 award. Holders may be eligible for direct entry to HE, depending on the subject.

GRADING SYSTEM

A 5	excellent
B 4	very good
C 3	good
D 2	minimum pass
F 1	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Educational institutions in Japan can be divided into three categories according to their source of funding: national – financed by central government; public – financed by local government (prefectures, municipalities); and private – financed by private organisations. Around a third of senior high school students attend private schools, while three-quarters of undergraduates are at private universities. Entrance to national high schools and universities is generally competitive, while the academic level of both public and private schools and universities varies widely.

Compulsory education in Japan comprises six years of primary school (from age six), and three years of lower secondary school, finishing at 15. However, 98% of students continue on to upper secondary education. They take an entrance exam that determines the level of upper secondary school that they enter. After three years, they graduate with the internally assessed Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate (Kotogakko Sotsugyo Shomeisho).

Students who did not complete upper secondary school can take the Certificate for Students Achieving the Proficiency Level of Upper Secondary School Graduates (or Konin – this qualification replaces the former Daiken), which makes them eligible to take the entrance examinations for Japanese universities. It is thus of an equivalent level to the upper secondary school leaving certificate.

Students at upper secondary school have some choice regarding the subjects they study, but generally cover a much broader curriculum than their counterparts in the UK.

English became compulsory from the third grade of primary school in 2011. However, classes are taught by the homeroom teacher who does not necessarily have any specialist training in language teaching. A foreign language (usually English) remains compulsory up to undergraduate level.

Reforms have introduced some schools that offer integrated lower and upper secondary education within one institution, amended curricular content to include elective elements and reduced the school week to five days instead of six. The aims of these reforms were to create a more flexible learning environment, to broaden the scope of the curriculum and to foster greater independence. However, curriculum content has recently been increased again in many subjects, amid fears that standards are falling. The Fundamental Law of Education was revised in December 2006, for the first time in over 50 years.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Applicants to national and public universities (Daigaku) in Japan are expected to have successfully completed 12 years of school education, attained an Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate and taken a preliminary entrance examination, the National Centre for University Entrance Examination ('CentreTest'), as well as taking the entrance examinations of individual institutions. Some, but not all, private universities also require applicants to take the National Centre for University Entrance Examination as a preliminary examination. The scores obtained in these entrance examinations are accorded more importance than school grades by universities. However, there is a growing range of alternative entrance methods such as recommendation by high schools or 'AO' (admissions office) under which applicants effectively recommend themselves. Currently, about 40% of applicants use this route and so do not have to take an entrance examination.

Most universities operate an American-style grades and credit-based system, leading to a four-year first degree (Gakushi).

Junior college associate degree courses (Jun-Gakushi) last two years. Vocational degrees (Senmon-shi) at vocational colleges also last two years. These two qualifications are considered to be of comparable level and holders of either are eligible in Japan for entrance to the third year of a four-year degree course in a related subject.

Jordan

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Tawjihi (General Secondary Education Certificate)

Acceptable at 60% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

Percentage scale with the minimum pass mark shown on the transcript.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

There are 10 years of compulsory education in Jordan, six at primary level and four at lower secondary. This may be followed by two years of secondary education. The General Secondary Education Certificate (Tawjihi) is taken at the end of year 12. Instruction is in Arabic but English language is compulsory from year 1 of basic education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University admission in Jordan is on the basis of the General Secondary Education Certificate at a minimum standard set annually. Much of the university teaching is in the medium of English. The first degree is credit-based and usually lasts for four years.

Kazakhstan

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Attestat/Svidetel' stvo o Srednem Obrazovanii (Certificate of Secondary Education)

Acceptable (if taken at grade 11) in lieu of GCSE (grades A*–C)/Credit Standard Grades on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

GRADING SYSTEM

5	excellent
4	good
3	satisfactory/minimum pass
2	unsatisfactory

Edinyi Natsional'nyi Test – ENT (Unified National Test, UNT)

Edinyi Natsional'nyi Test (Unified National Test) is a way of independent unified evaluation of secondary school graduates across the country (since March 2004). It is compulsory for all school graduates who are intending to apply for higher education in Kazakhstan, as it serves as both graduation from secondary school and a higher education entry test.

There are five subjects, including four compulsory subjects: Kazakh and Russian language, history of Kazakhstan and mathematics, and one from the following selection (which depends on the area of specialism of the higher education course, given in brackets): geography (economics), biology (medicine), physics (engineering), world history (law), chemistry (science), literature (philology) or foreign language (international related subjects).

A maximum of 100 points can be gained (each course worth 25 points and Kazakh not being counted). Currently for admission to national universities a minimum score of 70 is required; other universities in Kazakhstan require a score of 50.

The UNT is scored from 0–100; this is then converted to a grade of 2–5 which is subsequently amalgamated into the Attestat.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The system consists of primary, secondary (lower secondary and complete secondary) and HE. The nine-year education period, covering primary and lower secondary, is compulsory between the ages of six and 15. In practice many parents prefer that their children start school at the age of seven. Secondary education is provided by general, vocational and specialised secondary schools. Lower secondary education takes five years, on completion of which, students are awarded the Basic Secondary Education Certificate.

Following lower secondary education, students may proceed to upper secondary school level or to vocational school. Courses at upper secondary education last two years, leading to the Attestat/Svidetel' stvo o Srednem Obrazovanii (Certificate of General Secondary Education, upon completion of 11 years of education). The government of Kazakhstan plans to introduce an additional year into upper secondary education, which means that secondary education will consist of 12 years of study. A number of selected schools around the country have been piloting the new system. This qualification, together with Edinyi Natsional'nyi Test or ENT (Unified National Test) in four subjects, gains access to HE in Kazakhstan. Successful completion of vocational training is considered an alternative means of completing secondary education and leads to a diploma. Students can also progress to secondary specialised education. Specialised education courses last between two and four years, on completion of which, students are awarded the Diplom o Srednem Spetsialnom Obrazovanii (Diploma of Specialised Secondary Education).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

HE is provided at universities, polytechnics/technical institutes etc – 124 overall as of 1 March 2014.

Admission to HEPs (VUZ) in Kazakhstan is based on the results of Unified National Tests (described above) and the completion of secondary education or the equivalent vocational/specialist training.

Under the former system, the initial qualification, Diplom, was usually completed in five years. Under the new system, a Bakalavr (bachelor's) degree is awarded after four years of study (142–148 credits). Master's degrees are awarded following a further one to two years of study (36 to 47 credits) depending on the subject. For technical/engineering courses, the higher education degree is often called Diploma-Specialist and takes five years to complete. Medical courses are six years long, and the Diploma-Specialist is also awarded. This is usually followed by one year of clinical Ordinatura (practice), which, together with Diploma-Specialist, gives the right to work as a doctor. A PhD is normally three years and is equivalent to 66 credits.

Kenya

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE)**

Considered to be between GCSE and GCE A level provided a pass of C or above is achieved.

See also **Overseas examinations of UK awarding organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

A,	12
A-	11
B+,	10
B,	9
B-	8
C+,	7
C,	6
C-	5
D+,	4
D,	3
D-	2
E	1

EDUCATION SYSTEM

A system culminating in A levels was discontinued in 1989. The main structural changes were to extend primary education by one year to eight years (completed about aged 14) and to reduce secondary education from six to four years. The medium of instruction is English. The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), which is administered by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), is sat in the fourth year of secondary education. The examination is taken in seven subjects.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Access to HE in Kenya is on the basis of the KCSE examinations. The overall minimum grade required for admission is C+. Admission is regulated by an aggregate of points accumulated from specified subject clusters appropriate to the intended degree course. Points are awarded for four subjects on a scale of A12 ... C+ 7 ... E 1. Cut-off points scores vary from 31 for the Bachelor of Science (Agriculture), a four-year general degree, to 47 for the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery or the Bachelor of Pharmacy. Admission to non-university HE studies is on the basis of KCSE for post-secondary programmes. Apprenticeship programmes are organised by industries for their employees. Progression depends on passing a government trade test at various levels.

Kuwait

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Shahadat-al-thanawia-al-a'ama (General Secondary School Certificate)**

Acceptable at 60% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading varies between subjects; the maximum and minimum marks per subject are shown on the certificate. The main Grading System generally used by HEPs is:

Grade	Percentage	Result
A	100–90	excellent
B	89–80	very good
C	79–70	good
D	69–60	pass

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education in Kuwait is compulsory from grade 1 to 10 (age six to 16), following a 5+4+3 system – five years elementary, four years intermediate and three years at high school. Intermediate education culminates in the Intermediate School Certificate. To progress to secondary education, students must achieve a minimum of 50% in Islamic education, Arabic, English language, mathematics, science and social studies. Secondary schooling lasts for three years, with all final three years being streamed. The General Secondary School Certificate is awarded provided students achieve the pass mark of 50% in all subjects. Arabic is the medium of instruction and English language is compulsory throughout school education, commencing in the first grade.

There are numerous private schools in Kuwait which, while not free, are generously subsidised.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Kuwait has one state university, several technical schools, with private universities recently established. Admission to the university is on the basis of the General Secondary School Certificate. Individual departments set their entry requirements in the examination as a whole (e.g. 85% in medicine), and in addition require a competitive university entrance examination. The bachelor's degree would usually take four years, except in engineering and pharmacy (five) and medicine (seven).

Latvia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību (Certificate of General Secondary Education)**

May be acceptable for entry to higher education, with the exception of English language skills, which should be tested separately.

Considered to be comparable in standard to GCE AS/Scottish Higher.

GRADING SYSTEM

Centralised exams are marked A–F. For HE accession, usually grades A–D are needed. In general, the grading system for subjects appearing on the Certificate of General Secondary Education (Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību) is as follows:

10	izcili	(with distinction)	
9	teicami	(excellent)	
8	Ļoti labi	(very good)	A
7	labi	(good)	B
6	gandrīz labi	(almost good)	
5	viduvēji	(satisfactory)	D
4	gandrīz viduvēji	(almost satisfactory)	E lowest pass mark
3	vāji	(weak)	
2	Ļoti vāji	(very weak)	
1	Ļoti, ļoti vāji	(very, very weak)	

The mark 8 indicates that the knowledge and skills acquired correspond fully to the expected maximum level. Marks 9 and 10 are evidence of knowledge and skills substantially higher than expected at the appropriate level of learning and are therefore somewhat like A+ and A++.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Two year compulsory pre-school education is provided from the age of five. Nine year compulsory basic education begins at age seven, with four years of primary education, followed by five years of lower secondary education.

The language of instruction at basic level is either Latvian or Russian. At age 16, after completion of compulsory education, students may choose to continue education at upper secondary level. There are two types of upper secondary education programme; general secondary and vocational secondary education and training programmes. The compulsory curriculum of three-year general secondary schools (vidusskola, ģimnāzija), determined by the National Standards, is available in the following profiles: general comprehensive; humanities/social; mathematics/natural sciences/technical; vocational/professional (arts, music, business, sports). General secondary education is aimed at students wishing to pursue their studies to HE level, and comprises eight compulsory and four to seven elective subjects according to the requirements of the chosen profile. Upon graduation, students have to take at least four centralised national school leaving examinations. Since study year 2008/2009 graduates must also take a mandatory centralised state exam in mathematics. The Certificate of General Secondary Education (Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību) and a certificate of the centralised exams passed detailing scores is awarded to all students who have received passing final marks in all the subjects studied according to their chosen profile, as well as a positive assessment in the national examinations.

Vocational education and training programmes have also been developed, with the majority of schools providing three- and four-year vocational education and training programmes at upper secondary level. Students of four-year programmes have the opportunity to combine the acquisition of vocational qualifications with general secondary education. The number of general education subjects integrated in the four-year vocational educational curricula qualifies the graduates to enter tertiary education programmes.

The secondary vocational education programme culminates in five centralised school leaving examinations. One of these is a national qualification or national examination. The remaining four are held in compliance with the terms of general secondary education acquisition. Among graduates of vocational education and training programmes, only holders of a Certificate of Vocational Secondary Education (Diploms par profesionālo vidējo izglītību) are eligible for access to tertiary education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The certificate of general secondary education (Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību) or secondary vocational education (Diploms par profesionālo vidējo izglītību) give the right for entry to HE.

The admission procedure may vary, depending on the level of student demand for a certain programme, ranging from one to four competitive entrance examinations, to a ranking of applicants by results of centralised national school-leaving examinations, or final marks in subjects relevant to the programme. As of October 2006, students who have either completed their upper secondary education prior to 2004, or acquired their education abroad or been exempted from national centralised examinations due to health

reasons are not required to demonstrate centralised examination certificates. The admissions board may conduct interviews. HE institutions establish their entry requirements for the next academic year by 1 November of the current year.

The HE system is binary. Academic programmes are based on fundamental and/or applied science and comprise a thesis at the end of each stage. The Bakkalaurs (bachelor's) degree is awarded at the end of the first stage, and Maġistrs (master's) degree is awarded at the end of the second stage. The Maġistrs degree or equivalent is required for admission to doctoral studies. Since the year 2000, professional degrees can also be awarded.

The Diploma of first level professional HE/college programmes is the Diploms par pirmā līmeņa profesionālo augstāko izglītību and Diploma of second level professional HE is called Diploma of Higher Professional Education (Profesionālās augstākās izglītības diploms).

Lebanon

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Baccalauréat

Acceptable at a mark of 11 or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

20–18	excellent
17–15	very good
14–12	good
11–10	pass
9–0	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Six years of primary education is followed by three years of intermediate and three years of upper secondary education. The Baccalauréat is taken at the end of year 12. The medium of instruction in state schools are Arabic/French or Arabic/English.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Baccalauréat may satisfy university entrance requirements in Lebanon, but for some institutions there may also be an entrance examination. The American University of Beirut (AUB), which is linked to New York State University, also requires an English language test and the AUB Scientific-Quantitative General Test for admission to a four-year first degree.

Liechtenstein

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Berufsmaturität

BTEC National Diploma standard. May be considered to satisfy the general entrance requirements of UK HEPs.

Matura

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entry requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

Matura

6	sehr gut	(very good)
5	gut	(good)
4	genügend	(satisfactory)
3	mangelhaft (= 1 Minuspunkt)	(unsatisfactory) (= 1 minus factor)
2	schwach (= 2 Minuspunkte)	poor (= 2 minus factors)
1	sehr schwach (= 3 Minuspunkte)	(very poor) (= 3 minus factors)

At the Oberschule (lower secondary school), an average mark of at least 3.5 is needed for promotion to the next grade. At the Realschule (intermediate secondary school), the minimum mark needed for promotion is 4.0. At the Gymnasium (grammar school), the promotion depends on the average mark, which has to be at least 4.0 and the amount of minus factors and insufficient marks. Exceptions are possible in certain cases.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Ministry of Education with its subordinated offices, holds responsibility for the education system, vocational training and adult education.

Compulsory Education (from age six to 15) is covered by two school levels: primary schools and lower secondary schools. The secondary I level is further sub-divided into three school types: Oberschule, Realschule and Lower Gymnasium. At the end of the fifth year of primary school, a process for selecting the appropriate secondary school (Oberschule, Realschule, Gymnasium) takes place. The allocation of the secondary school is based on the student's performance in the fifth year at primary school.

A voluntary 10th school year is available after compulsory school.

General secondary education after the completion of compulsory education (grammar school senior level) is provided in the form of the upper level of the Gymnasium, which offers a wide range of subjects and balanced education, leading to university entrance qualifications. The upper secondary education at the Gymnasium consists of four years/grades. It concludes with the Matura (upper secondary school leaving examination) which is a general higher education entrance qualification which in Switzerland and in Austria provides access to universities without having to take an entrance examination.

The curriculum of the Gymnasium is determined by the requirements of the Matura. Option groups available are: languages including Latin; modern languages; art, music and education; business and law; mathematics and natural sciences.

Adult upper secondary education (vocational secondary school) consists of the Berufsmaturitätsschule Liechtenstein (BMS). It offers anyone who has completed vocational training the opportunity to earn the Berufsmatura (special higher education entrance qualification) while pursuing a working career. The Liechtenstein Berufsmatura provides admission to all higher education institutions in Liechtenstein and Austria as well as to all Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschulen) in Switzerland. There is a full-time and a part-time course offered, both following the same curricula. The full-time course lasts one year. The part-time courses last at least four semesters, including the final examination. The modular structure of the part-time course allows the student to complete the courses and the final examination in stages.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Entry to higher education is on the basis of the final examination certificate (Maturazeugnis or the Berufsmaturitzeugnis). In certain cases, practical traineeship or an additional examination may be required before starting or during higher education studies.

There are three levels of higher education degree: bachelor's lasting at least three years, followed by master's (at least two years) and doctorate (at least two years).

Liechtenstein possesses a limited tertiary education sector with only one public higher education institution (University of Liechtenstein) and two private institutions (The International Academy of Philosophy in Liechtenstein and the Private University in the Principality of Liechtenstein). In addition to this provision, Liechtenstein has contractual progression arrangements with Switzerland, Austria and the University of Tübingen in the State of Baden-Württemberg (Germany).

Lithuania

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Brandos Atestatas (Maturity Certificate)

Considered acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements where good grades have been achieved.

GRADING SYSTEM

All Subjects & School Level Final Exams	
Pass	10 (excellent)
	9 (very good)
	8 (good)
	7 (highly satisfactory)
	6 (satisfactory)
	5 (sufficient)
	4 (insufficient)
Fail	3 (highly insufficient)
	2 (poor)
	1 (very poor)
State level Final exams	
Pass	100–1

State level final exams are graded on a 1 to 100 scale. 1 is the lowest pass grade and is awarded to students who get the lowest amount of points required to pass. 100 is awarded to the 1% of students who achieve the highest result nationwide (norm-referenced assessment). Students who do not gain enough points to receive 1, fail the exam.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory education is from age seven (or six) to 16 (inclusive). Primary school is from age seven (or six) to 10, followed by basic/lower secondary education (age 10 to 16). After six years of basic/lower secondary education have been completed, students are awarded a Pagrindines mokyklos baigimo pazymejimas (PMBP) (Certificate of Completion of Basic/Lower Secondary Education School), showing their assessment on the 10-point scale in all subjects. They may then progress to upper-secondary education (Senior/Upper Secondary School or the last two years of Gymnasium'), which is optional, offering a two-year programme of studies

leading to the Brandos Atestatas (Maturity Certificate). At this level, to students in the 12th year (last school year) schools offer disciplinary diversification of four subject streams²: humanities (humanitarinis profilis), mathematics and natural sciences (realinis profilis), the arts (menu profilis) and technological (technologinis profilis). Overall, students have to take at least 10 subjects in two years, whereas the maximum number of subjects students may choose to study may not exceed 12. Students are offered courses at two different levels: general B (bendrasis) and extended A (isplestinis). Students have to study at least two but no more than five subjects of the stream chosen at the extended level. Individuals who have completed upper-secondary education take matura examinations. These are of two types: school level or state level. Though the results of state-level and school-level examinations are normally differently weighted by higher education institutions, both types of examination are eligible for the student to be admitted to a higher education institution.

To be awarded the Brandos Atestatas, students have to pass successfully all subjects and two school or state level matura examinations in total. Examination in the Lithuanian language is compulsory; a further subject can be chosen from the curriculum followed. If a candidate achieves a language test (such as IELTS) with a minimum CEFR level B2, at a better level than the same language taken as part of their state exam, they can substitute the result from the language test for that achieved from the state test. How many exams the student will choose to sit depends on the number of study programmes (and study fields) he/she chooses when applying for admission to HE institutions³. The law on higher education establishes that a competitive grade consists of the results of not more than four subjects where not more than three of them are the results of matura examinations. If the entrant chooses to apply for admission to study programmes of more than one study field, then he/she may have to sit more matura examinations.

Brandos Atestatas lists:

1. Results in all subjects the student studied in the last (12th) form. Graded on the scale 1–10. Also recorded is the course followed (A or B).
2. Results of school exams (if taken). Graded on the scale 1–10.
3. Results of state exams (if taken). Graded on the scale 1–100 Brandos Atestatas allows access to HE.

The Brandos Atestatas results are issued in the third week of July each year.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Brandos Atestatas is required by all HE establishments. Admission is competitive, based on the grades from the end of the 12th school year, in no more than four subjects, and the results of the specific matura examinations. Some HE establishments may additionally organise not more than two examinations or tests for identification of special abilities. State level matura examinations give more credits than the school level matura examinations. Therefore, students who intend to go to university take the required amount of state level matura examinations.

HE institutions in Lithuania are of two types: universities and colleges. HE establishments can be state or private. Non-university studies last three years, are undergraduate (professional bachelor's), one-cycle, aimed at acquiring the professional bachelor's degree and/or a professional qualification, testified by the professional bachelor's diploma or higher education diploma.

University studies are organised in three cycles: first cycle undergraduate (bachelor's), second cycle graduate (master's or specialised professional) and third cycle postgraduate (doctoral, residency or postgraduate art). Integrated studies are aimed at acquiring a qualification of the second cycle, when studies of the first and second cycles are combined in succession. Upon completion of four-year undergraduate university studies, the bachelor's diploma is awarded. Upon completion of five-to-six year integrated studies, the master's qualification or the master's qualification and a professional qualification are acquired, testified by the master's diploma. Sometimes only a professional qualification is awarded testified by the higher education diploma. Upon completion of two-year graduate master's studies, the master's diploma is awarded, testifying to the master's qualification or master's and professional qualification. Specialised professional one-to-one-and-a-half-year second cycle studies are aimed at acquiring a professional qualification in a specific study field, testified by the higher education diploma. Doctoral studies may be pursued after completion of the first two cycles, and last between three and four years. Postgraduate art studies last two years, are third-cycle studies designed to train HE establishment art teachers with the specialisation of artists. Residency is third-cycle studies designed exclusively for training specialists in specific study fields (medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine) wishing to follow their individually chosen careers. Studies are measured in credits (one credit representing 40 study hours, and corresponding to 1.5 ECTS [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System] credits).

¹Gimnazija starts after four years of lower secondary education (without its completion), when aged 14 or 15.

²As of the school year 2007/08, a reform has been implemented in curricular diversification. To students in the 11th year (penultimate school year) curriculum is offered by way of individualised provision without streaming students into curricular areas (subject streams). 60% of the curriculum is made up of the core curriculum compulsory to all pupils, while the rest pupils can choose of their own accord.

³The entrant has a right to apply for admission to more than one study programme and more than one higher education institution.

Luxembourg

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Diplôme de Fin d'Etudes Secondaires

Diplôme de Fin d'Etudes Secondaires Techniques

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

60–52	excellent	(excellent)
51–48	très bien	(very good)
47–40	bien	(good)
39–36	assez bien	(satisfactory)
35–30		(pass)
29–1		(fail)

The previous grading system used, which relates to the statistics below, was as follows:

60–48	très bien	very good)
47–40	bien	(good)
39–35	assez bien	(fair)
34–30	satisfaisant	(satisfactory)
29–20	insuffisant	(unsatisfactory)
19–1	mauvais	(poor)

As well as their diploma, students receive an official certificate indicating both the weighted overall average and the points achieved in each subject. Admission staff can therefore ask for specific results and need not confine themselves to the grades mentioned above.

For 2000/1, 2001/2, 2002/3, 2003/4, 2004/5 and 2005/6 the pass-rate of the Diplôme de Fin d'Etudes Secondaires was respectively 87.9%, 86.7%, 86.6%, 89.2%, 88.2% and 87.4%. Candidates awarded the Diploma were graded as follows:

	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
très bien	9.5	9.2	10.5	12.1	9.7	12.9
bien	45.7	47.2	47.4	46.5	49.2	46.8
assez bien	32.7	34.3	32.8	33.4	31.3	31.6
satisfaisant	12.1	9.4	9.4	8.0	9.8	8.7

Students who achieve 50 points or more within the très bien range may be regarded as outstanding. Only 6.4% achieved this performance in 2005/6.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

After six years of primary education, academic secondary schooling lasts seven years in two cycles of three and four years respectively. Examens de fin d'études secondaires are taken at the end of the second cycle in usually eight to ten subjects. In each subject, the mark awarded is a composite – one third assessments of the final year and two thirds the mark of the final examination. There is a comparable certificate/diploma from technical secondary education which is awarded in three specialisations: business administration, technological studies and medically-related studies. German is the main medium in primary education, but French is taught intensively throughout and becomes the main medium of instruction in the later years. English is taught in the two cycles of secondary education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The University of Luxembourg, created in 2003, has now implemented the structure of the Bologna process (bachelor's, master's, PhD). However, the offer is limited to a few disciplines, so some Luxembourg pupils look to Belgium, France, Germany and the UK for degree study.

Macedonia (Republic of)

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

State Matura (Secondary School Leaving Exam)

Taken at the end of secondary education leading to Drzavna Matura (Secondary School Leaving Matura Exam). The Matura Exams consists of three parts: compulsory (one subject); optional (three subjects); and a project assignment in one subject or education area. Acceptable as group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Megjunarodna Matura (International Baccalaureate)

A baccalaureate-style qualification offered by some grammar schools (gimnazii) in Macedonia, which satisfies the general entry requirements for UK HE.

GRADING SYSTEM

5	excellent
4	very good
3	good
2	sufficient
1	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Nine years of primary education (starting at age six), with a foreign language introduced in year one, are usually followed by one of the following:

- Four-year grammar schools (gimnazija), which may be classified as general, linguistic, classical or scientific, with appropriately different curricula
- Four-year art schools (art and design, music, dance)
- Four-year vocational schools (engineering, healthcare, economics, agriculture, etc.)
- Three-year vocational schools (industrial, crafts, etc.).

Apart from IB programmes, where the language of instruction is English, the language of instruction in all other schools is Macedonian.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to HE in Macedonia is on the basis of the Secondary School Leaving Matura exam. The Republic of Macedonia became a member of the Bologna Process in 2003, having started with the changes in the higher education system much earlier in 2000 when the Ministry of Education and Science passed the new Law on Higher Education. The Law requires universities to start introducing the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and designing study and subject programmes according to the principles of the Bologna Process.

The existing academic degree granted with a diploma was transformed into a baccalaureus and the programmes were shortened from four years to around three. The degree granted with a magisterium is transformed into a master's degree, achieved after five years of study. Medicine and medicine related studies still last six or five years. The degree of doktorat (PhD, dr.sc.) remains but it can be received after three more years, i.e. eight years in total: three years (bachelor's or baccalaureus) + two years (master's) + three years (doctor of science or doktor na nauki).

Malawi

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Malawi Junior Certificate Examination (JCE)**

Considered to be below GCSE standard.

Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE)

Acceptable at grades 1–6 in lieu of GCSE (grades A, B, C) on a subject for subject basis. Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

See also **Overseas examinations of UK awarding organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

Mark	Grade	Comments
1–2	A	distinction
3–4	B	credit
5–6	C	credit
7	D	ordinary pass
8	E	ordinary pass
9	F	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is not compulsory in Malawi. Primary education starts at age six and lasts for eight years, during which the media of instruction are Chichewa and English. It culminates in the Primary School Leaving Certificate. Malawi introduced free primary education, which makes primary education mandatory, though there is no law that enforces this.

Secondary education takes four years, the first two years of which are spent preparing for the Malawi Junior Certificate Examination (JCE). Students who pass this examination may continue their secondary education with a further two years' study. Secondary school culminates with the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to the University of Malawi and the University of Mzuzu is based on the Malawi School Certificate of Education with six subject passes with an aggregate score of at least 50%, including English language. In addition, applicants to the University of Malawi are required to pass a university entrance examination. Holders of the Cambridge Higher School Certificate (British A level), with at least three C grade passes may be admitted with one year of advanced standing into four-year general degree courses. Those with good IGCSE qualifications with at least six C grade passes are admitted into the first year of general degree courses.

Malaysia

This entry was last reviewed for the 2014 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM/Certificate of Education)**

Acceptable at grades 1–6 in lieu of GCSE grades A–C on a subject for subject basis (before 2010).

Acceptable at grades A+ to C in lieu of GCSE grades A–C on a subject for subject basis (from 2010 onwards).

Unified Examination Certificate (UEC)

Offered by the Malaysian Independent Chinese Secondary Schools system. Widely recognised as being acceptable at grades 1–6 in lieu of Scottish Highers on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM/Malaysia Higher School Certificate)

Acceptable at grades A to C in lieu of GCE A level on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM**SPM**

Subject Grades (before 2010)	Subject grade	Points allocated	
–	A+	18	Cemerlang (distinction)
1A	A	16	Cemerlang (distinction)
2A	A-	14	Cemerlang (distinction)
3B	B+	12	Kepujian (credit)
4B	B	10	Kepujian (credit)
5C	C+	8	Kepujian (credit)
6C	C	6	Kepujian (credit)
7D	D	4	Lulus (pass)
8E	E	2	Lulus (pass)
9G	G	0	Gagal (fail)

UEC

Grades		Marks
Distinction	A1	85–100
	A2	80–84
Credit	B3	75–79
	B4	70–74
	B5	65–69
	B6	60–64
Pass	C7	55–59
	C8	50–54
Fail	F9	0–49

STPM

Subject Grade	Subject Grade Value	Subject Grade	Subject Grade Value
A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	F	0.00
C+	2.33	4	Lulus (pass)

The STPM's grading system corresponds with that of the Matriculation system, which uses the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). The grades are divided into 11 categories (see table). Each grade is equivalent to subject grade points: Grades A to C have subject grade points between 4.0 and 2.0 and are considered a full pass; Grades C- to D have subject grade points of 1.67 to 1.0 and are considered partial pass; F grade is a grade point of 0.

Each paper's grade appears on the result slip and the certificate. The subject's grade and grade point is determined by the weighted average results of all that subject's papers, where all papers must achieve 'Pass' otherwise the grade and grade point would be F and 0 respectively. The cumulative grade point average is the average of the top four subjects taken and usually rounded up to two decimal points. Therefore, if a student scores A in four subjects and fails in the fifth, his CGPA would be 4.0.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Six years of compulsory primary education is followed by five years of secondary and two years of post-secondary education. The medium of instruction is in the national language, Bahasa Malaysia. English language is compulsory from primary level onwards. An English language syllabus developed with Cambridge International Examinations is a compulsory element of the SPM. As of 2006, students are given a GCE O level grade

for their English paper in addition to the normal English SPM paper. (Previously, this was reported on result slips as a separate result labelled 1119, which meant students received two grades for their English papers.) This separate grade is given based on the marks of the essay-writing component of the English paper. The essay section of the English paper is re-marked under the supervision of officials from British O levels examination. Although not part of their final certificates, the O level grade is included on their results slip. Entry to post-secondary education is based on examination performance at the SPM stage. There are two types of pre-university programmes: the STPM (1.5 years) and Matriculation (one-year or two-year programme). Previously, the Matriculation was a one-year programme, but from 2006, 30% of all matriculation students were offered two-year programmes. The SPM and STPM examinations are the responsibility of the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate and the Malaysian Examinations Council respectively under the aegis of the Ministry of Education.

The Malaysian Independent Chinese Secondary Schools System (MICSS) provides a six-year curriculum leading to the Unified Examination Certificate. Chinese is the main medium of instruction, but Malay and English are compulsory subjects as well as mathematics and science (taught in English). The MICSS is recognised in Chinese-speaking areas of south-east Asia but not in Malaysian public institutions. However, most private colleges recognise it.

The UEC is available in three levels: Vocational Unified Exam (UEC-V), UEC Junior Middle Level (UEC-JML) and Senior Middle Level (UEC-SML). The syllabus and examinations for the UEC-V and UEC-JML are only available in the Chinese language. The UEC-SML has questions for mathematics, sciences (biology, chemistry and physics), bookkeeping, accounting and commerce in both Chinese and English. The difficulty of UEC-SML test papers is nearly equivalent to A level except English.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The intake of students by the Ministry of Higher Education into public universities is based on the principle of meritocracy. The merit of candidates or ranking of applicants is based on 90% academic marks and 10% co-curriculum marks scored by each and every candidate. Admission to three-year first degrees in Malaysia is mainly on the basis of the STPM or matriculation courses. Usual minimum requirements are passes in two subjects at STPM, and a compulsory credit level pass in Bahasa Malaysia at SPM, but in practice, higher achievements are required due to the severe competition for places. All Malaysian pre-university students are required to sit the Malaysian University English Test (MUET). This covers listening and reading comprehension, speaking and writing. It is graded on a 6-band scale with Band 6 considered as the Excellent User and Band 1 as the Very Limited User. The recommended minimum band for entry to a Malaysian first degree is Band 3 Modest User.

With the introduction of the semester system, local universities are willing to offer credit transfers for relevant subjects taken in Diploma and other post-secondary courses.

Malta

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Secondary Education Certificate Examinations (SEC)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE (grades A–C).

Matriculation Certificate – Advanced Level (MC)

Acceptable as a package qualification comprising two subjects at A level, three subjects at intermediate level and a fourth subject at intermediate level on 'Systems of Knowledge'. This group qualification satisfies general entrance requirements.

See also **Overseas Examinations of UK Awarding Organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

SEC: 1–7 with Un as unclassified

MC: A–E pass grades with F as fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Pre-school provision in Malta starts at age three and is attended by around 98% of the cohort. Compulsory primary education begins at age five, continuing for six years.

State secondary education follows in two types of school – Junior Lyceum, which has a qualifying examination for entry, or Secondary School, with no qualifying entrance requirements. Both school types have a five-year course of general education, divided into a first cycle of common curriculum, followed by a second cycle of common core and optional subjects. There is no vocational orientation in compulsory education. After completion of Form V, at age 16, all pupils sit the Secondary Education Certificate. This is offered by the MATSEC Board of the University of Malta. Since 2000, this consists of two papers – Paper I is a core paper, Paper II has A and B options for different abilities.

The Matriculation Certificate Examination is offered in the University of Malta Junior College, the Higher Secondary School and non-state Sixth Forms and on condition of six passes at SEC or six GCE O Level passes in specified subjects. The Matriculation Certificate Examination covers a package of subjects from both the humanities and the science areas. Candidates offer six subjects in all, two of which must be at advanced level, and three at intermediate level, in addition to 'Systems of Knowledge'. Each subject is graded separately, as well as an overall grade awarded as an average of all six subjects. Medium of instruction are English and Maltese.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The University of Malta is Malta's only HEP. The main entry qualification is the Matriculation Certificate.

Further requirements are Maltese, English and mathematics in the SEC at grade 5 or better. Some courses may have additional special requirements. Bachelor's degrees last for three years (ordinary degree) and four years (honours). Medicine is a five-year course and law six years. Master's degrees are of two years' duration following a three-year first cycle degree and one year preceded by an honours degree. PhD studies last for three to six years.

Mauritius

This entry was last reviewed for the 2014 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION – SECONDARY LEVEL

Cambridge School Certificate (5th year of secondary education)

Generally considered to be comparable to GCSE Ordinary level.

Cambridge Higher School Certificate (7th year of secondary education)

Generally considered to be comparable to GCE Advanced level.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Basic education in Mauritius is based on 2+6+7 system, i.e. two years of pre-primary, six years of primary and seven years of secondary schooling. There is universal provision of primary education for six years (called Standard I – VI). Promotion is automatic; the only standard which can generally be repeated is standard VI. The six years of primary education culminate in the National Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) examination, which serves as a selection tool for entrance at secondary level, with only those passing the CPE being allowed access to secondary schools. Primary education was made compulsory in 1990.

Since 2005, education has been compulsory up to the age of 16 in Mauritius. The transition rate from primary to secondary was 84 % in 2011 (compared to 82 % from 2008 to 2010). There are consequently a sizable number of the 23,000 annual CPE candidates who do not succeed and need to re-sit the examination. Further to this re-sit, there are still some 2,700 children annually who do not succeed in the CPE. These double failures are not allowed entrance to mainstream secondary schooling but instead are channelled to the pre-vocational schooling where both remedial and pre-vocational education are carried out for four years, after which the students can join the vocational sector. They can later join the world of work, seek apprenticeship or follow further trade training programmes. Several measures have, however, been introduced to improve the pass rate at CPE, including the development since 2010 of an Enhancement Programme at Standard IV level (and extended in 2011 to Standard III) to better prepare students to schooling at upper primary level.

There are two main national examinations in the secondary school system in Mauritius. These examinations are organised by the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate and Cambridge International Examinations, UK. Students are awarded the Cambridge School Certificate at the end of five years of secondary schooling, and after two additional years can sit for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate.

ACCESS TO POST SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

There is currently a growing demand for post-secondary and tertiary education with more students sitting for O and A levels in Mauritius. As a result, more places have been provided for post secondary schooling in both the public and private sectors.

There are four public universities (University of Mauritius, University of Technology Mauritius, Open University of Mauritius and Université des Mascareignes) and other public field-specific post secondary institutions such as the Mauritius Institute of Education, The Mauritius Institute of Training and Development and the Mauritius Institute of Health. As at 2013, there are some 50 accredited private institutions delivering Tertiary education in Mauritius. Although the admission requirement for undergraduate courses is for two A level at HSC, applicants usually need to have at least a grade aggregate at HSC of 22 (A=10 points; B=8; C=6; D=4; & E=2) for securing entrance, especially in the high demand law, management, IT and engineering sectors.

Admission requirements at postgraduate and PhD levels are similar to those in the UK, namely a good bachelor's degree or master's degree in the requested area of study.

Efforts have also recently been focused on the development of the TVET sector with an increase in the number of programmes and intake of students at the level of National Diplomas, and it is expected that more programmes will be developed in sectors where there is a growing demand in the local industry and the world of work.

Mexico

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Bachillerato General

Considered comparable to at least GCSE standard (grades A, B, C) on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Bachillerato Tecnológico

Considered comparable to BTEC First Diploma /N(S)VQ Level 2.

Educación Profesional Técnica

Considered comparable to BTEC First Diploma /N(S)VQ Level 2.

GRADING SYSTEM

Marking is on a scale of 0–10 (highest). Some private institutions have started using a 1–100 scale. In most cases 6 or 60 is the minimum pass mark although some private institutions request 7 (or 70) as the pass mark.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory education in Mexico comprises three years of pre-primary education, six years of primary education (starting at age six) and three years of lower secondary education. Upper secondary education is non-compulsory and has three main types: general upper secondary, technical professional education and technological education. General upper secondary education (also known as the preparatory cycle) is offered to those students who have successfully completed primary and lower secondary schooling, and takes three years. During the final year, the student will specialise in either language and communication, natural sciences, mathematics or social sciences and history. These three years lead to the award of Bachillerato General. Technical

professional education leads to the Bachillerato Tecnológico which can qualify the holder to enter a profession or HE. Technological education leads to a terminal qualification called the Técnica. The medium of instruction is Spanish.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The usual entrance requirement is the Bachillerato. In addition, students normally take a university entrance examination. Courses leading to the Licenciado normally last between four and four and a half years, five years for certain professional qualifications (eg some engineering, dentistry, architecture) and six years for medicine. With effect from the 1993 educational reforms, the credit system is the same as that used in the United States, which has been introduced into certain institutions. Admission to non-university HE studies would require Bachillerato Tecnológico.

Montenegro

This entry was last reviewed for the 2014 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Secondary School Leaving Diploma

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

5 (maximum) ... 2 (minimum pass) ... 1.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Montenegro, primary education encompasses the nine years of compulsory education, usually between the ages of six and 15 with an optional pre-school year. The programme includes compulsory and extended curricula. A foreign language, usually English, is introduced as early as the first year, age six, throughout Montenegro as a facultative subject, while the compulsory foreign language (English, Italian, French, German or Russian) is introduced from the fourth grade or age nine. The second compulsory elective foreign language is in the seventh year.

Four years of secondary education, ages 15–18, is divided between general education schools (gymnasium) and VET schools. VET schools are divided into 2-year, 3-year, 4-year and higher VET schools. Currently vocational education is undergoing comprehensive reform and the eight-level Montenegrin Qualifications Framework has been established. The External Matura examination was introduced in 2011 across secondary education. Students complete their education in upper-secondary general education (gymnasia) with the general matura exam. In VET schools, students take the vocational matura exam at the end of the programme. The award of the VET Diploma is based on assessment throughout secondary school but also the final vocational test. The language of instruction is Montenegrin across the education system with the exception of communities with a prevailing minority population, where instruction is in the ethnic language with Montenegrin as the official language and a compulsory subject.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Secondary School Leaving Diploma is the basic requirement for admission to HE in Montenegro. Students with gymnasias, or appropriate fourth level VET Diploma, have direct access to HE. There are five types of higher education institutions: universities, faculties, academies of professional studies, higher education schools and higher education schools of professional studies.

Morocco

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Baccalauréat**

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements provided that an overall grade of at least 'bien' has been achieved.

GRADING SYSTEM

20–16	très bien	(very good)
15–14	bien	(good)
13–12	assez bien	(fair)
11–10	passable	(pass)
9–0	insuffisant	(fail)

Candidates with 9/20 may be passed exceptionally by the examination committee.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Fundamental education is compulsory and lasts for nine years. It is divided into two cycles of six years (primary) and three years (lower secondary). Following fundamental education students go on to either General Secondary Education (usually at a lycée – split into three streams: arts, experimental sciences and mathematics) or Technical Education (offered at Technical Secondary School), and study for a further three years. This culminates in the Baccalauréat. Assessments counting towards the award of the Baccalauréat are made twice a year (February and June) in each of three senior secondary years. Both Arabic and French are used in teaching.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

There are 13 universities in Morocco. The Baccalauréat is the basis of entry to university in Morocco but there are restrictions on numbers admitted, especially to the 'professional' areas where specific entrance examinations may be an additional requirement. Two years of study lead to the Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales (DEUG) and a further two years to the Licence.

Myanmar

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Basic Education High School Examination/ Matriculation**

Considered comparable to GCSE standard (grade A*–C)/ Credit Standard Grade Standard on a subject for subject basis where 40% or above has been achieved, with the exception of English language.

Government Technical Institute (GTI) Diploma

Considered to be comparable to BTEC National Diploma/ N(S)VQ.

GRADING SYSTEM**School**

Marking is on a percentage scale, with a minimum average of 40% as pass-mark which is required for university entrance.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The education system provides 11 years of schooling. The admission age is five years. Primary education covers the first five years of education grade 1 to grade 5: three years of schooling at lower primary level, two years at upper primary level. Secondary education lasts six years, divided into two cycles: four years at the lower secondary level (middle secondary) and two years at the upper secondary level (higher secondary). Lower secondary (middle secondary) schooling covers grade 6 to 9 (previously standard 5 to standard 8). At the end of grade 9 (standard 8) students choose between arts or science streams for upper secondary (higher secondary) grade 10 and 11, with Burmese, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry being mandatory subjects with economics for arts route and biology for science route. At the end of the upper secondary level (in year 11) students can take the Basic Education High School Examination (matriculation) to enter the tertiary level. English, mathematics and Myanmar are compulsory subjects in the matriculation examination.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

After matriculation at the age of 16+ or 17, depending on their grades, students would then continue their studies at government universities or institutions. Admission is based on the matriculation results (or grade). Some HE institutions require students to sit an entrance examination. Students that take the arts route at upper secondary will not be allowed to join any medical science universities that require the basic knowledge of biology such as medicine, veterinary, or dental.

Nepal

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**School Leaving Certificate**

Considered to be below GCSE standard.

GRADING SYSTEM

Pass with Distinction 75%+
Pass with 1st Division 60–74%
Pass with 2nd Division 45–59%
Pass with 3rd Division 32–44%

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education in Nepal is structured as school education and higher education. School education includes primary level of grades 1–5, and lower secondary and secondary levels of 6–8 and 9–10 respectively. Pre-primary level of education is also available in certain areas. Six years of age is the prescribed age for admission into grade one. A national level School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination is conducted at the end of grade 10. Grades 11 and 12 are considered as higher secondary level. Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB) supervises higher secondary schools which are mostly under private management.

Higher education consists of bachelor's, master's, and PhD levels. Depending upon the stream and subject, bachelor's level may be of three to five years' duration. The duration of master's level is generally two years. Some universities offer programmes like MPhil and postgraduate Diplomas.

Legally there are two types of school: community and institutional. Community schools receive regular government grants whereas institutional schools are funded by their own or other non-governmental resources. Institutional schools are organised either as a non-profit trust or as a company. However, in practical terms, schools are mainly of two types: public (community) and private (institutional). A third type of school are schools run by local people keen to have a school in their locality.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

There is no specific range of marks required for admission to higher education, but rather the requirement of different colleges that operate under different universities. Generally colleges require a 1st division result for admission or for eligibility to sit the entrance test. Until 1985 the only university in Nepal was Tribhuvan University. However, in the 1980s the government developed the concept of a multi-university system, with each new university having their own distinctive nature, content and function.

EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

The Ministry of Education and Sports is the apex body responsible for initiating and managing educational activities in the country. The Minister of Education, assisted by the State/Assistant Minister, provides political leadership to the Ministry. The Ministry, as a part of the government bureaucracy, is headed by the Secretary of Education and consists of the central office, various functional offices and offices located at the regional and district levels. The Central Office or the Ministry is mainly responsible for policy development, planning and monitoring and evaluation regarding different aspects of education.

With the purpose of bringing education administration nearer to the people, the Ministry has established five Regional Directorates and 75 District Education Offices in five development regions and 75 districts respectively. These decentralised offices are responsible for overseeing non-formal and school level educational activities in their respective areas. Regional Directorates are mainly responsible for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating education activities, and the District Education Offices are the main implementing agencies.

LIST OF UNIVERSITIES IN NEPAL

Prior to the establishment of the first college in the country, Tri-Chandra College in 1918, higher education in Nepal was nonexistent. Until 1985, Tribhuvan University had remained the only university in Nepal. In the early 1980s, His Majesty's Government developed the concept of a multi-university system for the country. One important assumption behind the concept was that each new university should have a distinctive nature, content and function of its own.

The first new university that was established was Mahendra Sanskrit University. The inception of this university was soon followed by Kathmandu University which, unlike Tribhuvan University or Mahendra Sanskrit University, is an institution of higher education founded by the private sector.

Currently there are six universities in Nepal:

- Tribhuvan University
- Kathmandu University
- Pokhara University
- Purbanchal University
- Mahendra Sanskrit University
- B.P.Korila Institute of Health Sciences.

Proposed universities:

- Lumbini Bouddha University
- Mid Western University
- Far Western University
- Nepal Agriculture and Forestry Science.

Netherlands

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Diploma Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs (Senior General Secondary Education) (HAVO)

Acceptable at grade 6 or better in lieu of GCSE with grades A, B or C on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Diploma Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs (University Preparatory Education) (VWO)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Diploma Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs, niveau 4 (Senior Secondary Vocational Education, level 4) (MBO)

May be acceptable for entry to vocational courses.

GRADING SYSTEM

10	uitmuntend	(outstanding)
9	zeer goed	(very good)
8	goed	(good)
7	ruim voldoende	(very satisfactory)
6	voldoende	(satisfactory/pass)
5	binja voldoende	(almost satisfactory)
4	onvoldoende	(unsatisfactory)
3	zeer onvoldoende	(very unsatisfactory)
2	slecht	(poor)
1	zeer slecht	(very poor)

It should be noted that scores of 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10 are rarely awarded.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Primary education lasts eight years beginning at age four (with English introduced in the seventh year), after which pupils can choose between various streams of secondary education. Two of these streams, HAVO and VWO, offer general secondary education which prepares students for HE. The HAVO diploma is obtained after five years of study and is the minimum entry requirement for admission to bachelor's programmes in the applied arts and sciences, in the type of higher education known as hoger beroepsonderwijs (HBO). HBO is in most cases offered by hogescholen (universities of applied sciences). The VWO diploma is obtained after completion of six years of study and is required for admission to bachelor's programmes in research-oriented disciplines in the type of higher education known as wetenschappelijk onderwijs (WO). WO is offered by universiteiten (universities).

During the last two years of the HAVO and the last three years of the VWO (upper secondary education), students focus on completing the requirements of at least one of four subject clusters (profielen). Each cluster specialises in a particular field of study in addition to satisfying general education requirements: science and technology; science and health; economics and society; culture and society. Each cluster is designed to prepare students for related programmes of study at tertiary level and fulfils entry requirements to HE in the Netherlands. Some subjects may be assessed internally in the penultimate year by means of examination, paper or project. A final examination consisting of six subjects (HAVO) and seven subjects (VWO) is taken by all pupils nationally at the end of the last year.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The VWO Diploma is the main entrance requirement for admission to bachelor's courses in WO disciplines, primarily offered by universities and institutions of comparable level in the Netherlands. An average final grade of 6 is the lowest pass, but a maximum of two grades of 5 may be compensated for by sufficiently high grades in other subjects. Admission to WO programmes is possible also on the basis of a pass in the first year examination of a hogeschool. In addition to the HAVO diploma, admission to HBO bachelor's courses is also possible after completion of a three- or four-year MBO (senior secondary vocational education programme), level 4. Students who complete HAVO or VWO are required to have completed one of the subject clusters listed above for admission to HE. Admission to some WO courses (most commonly medicine, dentistry and veterinary science) is based on a weighted lottery, though institutions are allowed to select a certain percentage of the students themselves (decentralised admission). There are also additional categories for mature students, foreign students and for students transferring from an HBO bachelor's programme.

Since 2002, both universities and universities of professional education offer bachelor's and master's degrees. A WO bachelor's course in a research-oriented discipline lasts three years, followed by a master's degree lasting from one to three years, depending on the field of study. An HBO bachelor's course in the applied arts and sciences lasts four years, and in many cases can be followed by a master's degree lasting from one to two years, depending on the discipline.

New Zealand

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Applicants may satisfy general entrance requirements by achieving:

- (i) The required achievement in the New Zealand qualification – the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)
- OR
- (ii) The required achievement in specific international qualifications
- OR
- (iii) Discretionary or provisional entrance to a university in New Zealand and the subsequent successful completion of the first year.

GRADING SYSTEM

Under New Zealand's standards-based assessment system, assessment is organised into units called standards, some of which are internally assessed (within learning institutions) and some, externally assessed (under a national examinations system). Each successful result in a standard attracts credits, which can be counted towards qualifications. A year's work in a typical school subject is assessed by approximately 18 to 24 credits. For school students, their qualifications are usually National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA). University entrance is also awarded on the basis of meeting credit requirements in specified subjects.

There are two types of standards: unit standards which typically carry two possible results: N (Not Achieved) and A (Achieved); and Achievement Standards which, in addition to N and A, carry two higher grades: M (Merit) and E (Excellence). An increasing number of unit standards also have grades of Merit and Excellence available.

Achievement standards assess the New Zealand Curriculum subject learning areas and may be either internally or externally assessed, with each subject generally including both internally and externally assessed standards. Unit standards generally relate to industry training and other non-curriculum-based learning areas. All unit standards are internally assessed.

The distributions of results: N, A, M, E, results for 2013, aggregated over all standards, in a selection of subjects at Level 3, are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Aggregated distributions of results; Not Achieved (N), Achieved (A), Merit (M), and Excellence (E), as percentages of all results in achievement standards for 2013 for a selection of subjects at Level 3. Void, absent and missing script data are excluded.

UE Subject	N	A	M	E
All subjects	21.2	34.7	25.0	19.0
Accounting	18.1	30.7	27.9	23.2
Biology	18.5	35.8	25.0	20.8
Calculus	17.3	32.8	29.6	20.2
Chemistry	20.8	29.1	27.3	22.8
Classical studies	23.8	33.5	24.1	18.6
Drama	13.8	28.3	29.5	28.4
Economics	23.2	38.6	23.4	14.8
English	25.2	36.7	22.7	15.4
Geography	21.7	38.0	24.9	15.4
History	21.8	34.5	24.5	19.2
Media studies	21.3	39.5	22.5	16.7
Physics	22.0	39.2	26.6	12.1
Statistics and modelling	16.5	33.7	26.3	23.4
Visual arts	18.1	30.7	27.9	23.2

From 2007, NCEA certificates have been issued with Merit and Excellence endorsements to recognise high level performance. Candidates who gain 50 credits with Excellence, at or above the level of the certificate, gain a certificate endorsed with Excellence. Those who gain 50 credits with Merit or Excellence at or above the level of the certificate, gain a certificate endorsed with Merit. The percentage of Year 13 students whose certificates were endorsed with Merit or Excellence in 2013 is shown in Table 2 on the next page.

Table 2: The percentage of Year 13 students whose NCEA Level 3 certificates were endorsed with Merit or Excellence in 2013

Achieved with Excellence	11.3
Achieved with Merit	28.5
No Endorsement	60.2

Course endorsement was introduced across all three NCEA levels in 2011. NCEA course endorsement enables students to gain Excellence and Merit endorsement in individual courses (subjects), and follows the overwhelmingly successful introduction of certificate endorsement in 2007. Students receive an Excellence endorsement for a course if they gain 14 credits at Excellence level, while students gaining 14 credits at Merit (or Merit and Excellence) will gain a Merit endorsement. To ensure students are capable of performing well in both modes of assessment, at least three of the 14 credits must be from internally assessed standards, and three from externally assessed standards.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

In New Zealand schooling is compulsory for students aged six to 16 but most children start school aged five. Typical teacher student ratios range from 1:19 to 1:24 depending on year level and school type. The New Zealand school year typically runs from the end of January to mid-December, and is divided into four terms. Both single-sex and coeducational schooling options are available and state (public) schools are generally secular. Primary education starts at Year 1 and continues until Year 8. Years 7 and 8 are offered at either a primary or a separate intermediate school. Secondary education covers Years 9 to 13; typically students are aged 13 to 17. Most secondary students in New Zealand attend government-funded schools, known variously as secondary schools, high schools, colleges or area schools. There is a compulsory national curriculum for Years 1–10. Students progress to the next level of schooling at the beginning of each school year. The non-mandated curriculum in years 11–13 allows schools to offer specialised courses. Overall schools are required to deliver a broad-based education. Most schools give instruction in the English language.

MĀORI EDUCATION

The Māori people are the Tangata Whenua (indigenous peoples of New Zealand/Aotearoa). New Zealand offers a parallel education system that recognises Māori world views and knowledge. Kōhanga Reo (Māori immersion language learning centres) cater for early childhood education, Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori immersion schools), for students in Years 1 to 8, and Wharekura (secondary Māori immersion schools), for students in Years 9 to 13. Learning programmes are delivered through te reo Māori (Māori language) and education is based on Tikanga Māori (Māori values and principles). Te Marautanga o Aotearoa is the New Zealand national Māori immersion education curriculum. The majority of Māori students attend mainstream schools.

SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS

The implementation of the present qualifications system for New Zealand school students began in 2002. The main qualification in this system, NCEA, is available at three levels. NCEA Level 1 (typically undertaken at Year 11), Level 2 (typically undertaken at Year 12), and Level 3

(typically undertaken in Year 13 – the final year). The NCEA qualifications are registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF). The NCEA qualification is designed to acknowledge achievement across the learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum, and also to provide a foundation for further study and employment.

As described above, NCEA qualifications are gained by acquiring credits from units of assessment called standards. Credits from approved lists of subjects and standards also form the basis on which university entrance is awarded.

To gain NCEA Level 1 a minimum of 80 credits are required, as well as literacy and numeracy requirements (10 credits from approved standards for literacy skills and 10 credits from approved standards for numeracy skills). NCEA Level 2 also requires a minimum of 80 credits, 60 of which must be achieved at Level 2 or above. The remaining credits can come from any level. NCEA Level 2 also has literacy and numeracy requirements (10 credits from approved standards for literacy skills and 10 credits from approved standards for numeracy skills).

NCEA Level 3 requires a minimum of 80 credits, 60 of which must have been achieved at Level 3 or above, and the remaining 20, at Level 2 or above. From 2014 NCEA Level 3 will have literacy and numeracy requirements (10 credits from approved standards for literacy skills and 10 credits from approved standards for numeracy skills).

In January of each year, school candidates access their results online for each standard entered during the previous year. School candidates are then sent their examination scripts. Candidates then have an opportunity to appeal results through the Review and Reconsideration Process. Students are able to request NCEA certificates and their Record of Achievement from NZQA. The Record of Achievement shows results for all standards in which students have gained credit (results of N are excluded from this record).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University entrance requirements may be met by gaining credits in approved subjects and standards. The requirement is the achievement of NCEA Level 3 and three subjects of 14 credits from the list of approved subjects. In addition, a minimum of 10 numeracy related credits at NZQF Level 1 and a minimum of 10 literacy credits at NZQF Level 2 or higher, with at least five in each of reading and writing, are required. Literacy credits may be gained either in the English or the Māori language.

Admission to many university degree programmes (such as medicine) is restricted and as such, these programmes require higher achievement than the specified minimum (university entrance). The number of restricted programmes is increasing, with some universities now requiring higher achievement than the university entrance requirement for entry into bachelor degrees in arts, science and commerce.

There is no formal entry requirement for non-university tertiary institutions. Any requirements for entry to non-university degree programmes or other tertiary programmes are established at programme level by the individual teaching institutions.

Students in New Zealand secondary schools have the opportunity to sit New Zealand Scholarship examinations in one or more subjects. Successful candidates win monetary awards to fund university study in New Zealand. This system of examinations is designed for high achieving students and requires high-level critical thinking, abstraction and generalisation, and the integration, synthesis and application of knowledge, skills, understanding and ideas, to complex situations. Results in New Zealand Scholarship examinations do not attract credits, nor contribute towards qualifications. However, successful scholarship results are recorded on a candidate's Record of Achievement.

Nigeria

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Senior School Certificate Education (SSCE) West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)

Regarded as being below the standard of UK A levels. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to a bridging programme.

GRADING SYSTEM

SSCE

1	excellent
2	very good
3	good
4–6	credit/minimum acceptable pass
7–8	pass
9	fail

WASSCE

1	excellent
2	very good
3	good
4–6	credit/minimum acceptable pass
7	pass
8	pass
9	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Six years of primary education is followed by three years of junior secondary school, which may be followed by three years in senior secondary school. Senior secondary education is evaluated by continuous assessment and by a national examination conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) or the Nigerian Examinations Council (NECO), leading to the award of the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate or the Senior School Certificate respectively. (This replaced a system of O and A levels in 1989.) The WASSCE, harmonised throughout the WAEC's member countries, is awarded on the basis of 30% continuous assessment and 70% external examination. In the initial primary years, instruction is usually in the medium of a local language, but thereafter, English is mainly used.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

WASSCE passes with credit in five relevant subjects, obtained at not more than two sittings, together with an acceptable standard in the competitive University Matriculation Examination administered by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), secures admission in Nigeria to a degree course of not less than four years in length.

Norway

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Vitnemål – grunnskolen (Lower Secondary Leaving Certificate)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Vitnemål – videregående opplæring (Upper Secondary Leaving Certificate)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements, provided it is endorsed 'generell studiekompetanse'.

GRADING SYSTEM

Lower secondary school 6 (maximum), 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
Upper secondary school 6 (maximum), 5, 4, 3, 2 (pass), 1, 0

Certificates contain two separate columns of grades. Grades in the 'Vitnemål' are given for overall achievement based on continuous assessment as well as performance in the final examinations in some subjects. Examinations are set by and assessed under the supervision of The Directorate for Education and Training. The examinations may be: written = S (skriftlig); oral = M (muntlig); oral-practical MP (muntlig-praktisk); or practical = P (praktisk), as shown on the Certificate under 'Prøveform'. 'Deltatt' means that the student has followed the teaching in this subject but chosen not to be assessed with a mark.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The 'Avgangsprøve' (Vitnemål – grunnskolen) is taken at the end of 10 years of compulsory education (nine for those born earlier than 1991). Pupils then have a statutory right to proceed to three years of upper secondary education and training. Until 2005, they chose one from a selection of 15 foundation courses for their first year and specialised advanced courses, I and II, for their later years. In the academic year 2006/7 the reform called Knowledge Promotion (Kunnskapsløftet) was introduced. Pupils now have a choice of a general university preparatory programme, (specialising in either languages, natural sciences & mathematics, social sciences & economics, arts, crafts & design, sports or music, dance & performance) or one of nine vocational programmes. Pupils from vocational areas of study can meet the HE entrance requirements after completion of a supplementary one-year general study course. Vocational courses lead to a tradesman's or journeyman's certificate and are generally taken on the basis of two years in school and two years of work placement. Successful completion of either route, academic or vocational, will make the pupil eligible for the 'Vitnemål – videregående opplæring' (Upper Secondary Leaving Certificate). Since 1997, English is compulsory from the first grade of primary school.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The basic requirements for entry to all HE in Norway are usually met by the 'Vitnemål' endorsed 'generell studiekompetanse'. For admission to some faculties/studies, for example, medicine and technological studies, there are additional requirements. Since 2001, universities and university colleges have had the right

to admit students without sufficient formal entrance qualifications on the basis of age (25 years or more), and a combination of formal and non-formal learning. The relevant institution decides if the applicant is qualified for their study programme.

Since autumn 2002, the degree system in higher education has been changed to bachelor's (three years), master's (two years) and PhD degrees. A number of institutions changed their programmes in 2002, while the rest of the institutions changed all programmes for first-year students from the academic year 2003/4. The European Credit Transfer Scheme Grading System has been adopted (A Excellent, B Very Good, C Good, D Satisfactory, E Sufficient, FX Fail – more work required before the credit can be awarded, F Fail – considerable further work is required). A transition period, with the old and the new degree systems and grading systems in use at the same time, lasted until June 2005 for the lower, or first degree 'cand.mag', and lasted until June 2007 for the higher, or second, degrees (eg cand.philol, cand.polit and cand.scient).

For students who began their university or university college studies up to, and including, the academic year 2002/3, the first or lower degree (cand.mag) could be obtained after three-and-a-half to four years of study. The higher degree (cand.philol, cand.scient, cand.polit etc.) is usually achieved after two additional years of full-time study, and includes a thesis. Public (i.e. state) university colleges (serving about one half of all HE students) are integrated with the university system and transfers are possible with full credit (all the institutions are legally bound to grant full credit transfer unless there is overlap in the academic content of courses). Private HE caters for more than 10% of students in HE. In HE, the most common old style marking system ranges from 1.0 (maximum) to 6.0 (4.0 = minimum pass), i.e. the reverse of the school grading system.

Oman

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Thanawiya Amma (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)

Acceptable at 70% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

Percentage scale, with no minimum pass mark.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Six years of primary education and three years of preparatory education are followed by three years of secondary education, with an option to choose either science or arts stream from Year 2. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught from Primary 4. The Secondary School Leaving Certificate is a Year 12 examination.

Since the 1998/9 school year, a 10-year system of basic education has been in the process of being introduced. Under this system, two cycles of four and six years respectively are followed by two years of secondary education. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English is taught from grade 1. More schools are added to the new system each year. The Secondary School Certificate remains a Year 12 examination, but its title is being reviewed.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to university in Oman, for a bachelor's degree course of a minimum of four years, is on the basis of the Thanawiya Amma, in theory at an overall mark of 65%, but competition for places commonly ensures an entrance level of over 90% and of 95% for medicine. Study in faculties other than Islamic studies is preceded by a preparatory course in English, IT and study skills.

Pakistan

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Intermediate/Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC)

Acceptable at 50% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

See also **Overseas examinations of UK awarding organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

A1	100–80%	outstanding
A	79–70	excellent
B	69–60	very good
C	59–50	good
D	49–40	satisfactory
E	39–33	pass
F	32–0	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is compulsory at primary and secondary levels. Primary education commences at age five and continues for five years, largely in the medium of Urdu. It is followed by five years of secondary education, the last two years of which are streamed into science, humanities or technical studies. A further two years at a higher secondary/intermediate college leads to the Intermediate/Higher Secondary School Certificate. English is sometimes used in university education.

The Punjab Government is giving a monthly stipend to those students considered deserving in order to promote literacy, particularly female students. Additional legislation is underway by the provincial and federal governments in order to further improve education policies.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The HSSC gives access to four year honours degrees in Pakistan. Pass degrees are usually taken at an affiliated college and honours degrees at a university.

The Philippines

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

National Achievement Test (NAT)

A national census test designed to assess a student's achievement level in five key subject areas – English, Filipino, science, maths and social science. It replaced the National Elementary Achievement Test and the National Secondary Achievement Test and is administered at three levels—Year 3, Year 6 and Year 10. This is prior to the roll-out of the new K-12 curriculum for Year 3.

Philippine Validating Tests (PVT)

A test intended to validate learning acquired by those who dropped out of school by force of circumstance before the end of the school year and those who studied in non-graded school, distance learning and home school systems. This is taken by these students to reintegrate into the normal school system.

Following the full roll-out of the K-12 curriculum in 2016, a new national assessment test is expected to be implemented. Higher education institutions administer their own entrance examinations.

GRADING SYSTEM

Universities use one of the three grading systems: Letter, Grade Point 1 to 5 or Grade Point 4 to 1.

- The letter system is used by the Ateneo University
- Grade Point 1 to 5 is used by the University of the Philippines, the University of Santo Tomas and all public universities
- Grade point 4 to 1 is used by De La Salle University.

Marking systems for the school leaving qualification vary.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Philippine government has revamped the basic education system and is gradually implementing the new curriculum per year level, with full implementation in 2016. The Kinder to Year 12 (K to 12) Programme will see the addition of two years into the current system. Basic education is free in public schools but is compulsory only up to Year 6 (elementary education). Private provision is also widely available

For the year 2013–14, the new curriculum for Kinder, Year 1, Year 2, Year 7 and Year 8 has been rolled out. In the meantime, the other year levels will use the old curriculum up to Year 10 until the full implementation of Year 11 in 2015 or 2016. A few pilot schools at the moment have administered Year 11 curriculum, senior high school, in 2012–13 and will continue with Year 12 this incoming academic year 2013–14.

When the new K to 12 curriculum is fully implemented, high school graduates will be on a par with the international standard of 12 years of basic education.

Some private schools that are implementing the old curriculum for Year 3 and up have extended elementary education to seven years.

Most high schools, particularly the private ones, administer their own entrance examination. Secondary education is the stage of formal education following the elementary level below college level corresponding to four years of high school and can be attained through

an alternative learning system. The K to 12 Curriculum will utilise Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) from kinder up to Year 3, though English is still the main medium of instruction.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to colleges and universities is usually based on the High School Diploma, high school grades, performance in the entrance examination of the particular institution and on other requirements or restrictions of specific departments such as talent tests. Foreign students may be considered on the basis of their performance on the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Examination (three Ordinary level passes and two Advanced level passes) or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) (minimum total score of 1,200), or by having an International Baccalaureate Diploma.

Bachelor's degrees usually take four years to complete. It can take as little as three years in institutions that use trimesters as opposed to semesters. Master's degrees normally take two years if taken full time and up to five years when taken on a part-time basis.

Law and Medicine are not considered undergraduate degrees. Students need to take a pre-law or pre-medicine college degree prior to applying for Law or Med School. For law, these preparatory degrees can either be business, psychology, economics, political science, international studies or any related field. For medicine, subject units are used to determine admission to Med School. There are set requirements for biology, chemistry, maths and physics. Law schools have their own entrance examinations. There is the National Medical Admission Test for students who wish to pursue medicine.

After the law degree, students need to pass the Bar examinations before they can practice. For medicine, there is a national licensure exam in addition to residency. Law and medicine are four year degrees. The University of the Philippines offers an accelerated seven year medical programme to a small set of top performers of the UP College Admission Test. Law schools are currently shifting into JD curriculums from previous LLB offers.

Poland

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Matura (Secondary School Certificate)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements, with extended level generally being considered equivalent in standard to GCE Advanced level.

GRADING SYSTEM

A percentage marking system accompanied the introduction of the new Matura examination in 2005. 30% in each compulsory oral and written subject at the basic level constitutes a minimum pass. The written part of the examination consists of three compulsory subjects at standard or extended level, including Polish, mathematics and a modern foreign language. In addition, students also take between one and three subjects at extended level.

The following tables show the percentage of candidates achieving each grade in 2009 in certain selected subjects.

Subject: Polish		
Stanine Scores	Standard Level Max. 70 point	Extended Level Max. 50 points
1st stanine – lowest 4%	0%–23%	0%–38%
2nd stanine – very low 7%	24%–33%	39%–46%
3rd stanine – low 12%	34%–41%	47%–54%
4th stanine – low medium 17%	42%–49%	55%–60%
5th stanine – medium 20%	50%–56%	61%–68%
6th stanine – high medium 17%	57%–63%	69%–76%
7th stanine – high 12%	64%–70%	77%–82%
8th stanine – very high 7%	71%–77%	83%–90%
9th stanine – highest 4%	78%–100%	91%–100%

Subject: English		
Stanine Scores	Standard Level Max. 50 point	Extended Level Max. 50 points
1st stanine – lowest 4%	0%–19%	0%–46%
2nd stanine – very low 7%	20%–25%	47%–56%
3rd stanine – low 12%	26%–37%	57%–64%
4th stanine – low medium 17%	38%–53%	65%–72%
5th stanine – medium 20%	54%–69%	73%–79%
6th stanine – high medium 17%	70%–81%	80%–85%
7th stanine – high 12%	82%–89%	86%–90%
8th stanine – very high 7%	90%–94%	91%–95%
9th stanine – highest 4%	95%–100%	96%–100%

Subject: Maths		
Stanine Scores	Standard Level Max. 50 point	Extended Level Max. 50 points
1st stanine – lowest 4%	0%–10%	0%–10%
2nd stanine – very low 7%	11%–18%	11%–28%
3rd stanine – low 12%	19%–30%	29%–40%
4th stanine – low medium 17%	31%–42%	41%–54%
5th stanine – medium 20%	43%–54%	55%–56%
6th stanine – high medium 17%	55%–66%	67%–76%
7th stanine – high 12%	67%–76%	77%–86%
8th stanine – very high 7%	77%–86%	87%–94%
9th stanine – highest 4%	87%–100%	95%–100%

Subject: Geograph		
Stanine Scores	Standard Level Max. 50 point	Extended Level Max. 60 points
1st stanine – lowest 4%	0%–22%	0%–10%
2nd stanine – very low 7%	23%–32%	11%–22%
3rd stanine – low 12%	33%–44%	23%–37%
4th stanine – low medium 17%	45%–56%	38%–55%
5th stanine – medium 20%	57%–68%	56%–72%
6th stanine – high medium 17%	69%–76%	73%–83%
7th stanine – high 12%	77%–82%	84%–90%
8th stanine – very high 7%	83%–88%	91%–95%
9th stanine – highest 4%	89%–100%	96%–100%

Subject: Chemistry		
Stanine Scores	Standard Level Max. 50 point	Extended Level Max. 60 points
1st stanine – lowest 4%	0%–22%	0%–10%
2nd stanine – very low 7%	23%–32%	11%–22%
3rd stanine – low 12%	33%–44%	23%–37%
4th stanine – low medium 17%	45%–56%	38%–55%
5th stanine – medium 20%	57%–68%	56%–72%
6th stanine – high medium 17%	69%–76%	73%–83%
7th stanine – high 12%	77%–82%	84%–90%
8th stanine – very high 7%	83%–88%	91%–95%
9th stanine – highest 4%	89%–100%	96%–100%

Pre-2004 the grading system was as follows:

6	celujacy	(excellent)
5	bardzo dobry	(very good)
4	dobry	(good)
3	dostateczny	(satisfactory/pass)
2	mierny	(mediocre)
1	niedostateczny	(unsatisfactory)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The education system consists of primary schools, lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools (general upper secondary, technical upper secondary, specialised upper secondary and basic vocational schools). Tuition in state schools is free. Full-time compulsory education continues until the pupil is 16 years of age. Part-time compulsory education, however, in school or out-of-school, lasts until 18 years of age (based on the Constitution of the Republic of Poland adopted in 1997).

Full-time compulsory education in primary schools starts when the child reaches seven years of age. However, starting 2004/05 school year, all six-year-old children are obliged to attend pre-school classes (either in kindergartens or in primary schools) in order to complete a mandatory year of preparation for primary education. Education in primary schools lasts six years. This six-year period culminates in national testing, to provide information on how much pupils have learned. Progression is on to gimnazjum (lower secondary school). Primary and lower secondary schools (i.e. compulsory schools) have so-called 'school areas', which means that every child who is a resident of that area is admitted in his/her local school. If parents wish to choose another school, they are free to do so provided there are places available.

The three-year period at lower secondary school concludes with an examination, split into two parts: humanities and science (the latter combining mathematics and natural science). A foreign language element has been included since 2009. Upper secondary schools are selected on the basis of the results of this examination. Students choose from three-year general upper secondary schools (liceum), four-year technical upper secondary schools (technikum), two-three-year basic vocational schools (zasadnicza szkola zawodowa) or three-year specialised upper secondary schools (liceum profilowane).

Education at vocational schools concludes with a professional examination, which, from 2004, is externally assessed. Specialised upper secondary schools offer a combination of academic and vocational study, which can act as a base to obtain professional qualifications in post-secondary schools (szkola policealna). Specialised upper secondary and general and technical upper secondary schools culminate with the matura. From 2004/05 a new system of matura examinations was implemented. Assessment is through externally assessed written examinations and oral examinations assessed in school (the latter concern both Polish/mother tongue and modern languages). Subjects are available at basic and advanced levels.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

On passing the matura school-leaving examination, students may continue their education at an institution of tertiary education (university or college). Dependent on the type of institution, field and duration of study, students read for the licentiate (minimum three years of study) or engineer (minimum three and a half years of study), or for a master's degree (four and a half to six

years, depending on the field of study, so-called long-cycle programmes). Upon completion of licentiate or engineer studies (first-cycle programmes), the graduates can continue their education undertaking second-cycle programmes leading to master's degrees (lasting one and a half to two years). On graduation, holders of the master's degree may begin doctoral studies (third-cycle programmes) or non-degree postgraduate studies. Non-degree postgraduate studies can usually be pursued by holders of licentiate degrees as well as those holding master's degrees.

Portugal

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Diploma de Ensino Secundário (previously known as Certificado do 12º ano)

The Diploma de Ensino Secundário is granted after successful completion of the 12th year of schooling. Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements for UK HEPs, provided that an overall grade of at least 'bom' has been achieved.

GRADING SYSTEM – between 0 and 20 – pass mark 10

20–18	muito bom	(excellent)
17–14	bom	(good)
13–10	suficiente	(pass)
9–5	mediocre	(poor)
4–0	mau	(very poor)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Nine years of compulsory basic education is followed by three years of secondary education, which may comprise courses with a general, technical or professional emphasis. The emphasis will be made clear by the school leaving certificate awarded in Year 12 on the basis of national examinations. English is an optional subject for those who do not want to follow a degree in English.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Access to higher education is subject to a numerus clausus according to the legislation in force. Students wishing to qualify for admission to HE in Portugal must sit for a national competition (concurso nacional) for public institutions and/or apply individually for private institutions. In both cases, students have to fulfil general conditions for access to HE in Portugal:

- have successfully completed the 12th year of schooling or the equivalent
- have completed the national specific examinations in accordance with the HE course the student wishes to attend
- have obtained a minimum mark when required
- have fulfilled the prerequisites for the HE course the student wishes to attend, if required.

With the publication of law number 49/2005, dated 30 August, that introduced several changes into the Basic Law on the education system in order to comply with the Bologna Process, the structure of the degree system is as follows.

Licenciado degree – 1st cycle
Mestre degree – 2nd cycle
Doutor – 3rd cycle

Both university and polytechnic institutions confer the degree of licenciado. In the polytechnic education, the cycle of studies that leads to the degree of licenciado with a normal length of six curricular semesters of students' work, corresponds to 180 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits, and in certain cases, namely those covered by internal legislation or by European legislation, the cycle of studies has a length of seven to eight curricular semesters of students' work, corresponding to 180 to 240 ECTS credits. In the university education, the cycle of studies that leads to the degree of licenciado with a normal length of six to eight curricular semesters of students' work, corresponds to 180 to 240 ECTS credits.

In the first cycle of studies of the university and polytechnic institutions, the degree of licenciado is conferred on those who, after concluding all the curricular units that integrate the study programme of the licenciatura course, have obtained the established number of credits.

Both university and polytechnic institutions confer the degree of mestre (master's). The cycle of studies that leads to the degree of mestre (master's) has a normal length of three to four curricular semesters of students' work corresponding to 90 to 120 ECTS credits. In polytechnic education, the cycle of studies that leads to the mestre (master's) degree must ensure predominantly that the student acquires a professional specialisation. In university education, the cycle of studies that leads to the mestre (master's) degree must ensure that the student acquires an academic specialisation relating to research, innovation or expansion of professional competences.

The doutor (doctorate) degree is only conferred by university institutions. The degree of doutor (doctorate) is conferred on those who, after concluding all the curricular units that integrate the study programme of the doutoramento course, have successfully defended their thesis in public.

Non-university and university institutions can award the licenciado and mestre degree. The doutor degree can only be awarded by universities. Higher education institutions can run courses that do not award any type of degree, but do award a diploma upon successful completion of the course.

Qatar

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Qatar Senior Schooling Certificate (QSSC)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Will need to be supplemented by acceptable qualifications that are widely used for entry to HE in the UK, e.g. GCE or SQA awards.

GRADING SYSTEM

Seven subjects, marked out of 1,000, with a grade from A–F

Previously graded on a percentage scale, with a minimum overall pass mark of 50%.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

There are currently 102 independent schools in Qatar. These were created to turn Qatar's vision of developing a world-class education system into a reality. They are government-funded schools granted autonomy to carry out their educational objectives, whilst being held accountable to terms agreed in a contract with the Supreme Education Council. All independent schools must meet established curriculum standards in Arabic, English, mathematics and science.

The Supreme Education Council administers the Qatar School Education System with central control of the curriculum. Education is free for Qatari nationals of both sexes. Six years of primary and three years of preparatory education lead to a three-year secondary course and examinations for the Qatar Senior Schooling Certificate in grade 12. Education is compulsory up to the ninth grade. Whilst the medium of instruction in state schools is Arabic, English is introduced as the main foreign language in the first grade and is taught up to the end of compulsory education. In all but the most recently opened independent schools, the medium of instruction for mathematics, science and IT classes is English. Vocational training is available for boys at preparatory and secondary levels in a six-year course at a vocational school. A diploma is awarded after a successful two-year training period. Special vocational courses are available for adults to enable them to find employment.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Upon completion of the Qatar Senior Schooling Certificate (QSSC), Qatari students who score 80% and above are eligible to apply for scholarships offered by the Supreme Education Council. For all English speaking countries, the Higher Education Institute sponsors study for one year at the Academic Bridge. Thus, students who need to strengthen their English language skills can enrol in the programme for a year. Only students who gain an unconditional acceptance from a university approved by the Higher Education Institute are eligible to apply for its scholarship programme.

Students interested in studying at the University of Qatar will be admitted to a four-year bachelor's degree programme on the basis of the General Secondary Education Certificate.

Romania

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Diploma de Bacalaureat**

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Secondary Vocational Diploma

Comparable to BTEC National Diploma/NVQ level 3.

GRADING SYSTEM

10 (maximum) ... 5 (minimum pass) ... 1.

The pass mark for Bacalaureat examinations is 5 for each subject and 6 for the final average.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The general education framework is established by the Law on National Education No 1/2011, whereas specific

regulations and procedures are released through Orders of the Minister of Education, Research, Youth, and Sports, and Government decisions. In Romania education is offered on the following successive levels:

- Early education, provided for children aged 0–6
- Primary education, including the school preparatory class and grades I–IV
- Secondary education, which includes successively:
 - Lower secondary education, or gymnasium, (Gimnaziu), including grades V to IX
 - Upper secondary education, or lyceum (Liceu), which includes grades X–XII/XIII, with the following routes/paths: theoretical, vocational (i.e. theological, artistic and military) and technological
- Trade schools with a duration that ranges between six months and two years
- Post-secondary non-tertiary education, which includes post-high school
- Higher education (tertiary education), which includes undergraduate education and postgraduate education.

Compulsory education includes primary education and lower secondary education. Transition to upper secondary education follows in the wake of graduation from lower secondary education, but the admission of students to the specific upper secondary units they have opted for would depend on a centrally administrated ranking based on students' performance throughout their lower secondary education, and the grades obtained by them in the national assessments before graduation. The school-leaving diploma – Baccalaureate exam (examenul de bacalaureat) is taken in five subjects, of which two are chosen by the student. Each subject examination is internally assessed, and marked out of 100, then converted to the 10-point scale.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

High school graduates who sit and pass the Baccalaureate exam are awarded the Baccalaureate diploma, which confers the right to pursue higher education. The admission methodology is different for each university and study programme. Generally, admittance depends on the candidate's performance in the Baccalaureate national examination, on their performance in upper secondary school and, sometimes, on their performance in the university entrance examination (written exams or interviews). Access to the number of places which are fully subsidised by the Government within public universities is based on *numerus clausus*. Having signed the Bologna Declaration, from 2005, Romania introduced a restructured HE system (3+2+3 – bachelor's+master's+Doctoral studies). As a result of the fact that, commencing with the 2005/2006 academic year, Romanian higher education institutions, private and public, have been required to implement the three-tier structures, the first degree, (*Diploma de Licenta*, which is considered comparable to British bachelor's (Ordinary standard)), is usually achieved after three years. For engineers and architects, there are *Diploma de Inginer* and *Diploma de Arhitect* (comparable to British bachelor's (Ordinary) degree standard). Students with high grades may be considered for admission to postgraduate study on fully subsidised places within public universities.

Russia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Attestat o (Polnom) Srednem Obshchem Obrazovanii (Certificate of Secondary Education)

Acceptable (if taken at grade 11) in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

Diplom o Srednem Professionalnom Obrazovanii (Secondary Vocational Education Diploma)

Comparable to NVQ level 2.

GRADING SYSTEM

5	excellent
4	good
3	satisfactory/minimum pass
2	unsatisfactory
1	totally unsatisfactory

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The first nine years of education are compulsory and comprise primary education (age six to 10) and lower secondary school (age 11 to 15/16). This then leads to a further two years of non-compulsory upper secondary education. Upper secondary education leads to the award of Attestat o (Polnom) Srednem Obshchem Obrazovanii (Certificate of Secondary Education) for general education, and Diplom o Srednem Professionalnom Obrazovanii (Secondary Vocational Education Diploma) for vocational education. The Attestat o (Polnom) Srednem Obshchem Obrazovanii has a considerable element of oral examining and all subjects taken must be passed to qualify for the Certificate. There are two compulsory subjects (mathematics and Russian language), and students choose other subjects according to the course requirements of individual higher education institutions.

Each type of examination used to have its own centralised requirements, and the content and method of assessment varied greatly according to the school and the higher educational institution. Unified State Examinations (USE) were launched in 2001 in order to provide equal assessment criteria for all the regions in the Russian Federation. The USE consists of tests in a number of compulsory subjects. The tests are graded according to the percentage of correct answers, but the correlation between percentage and the grade (a 5-tier system) differs from subject to subject. From 2009 all the higher educational institutions in Russia must use the USE for admissions. The most prestigious universities in the country, such as Moscow State University and St Petersburg State University, will be allowed to hold additional examinations.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Entry to HE in Russia is based on the Unified State Examination and, for some institutions, upon a competitive entrance examination. After four years of study, the Bakalavr is awarded. The Bakalavr is considered to be comparable in standard to the British bachelor's (ordinary) degree. Following a further year of study, the Magistr's degree is awarded. An alternative route is the Specialist Diploma, which is professionally orientated and takes five to six years. It is considered to be comparable in standard to the British bachelor's degree.

Saudi Arabia

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Tawjihiyah (General Secondary Education Certificate – GSEC)

Acceptable at 70% or above in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, a foundation degree or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

100–90%	excellent
89–75	very good
74–60	good
59–50	pass
49–0	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education in Saudi Arabia is free, but not compulsory. General education comprises six years of primary school, three years of intermediate school and three years of secondary school. Education is strictly segregated along gender lines at all stages, and boys and girls follow a slightly different curriculum and take different exams. Religious and cultural education form a significant element of the curriculum. Arabic is the medium of instruction, apart from technological and scientific courses at HE level.

Throughout their intermediate and secondary education, students must pass end-of-year exams each year to progress to the next stage. Primary education commences at age six. On successful completion of final year primary education examinations, students then progress to intermediate school where they study for three years.

In the first year of general secondary school, students follow a common curriculum. Students are streamed on the basis of their first year end-of-year examinations to follow a scientific or literary curriculum. Students obtaining 60% or above in the end-of-year examination can choose which curriculum to follow. Those obtaining below 60% must follow the literary stream.

Secondary education culminates with the General Secondary Education Certificate (Tawjihiyah). At secondary level, students can also attend technical/vocational schools, which award the Secondary Vocational School Diploma, the Secondary Commercial School Diploma or the Secondary Agricultural Diploma.

A new secondary school system is currently being piloted. However, the decision whether to fully implement this system has yet to be taken.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University admission in Saudi Arabia is based primarily on the results of the GSEC, although some faculties may administer their own university entrance examination. A national aptitude test has been introduced in addition to the GSEC, as a measure of student ability. It covers areas that are not traditionally covered in GSEC, such as logical thinking and quantitative methods. It consists of two main sections; language and quantitative abilities. The test is administered by an independent examination body, QYAS, developed by the Ministry of Higher Education. An average GSEC mark of 90% is necessary for entry into medicine courses and 80% for others.

Serbia

This entry was last reviewed for the 2014 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

At the end of secondary education students receive 'Diploma o završenoj srednjoj školi' (Secondary School Leaving Diploma). At the moment government of Serbia, Ministry of Education Science and Technological Development is developing school leaving examinations after secondary education. It is expected that the final exams will be introduced in the school year 2016/17 for three-year secondary education programmes, and in 2017/18 for four-year secondary education programmes.

GRADING SYSTEM

5.0 (maximum) ... 2.0 (minimum pass) ... 1.0.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Serbia, primary education is compulsory and lasts eight years. The implementers of primary education are primary schools. It is carried out in two education cycles: the first from first to fourth grade, organised through the classroom teaching, and the second cycle of fifth to eighth grade through subject teaching. Primary education starts at the age of six and a half and last for eight years with a mandatory pre-school year. A foreign language, mostly English, is introduced as early as the first year throughout Serbia, and a second foreign language (French, German or Russian) is introduced from the fifth year.

The implementers of secondary education are secondary schools. Persons that have acquired primary education and passed the final exam may enroll first grade of secondary school, in accordance with the pertaining law. Four years of secondary education is divided between comprehensive schools (gymnasiums) and VET (including music and design) schools. The award of the Diploma is based on assessments throughout secondary school. The medium of instruction is Serbian.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Candidates for studies of the first degree of university take an entrance exam or an aptitude and abilities test, in accordance with the general act of the independent institution of higher education. The ranking of candidates for studies of the first degree is determined based on the general performance during secondary education and the performance in the entrance exam, or the aptitude and abilities test.

There are five types of higher education institutions: universities, faculties/art academies, academies of professional studies, higher education schools and higher education schools of professional studies.

Higher education system has two types of studies: academic studies organised at universities, and vocational profession-oriented studies organised either at colleges of applied studies or at universities.

The three-cycle system of academic studies includes: basic academic studies lasting three to four years, carrying 180 to 240 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System), master's studies lasting one to

two years with 60 to 120 ECTS, and doctoral studies with a minimum of three years of study or 180 ECTS. In the field of medical science (the studies of medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine) integrated study programmes that last six years and must carry a minimum of 360 ECTS, as well as integrated pharmacy studies with 300 ECTS have been introduced. In addition, the second cycle of academic studies includes specialist academic studies with the minimum duration of one year.

National source of information

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ENIC CENTER (Information on Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications)
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Sierra Leone

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)

Regarded as below the standard of UK A levels. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to a bridging programme.

GRADING SYSTEM

1	excellent
2	very good
3	good
4–6	credit/minimum acceptable pass
7	pass
8	pass
9	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Under the 6+3+3 structure, after six years of primary education, pupils take a National Primary School Examination (NPSE) before proceeding to three years of junior secondary education, at the end of which, the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), which is below GCSE standard, may be taken. The results in the BECE give access to three years of senior secondary education, which is concluded by examinations for the WASSCE. The WASSCE replaces GCE O/A level examinations. The medium of instruction is English.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to a four-year honours degree in Sierra Leone is on the basis of passes (at grade 6 or better) in five subjects, including English and mathematics, in the WASSCE. Good GCE A level results may achieve advanced standing.

Singapore

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Singapore/Cambridge GCE Ordinary level

Acceptable at grades A1–C6 in lieu of GCSE grades A, B and C on a subject for subject basis.

Singapore/Cambridge GCE Advanced level

Acceptable at grades Distinction and A–E in lieu of GCE A level on a subject for subject basis.

International Baccalaureate Diploma

Grades are awarded for each of the six courses of study ranging from 1 point (lowest) to 7 points (highest). The diploma is awarded to those who score a minimum of 24 points, subject to certain minimum levels of performance across all subjects, as well as satisfactory participation in creativity, action and service. The total highest score is 45 points, as students can also be awarded up to three points for their combined results on theory of knowledge and the extended essay.

Polytechnic Diplomas

There are five polytechnics that offer two- to three-year diplomas to GCE O and A level graduates. These range from business management, engineering, life sciences, health sciences, computing, media studies, sports and wellness to hospitality management.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grading is based on the Grade Point Average (GPA) system of computation as follows:

Grade	GPA
A	4.0
B+	3.5
B	3.0
C+	2.5
C	2.0
D+	1.5
D	1.0
E	0.5
F	0
GPA = Total score	
S (course/module credit value)	

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Compulsory education (six years for the primary years) was introduced from 2003. Six years of primary education is followed by four or five years of secondary education. Students are streamed according to academic ability from the end of Primary 4. The majority of students complete secondary education and study for GCE O levels, either through a four-year 'express' course, or a five-year 'normal' course.

A seamless education where the top 10% of secondary school students can proceed to pre-university without taking the GCE O level examination was introduced in 2004 to provide them with an enriched education where the curriculum is more broad-based and multi-disciplinary. Students under this Integrated Programme (IP) will skip the GCE O levels and take the GCE A levels or International Baccalaureate Diploma or NUS High School Diploma after six years of study.

The medium of instruction in schools is English, with pupils offering their mother tongue (Chinese, Malay or Tamil) as their second language. GCE O and A levels are provided by Cambridge Assessment (formerly known as University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate).

The Singapore Ministry of Education and the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board are responsible for subjects examined in the mother tongue.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Eligibility for higher education is based on results obtained in GCE A levels, International Baccalaureate Diploma, NUS High School Diploma or a Diploma from one of the five local polytechnics – Singapore Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic and Republic Polytechnic.

GCE A level students must have attained at least two H2 passes, attempted General Paper (GP) or Knowledge and Inquiry (KI) in the same sitting and achieved a minimum of grade 'S' in their mother tongue. Selection to the National University of Singapore and the Nanyang Technological University is based on grades in GP (or KI), Project Work, three H2 and one H1 content-based subjects (one of which has to be a contrasting subject). In addition, the universities may also consider students' achievements in other areas, such as co-curricular activities and community involvement programmes.

Polytechnic diploma holders must have achieved excellent academic performance (top 10% to 20% of their cohort) for entry into the local universities.

Entry to the local universities is very competitive due to the strong demand for places and high standards for entry are usually expected.

General bachelor's degrees take three years to complete, with an additional year for an honours degree and five years for medicine.

Slovakia

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Vysvedčenie o Maturitnej Skúške/Maturita

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

1	výborný	(excellent)
2	velmi dobrý	(very good)
3	dobrý	(good)
4	dostatočný	(pass)
5	nedostatočný	(fail)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Schooling for the duration of nine years is compulsory (from age six to the end of school year in which student reaches 16). Nine years of basic education is followed by a four- or five-year secondary education course in a gymnasium, a secondary vocational school, a secondary specialised school, an apprentice training centre or a conservatoire. All these secondary education courses lead to the matriculation examination, Vysvedčenie o Maturitnej Skúške or Maturita. The gymnasium curriculum

involves a broad-based core and some specialisation in science, humanities or mathematics, but the matriculation examination is usually taken in only four subjects, of which mother tongue and literature and a foreign language are compulsory. In addition to marks for individual examination subjects, achievements throughout the secondary course, grading students as having passed with honours; passed very well; passed; or failed. The main medium of instruction is Slovak, but minorities can also be taught in their own language (Hungarian, Roma or Ukrainian).

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Maturita remains a prerequisite for HE in Slovakia, but each faculty of the 35 institutions has considerable autonomy and they may use more specialised and selective admissions procedures, commonly involving written examinations. The first degree of *Bakalár* takes three or four years of study and may be followed by a two-year programme leading to a master's degree. Medicine and veterinary medicine involve six years of study.

Slovenia

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Spričevalo o splošni maturi (General Matura Certificate)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

5	excellent
4	very good
3	good
2	satisfactory (<i>minimum pass</i>)
1	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Since 2008/09, a single structure education system of nine years has been compulsory for all children aged six to 15. Upper secondary education in Slovenia consists of general, technical and vocational education. The main objective of vocational schools is to equip students with knowledge and skills to enter the labour market. Technical and general upper secondary schools (*gimnazije*) aim to equip students with knowledge and skills to continue education.

In addition to general *gimnazija* there are several other types of specialised *gimnazije*: classical, technical, art *gimnazija*, and *gimnazija* of economics. Programmes last four years and end with the final examination in five school subjects, i.e. general matura examination. Students who pass all five subjects are awarded the general matura certificate (*Spričevalo o splošnimaturi*).

Gimnazija students who decide, for various reasons, not to continue their education have the option to enter the labour market after they attend a vocational course and receive qualification for the respective occupation.

Technical upper secondary education courses provide learners with basic general and technical education. Learners develop knowledge and skills for the respective occupation as well as to continue education at higher education institutions.

The courses last four to five years (240–300 credit points) and end with final examination, i.e. vocational matura examination. Students are awarded the vocational matura certificate (*Spričevalo o poklicnimaturi*) which allows them to enrol on the first-cycle degree of higher professional study programmes. Access to the academic first-cycle degree and uniform master's degree is also an option for students with the vocational matura certificate, but only if they pass an examination in the additional general matura subject.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The tertiary education includes short-cycle higher education and higher education.

Short-cycle higher vocational education programmes last two years (120 ECTS [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System]). Students acquire occupational competences in accordance with occupational standards. Graduates are qualified to manage, plan and supervise various work processes.

Recently, higher education has become more unitary in structure, namely to comply with the Bologna process. In 2006, amendments to the Higher Education Act provided the legal framework for establishing the higher education system of three-cycles according to the Bologna declaration.

The first-cycle study programmes (equivalent to bachelor's degree) last three to four years and provide 180–240 ECTS credits. Programmes are designed to equip students with basic academic knowledge and skills or professional competencies. At this level, programmes are either theory-based or equip students for specific professions.

The second-cycle study programmes – *magisterij* (equivalent to master's degree) with 60–120 ECTS credits last one to two years. Programmes are designed to equip students with advanced academic skills. The second-cycle study programmes include uniform study programmes. They may only be developed for the regulated professions and they last five to six years with 300 or 360 ECTS credits.

Doctoral studies (*doktorski študij*) or third cycle last at least three years.

South Africa

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

South African National Certificate (SA NSC) (as from November 2008)

Contrary to the senior certificate examinations indicated below, this qualification does not distinguish between higher and standard grade levels.

Grading of performance in subjects is on a seven point rating scale, where ratings 7 to 4 would be related to the A–D rating levels previously accepted for the senior certificate on the following rating scale.

GRADING SYSTEM

7	100–80%
6	79–70
5	69–60
4	59–50 <i>minimum acceptable</i>
3	49–40
2	39–30
1	29–0

Grades 4 or above are generally considered to be acceptable for entry to HE in the UK. A grade 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC) candidate is required to offer one official language at home language level, another official language at first additional language level, mathematics or mathematical literacy, life orientation (a half subject) as well as three other subjects. An NSC will be awarded to a candidate who obtained 40% in three subjects, one of which must be the home language, and 30% in three subjects, provided that a complete portfolio of evidence in the school-based assessment component is submitted in the subject failed. The NSC is predominantly a group certificate requiring three years of schooling with school-based assessment where 25% of the final mark is based on a moderated school-based assessment. Umalusi is the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assuring body which is responsible for quality assuring the NSC. (See also Access to Higher Education).

Pre 2008**Senior Certificate with or without Matriculation Endorsement**

Standard Grade: Acceptable at grades A–D in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis.

Higher Grade: Acceptable at grades A–D in lieu of qualifications widely used for entry to UK HE, e.g. GCE or SQA awards. Passes in five subjects at Higher Grade may satisfy general entry requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

A	100–80%
B	79–70
C	69–60
D	59–50 <i>minimum acceptable</i>
E	49–40
F	39–33
FF	33–30

The official pass mark for Higher Grade subjects is 40% except for second language Higher Grade subjects as well as all Standard Grade subjects where the pass mark is 33.3%. The mean mark in any subject is usually about 55%. Only a small proportion of candidates score an A in any subject (from as little as 2% to a maximum of about 10% in subjects taken by highly select groups). A further 8–15% are likely to gain a B and about 20–25% achieve a C grade. Though variations will occur from year to year, this may be considered as a typical distribution. The Senior Certificate is a group certificate and records an aggregate mark (a minimum of about 40%). (See also *Access to Higher Education* below.)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Following from the new constitution of 1996, the Department of Education has responsibility for all general educational policy that must be implemented by nine provincial education departments and two independent providers. Nine years of compulsory education constitute the general education phase for which the General

Education Certificate (GEC) was recently introduced as a grade 9 qualification. This phase is followed by three years of non-compulsory senior secondary education leading to examinations for a Senior Certificate at the end of grade 12. The last full-time Senior Certificate examination was conducted in 2007 and Senior Certificate candidates were allowed to supplement single Senior Certificate subjects until June 2011. The Senior Certificate requires a minimum of six subjects selected from six different groups, of which two official languages are compulsory. Subjects may be taken at either Higher or Standard Grade or at N3 level for the National Senior Certificate (not to be confused with the future NSC), a vocational qualification. The Senior Certificate aggregate is on a total (for the best six subjects, though some subjects' results must be counted even if not in the best six) of between 1,800 and 2,100. For a Senior Certificate to be awarded, a candidate must achieve an aggregate of 720 marks; for university entrance a candidate must achieve an aggregate of at least 950 and endorsement. Since 2001, Senior Certificates were awarded with distinction (1,680+ marks) and merit (1,260+ marks). A relatively small percentage of candidates, 2.5%, obtain their certificates with distinction and a further 11.4% with merit in a typical distribution. For the numerous degree programmes, an aggregate of 1440 and performance in specified subjects would as a rule qualify the holder for university admission.

As from November 2008 the Senior Certificate is being replaced by the National Senior Certificate (NSC), which phased in from grade 10 in January 2006 and grade 11 in January 2007. The phasing in of the NSC completes the process of curriculum and assessment change introduced in 1994 with the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurer, known as Umalusi as statutory body that is responsible for quality assuring the Senior Certificate as well as the NSC as from November 2008.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION**Access on the basis of the Senior Certificate**

As from 1992, the certification of minimum requirement for admission to bachelor's degree studies in South Africa was administered by the South African Certification Council (SAFCERT), which also validated all various Senior Certificates. These functions were taken over by Umalusi, which also endorses Senior Certificates where the candidate has met the matriculation requirements as determined by the Minister of Education on the advice of the Committee of University Principals and its Matriculation Board. Matriculation endorsement requirements include passing at least five subjects at one sitting, with an average mark of 45% or better; having passed at least four of the subjects at the Higher Grade (to include two official languages one of which must be a university medium of instruction). The Matriculation Board issues certificates of exemption from the endorsement requirement to bachelor's degree candidates who qualify in terms of ministerially approved requirements. Individual institutions may have additional requirements and many set specific faculty requirements. Different points systems are used by individual institutions, but a typical points system for admission awards Higher Grade passes at A–E, 6–2 points and Standard Grade passes 4–2 points. Institutions specify a minimum points score, over and above matriculation

endorsement for admission. These minima will range from 23 to 35 on this scale. Other scales are used by various institutions. The South African bachelor's degree is taken over three years and may be followed by a single-subject one-year honours degree.

Access on the basis of the National Senior Certificate (NSC)

National Policy has prescribed a minimum of three NSC achievement levels for admission to three entry level higher education qualification types. As of 2009, the three types are higher certificate, diploma and bachelor's degree. Institutions have jointly developed an admission points system to assist them with admission as of 2009 onwards. Individual institutions have institution-specific cut-off levels for admission to the three qualification levels. Different points systems are used by individual institutions, but a typical NSC points score will have numerically related NSC rating score points for subject passes over and above the minimum admission requirements. These minima will range from 28 upwards but some universities use other scales. The South African bachelor's degree is still taken over three years and may be followed by a single-subject one-year honours degree.

South Korea

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Ilbankye Kodung Hakkyo (General High School Diploma)

Considered to be between GCSE and GCE A level standard. Those students with grades above 'mi (70–79)' may be considered for admission to access or foundation level programmes.

Within academic high school education, there are specialised high schools for talented students in arts, sports, or foreign languages, which are called arts high school, physical education high school, and foreign language high school respectively. These schools set higher entry requirements and higher-standard education in the academic or practical area is provided. Considered to be equivalent to GCE A level and students with above 'mi' may be considered for direct admission to first degree in relevant subjects.

Silopkye Kodung Hakkyo (Vocational High School Diploma)

Acceptable in lieu of BTEC First Diploma or NVQ level 2.

GRADING SYSTEM

A (soo)	90% or above
B (woo)	89–80
C (mi)	79–70
D (yang)	69–60
E (ga)	below 60

There is no universal grading system in Korea. Assessment depends on the individual school and may use grades and/or percentage marks.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Korea has a 6+3+3+4 system of primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and HE, the first nine years being compulsory. A National Curriculum covers the

10 years from primary to the first year of upper secondary education. The medium of instruction is Korean, but English is a compulsory subject from the third year of primary school.

Upper secondary education is divided into four streams: academic, vocational, science and specialist. Vocational high school students can request academic classes be arranged for college entrance. On successful completion of academic high school, students are awarded the High School Diploma. Academic high school students must take all National Curriculum subjects plus elective subjects, which make up a minimum total of 204 units.

Vocational high school students take general academic subjects plus vocational subjects, and are awarded the Vocational High School Diploma upon completion.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Entry to a four-year first degree course in Korea is based on the applicant's high school transcript and results of the national College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT), but the ratio of each element for student selection depends on the individual institution's decision. The subject areas of the newly revised CSAT consist of Korean language, mathematics, foreign language (English), social studies/science/vocational education, and second foreign language/Chinese characters and classics – all are optional (students select subjects required by the colleges they wish to attend). The new CSAT adopts two ways of marking: one is raw mark and the other is standard mark.

Subject areas (standard)	Full (raw) mark	Range
Verbal	100	0–200
Mathematical	100	0–200
English	100	0–200
Social studies	50	0–100
Science OR vocational education	100	0–200
Foreign languages	50	0–100

Spain

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Graduado en Educación Secundaria (GES)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Access Mark for University – Admission note for Degree Candidates

Acceptable at an average mark of 5 or better as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Título de Bachiller

Bachillerato marks are awarded by schools internally and are not externally moderated. Therefore successful candidates also have to take the common university entrance examination (PAU) to qualify for entry to degree courses.

GRADING SYSTEM

10	distinction
9	outstanding
8 and 7	very good
6	good
5	pass (allows access to Spanish universities)
Under 5	fail

Bachillerato assessments are marked either numerically between 0 and 10 (the pass mark is 5 or above) or qualitatively, with a numerical equivalent assigned to each grade.

The average Bachillerato mark (Nota Media del Bachillerato) is the mathematical average of the sum of the individual subject marks and is recorded to within two decimal places.

Subject marks are usually an average of three internal assessments in each year. This average grade, expressed in numbers, as above, is shown on the certificate. The specialisation will be noted and also the mean mark covering all subjects taken in the two years of the Bachillerato.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Ministry of Education controls the general policy, inspectorate, validation and curriculum development, but there is considerable devolution in detail to 17 'autonomous' communities. The Graduado en Educación Secundaria (compulsory education) is taken at the end of ten years of compulsory education (six years of primary and four years of secondary). This is at age 16. Pupils may then embark on a two-year course leading to the Título de Bachiller.

The Bachillerato studies are organised in three broad specialities (modalidades): arts; humanities and social sciences; and science and technology (although schools offer a range of slight subject variations for each). Pupils may alternatively embark on a two-year vocational course (different specialities) leading to the Título de Técnico de Grado Medio.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Holders of the Título de Bachiller are qualified for admission to university in Spain provided they also pass the entrance examination (Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad or PAU). The final mark for university entry is made up of 40% from the PAU and 60% from the average Bachillerato mark. An overall average of at least 5 out of 10 is required.

From 2010 onwards, the PAU has been split into two parts: a compulsory group of four or five tests set jointly by the universities of each autonomous community, called the General Phase, and an Optional Specific Phase in subjects related to the degree course being applied for. The Specific Phase is weighted by individual universities and can add up to four additional points to the overall Access Score. In practice, the General Phase + Bachillerato alone will be sufficient for the great majority of degree courses but for high demand degrees such as medicine or architecture, universities can effectively raise the mark spread, and consequently course access scores, to a maximum of 14 instead of the maximum of ten spread provided by the General Phase + Bachillerato.

The PAU is not needed for Vocational Studies of advanced level, which can also be followed after the Bachillerato and lead to a Técnico Superior qualification after two years of study.

There is an average comparison between UK/Spanish marks, published in BOE and used by Spanish universities to accept British educated students:

BRITISH QUALIFICATIONS FOR DIRECT ACCESS TO SPANISH UNIVERSITIES

- Students must have a minimum of five GCSE or IGCSE with marks A, B or C
- A minimum of two full GCE A levels with marks A*, A, B, C, D or E.

Each complete A level and AS is given its UCAS Tariff value, and these are added together to give a total. For example:

Spanish A level: A*

Art A level: B

ICT A level: B

French A level: A

English AS: C

Media studies AS: B

Ranking: $140+100+100+120+40+50= 550$

The total Tariff points are converted into a two decimal number between five (140 Tariff points) and 10 (greater than 620 Tariff points), according to the table published in BOE by the Spanish Ministry of Education. This provides a direct correspondence as indicated in the table below.

Note the equivalences in this table are not endorsed by UCAS and are intended to provide an indicative conversion for UK applicants to Spanish universities. This table is not an allocation of UCAS Tariff points to the Título de Bachiller.

UCAS	Spain
140	5
160	5.2
180	5.4
200	5.6
220	5.8
240	6
260	6.2
280	6.4
300	6.6
320	6.8
340	7
360	7.2
400	7.6
420	7.8
440	8
460	8.2
480	8.4
500	8.6
520	8.8
540	9
560	9.2
580	9.4
600	9.6
620	9.8
>620	10

Students who want to attend Spanish universities can also choose to take the exam for the Fase Específica to increase their mark. This would allow students an extra four points in their overall qualification. Students can take as many subjects as they wish from the list of subjects which qualify for the Fase Específica.

Higher Qualification Degrees in Spain Grado or First Degree lasting 4 years (240 ECTS credits).

All Grados will belong to one of five families and all degrees within a family will have a common first year. The remaining three years will be designed by the university concerned.

Before Bologna, the higher education system was divided into Diplomas or Ingeniero/Arquitecto Técnico (three years) and Licenciaturas/Ingeniero o Arquitecto (five years). The Ingeniero/Arquitecto Técnico can access Master programmes in Spain. These have recently been given equivalence to a UK degree (not honours).

Master: A taught postgraduate course lasting one to two years (60–120 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits).

Doctorate: Entry requirement: First degree plus a master's degree or first degree plus a pre-doctoral course in research methodology. A thesis is written after research normally lasting at least three years.

Sri Lanka

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Sri Lanka Ordinary level

Acceptable at grades A–C in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (with the exception of English language).

Sri Lanka Advanced level

Acceptable at grades A, B and C in lieu of GCE A Level on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM

O level (pre-2001)

100–75%	D	distinction
74–50	C	credit
49–35	S	pass
34–0	F	fail

O level (since 2001)

100–75%	A	distinction
74–65%	B	very good pass
64–50%	C	credit
49–35%	S	pass
34–0%	F	fail

A level

100–75%	A	distinction
74–65	B	very good pass
64–55	C	credit
54–40	S	ordinary pass (simple pass)
39–0	W/F	weak

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Five years of primary education and six years of secondary education culminate in the Sri Lanka O level. A two-year collegiate course leads to A levels in a minimum of three subjects. Sinhala, Tamil and English are the media of instruction. English is taught as a secondary language from year one, but is not compulsory.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Entrance to university in Sri Lanka is at A level standard for a three-year general or four-year honours degree. Candidates are required to have three A level passes, and sit a Common General paper and a General English paper, to assess their intellectual ability and general knowledge. The English paper is compulsory but applicants do not have to pass it to enter university. Professional courses tend to be taught in English, which is used also in the later stages of most other degrees.

Sudan

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Sudan School Certificate (SSC)

Acceptable at 50% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by Advanced GCE, SQA awards or an equivalent qualification.

GRADING SYSTEM

A	100–80%
B	79–70
C	69–60
D	59–50
49 and below is a fail	

The percentage is calculated from the four compulsory subjects plus the three highest optional subjects.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education in Sudan comprises eight years of basic education and three years of secondary education. The three-year academic secondary school course ends with the School Certificate examinations. Certificates are awarded provided students have passes in four compulsory subjects (Arabic, English, mathematics and Islamic or Christian religion), plus one or more optional subjects or three compulsory passes (including Arabic language), plus two or more optional subjects. The third year of secondary education involves a choice between arts and science streams. The medium of instruction is Arabic, but English language is compulsory from the 5th grade of basic school education.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Passes at 50% in the SSC examinations or equivalent certificates qualify candidates for entry to a four-five year general/honours degree in the Sudan, although some institutions require higher marks (70–80%). In competitive areas such as medicine and engineering the minimum percentage required is 83.3% or 74.3% respectively. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is the government body responsible for Higher Education.

Sweden

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Slutbetyg från Grundskola (School Leaving Certificate from compulsory education)

Acceptable at grade G or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Slutbetyg/Examensbevis från Gymnasieskolan (School Leaving Certificate from Upper Secondary Education) Slutbetyg/Examensbevis från Gymnasial Vuxenutbildning (Certificate from Municipal Upper Secondary Adult Education)

Acceptable as group qualifications that satisfy general entrance requirements, provided that three years at upper secondary school have been completed.

During a transition period there will be pupils with school leaving certificates from two different upper secondary education systems. In the former system, pupils will receive a *Slutbetyg* if they started their programme before 1 July 2011 and, in the new system, pupils will receive an *Exemensbevis* if they started their programme after 1 July 2011. For pupils in *Gymnasial Vuxenutbildning* the new system will be in place from 1 July 2012.

GRADING SYSTEM

In both systems the grades are criteria-related and students receive a grade on the completion of each course. However, in the system where there are *Slutbetyg* the top grade of MVG (Pass with special distinction) is given only when the pupil's results are exceptional.

Mycket väl godkänd	MVG	pass with special distinction
Väl godkänd	VG	pass with distinction
Godkänd	G	pass
Icke Godkänd	IG	fail
39–0	W/F	weak

The new system's grade scale has the classifications A–F, where A is the highest grade and E is the lowest passing grade. F is a fail.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

After nine years of compulsory education, with English introduced sometime during the first three years, almost all pupils proceed to upper secondary school (*gymnasieskolan*). Prior to 1 July 2011 they could choose to pursue one of the 16 national programmes or a specially-designed programme. Two of the national programmes – natural science and social science – as well as many of the specially-designed programmes, have an increased focus on university entrance. There are no formal school leaving examinations. The *Slutbetyg* från *Gymnasieskolan*, usually awarded after three years at an upper secondary school (*gymnasium*), gives a grade for each course, including compulsory and optional courses. Each subject may include several courses. Grades are based on continuous internal assessment, with the syllabuses and criteria for the various grades defined nationally. The certificate will specify the programme studied: F for complete (2,500 points), U for extended or R for reduced. The *Slutbetyg* från *Gymnasial Vuxenutbildning* requires a minimum of 2,350 points.

In the new system, pupils may choose to pursue one of 18 national programmes; 12 vocational and six that are preparatory for higher education. Pupils in vocational programmes may take further courses and thus get basic eligibility for higher education, which is specified on the certificate by GB. The six national programmes that are preparatory for higher education are: Business Management and Economics (*ekonomiprogrammet*), Arts (*estetiska programmet*), Humanities (*humanistiska programmet*), Natural Science (*naturvetenskapsprogrammet*), Social Science (*samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet*) and Technology (*teknikprogrammet*). The *Exemensbevis* from *Gymnasieskolan*, usually awarded after three years of upper secondary school, gives a grade for each course, including compulsory and optional courses. Each subject may include several courses. Grades are based on continuous internal assessment, with the syllabuses and criteria for the various grades defined nationally. The certificate will specify the programme studied: U for

extended. The *Exemensbevis* from *Gymnasieskolan* requires a minimum of 2,500 points and will be marked with a U if it has been extended. The *Exemensbevis* from *Gymnasial Vuxenutbildning* requires a minimum of 2,400 points.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

For eligibility for higher education, a certificate must include at least 2,250 points for courses with a grade of pass or above, including Swedish, English and mathematics. A complete programme is required from upper secondary education. In practice, competition is usually keen for places in higher education; high grades are needed and specific requirements must also be satisfied for many university programmes.

All levels of the Swedish education system are currently undergoing major reforms that will affect all of the above mentioned regulations. New requirements for eligibility for higher education will be in place from 2013.

A bachelor's degree (*Kandidat*) is achieved by accumulating at least 180 credits, with at least 90 in one subject, and takes three years.

Switzerland

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Schweizerisch anerkanntes kantonales Maturitätszeugnis/Certificat de maturité cantonal reconnu par la Confédération/Attestato di maturità cantonale riconosciuta dalla Confederazione

Maturitätszeugnis, ausgestellt von der Schweizerischen Maturitätskommission/Certificat de maturité, délivré par la Commission suisse de maturité/Attestato di maturità, rilasciato dalla Commissione svizzera di maturità

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements for doctoral/research universities and universities of teacher education.

Berufsmaturität/Maturité professionnelle/Attestato federale di maturità professionale

Acceptable as group qualifications satisfying general entrance requirements for universities of applied sciences.

GRADING SYSTEM

6 (maximum), 5, 4: satisfactory, 3, 2, 1: insufficient

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Considerable educational autonomy rests with the 26 cantons. Systems thus vary in many quite basic respects, especially between cantons in different linguistic regions. There is, however, considerable agreement upon nine years of compulsory education followed by three or four years of upper-secondary education leading to the school leaving qualification, a Cantonal Maturity Certificate or a Swiss Maturity Certificate, or a Federal Vocational Baccalaureate, the name identifying the first language as German, French or Italian, as noted above. The duration of schooling up to maturity certificate is 12/13 years.

Ninety percent of young people in Switzerland attend upper secondary schools. One-third concludes with a

maturity certificate or a Federal Vocational Baccalaureate. Most of these young people continue to study at university level. Two-thirds complete vocational education and training with a Federal VET Diploma.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Cantonal Maturity Certificate is the basic qualification for admission to doctoral/research universities or universities of teacher education. Most such certificates are specifically endorsed as 'Swiss recognised'; those which are not are often specialised (e.g. artistic or pedagogic) and have uncertain currency, especially outside the specific canton. The Federal Vocational Baccalaureate is the basic qualification for university of applied sciences admission.

There is a *numerus clausus* for studies in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and sports sciences. Since the 2001/02 winter semester, Swiss universities have been busy adjusting their curricula to comply with the Bologna Declaration. Under this new two-tier system the first grade awarded is the bachelor's degree (180 ECTS [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System] credits or three years full-time study) and the second one the master's degree (90/120 ECTS credits or one and a half/two years full-time study). A bachelor's degree is the prerequisite for admittance to studies at master's level.

Candidates seeking admission to doctoral studies must hold a master's degree from a doctoral/research university. Admission decisions are taken on the basis of individual aptitude and qualifications. Candidates able to demonstrate proven scientific qualifications may also pursue doctoral studies with a master's degree from other types of higher education institutions. Research doctorate degrees are generally awarded after three to five years of postgraduate research and the submission of a written thesis.

Furthermore, the universities can confer master's degrees in further education, the so-called Master's of Advanced Studies – MAS (a minimum of 60 ECTS credits or one year full-time study). A MAS does not give access to doctoral studies.

Since implementation of the new two-tier study system has not yet been completed, degrees according to the former system are still being awarded. The first grade awarded is the *Lizentiat/Licence* or Diploma with a total length of full-time study of four–five years and six years for medical studies (no ECTS credits). However, experience shows that they usually last one or two years longer. The *Lizentiat/Licence* and Diploma correspond to a master's degree level; they are the minimum prerequisite for undertaking a doctorate.

Syria

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Al Shahada Al Thanawiya/Baccalaureat (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)

Acceptable at 60% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

There are different types of Baccalaureate, but the main ones are Scientific and Literary themes.

GRADING SYSTEM

Literary stream: 270 (maximum) ... 114 (minimum pass)

Scientific stream: 290 (maximum) ... 116 (minimum pass)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Six years of primary education and three years of preparatory education lead, on the basis of a selection examination, to three years of secondary education, at the end of which, pupils take the Secondary School Leaving Certificate. The first year of the secondary course is general and a choice must then be made between literary and scientific streams. Arabic is the medium of instruction. English is the first foreign language studied, and French has recently been introduced as the second foreign language, changing the maximum and minimum marks available.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University admission in Syria is on the basis of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate. First degrees are of four to six years in length.

Taiwan

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Senior High School Diploma

Acceptable at grade C or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

A	100–80%
B	79–70
C	69–60 <i>minimum pass mark</i>
D	59–50

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Taiwan school system is based on the US model: six years of primary education (age 7–12), three years of junior high school (age 13–15) and three years of senior high school (age 16–18). The duration of Taiwan compulsory education is nine years, including the 6-year primary education and the 3-year junior high school. The Senior High School Diploma may be completed in Year 12 and the award requires marks of 60 or above in all prescribed subjects and a total of 160 credits from the three years of senior high school. Chinese and mathematics are both compulsory subjects from primary through to secondary education. English becomes compulsory from grade 3 onwards. Chinese remains the main medium of instruction.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In order to help Taiwanese students with talent to access local universities/colleges much more easily, the Taiwan government has gradually introduced diversified college enrolment schemes: the Subject Competence Test in 1994 and the Assigned-Subject Test in 2002. Since then, admission to a four-year general bachelor's degree in Taiwan is divided into two major entrance systems.

The Subject Competence Test usually takes place in February. A prospective college student can be granted admission based on his/her test scores by individual application or school recommendations. If students are not satisfied with their results, they have the opportunity to take the Assigned-Subject Test in July. Subjects in this test include Chinese, English, mathematics, history, geography, physics, chemistry, and biology. Students can choose their test subjects, subject to the entrance requirements of individual local departments and universities/colleges. This is highly competitive in some areas as it is for admission by placement.

Exemptions from entrance examinations are available for gifted students.

Tanzania

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE)

Acceptable at grade C or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis.

Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education (ACSE)

Acceptable in lieu of GCE A levels on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM

CSE	A	excellent
	B	very good
	C	good
	D	satisfactory
	F	fail
ACSE	A	excellent
	B	very good
	C	good
	D	fair
	E	satisfactory
	S	basic/subsidiary pass
	F	fail

The Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) and the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education (ACSE) are both awarded in four divisions. Though variations will occur from year to year, this may be considered as a typical distribution.

Division	I	II	III	IV
CSE	2.84%	3.65%	11.81%	45.56%
ACSE	7.40%	20.20%	38.05%	24.20%

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Seven years of primary education, in the medium of Kiswahili, leads to the Primary School Leaving Certificate. The Certificate of Secondary Education is taken after four years. Two years in high school lead to the ACSE. Both the CSE and the ACSE are taught through the medium of English.

For evaluation of performance, 50% is derived from continuous assessment carried out by the National Examination Council.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Minimum entrance requirements to first degree courses in Tanzania are:

CSE (or equivalent), with passes in five appropriate subjects obtained prior to the sitting of the ACSE (or equivalent)

and two principal level passes in appropriate subjects at the same sitting, with total points not below 5, based on the scale A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1, F=0; or two principal level passes (in appropriate subjects) not at the same sitting, provided they are both of grade C or above; or an appropriate equivalent Diploma/Certificate of not less than second class/credit level and approved by the Senate.

Thailand

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Mathayom Suksa 6 (M6)

Mathayom 6 is the final examination taken by students at the end of their three years of upper secondary education and is acceptable at grade 1 or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis, except in English language. It would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course, as well as an appropriate English qualification.

GRADING SYSTEM

4	excellent
3	good
2	fair
1	pass
0	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The system has been going through two reforms in the last five years – basically the first nine years of education to Mathayom 3 are compulsory. The last three years of the upper secondary level to M6 is divided between academic or vocational routes. For the academic route, students choose either an arts or science stream, and in either stream, choose three to five specialised subjects.

There is a new emphasis on vocational qualifications, which students can use to enter the workforce or continue to HE.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Beginning in academic year 2006, students completing grade 12 are obliged to take national educational tests of two types: the Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET) and the Advanced National Educational Test (A-NET).

Both examinations are administered by the National Institute of Educational Testing Service to assess student proficiency in mathematics, Thai language, science, English language and social studies, religion and culture. The A-NET tests focus more on thinking and analytical skills, as well as aptitude in relation to particular academic and professional disciplines, such as engineering, teacher education, medicine, architecture, foreign languages, fine arts, and music.

The newly-modified university admission system can be summarised as follows:

1) The Direct University Admission System:

Under this system, each higher education institution determines and administers its own admission criteria and procedures in certain fields of study consistent with its mission and philosophy. For admission to some fields

of study, the Direct Admission System may also include O-NET and/or A-NET results. Aptitude tests not included in the national tests but required for certain fields of study will be administered by the particular institution.

2) The Central University Admission System:

The Office of the Higher Education Commission, the Council of University Presidents of Thailand, and the educational institutions change in the previous approach with a new Central University Admission System (CUAS).

Redesigned and implemented in 2006, the revised CUAS integrates multiple indicators to evaluate student achievement and performance. These include:

- 1) the overall cumulative grade point average (GPAX) for grades
- 2) the grade point average (GPA) in grades 10–12 in three to five of the eight subject groups of the core curriculum
- 3) results of the O-NET and/or A-NET tests.

3) Special Programmes and the Quota System

Apart from the normal admission system, a number of students are also admitted through special programmes and a quota arrangement set by the institution. For example, in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health, the faculties of medicine at Chulalongkorn, Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Mahidol and Prince of Songkla universities admit about 15% of their students through the 'Promotion of Medical Science Education for Rural Areas' Project.

Tunisia

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Baccalauréat

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements provided that an overall grade of at least 'assez bien' has been achieved.

GRADING SYSTEM

20–16	très bien	(very good)
15–14	bien	(good)
13–12	assez bien	(fair)
11–10	passable	(pass)
9–0	insuffisant	(fail)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Nine years of compulsory basic education (école de base) may be followed by four years of more advanced and specialised study leading to the Baccalauréat examinations. For the final three-year period, a choice is made to specialise in lettres, sciences techniques, mathématiques, sciences expérimentales, économie et gestion informatique or sports. The medium of instruction is Arabic for literature and human sciences, while French is used for scientific subjects.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Baccalauréat is the basis of admission to a first degree in Tunisia. Arabic and French are the media of instruction at university level.

Turkey

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Devlet Lise Diplomas (State High School Diploma)

Lise Bitirme Diplomas (Private High School Diploma)

Considered to be at a standard of at least GCSE level.

Students with an overall average of four out of five satisfy the general entry requirements of some British HEPs.

Genel Lise (State High Schools)

Students can enrol in state high schools directly following completion of their primary education without undertaking an entrance test. This stage of education lasts four years, and consists of a curriculum of natural sciences (physics, biology and chemistry), Turkish literature, social sciences or foreign languages. The aim is to prepare students for higher education. Most graduates will need a foundation year in the UK prior to commencing a degree programme.

Anadolu Lisesi (Anatolian High School Diploma)

Anatolian high schools are selective institutions, which were established with the aim of preparing students for university, and at the same time combining students of similar interests and abilities together. Depending on the resources, these schools may offer a five-year programme, which includes an initial year of intensive foreign language teaching as a preparatory year. This is usually English; it may also be French or German. Tuition is in Turkish after the preparatory year; however, depending on resources and demand, the tuition of natural sciences (physics, biology and chemistry) and mathematics can be delivered in a foreign language.

The demand for places in the Anatolian high schools is very high and admission is through a competitive entrance examination. Graduates are generally successful in the university entrance exam. The graduates who have grade point averages above 4.5 and whose English skills are satisfactory are mostly eligible for first-year entry into British HEPs.

Science High School (Fen Lisesi)

Science high schools were established with the aim of providing education to exceptionally gifted students in the areas of mathematics and natural sciences. All students are encouraged to engage in scientific research activities. These schools offer a four-year programme with a curriculum that emphasises science and mathematics. The language of instruction is Turkish. Entrance to science high schools is through an extremely competitive examination. The graduates of these schools generally achieve the highest scores in the university entrance exam for all Turkey.

Private Foreign Language Medium Schools (Yabancı Dil Ağırlıklı Özel Lise)

A group of schools offering international curriculum and International Baccalaureate Diploma option to their students together with the national curriculum. Some of them are very reputable and the teaching quality is excellent. These schools offer five-year programmes, which includes one year of intensive language tuition. Most of their students are eligible for first-year entry to UK HEPs.

Devlet Teknik Lise Diploması (State Technical four-year High School Diploma)**Devlet Meslek Lise Diploması (State Vocational High School Diploma)**

Considered to be between BTEC First Diploma and BTEC National Diploma and of similar standard to State High School Diploma. Caution should be taken as these diplomas may be less suitable as a preparation for academic study.

GRADING SYSTEM IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Grade	Number	Point (Mark)
Very good	5	85–100
Good	4	70–84
Average	3	55–69
Pass	2	45–54
Fail	1	25–44
Unsuccessful	0	0–24

Source: British Council Education UK Turkey 2012

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is compulsory from the age of six. Eight years of primary education allows entry to secondary education. Since 2005, secondary education has lasted for four years, and covers; general (four years), vocational (four years) or technical education (five years). In the second year of secondary education, students can choose to specialise in natural sciences, literature and mathematics, the social sciences, foreign languages, art or physical education. The Lise Diploması (High School Diploma) is awarded locally on the basis of a wide range of assessments, including written and oral examinations, homework and extra-mural activities. Vocational secondary school prepares students for entry into a profession or HE. In addition to those, the private foreign language medium schools offer 4 + 1 intensive foreign language tuition, just like some of the Anatolian High Schools. It is compulsory to follow the Turkish curriculum for those students to receive the high school diploma; however, if the school is offering an international curriculum or the IB, those students may wish to get credits.

The new four-year high school system produced its first graduates in 2009.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to HE is centralised and based on Lise Diploması and a Student Selection Examination (OSS). The single university placement test (OSS) was replaced with a two-stage examination in 2010. In March, students take the Transition to Higher Education (YGS). The students who achieve grades between 140 and 179.99 will only be able to apply for open learning degrees (associate and undergraduate) and full-time associate degrees (two-year vocational programmes within universities). Students who achieve 180 and above are eligible to sit the second stage examination in June, the Undergraduate Placement Test (LYS). The test will be used to assign students to full-time undergraduate programmes in five sessions over two weekends. Subjects taken are mathematics and geometry, a foreign language, social sciences, Turkish literature and geography, and natural sciences. The results are announced in late July or early August.

The two-year programmes lead to the award of Onlisans Derecesi/Diploma (pre-licentiate or Associate Degree); the four-year programmes to the award of a Lisans Diploması. Entry is highly competitive. There is particular pressure for places in engineering, medicine, economics and business-related courses.

Uganda

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE)**

Acceptable at grades 1–6 in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis.

Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE)

Acceptable at grades A–E in lieu of GCE A level on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM**UCE**

1, 2	distinction
3–6	credit/minimum acceptable pass
7, 8	pass
9	fail

UACE

A–E	pass
F	fail

In nine high-entry subjects at A level, in recent years, an average of 0.8% of the candidates achieved grade A and an average of 11.7% were awarded grades A–C. (The Uganda National Examinations Board suggests that candidates who take UACE and also University of London A levels achieve comparable results, especially in science and mathematics.)

EDUCATION SYSTEM

After seven years of schooling, at about age 14, the Primary Leaving Examination serves as a qualifying test for post-primary institutions. Four years of lower secondary education leads to the UCE examination in not less than eight subjects, which must include English. UCE results are the basis of selection for advanced secondary education. The UACE is taken after a further two years in at least three subjects and a General Paper. English is the medium of instruction throughout the educational system.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to a three-year degree course in Uganda would usually involve a minimum requirement of six UCE and two UACE passes.

Ukraine

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Atestat pro Povnu Zagal'nu Sersdniu Osvitu (Certificate of Complete General Secondary Education)**

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

GRADING SYSTEM

12–10	excellent
9–7	good
6–4	satisfactory
3–1	unsatisfactory

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is compulsory from the ages of 6 to 15 (grades 1–9). Grades 9–12 can be completed at either senior secondary school or vocational school. Senior secondary education is also offered by gymnasiums and lyceums. On completion of grade 12, students take the Attestat and, from 2008, an Independent External Examination (a standardised common university admissions examination). There are also technical and vocational schools at which pupils study for both the Attestat and a professional diploma.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to HEPs in Ukraine is on the basis of the Certificate of Complete General Secondary Education. Since 2008, highly competitive entrance examinations and interviews have been replaced by the Independent External Examination. There are four levels of higher education. Levels 1 and 2, studied at higher vocational schools, offer courses culminating in the Dyplom Molodshogo Spetsialista (Diploma of Junior Specialist). Level 3 (studied at institutes) and level 4 (studied at institutes, academies and universities), lead to degree qualifications. The degree system is currently under reform to bring it into line with the Bologna process. Completion of the first cycle now results in the award of a bachelor's degree after three years, and completion of the second cycle leads to a master's degree after a further year.

United Arab Emirates

(Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, Umm al Quwain)

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**Tawjihiyya (Secondary School Certificate)**

Acceptable at 70% or better in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language). Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course. Dependent on the syllabus offered, HEPs may consider that the depth of study involved approaches GCE A level standard on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM

The maximum score available in each subject is shown on the School Certificate and varies according to the subject's weighting in calculating the overall assessment of the award.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

After six years of primary education, a selection examination admits to three years of preparatory education and three years of secondary education, ending in examinations for the Secondary School Certificate. Since 1998, a 20-year reform programme, called Vision 2020, has been embarked upon under which there may be reforms to the structure of the school system. Arabic is the medium of instruction.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

University admission in the United Arab Emirates is on the basis of the Secondary School Certificate with an overall average mark of at least 80% depending upon the course of study and an English level of IELTS band 5 or

equivalent. Some courses may also require an interview. The bachelor's degree is awarded on the basis of credit units in a semester system and would commonly be of four years in length.

United States of America

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION**High School Graduation Diploma**

On its own, at a minimum, can be considered acceptable in lieu of GCSE (grades A, B, C) provided an average grade C is obtained in subjects which have counterparts in the GCSE syllabus (see Education System below).

College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) Tests

Minimum of 600 in writing, critical reading and mathematical elements of the SAT Reasoning Test and a minimum of 600 in relevant SAT Subject Tests taken or a score of 26 or higher in the ACT (which covers English, mathematics, reading, science and writing) may be regarded as satisfying general entrance requirements.

Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

Grades of 3 and above in at least two, and preferably three, subjects may be regarded as satisfying general entrance requirements.

Group A subjects	Group B subjects
Biology	Art history
Calculus AB	Studio art (drawing portfolio)
Calculus BC	Studio art (2-D design portfolio)
Chemistry	Studio art (3-D design portfolio)
Physics 1	Computer science A (a one-term course)
Physics 2	Environmental science
Physics C	Government and politics: United States
Chinese language and culture	Human geography
English literature and composition	Macroeconomics
English language and composition	Microeconomics
French language and culture	Music theory
German language and culture	Psychology
Italian language and culture	Statistics
Japanese language and culture	
Latin: Virgil	
Spanish language and culture	
Spanish literature and culture	
European history	
United States history	
World history	

NOTE: Foreign language and literature AP courses typically require four prior semesters of study

Advanced Placement Tests carry UCAS Tariff points as follows:

Group A	Group B
Grade 5 – 120 Tariff points	Grade 5 – 50 Tariff points
Grade 4 – 90 Tariff points	Grade 4 – 35 Tariff points
Grade 3 – 60 Tariff points	Grade 3 – 20 Tariff points

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

For further information about the UCAS Tariff, please see Appendix H.

GRADING SYSTEM**CEEB SAT Tests**

Scaled score 800–200 in each test.

800–700	exceptional
699–600	high
599–480	above average
479–420	average
419–200	generally unacceptable

AP Tests

5	extremely well qualified
4	well qualified
3	qualified
2	possibly qualified
1	no recommendation

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is the responsibility of the individual states and the educational structure varies, notably in primary and middle school. In actual fact, there is no national curriculum. The most common structure includes four years of high school with a total of 12 years overall. The High School Graduation Diploma is awarded on the basis of satisfactory completion of required coursework with an average of grade C or better. The individual subjects of the Diploma are generally graded A (excellent) – B – C – D (pass) – F (fail). High School Diplomas are based on internal assessment with little standardisation (state-mandated performance guidelines), but may be regarded as providing useful supplementary evidence for purposes of admission to HE courses in the UK. If requested by the pupil, a school will supply a transcript of courses with grades and a school profile that gives an indication of the kind of high school attended, the level of courses offered and of student performance in courses and tests (district, state, national, SAT, etc).

The majority of schools offer the opportunity for students to participate in the Advanced Placement programme of the College Board. This programme allows students to take college-level introductory courses in selected subjects. Thirty-five examinations are offered in each of twenty-five subjects at the end of each academic year. Some high achieving independent schools do not necessarily offer the AP courses as their classes are thought to be as rigorous or more so than AP, but in most cases these schools continue to offer the AP exams annually.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In addition to the High School Diploma (or General Education Development (GED) programme as substitute credential), many universities in the US require the SAT Reasoning Test and Subject Tests or ACT for entry to the first year of a broadly based four-year degree. Institutions of a high standing would expect Honours and College Preparatory courses to be taken in high school; they would expect a combined SAT score of around 1,800 or above for entrance, although there is variation among institutions. US institutions often indicate standardised test score requirements by citing the mid-50% range of the previous incoming class (meaning that 25% of students scored below the range and 25% scored above the range).

Candidates taking AP examinations who obtain scores of 3 or above in designated subjects may be awarded academic credit in corresponding subjects, contributing to the total number of credits needed to complete the degree. However, for this purpose, the more competitive

institutions usually require scores of 4 or 5. The institution decides the score requirement for each AP subject and sets a limit on the amount of credit available; credit for a full year or more may be awarded in some cases.

The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, a nationally recognised College Board examination, are another entry route to higher education. There are 35 subject-based exams on offer; although no coursework is required, students can take the tests in which they have sufficient knowledge. Non-traditional students, including those who have completed military service, are most likely to have taken CLEP exams. However, traditional, college-bound students are now beginning to take the exams as a way to earn college credits (which are determined by each college/university).

The Associate Degree in Arts or Science is awarded by two-year post-secondary colleges, often called community colleges, which offer a range of academic and vocational courses. Holders of this qualification may be allowed to transfer into the third year of a bachelor's degree programme in the US. Holders of an associate degree would not be able to apply for a postgraduate programme or equivalent.

Uzbekistan

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION**Attestat o srednem obrazovanii (Certificate of Secondary Education)**

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

O'rta Ma'lumot To'g'risida Shahodatnoma

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

GRADING SYSTEM

100–86%	excellent
85–71	good
70–56	satisfactory
55 or less	unsatisfactory

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Four years of primary education is followed by five years of lower secondary and a further three years in an academic lyceum or a professional college. Uzbek is the medium of instruction in the majority of schools, although Russian is still widely used. English has replaced Russian as the foreign language of choice for most students. There is a wide range of HE institutions in Uzbekistan, although those located outside the capital are generally more poorly resourced.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

On completion of their secondary education (academic lyceum or professional college), students sit a nationally administered multiple-choice examination for entry into HE. Application can be made to only one university in a given year. A pass mark is set by each university and students achieving this are eligible for government scholarships. Increasing numbers of fee-paying or 'contract' students are also being accepted.

Venezuela

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Bachillerato

Título de Bachiller

Comparable to GCSE standard (grades A, B, C) on a subject for subject basis (except English language).

Técnico Medio

Comparable to BTEC First Diploma standard.

Técnico Superior

Considered comparable to BTEC National Diploma standard.

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading is on a scale of 20–1, with 10 as the minimum pass mark.

The academic year is divided into three or more periods. Grades are given for each period. At the end of the year, the grades are averaged to form a previa grade.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

There are nine years of basic compulsory education combining primary and secondary from the age of six to 14. At secondary level (age 14 to 16), students can choose diversified secondary and train for the Bachillerato in science, arts and/or humanities; or they can train for the Técnico Medio at an Educacion Media Profesional. Studies are divided into industrial husbandry, commercial and health sectors. The medium of instruction is Spanish.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to university level and non-university level studies (technical/vocational type) requires students to have obtained the Bachillerato with the minimum mark of 10, and sit the Prueba de Aptitud Académica aptitude test. Some universities have their own admission test in order to select the best prepared students.

A recent change for higher education access is registration on to the national system of higher education (Registro Unico para el Sistema de Educación Superior – RUSNIES).

Vietnam

This entry was reviewed for the 2015 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Lower Secondary School

Generally considered to be below the standard of GCSE.

Tot Nghiep Pho Thong Trung Hoc (Upper Secondary School Graduation Certificate)

Considered to be between GCSE and A level standard.

GRADING SYSTEM

10–9.0	excellent
8.0–7.0	good
6.5–5.0	pass
4.5 and below	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The system comprises 12 grades of which the first nine are, in principle, compulsory. The language of instruction is Vietnamese, although some ethnic minority students receive pre-school and primary instruction in their own language while learning Vietnamese.

Upper school – on completion of a nine-year basic education, pupils can either continue their studies at upper secondary school or move to vocational training. Upper secondary education lasts three years, covering grades 10, 11 and 12. Upper secondary schools admit those who have completed basic education and prepare pupils for further education. The syllabus at upper secondary schools is a continuation of that at the basic education schools. Examinations are taken at the end of each term.

On successful completion of upper secondary school education, pupils are awarded the Bang Tot Nghiep Pho Thong Trung Hoc (Upper Secondary School Graduation Certificate).

Vocational training is provided at three levels: vocational elementary, vocational secondary and vocational diploma. Courses are delivered by vocational training centres, vocational secondary schools and vocational colleges.

Elementary level courses last one month, three months or six months, depending on the demand of employers. Vocational secondary level courses admit graduates of upper secondary schools or lower secondary schools for one-and-a-half to two years or three years respectively. Vocational diploma courses admit graduates of upper secondary schools or vocational secondary schools for two-and-a-half to three years, or one to one-and-a-half years respectively.

The vocational system ensures good articulation between the three levels and between the vocational and academic routes, e.g. learners from lower secondary schools can take a three-year course at vocational secondary schools to get certificates in certain trades and upon graduation, they can sit the national examination to enter universities.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission is made on the basis of completed upper secondary education and a national entrance examination. Post-school education is provided by public and private universities, HE and research institutes, and teacher training colleges.

The Tot Nghiep Dai Hoc (bachelor's degree) is comparable to a British bachelor's (honours) degree and is awarded after four to six years of study.

West Indies/Caribbean

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

In this context, the West Indies is taken to be the following English-speaking Caribbean Commonwealth territories which have a considerable measure of shared educational tradition and practice: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts/Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands.

EVALUATION

Caribbean Examinations Council, Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC)

Acceptable at the General or Technical Proficiency levels on a subject for subject basis in lieu of GCSE, provided that grade III or better has been achieved. Would require to be supplemented by Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE), GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

Caribbean Examinations Council, Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)

Acceptable at the two-unit level in lieu of GCE A levels on a subject for subject basis.

Overseas Examinations of UK Awarding Bodies

Some prospective candidates for HE in the UK will have prepared on the basis of GCSE and A level examinations (see Appendix A).

College of the Bahamas Associate Degree Programme

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Barbados Community College Associate Degree Programme

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

Bermuda Secondary School Certificate (BSSC)

Acceptable in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis, provided that a grade-point average of 2.0 has been achieved. Would require to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

Bermuda College University Transfer Programme (Diploma in Arts and Science)

Acceptable as a group qualification satisfying general entrance requirements.

GRADING SYSTEM

CSEC

I, II, III (*minimum acceptable*) ... VI

There is no pass/fail mark.

CAPE

I	excellent
II	very good
III	good
IV	satisfactory
V	acceptable
VI	limited
VII	very limited

College of the Bahamas Associate Degree Programme

4.00–3.45	distinction
3.44–2.85	credit
2.84–2.00	pass

Barbados Community College Associate Degree Programme

Letter	Mark	Definition	Grade Point
A*	100–90	Exceptional	
A	89–80	Excellent	4.0
B+	79–75	Very good	3.5
B	74–70	Good	3.0
C+	69–65	Fairly good	2.5
C	64–60	Satisfactory	2.0
D	59–50	Passing	1.0
F	49–00	Failing	0.0

BSSC

A	4.0	outstanding
B	3.0	very good
C	2.0	good
D	1.0	satisfactory
E	0.0	unsatisfactory

Bermuda College University Transfer Programme (Diploma in Arts and Science)

Individual subjects:

A	excellent	4.0
B	good	3.0
C	satisfactory	2.0
D	pass	1.0
E	fail	fail

Overall classification: Grade Point Average (GPA): 3.50 minimum award for Distinction, 3.00 minimum for Merit, 1.50 minimum for Diploma.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Although there are local variations, the common structure throughout the West Indies/Caribbean is six years of primary education followed by five years of secondary education leading to the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) or to GCSE or their equivalent. A further one to two years may lead to the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) and two years may lead to A levels of UK Awarding Bodies.

CAPE was first administered in May/June 1998, by the CXC. CAPE syllabuses are structured as one- or two-unit courses. A one-unit course consists of three modules, 150 credit hours, which include contact time and time spent on projects and other assignments. The unit is based on content, knowledge and skills drawn from specific subject areas. A two-unit course consists of two one-unit courses designed to cover a well-defined subject area and to contain the core content of the A level and additional content considered to be relevant to the needs of the region in a global environment. Each unit is separately examined and certified by internal and external examiners.

CXC has introduced Associate Degrees in nine areas: business studies, environmental science, general studies, humanities, computer science, mathematics, modern languages, natural science and technical studies. These degrees will be awarded based on performance at grades I to V in seven CAPE units, including Caribbean studies and communication studies. While most school candidates will achieve their CXC Associate Degrees in two years, candidates have a maximum of five years to acquire the minimum of seven units required. The first CXC Associate Degrees were awarded in 2006, using a four-point GPA.

- I 4.0
- II 3.5
- III 3.0
- IV 2.5
- V 2.0

English is the medium of instruction throughout the West Indies/Caribbean educational system.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The University of the West Indies, which has campuses in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and the University of Guyana admit to a three-year degree on the basis of at least five CSEC of GCE subjects, two CAPE subjects or an Associate Degree. English language is compulsory.

The United Kingdom National Recognition Information Centre (UK NARIC) has advised UK universities that six CAPE units will be accepted. As universities in Canada and the United States accept students on the basis of the CSEC, CXC is discussing with these institutions the award of credits and advanced standing to persons with CAPE certification.

Zambia

This entry was last reviewed prior to 2010.

EVALUATION

Zambia School Certificate

Acceptable at grades 1–6 in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis. Would need to be supplemented by GCE A levels, Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers, or a bridging course.

See also **Overseas examinations of UK awarding organisations** (Appendix A).

GRADING SYSTEM

1, 2	distinction
3, 4	merit
5, 6	credit/minimum acceptable performance level formerly required for a GCE O level pass
7, 8	satisfactory
9	unsatisfactory

Grade boundaries are fixed for each examination session by an Awards Committee based on the examiners' recommendations, background information about the candidates and performance statistics. The grade boundaries will, therefore, vary from subject to subject and, within a subject, from year to year.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

The official medium of instruction is English, though a recent change to government policy allows children in grades I to IV to be taught in the local language. There are seven years of primary education, two years of junior secondary education and three years of senior secondary education culminating in the joint examination for the Zambia School Certificate and General Certificate of Education (Ordinary level). All the requirements for the School Certificate must be satisfied at the same examination sitting. To qualify for the award of a School Certificate, a candidate must reach a satisfactory general standard as judged by their best performance in six subjects and either:

- pass in six subjects (including English language) with credit or better in at least one of these; or
- pass in five subjects (including English language) with credit or better in at least two of these.

Candidates who do not meet the requirements for the award of a School Certificate are awarded a General Certificate of Education in the subjects in which they attain grade 8 or above. The Zambia School Certificate is equivalent to the School Certificate formerly issued by Cambridge Assessment (formerly the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate) to candidates in Zambia. The Examinations Council of Zambia does not offer A level examinations, but it is responsible for students who prepare for A levels of a UK awarding organisation. It is also possible for other institutions to prepare students for A levels of a UK awarding organisation.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Most degree programmes last for four years, except for engineering, mineral science and agriculture, which take five years, veterinary medicine, which takes six years, and the degree in medicine, which takes seven years. Admission to university degree programmes is on the basis of a minimum of five passes at credit level in

the joint School Certificate and General Certificate of Education examinations. Entrants with GCE A level passes in relevant subjects may be given exemption from the first year of university courses.

Zimbabwe

This entry was last reviewed for the 2013 qualifications guide.

EVALUATION

Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE)

Ordinary level pass acceptable at grade C or better in lieu of GCSE.

Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education (ACSE)

Acceptable at grades A–E in lieu of GCE A level on a subject for subject basis.

GRADING SYSTEM

CSE

A	excellent
B	very good
C	good
D	fair
E	unsatisfactory
U	fail

ACSE

A	excellent
B	very good
C	good
D	fair
E	pass
O	subsidiary of O level
F	fail

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Previously, a system of O and A levels was administered by Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). Responsibility for O levels was localised in November 1999, and A levels in November 2002. The examination system is now organised by the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC).

The school system is made up of seven years of primary education from age six to 13. After four years of lower secondary school, pupils attain O/GCE, and after a further two years, they attain A/GCEs. The language of instruction throughout the school system is English.

National examinations are held in grade 7, followed by progression to lower secondary school. In Form 2 of secondary school, students take the Zimbabwe Junior Certificate. O/GCE is taken in Form 4 at the end of lower secondary education. Students are required to achieve at least five passes including maths, English and a science subject at O/GCE in order to progress to upper secondary school. A/GCEs are taken at the end of Form 6.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission for three- and four-year degrees is based on five O/GCE passes in English, mathematics and three other subjects unless specified by a university plus two A/GCE passes in relevant subjects. A relevant Higher National Diploma may also be considered. Entry into universities is highly competitive. Admission to polytechnics and teacher training colleges is based on five O/GCE passes, including mathematics and English language.

Appendix A – International examinations of UK awarding organisations

A number of UK awarding organisations offer international examinations, particularly in Commonwealth and former Commonwealth countries. Examinations are offered by AQA, Pearson Edexcel, Cambridge International Examinations, ICCE, NCC Education and Trinity College London.

Over the last 25 years, the administrative arrangements in many countries have changed to permit the participation of new indigenous examination boards (councils) leading to a smaller presence of UK awarding organisations.

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS QUALIFICATIONS OVERVIEW

Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (Cambridge IGCSE)/Cambridge International Certificate of Education (Cambridge ICE)/Cambridge GCE Ordinary level (Cambridge O level)/Cambridge School Certificate

Cambridge IGCSE® is part of the Cambridge Secondary 2 stage and is taken in over 4,000 schools in over 140 countries worldwide, including more than 1,500 schools in the UK. It is a linear qualification which provides an international curriculum for 14-16 year olds, and is equivalent in standard to the UK GCSE and the Cambridge O level. It also provides a strong foundation for higher-level courses such as Cambridge International AS and A levels and Cambridge Pre-U. Cambridge IGCSE is assessed on an eight-point scale of grades: A* – G, with A* being highest; it may be considered acceptable at grades A*, A, B or C in lieu of the UK GCSE on a subject for subject basis.

21 Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses have been approved by Ofqual and are currently eligible for funding for teaching in state schools in England and Northern Ireland. A full list of Ofqual-approved syllabuses is available on the Cambridge website. When a Cambridge IGCSE is approved by Ofqual, it appears on the Register of Regulated Qualifications as a Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate. This is the official title for all Cambridge IGCSEs approved by Ofqual. With a few exceptions, the content of the Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate is identical to the Cambridge IGCSE. Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificates are assessed in the same way as Cambridge IGCSEs, using an eight-point scale of grades: A*–G, with A* being highest.

Cambridge IGCSE English as a First Language and Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language qualifications may satisfy the English language proficiency requirements of many universities in the UK and other anglophone countries.

Further details about IGCSE English language qualifications can be found at www.cie.org.uk.

If a student passes seven Cambridge IGCSE or Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate examinations from five different IGCSE subject groups including two different languages, they will qualify for the Cambridge International Certificate of Education (ICE). Cambridge ICE is awarded at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Cambridge O level is an internationally recognised qualification equivalent to the UK GCSE and may be considered acceptable at grades A*, A, B or C in lieu of the UK GCSE on a subject for subject basis. Passing grades at Cambridge O level are A*–E, with A* being highest. Cambridge O levels are also part of the Cambridge Secondary 2 stage and are typically for 14–16 year olds. They continue to be taken in approximately 70 countries around the world.

Full information is available from Cambridge International Examinations: www.cie.org.uk/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-secondary-2/

Cambridge Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education (HIGCSE)

The Cambridge HIGCSE has a close affinity to the Cambridge IGCSE, but involves a further year of study. The curriculum is essentially an extended IGCSE, with additional content studied in greater depth. HIGCSE is graded 1 to 4 with 1 being highest. Grades 1–3 have been accepted for undergraduate admission in the Republic of South Africa.

This certificate was limited to southern Africa and was withdrawn from use in 2010.

Cambridge International Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced level (Cambridge International AS and A level)

Cambridge International AS and A level qualifications are part of the Cambridge Advanced stage. They are taken in over 130 countries and offer a choice of 55 different subjects, and are typically for 16 and 19 year olds preparing for study at university and higher education level. Cambridge International AS and A level qualifications are generally recognised by universities as equivalent in value to UK AS and A levels and may be accepted at grades A* – E in lieu of the UK GCE A and AS level on a subject for subject and grade for grade basis. The A* grade is not awarded at AS level.

Cambridge International A levels are linear in structure; however, students can choose from a range of assessment options: they can take all papers of the Cambridge International A level course in the same examination session, usually at the end of the second year of study or take a 'staged' assessment route – that is, take the Cambridge International AS level in Year 1 and complete the Cambridge International A level in Year 2.

Candidates can also take the Cambridge International AS only. The syllabus content for Cambridge International AS level is half of a Cambridge International A level programme. Candidates who take Cambridge International AS level first and then want to retake it, must generally retake the whole of the Cambridge International AS level.

Cambridge International AS and A level examination sessions occur twice a year, in June and November, with results issued in August and January respectively. Cambridge International AS and A level final certificates are entitled 'General Certificate of Education' and include a list of the subjects and grades achieved by the Cambridge student.

Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC), taken only in Mauritius, is a group award comprised of principal subjects (A level) and subsidiary subjects (AS level). Subsidiary subjects usually include a General Paper and a local language. Full information is available from Cambridge International Examinations (see Appendix I).

Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (Cambridge AICE) Diploma

Cambridge AICE offers an international pre-university curriculum and examination system which emphasises the value of broad and balanced study for academically able students. It is a group award that requires the study of subjects drawn from three curriculum areas (mathematics and science; languages; and arts and humanities). There is a fourth curriculum area for global perspectives which includes Cambridge International AS level Global Perspectives and Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research (GPR). Either of these can count towards the Cambridge AICE Diploma, providing all other requirements for the diploma have been met.

Cambridge AICE draws upon the full portfolio of Cambridge's post-16 provision (Cambridge International AS and A level). The individual choice of subjects within these areas is intended to provide a flexible, comprehensive and integrated curriculum programme.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

A candidate needs to take and pass subjects equivalent to a minimum of six credits to obtain the Cambridge AICE Diploma. The credit rating of counting qualifications is Cambridge International A level (and Cambridge Pre-U GPR) = 2 credits and Cambridge International AS level = 1 credit.

Three levels of the Cambridge AICE Diploma are awarded: Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Where a student takes more than the minimum number of subjects for the Cambridge AICE Diploma, the best results which satisfy the subject group requirements will count towards the award.

Cambridge International Diploma in Business

The Cambridge International Diploma in Business (formerly Cambridge Skills and Career Award) assesses the practical application of career-based knowledge across a range of business-focused areas. The Cambridge International Diploma in Business at Advanced Level is equivalent to A level, and the Cambridge International Diploma in Business at Standard Level is equivalent to GCSE.

The Diploma is modular in structure, and to achieve a full Diploma at a given level, candidates need to pass both the compulsory core modules and the requisite number of optional modules.

The assessment methods include written examinations and assignments, all externally assessed by Cambridge.

Successful Diploma candidates are awarded Pass, Merit or Distinction, where, at Advanced level, Distinction may be taken as performance equivalent to the award of A level grade B, Merit to grade C and Pass to grade D. Three types of certification can be awarded – Full Diploma, Core Module and Optional Module.

Institutions are advised to accept only those applicants presenting a Full Diploma.

The Cambridge International Diploma in Business is in the process of being withdrawn. Entries from new candidates for the Cambridge International Diploma in Business will not be accepted. Entries will only be accepted up to and including the October 2015 examination session.

Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate (Principal Subject, Short Course and GPR)**BACKGROUND**

Available in the UK since September 2008, Cambridge Pre-U was developed in response to requests from UK schools for an alternative to A Level that would fully support successful progression from school to undergraduate study and beyond. It was developed in consultation with schools, higher education institutions and subject associations. Cambridge Pre-U is a rigorous academic programme and qualification which has been accredited by Ofqual and is eligible for funding for teaching in UK state schools. An alternative to the UK A level, Cambridge Pre-U is designed to help students gain an in-depth knowledge of the subjects studied and to develop the skills needed for university study.

Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate (Principal Subject)

There are 25 individual Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects, certificated separately and assessed at the end of a two-year programme of study. Students may choose to combine subjects to form part of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma (see section on Cambridge Pre-U Diploma). The Cambridge Pre-U Certificate (Principal Subject) has been assigned 380 Guided Learning Hours by Ofqual.

DATE OF FIRST TEACHING

2008

DATE OF FIRST AWARD

2010

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The assessment is linear, with all examinations being taken at the end of the two-year study period.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grading Band	Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects Grade	UCAS Tariff points
Distinction	D1	To be confirmed
	D2	145
	D3	130
Merit	M1	115
	M2	101
	M3	87
Pass	P1	73
	P2	59
	P3	46

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

Further information on Cambridge Pre-U, including syllabuses, may be found on the Cambridge website at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu. Should you require further information on Cambridge Pre-U, please contact Cambridge International Examinations (see Appendix I).

Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate (Short Course)

BACKGROUND

Cambridge Pre-U Short Courses (one-year course) are available for modern languages, mathematics, further mathematics and global perspectives. A Short Course can be taken in the first or second year of study and is offered in order to encourage students to develop a broad subject portfolio. The Cambridge Pre-U Certificate (Short Course) has been accredited by Ofqual and has been assigned 180 Guided Learning Hours.

DATE OF FIRST TEACHING

2008

DATE OF FIRST AWARD

2009

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The assessment is linear, with all examinations being taken at the end of the one-year study period.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grading Band	Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects Grade	UCAS Tariff points
Distinction	D1	To be confirmed
	D2	To be confirmed
	D3	60
Merit	M1	53
	M2	46
	M3	39
Pass	P1	32
	P2	26
	P3	20

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

Further information on Cambridge Pre-U, including syllabuses, may be found on the Cambridge website at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu.

Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate Global Perspectives and Research (GPR)

BACKGROUND

Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) constitutes the compulsory core of the Diploma, and can also be taken as a stand-alone qualification and certificated separately. It is comprised of Global Perspectives (a taught course) and an independent Research Report.

Global Perspectives encourages breadth across the curriculum through the interdisciplinary study of a number of themes of global relevance, developing critical thinking and a range of study and research skills. A unique feature of Global Perspectives is the Critical Path (deconstruction, reconstruction, reflection and communication). This approach to analysing and evaluating different perspectives helps students develop essential thinking and reasoning skills.

The Research Report promotes the application and development of the skills taught in Global Perspectives

and helps prepare students to cope with the demands of university study. It is a single piece of extended writing (between 4,500 and 5,000 words) in the form of a report based on an investigation or field study.

Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) has been accredited by Ofqual and has been assigned 320 Guided Learning Hours, 200 of which are for Global Perspectives and 120 for the independent Research Report.

Although Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects are primarily taken in the UK, Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) was introduced to specifically selected non-UK schools in 2009. The non-UK schools offering GPR are situated in nine countries around the globe.

DATE OF FIRST TEACHING

2008

DATE OF FIRST AWARD

2010

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Global Perspectives is assessed through three compulsory components: written paper, essay and a presentation all of which are taken at the end of the first year of study. The Research Report is assessed at the end of the second year of study. Each part, Global Perspectives and the Research report, contributes 50% towards the final mark.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grading Band	Cambridge Pre-U GPR Grade	UCAS Tariff points
Distinction	D1	To be confirmed
	D2	140
	D3	126
Merit	M1	112
	M2	98
	M3	84
Pass	P1	70
	P2	56
	P3	42

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

The first-year course, Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives, is also available at Cambridge International AS level.

Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) can also count as two credits towards the award of a Cambridge AICE Diploma.

Further information on Cambridge Pre-U, including syllabuses, may be found on the Cambridge website at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu. Should you require further information on Cambridge Pre-U, please contact the awarding body, Cambridge International Examinations, at info@cie.org.uk

Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

BACKGROUND

Students who have passed four components comprised of three Cambridge Pre-U Certificates (Principal Subjects) plus the core component, Global Perspectives and Research (GPR), can obtain a Cambridge Pre-U Diploma. Students will receive a certificate for individual Principal Subjects, GPR and Short Courses and an **additional certificate** for the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma if they have met the necessary requirements.

Up to two A levels can be substituted for Cambridge Pre-U Certificates (Principal Subjects).

DATE OF FIRST TEACHING

2008

DATE OF FIRST AWARD

2010

NUMBER OF UNITS AND STRUCTURE

Students qualify for the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma if they achieve at least a pass grade in the following four elements:

- three Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject Certificates
- Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research Report (GPR).

Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) is also available as a stand-alone qualification.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificates in the Principal Subjects are qualifications in their own right. Each individual Principal Subject is graded separately on a scale of nine grades: D1 (Distinction 1), D2, D3, M1 (Merit 1), M2, M3, P1 (Pass 1), P2, P3.

These grades are reported on a separate certificate to the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma itself.

The Cambridge Pre-U Diploma is scored separately, by aggregation of results in three Principal Subjects and the core component (GPR) (the two components of the core each having half the weight of a Principal Subject).

Each element or component of the Diploma is awarded a score, as shown in the table below: Principal Subjects are given a maximum of 24 marks, Global Perspectives and the Research Report (GPR) a maximum of 12 each, or 24 in total. The scores for all four elements are then aggregated to create a single score out of 96 for the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma as a whole.

Contribution of each element to the Diploma score		
Grade	Principal Subject	GPR
D1	24	24
D2	22	22
D3	20	20
M1	18	18
M2	16	16
M3	14	14
P1	12	12
P2	10	10
P3	8	8

Further information on Cambridge Pre-U, including syllabuses, may be found on the Cambridge website at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu. Should you require further information on Cambridge Pre-U, please contact the awarding body, Cambridge International Examinations, at info@cie.org.uk

AQA

Fully-approved AQA centres overseas may prepare and enter their internal candidates for those AQA specifications for which they can provide the teaching and necessary supervision and/or assessment. The specifications and examinations offered overseas are the same as those offered in the UK and are available for GCSE, AS and A level GCE (including applied subjects), and Entry Level. For specifications that include coursework, staff from the centre must attend an annual teacher standardisation meeting held in the UK.

AQA does not accept entries for any of its examinations from private candidates overseas; only the internal candidates of overseas centres may be entered by those centres. However, please note that the coursework option of any AQA Certificate (IGCSE) is **not** available to centres outside the UK.

PEARSON EDEXCEL

Candidates may enrol for any of the following qualifications through an approved Pearson Edexcel Centre, either through their school, college or through their local overseas authority (normally the British Council) as a private candidate.

International General Certificate of Secondary Education (International GCSE)

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE is intended as a preparation for students for further academic success, including progression to A level and AS study. It is available in more than 100 countries around the world. The qualification is considered equivalent to Pearson Edexcel GCSE and may be considered acceptable at grades A*, A, B or C in lieu of GCSE on a subject for subject basis. Detailed information may be obtained from Pearson Edexcel. The International GCSE is assessed on an eight-point scale of grades: A* – G.

Pearson Edexcel Advanced GCE and Advanced Subsidiary GCE

These Ofqual-regulated qualifications now have an examination series in June only. A wide range of subjects are available at both AS and A level and these qualifications continue to be taken by international schools and colleges for which this exam series is convenient. Pass grades are A* – E and may provide progression to HE in the UK.

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Levels and AS qualifications

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Levels and AS qualifications are an international alternative to Pearson Edexcel Ofqual-regulated GCE AS and A level qualifications. This new suite of qualifications is regulated by Pearson and designed for use in international schools and colleges as it has examination series in January and June. The subjects available are: accounting, business studies, biology, chemistry, economics, law, physics and mathematics. Pass grades are A*–E and may provide progression to HEPs in the same way as those taken by students in the UK.

General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

The GCSE is the same qualification as that taken in the UK, and is popular with both expatriate and local students. These courses can only be followed at centres approved by Pearson Edexcel to offer GCSE qualifications, and as such, are not available to private candidates.

Pearson Edexcel International Diploma

The Pearson Edexcel International Diploma is a new qualification which was examined for the first time in May/June 2013. It consists of a Core of either three A levels or a BTEC Extended Diploma (or three BTEC Subsidiary Diplomas or a BTEC Diploma and a BTEC Subsidiary Diploma) plus the following Additional Components: either AS General Studies or AS Global Development, BTEC Level 3 Work Skills Plus and the Extended Project. The International Diploma is considered to be equivalent in size to four A levels. It is not separately graded.

BTEC Level 2 First Certificates, Extended Certificates and Diplomas

BTEC Level 2 First Certificates, Extended Certificates and Diplomas are unit-based awards that assess a student's ability to apply knowledge and understanding to practical, real-life situations. Each unit is graded Pass, Merit or Distinction and students must pass every unit in order to achieve the award, although students who have not completed the full suite of units are still eligible to transfer credits as appropriate.

BTEC Level 3 National Certificates, National Subsidiary Diplomas, National Diplomas and Extended National Diplomas

BTEC Level 3 National Certificates, National Subsidiary Diplomas, National Diplomas and Extended National Diplomas are unit-based awards that assess a student's ability to apply knowledge and understanding to practical, real-life situations. Each unit is graded Pass, Merit or Distinction and students must pass every unit in order to achieve the award, although students who have not completed the full suite of units are still eligible to transfer credits as appropriate.

BTEC National courses are accepted as equivalent to GCE Advanced qualifications by UK HEIs, and as such, allow students to enter the first year of undergraduate programmes.

BTEC HNC Diploma and HND Diplomas

BTEC HNC Diplomas and HND Diplomas are higher level unit-based qualifications that assess a student's ability to apply knowledge and understanding to practical, real-life situations. Each unit is graded Pass, Merit or Distinction and students must pass every unit in order to achieve the award, although students who have not completed the full suite of units are still eligible to transfer credits as appropriate.

BTEC HND Diploma courses are accepted by many HEIs as equivalent to the first two years of study of a degree course.

ICCE International Certificate of Christian Education QUALIFICATION ABBREVIATION ICCE

BACKGROUND

The ICCE provides qualifications for pupils who use the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) programme in independent faith-based schools and home schools. ICCE Advanced Certificate is accepted by many universities for undergraduate entry. A UK NARIC assessment in 2011 carried out in both school and home school environments stated that the General Certificate can be considered comparable to Cambridge International Examinations O levels and the Advanced Certificate can be considered

comparable to Cambridge International Examinations A levels.

Since September 2004, the ICCE has replaced the National Christian Schools' Certificate (NCSC). The curriculum content and standard have been enhanced by coursework at the four highest levels.

DATE OF FIRST AWARD 2005

NUMBER OF UNITS AND STRUCTURE

ICCE Foundation = 7.5 credits
ICCE Vocational = 16 credits
ICCE General = 16 credits plus coursework
ICCE Intermediate = 23 credits plus coursework
ICCE Advanced = 29 credits plus coursework
ICCE Advanced Plus = 34 credits plus coursework

ASSESSMENT METHOD

By unit tests, essays and practical science projects, all externally moderated (80% internal, 20% external).

EXAMINATION TIMING Throughout the year

DATE OF RESULT PUBLICATION Throughout the year

GRADING SYSTEM

A*	100%–98%
A	97.99%–96%
B	95.99%–92%
C	91.99%–88%
D	87.99%–84%
E	83.99%–80%
Fail	below 80%

QUALITY ASSURANCE

All unit tests are moderated by internal trained moderators and verified by external moderation. Schools are vetted by an annual assessment visit. Home educated pupils are required to submit all tests annually for external moderation.

PROGRESSION/ARTICULATION

Students complete each level of the certification programme over a period of, typically, five years. Pupils must complete the lower certificates before proceeding to the next. The credits are accumulative.

NCC EDUCATION

NCC Education is a leading UK awarding organisation in IT and business, providing assessment and certification through recognised British qualifications internationally.

Originally part of the National Computing Centre, established in 1966 by the British Government, NCC Education began by offering IT qualifications and has since developed business and English certificates and teaching programmes.

NCC Education Level 3 Diploma in Business (QCF) (L3DB)

An introduction to business which equips candidates with the necessary skills for entry to the NCC Education Level 4 Diploma in Business programme. The Level 3 Diploma in Business (L3DB) provides candidates with a broad but secure foundation in the fundamental concepts of business, effective and practical IT skills and the essential study skills necessary to succeed at undergraduate level study.

The programme consists of five compulsory units as follows: Study and Communication Skills, Mathematical Techniques, IT Skills, Introduction to Business, Introduction to Accounting and Economics. Candidates must pass all five compulsory units to be awarded the qualification. Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education International Foundation Year (IFY)
National Qualifications Framework Level 3

A one-year programme for speakers of English as a foreign language who are seeking entrance to a university bachelor's programme or the NCC Education Level 4 Diplomas in Business, Computing or Business IT. The programme covers English language, study skills, mathematical techniques, culture studies and introduces candidates to world of business or IT. It consists of the following six compulsory units: Developing English Language Skills, Advanced English Language Skills, English for Academic Purposes, Study and Communication Skills, Culture Studies, Foundation Mathematics. A further two units are chosen from the following four electives: Introduction to Computing, Introduction to Programming, Introduction to Business, Introduction to Accounting and Economics.

Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification. Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 3 Diploma in Computing (QCF) (L3DC)

An introduction to computing which provides candidates with a broad but secure foundation in the fundamental concepts of computing and the essential study skills needed to succeed at undergraduate level. Candidates will be introduced to programming and mathematical techniques which will assist them in their understanding of computing and their future studies. The programme allows progression to the NCC Education Level 4 Diploma in Computing or Business IT programmes. The programme consists of the following five compulsory units: Study and Communication Skills, Mathematical Techniques, IT Skills, Introduction to Computing, Introduction to Programming.

Candidates must pass all five units to be awarded the qualification. Assessed by assignments and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 4 Diploma in Computing (L4DC)

A one-year, classroom-based academic programme which equips candidates with fundamental skills and knowledge in computing. Upon completion of the programme candidates will be competent in the development, testing and maintenance of software and database systems. The programme is aimed at candidates seeking undergraduate entry on to the NCC Education International Degree Journey in Computing or those wishing to progress to study at universities with which NCC Education has articulation agreements. Also, the programme helps those who are looking to improve their career prospects or gain employment within the IT sector. Upon successful completion, candidates can either use the qualification to secure employment in the IT sector or continue their studies on to the NCC Education Level 5 Diploma in

Computing (L5DC). Alternatively, candidates can apply to one of the universities which accept NCC Education graduates on to the second year of their degree programmes. The programme consists of a total of eight units: Skills for Computing, Computer Networks, Computer Systems, Designing and Developing a Website, Databases, Designing and Developing Object-Oriented Computer Programmes, Software Development Techniques, Office Solutions Development. Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification.

The programme is assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 4 Diploma in Business Information Technology (QCF) (L4DBIT)

A one-year, classroom-based academic programme, which provides candidates with a comprehensive understanding of computing, communication and business skills. Upon completion of the programme candidates will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of computing systems. Candidates will also gain a solid foundation and breadth of knowledge in business. The programme is aimed at candidates seeking undergraduate entry on to the NCC Education International Degree Journey in Business IT, and those wishing to progress to study at universities with which NCC Education has articulation agreements. Alternatively, the programme helps those who are looking to improve their career prospects or gain employment within the IT sector.

The programme consists of a total of eight core units: Skills for Computing, Computer Networks, Computer Systems, Designing and Developing a Website, Databases, eBusiness, Essentials of Management, Understanding Business Organisations. Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification.

Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 4 Diploma in Business (L4DB)

A one-year, classroom-based academic programme, which provides candidates with a broad introduction to the many aspects of international business in today's world. Upon completion of the programme candidates will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of business principles and concepts. Candidates will also gain a solid foundation and breadth of knowledge in business management, economics and ebusiness.

The programme is aimed at candidates seeking undergraduate entry on to the NCC Education International Degree Journey in Business and those wishing to progress to study at universities with which NCC Education has articulation agreements. Alternatively, the programme helps those who are looking to improve their career prospects or gain employment within the business sector.

The programme consists of eight core units: Essentials of Management, Fundamentals of Economics, Communications for Business, Understanding Business Organisations, Business Mathematics, Introduction to Finance, eBusiness, Principals of Marketing. Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification. Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 5 Diploma in Computing (QCF) (L5DC)

A one-year, classroom-based academic programme, which equips candidates with a critical understanding of the established principles of computing. Candidates will have developed new skills relevant to the IT industry and build upon the knowledge gained from the L4DC. The programme is aimed at candidates seeking to progress to the second year of a three-year NCC Education International Degree Journey in Computing, or those wishing to progress to study at universities with which NCC Education has articulation agreements. Alternatively, the programme helps those who are looking to improve their career prospects or gain employment within the IT sector.

The programme consists of a total of eight core units: Professional Issues in IT, Network Security and Cryptography, Information Systems Analysis, Dynamic Websites, Analysis, Design and Implementation, Database Design and Development, Agile Development, Computing Project. Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification. The programme is assessed by assignments and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 5 Diploma in Business IT (L5DBIT)

A one-year, classroom-based academic programme, which equips candidates with a critical understanding of the established principles of computing relevant to the IT and business industry. Candidates will develop new skills relevant to the IT industry and build upon the knowledge gained from the L4DBIT. The programme is aimed at candidates seeking to progress to the second year of the three-year NCC Education International Degree Journey in Business IT, and those wishing to progress to study at universities with which NCC Education has articulation agreements. Alternatively, the programme helps those who are looking to improve their career prospects or gain employment within the IT sector.

The programme consists of a total of eight core units: Professional Issues in IT, Information Systems Analysis, Dynamic Websites, Database Design and Development, Business IT Project, Information Systems and Organisations, Principles of Business Operations, Office Solutions Development. Students must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification.

Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 5 Diploma in Business (QCF) (L5DB)

A one-year, classroom-based academic programme, which equips candidates with a critical understanding of the established principles of business and management. Candidates develop new skills relevant to the business industry and build upon the knowledge gained from the L4DB. The programme is aimed at candidates seeking to progress to the second year of the three-year NCC Education International Degree Journey in Business, and those wishing to progress to study at universities with which NCC Education has articulation agreements. Alternatively, the programme helps those who are looking to improve their career prospects or gain employment within the business sector.

The programme consists of eight core units: Business Economics, Advanced Business Mathematics, Marketing in Business, Human Resources in Business, Understanding Consumer Behaviour, Principles of Business Operations, Financial Management, Information Systems and Organisations. Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification.

Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

Pre-Master's in Business (PMB)

This programme is designed to enable candidates to quickly bridge the gap between their existing qualifications and a master's programme. Candidates will upgrade their English language ability to a level suitable for master's entrance, while also being introduced to studying business subjects through the medium of English. After successful completion of this course, candidates can continue their NCC Education Postgraduate Degree Journey with the NCC Education Level 7 Diploma in Business Management, or apply to one of the universities which accept NCC Education Pre-Master's in Business graduates on to their master's degree programmes.

The programme consists of the following units: Pre-Master's in Business: English Language Level 4, English Language Level 5, English for Academic Purposes 1 and 2, Developing Study Skills for Postgraduate Learning, Finance and Accounting, Global Marketing Strategies and Strategic Business Management. Master's Preparation in Business: English Language Level 4, English Language Level 5, English for Academic Purposes 1 and 2, Developing Study Skills for Postgraduate Learning and one of the three business modules.

Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

Pre-Master's in IT (PMIT)

This programme is designed to enable candidates to quickly bridge the gap between their existing qualifications and a master's programme. Candidates will upgrade their English language ability to a level suitable for master's entrance, while also being introduced to studying IT subjects through the medium of English. After successful completion of this course, candidates can continue their NCC Education Postgraduate Degree Journey with the NCC Education Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Business IT, or apply to one of the universities which accept NCC Education Pre-Master's in Business graduates on to their master's degree programmes.

The programme consists of the following units: Pre-Master's in IT: English Language Level 4, English Language Level 5, English for Academic Purposes 1 and 2, Developing Study Skills for Postgraduate Learning, Databases, Object-Oriented Modelling, Decision and Management and Support Systems.

Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 7 Diploma in Business Management (QCF) (L7DBM)

The NCC Education Level 7 Diploma in Business Management is designed to develop a student's career in management. The programme covers a wide range of contemporary issues and develops the critical, analytical and technical skills needed for senior management positions. The programme will also develop the academic skills required for further study at master's level. NCC Education also works in conjunction with a number of UK universities, to deliver MBA and MSc programmes for L7DBM graduates.

The programme consists of eight core units as follows: Information and Knowledge Management, International Marketing Strategy, Management, Control and Accountability for Financial Resources, Managing People in Organisations, Research Methods, Study Skills for Postgraduate Learning, Strategic Management and Strategic Operations Management. Candidates must pass all eight units to be awarded the qualification. Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

NCC Education Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Business IT (L7DSBIT)

The NCC Education Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Business IT is designed for IT and computing graduates or practitioners who wish to further develop their careers. The programme covers a wide range of contemporary issues and develops the critical, analytical and technical skills needed for senior positions in the IT industry. The course also develops the academic skills required for further study at master's level. NCC Education also works in conjunction with a number of UK universities, to deliver MSc programmes for L7DSBIT graduates.

The programme consists of four core units as follows: Research in Information Technology, Enterprise Software and Business Infrastructure, Strategic Information Systems Analysis and Project Management. Candidates must pass all four units to be awarded the qualification. Assessed by assignment and examination. Awarded by NCC Education.

TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

- Trinity College London is an international exam board that offers qualifications in music, drama, performance, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL)
- Trinity examines over 600,000 candidates a year in the United Kingdom, across Europe and worldwide
- Trinity qualifications are regulated by Ofqual in England and Northern Ireland and by the Welsh Government
- Trinity is a member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE)
- Trinity is approved by the UK Home Office to offer English language exams for visa purposes
- Trinity examiners are fully qualified, professionally active and attend training and standardisation events every year.

Music, Drama And Performance Qualifications Trinity music, drama and performance qualifications and the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

Framework	Trinity qualifications
Level 7	Fellowship diplomas
Level 6	Licentiate diplomas
Level 4	Associate diplomas
Level 3	Grades 6, 7 & 8
Level 2	Grades 4 & 5
Level 1	Grades 1, 2 & 3
Entry Level 3	Initial

Music Qualifications

Graded music qualifications in keyboard, strings, woodwind, brass, percussion and voice span nine levels from Initial to Grade 8. Those who wish to go further can take associate, licentiate and fellowship diplomas in music performance and composition – including employment-related qualifications in all these areas – and in music theory, classroom teaching and individual tutoring. Practical and theory music qualifications at grades 6 – 8 attract UCAS Tariff points. For further information about the UCAS Tariff see Appendix H.

Rock & Pop Qualifications

Rock & Pop graded qualifications, from Initial to Grade 8, for bass, drums, guitar, keyboards and vocals, are available internationally and offer an opportunity for musicians to gain accredited qualifications by playing well-known songs and demonstrating skills across rock and pop genres. Rock and Pop qualifications at grades 6 – 8 attract UCAS Tariff points. For further information about the UCAS Tariff see Appendix H.

Drama and Performance Qualifications

Qualifications in drama and performance subjects provide practical assessment in acting, speech and drama, musical theatre, performance arts and communication skills. These qualifications are available from Initial to diploma level, and assessments may be undertaken by individuals, pairs or groups. Individual and paired drama and performance qualifications at grades 6 – 8 attract UCAS Tariff points. For further information about the UCAS Tariff see Appendix H.

Arts Award

Arts Award qualifications are managed by Trinity in association with Arts Council England. These support young people to develop as artists and arts leaders. The programme develops their art form knowledge, creativity, leadership and communication skills. Gold Arts Award is a Level 3 qualification on the QCF and attracts 35 UCAS Tariff points. For further information about the UCAS Tariff see Appendix H.

English Language (ESOL) Qualifications

Trinity offers the following ESOL qualifications:

- Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE)
- Integrated Skills in English (ISE)
- ESOL Skills for Life
- Spoken English for Work (SEW).

These qualifications are regulated by Ofqual and align with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as follows:

TRINITY ESOL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES

Trinity ESOL qualifications					
	GESE	ISE	ESOL Skills SEW for Life		
Framework Level	CEFR Level	Speaking & Listening	Reading & Writing, Speaking, Listening	Reading & Writing, Speaking, Listening	Speaking & Listening for work
Level 3	C2	Grade 12	ISE IV		
Level 2	C1	Grade 11	ISE III	Skills for Life	SEW C1
Level 1	B2	Grade 9 Grade 8 Grade 7	ISE II	Skills for Life	SEW B2+ SEW B2
Entry 3	B1	Grade 6 Grade 5	ISE I	Skills for Life	SEW B1
Entry 2	A2	Grade 4 Grade 3	ISE 0/Foundation	Skills for Life	
Entry 1	A1	Grade 2 Grade 1*		Skills for Life	

* GESE Grade 1 qualification is not included on the NQF framework.

In 2012 Trinity's GESE, ISE and Skills for Life qualifications were awarded ALTE's Q-mark – demonstrating that these exams have passed a rigorous audit and meet all 17 of ALTE's quality standards.

Trinity GESE, ISE and Skills for Life exams are approved by the UK Home Office for visa applications.

Teaching English To Speakers Of Other Language (TESOL) Qualifications

Trinity offers a number of qualifications in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) including the Certificate in TESOL (CertTESOL), Certificate in International Business English Training (Cert IBET), Teaching Young Learners Extension Course (TYLEC), Certificate in Teaching English with Technology (CertICT), Diploma in TESOL (DipTESOL) and the Fellowship Diploma in TESOL (FTCL Diploma).

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about Trinity examinations can be obtained from Trinity College London – www.trinitycollege.com. See Appendix I.

Appendix B – European Baccalaureate

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS		OPTIONAL SUBJECTS		COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES
Column 1	Column 2 (2 periods)	Column 3 (4 periods)	Column 4 (3 periods)	Column 5 (2 periods)
Language I (4 periods)	Biology	Latin*	Advanced language I	Lab physics**
Language II (3 periods)	History	Ancient Greek*	Advanced language II	Lab chemistry**
Mathematics (3 periods)	Geography	Geography	Advanced mathematics^	Lab biology**
or	Philosophy	Philosophy		IT
Mathematics (5 periods)		Language III		Economics°
Religion/ethics (1 period)		Language IV		Sociology
Sport		History		Art °
(2 periods)		Economics		Music °
		Physics		Theatre Studies
		Chemistry		Politics
		Biology		Language V
		Art		
		Music		

Column 2 courses are compulsory unless chosen from Column 3. Biology from Column 2 is compulsory unless biology, physics or chemistry is chosen from Column 3.

* Students may take these subjects only if they have taken them in Years 4 and 5.

^ Advanced mathematics may only be taken in conjunction with 5-period mathematics from Column 1.

** Only allowed if corresponding science option is chosen from Column 3.

° Not allowed if already chosen in Column 3.

The European Baccalaureate (EB) is a group diploma awarded only by the 14 European schools of the European Union (see below), which provide free education for children of its staff. There are currently around 24,000 pupils in the system as a whole, and approximately 1,500 pupils take the final examination every year.

Article 5 (2) (b) of the Statute of the European Schools, an international treaty to which the UK has acceded, provides that holders of the EB shall: 'have the same right as nationals with equivalent qualifications to seek admission to any university in the territory or the Contracting Parties'. In this context 'university' applies to all HEPs.

STRUCTURE

The EB examines the final two years of a seven-year secondary education cycle. A significant element of study is always undertaken in the first foreign language, including history and geography from Year 3 (Year 9 in the UK). With the exception of the mother tongue, the syllabuses in the 14 language sections are identical, and the same standards of attainment are required of all. Not all schools are able to offer all language options. If an option course cannot be offered in Language I, it may be offered in either the working language of the student concerned, or in the language of the school's host country.

- Students must take all subjects in column 1 (see above)
- Biology, history, geography and philosophy must be chosen in either column 2 or 3
- Biology is compulsory unless physics or chemistry is chosen in column 3
- Students must choose a minimum of two and a maximum of four four-period subjects from column 3 to ensure their weekly timetable consists of at least 31 periods.

In addition they may choose subjects from column 4 and a maximum of two subjects from column 5. The maximum number of periods per week is 35 (36 if a column 4 subject is chosen).

ASSESSMENT

The EB is a group diploma and candidates are awarded a final overall mark expressed as a percentage, and a mark out of ten for each individual subject. Candidates who achieve an overall mark of 60% or above are awarded the Baccalaureate. The final mark is the result of:

- Internal assessment of all subjects studied during Year 7 (Year 13 in the UK) by means of:
 - internal school examinations – 30%
 - continuous assessment – 20%.
- Final written exams set by the examining board, in the mother tongue, first foreign language, mathematics and two elective subjects – 35%.
- Three final oral exams set by the teacher and an external examiner appointed by the examining board – 15% – in:
 - mother tongue
 - first foreign language, history or geography
 - third compulsory or elective subject.

Complementary activities cannot be offered in the final written or oral examinations; they contribute only to internal assessment. There are no individual subject pass certificates, but individual subject marks are calculated at all stages, and are indicated on the final Baccalaureate certificate. Students must pass each year – if not they must repeat the year, and ultimately leave the school if they fail the same year twice. Students receive the Diploma, which is their formal record of achievement, and the marks for each subject at about the same time in early July. The subject results are in simple tabular form.

The average score across the European Schools is around 75%. It is extremely difficult to score 90% or more.

No GCSEs or other national examinations are taken at the European schools.

ADMINISTRATION

The European Schools are administered by a Board of Governors, which consists of representatives of the member states, and a representative of the European Commission. The EB is administered and directly supervised by an external examining board appointed annually by the Board of Governors.

The examining board is chaired by a university professor and is composed of examiners from each of the European Union countries. These representatives must meet the requirements laid down in their home countries for appointment to the examining board.

ACCEPTABILITY

While British students make up the majority of applicants to UK HE, applications are made by students of other nationalities who may have completed their studies in a language other than English. The substantial compulsory element of the EB should also be taken into account when making admissions decisions. Offers to EB students are generally expressed in terms of gaining a Diploma mark of 60% (the pass mark) or above, or by specifying the final EB score and marks in selected individual subjects.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The European schools are located in Belgium (Brussels I, II, III, IV and Mol), Germany (Frankfurt, Karlsruhe and Munich), Italy (Varese), Luxembourg (I and II), the Netherlands (Bergen), Spain (Alicante) and the UK (Culham).

For more information on pass rates, average scores and the university performance of EB students, please see the Department for Education's publication, *The European Baccalaureate; Information for admissions officers of universities and other higher education institutions*: www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-on-the-european-baccalaureate

Appendix C – International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation. Its four programmes for students aged three to 19 help develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalising world.

Founded in 1968, the IB currently works with 3,858 schools in 148 countries to develop and offer four challenging programmes to over 1,211,000 students.

Middle Years Programme (MYP)

The Middle Years Programme (MYP) offered by the International Baccalaureate (IB) provides a framework of academic and life skills for students aged 11–16. The five-year programme follows on from the IB's Primary Years Programme and serves as a preparation for the IB's Diploma Programme.

The MYP provides a framework of concepts, skills, objectives and assessment criteria in eight subject groups and a pedagogy aimed at engaging students in disciplinary understanding by exposure to authentic connections as well as developing their awareness of the relationships between disciplines.

The MYP is guided by the following three fundamental concepts, rooted in the IB mission statement: communication, intercultural awareness and holistic learning.

The 'areas of interaction' are at the core of the programme, providing the contexts for curriculum planning and an opportunity for teachers' and students' interaction with authentic situations. Students develop an understanding of each through contribution in all subjects. They are grouped as: approaches to learning, community and service, health and social education, environments and human ingenuity. These pervade and recur throughout the five years of the MYP, through the eight subject groups, and also through interdisciplinary teaching and projects, whole-school activities and the MYP personal project. The areas of interaction are not directly assessed nor awarded individual grades, since they are perspectives rather than subjects.

In the last year of the MYP, students complete the personal project, a significant body of work, the product of the student's own initiative and creativity. The personal project must reflect a personal understanding of the areas of interaction and the application of skills acquired through approaches to learning. MYP students are expected to choose their project, which can take many forms, and take the process to completion with the supervision of an adult in the school. The personal project forms part of the assessment scheme of the MYP. It involves planning, research and a high degree of personal reflection.

All schools are expected to develop their own written curriculum following the guidelines provided by the IB and ensuring students will be able to meet the objectives for the final year of the programme. In doing so, schools

may need to consider any national or local requirements about mandated curricula, provided the integrity of the MYP is respected at all times.

The MYP subject groups:

- Arts – visual arts and performing arts
- Humanities – studies of individuals, societies and environment including subjects such as history, geography, economics, politics, civics, sociology, anthropology and/or psychology
- Language A – student's best language, usually the school's language of instruction
- Language B – a modern foreign language learned at school
- Mathematics – course includes the five branches of mathematics: number, algebra, geometry and trigonometry, probability and statistics, and discrete mathematics
- Physical education – course includes health and fitness, individual and team sports
- Sciences – biology, chemistry, physics
- Technology – computer and design technology.

MYP authorisation and programme evaluation of schools:

All schools undergo an authorisation visit, following a minimum of one year as a candidate school. Four years after authorisation and then every five years, the school receives a programme evaluation visit, which is the culmination of a detailed self-study process. The IB standards and practices provide the framework towards authorisation and programme evaluation.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers assess students' work with guidance from IB according to prescribed, published criteria which state final levels of achievement in each discipline for the final year of the programme. All schools must assess their students with the published assessment criteria in the final year. The IB also provides recommended interim assessment criteria based on the objectives for each of the subject groups for years 1 and 3 of the five-year programme. Schools can opt for the MYP certificate, accompanied by a record of achievement issued by the IB. These are formal documents limited to schools that offer the last year of the programme and elect to have their own student assessment validated by IB through a rigorous and quality assured process of external moderation.

The IB will issue an MYP certificate to each student who satisfies the following conditions. The student must:

- be registered, and have gained at least a grade 2 in at least one subject per subject group of the MYP (Please note that a second language A may be taken instead of a language B)
- have gained at least a grade 3 for the personal project
- have participated in the programme for at least the final two years
- have met the expectations of community and service to the satisfaction of the school

- have gained a grade total of at least 36 from the eight subject groups and the personal project combined, out of a possible maximum of 63. (This total and the maximum will be different in the case of the mother-tongue language option or if a student has gained an exemption due to special educational needs.) If more than one subject has been entered in a given subject group, only the single best grade will count towards certification, although all subject results will appear on the MYP record of achievement.

The IB also provides all schools with a portfolio of achievement for each student. This allows the school to document the student's accomplishments at the end of the course. The portfolio includes papers from the IB describing the programme. The school may add its own certificates, academic results and awards, a self-evaluation by the student, information about community and service, the personal project and any other achievements. Schools not applying for MYP certificates are required to regularly submit samples for the process of monitoring of assessment to ensure they comply with the assessment requirements of the programme.

GENERAL GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Grade 1 Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives.

Grade 2 Very limited achievement against all the objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support.

Grade 3 Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations with support.

Grade 4 A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Grade 5 A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.

Grade 6 A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.

Grade 7 A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality.

International Baccalaureate Diploma

QUALIFICATION ABBREVIATION

IB

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK LEVEL

Level 3

BACKGROUND

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is an international academic qualification administered by the International Baccalaureate (IB). It is a two-year academically rigorous pre-university programme designed, amongst a variety of broader aims, to promote international mindedness.

All students, irrespective of their particular interests, are required to follow six subjects in a range of disciplines. At least three and not more than four of these must be at higher level (HL) and three (or two if four HL courses are completed) at standard level (SL). The recommended minimum classroom contact time for each HL is 240 hours, and for each SL, 150 hours over the two-year period of the programme. The examined subjects must include two languages, one subject from individuals and societies, an experimental science, mathematics and one further option. All subjects are designed to incorporate international perspectives. The IB has three working languages, English, French and Spanish, and almost all examination papers are available in each of these languages.

The six subjects are bound together in a coherent form by the 100-hour theory of knowledge course followed by all students, and by an extended essay which demonstrates research skills. A further requirement is that candidates be involved in 150 hours of creativity, action and service (CAS) which supports the philosophy of a holistic international education.

Only an authorised IB World School that meets the IB's standards and practices can enter candidates for IB qualifications. The Diploma programme is designed as a two-year course of study, although in exceptional cases a maximum of two SL subjects may be taken as one year courses. All HL courses, at least one SL course and the core must be completed over two years.

DATE OF FIRST AWARD

1970

NUMBER OF UNITS/STRUCTURE

Candidates choose six subjects, at least three and not more than four at higher level and three (or two if four HL courses are completed) at standard level. Candidates choose their programmes of six subjects by selecting one each from the following six groups. Alternatively a candidate may offer, instead of a Group 6 subject, a third modern language, a second subject from Individuals and societies, a second subject from experimental sciences or further mathematics SL or computer science. Students therefore study all subject areas, gaining a depth at higher level similar to that at A level. In most cases, standard level subjects maintain similar depth to those at higher level, but with reduced course content.

Group 1 – Studies in language and literature

These courses are designed for students' best language for academic work. Courses available in this group are:

- Language A: Literature higher level
- Language A: Literature standard level
- Language A: Language and Literature higher level
- Literature and Performance standard level.

Group 2 – Language Acquisition

Language B Higher level and Language B Standard level:

- A foreign language course for students with previous experience of learning the language. The main focus of the programme is on language but a variety of texts also forms part of the course. Classical Greek and Latin can also be studied as a group 2 course.

Or

- Ab initio
- A foreign language learning course over two years at SL for students with no previous experience of learning the target language.

Group 3 – Individuals and societies

- Business and management
- Economics
- Environmental system and societies (SL) – this is an interdisciplinary subject and can be taken through group 3 and group 4
- Geography
- History
- Information technology in a global society
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Social and cultural anthropology.

Group 4 – Experimental sciences

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Design technology
- Environmental system and societies (SL only)
- Physics
- Computer science
- Sports, exercise and health science (SL)
- Environmental system and societies (SL) (interdisciplinary).

Group 5 – mathematics

- Mathematics (HL)
- Mathematics (SL)
- Mathematical studies (SL)
- Further mathematics (HL)
- All students must do a course in mathematics.

Group 6 – Arts

- Music
- Theatre
- Visual arts
- Film
- Literature and performance (interdisciplinary).

School based syllabuses

A syllabus designed by an experienced IB school according to its own needs, interests and expertise, and approved by the IB under strict criteria. A candidate may choose only one SBS subject as one of their standard level choices.

All Diploma Programme candidates will also undertake:

- a. Theory of knowledge – a 100-hour course taught over two years which is an interdisciplinary requirement intended to stimulate critical reflection on knowledge and issues.
- b. Extended essay – a substantial piece of independent research work about 4,000 words long. It must be written in a Diploma Programme subject. 50 hours.
- c. Creativity, action, service (CAS) – the CAS programme is provided by the school and monitored by the IB. 150 hours.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Assessment in the IB varies widely across the disciplines and includes multiple choice, essay, data analysis, short answer and structured questions. In most subjects the teachers contribute 20% of the marks through internal assessment which are then moderated by external examiners. Students are assessed on the whole course in final examinations held at the end of the two years. The courses are not modular. Candidates not completing all the requirements for a Diploma may be awarded certificates for individual subjects. Assessment procedures are kept constantly under review to ensure both integrity and quality. Their validation includes, amongst other activities, question paper and marking scheme review by external advisers, standardisation of examiners, marking, moderation, grade awarding and arbitration procedures, an enquiry upon results service, and public reporting of statistics.

EXAMINATION TIMING

May and November

DATE OF RESULT PUBLICATION

Early July and early January

GRADING SYSTEM

Each subject is graded 1–7 (7 being the highest) The recommendation for the award of the final grade in each subject is normally the responsibility of the Chief Examiner. A grade will not normally be awarded to a candidate in any subject for which any of the required assessment components have not been completed.

All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional Diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the Diploma.

The Diploma will be awarded to a candidate whose total score is 24, 25, 26 or 27 points, provided all the following requirements have been met:

- a. numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the diploma
- b. all CAS requirements have been met
- c. at least a grade D has been awarded for both theory of knowledge and the extended essay
- d. there is no grade 1 in any subject
- e. there is no grade 2 at HL
- f. there is no more than one grade 2 at SL

- g. overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below
- h. at least 12 points have been gained on HL subjects (candidates who register for four HL subjects must gain at least 16 points at HL)
- i. at least nine points have been gained on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least six points at SL)
- j. the candidate has not been found guilty of malpractice by the IB organisation

The Diploma will be awarded to a candidate whose total score is 28 points or above, provided all the following requirements have been met:

- a. numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the diploma
- b. all CAS requirements have been met
- c. grades A (highest) to E (lowest) have been awarded for both theory of knowledge and an extended essay, with a grade of at least D in one of them
- d. there is no grade 1 in any subject
- e. there is no more than one grade 2 at HL
- f. there are no more than two grades 2 at SL
- g. overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below
- h. at least 11 points have been gained on HL subjects (candidates who register for four HL subjects must gain at least 14 points at HL)
- i. at least eight points have been gained on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least five points at SL)
- j. the candidate has not been found guilty of malpractice by the IB organisation

A maximum of three examination sessions is allowed in which to satisfy the requirements for the award of the IB Diploma.

AWARD OF INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE COURSES

A candidate who is not registered for the full Diploma may register for examination in one or more subjects.

Such a candidate is classified as a Diploma Programme (DP) course student and receives a certificate recording the result(s) obtained in each subject. Candidates who have registered for the full Diploma, but who have not fulfilled all the requirements for the award, will receive a certificate indicating the results obtained in individual DP courses. A Diploma candidate who wishes to register for more than the six subjects required for the Diploma may register for one or more additional subjects at HL.

The IB Diploma Programme is recognised by Ofqual as an accredited qualification. The IB is recognised by UK HEPs as fulfilling the minimum matriculation requirements for entry. The IB recommends that institutions make offers to applicants based on a total points acquisition by the candidate. Offers to IB students that are expressed in terms of gaining the Diploma and with specific grades, usually in HL subjects, should not be made by equating IB grades to GCE A level grades. No formal equivalence exercise has been conducted on IB higher level courses and A levels, therefore it is not possible to make comparisons on the basis of any external evidence. This approach also does not take account of, and give credit to, the breadth of study required in the IB Diploma Programme.

The IB Diploma Programme has been awarded the following UCAS Tariff points.

Grade	UCAS Tariff points (2010 onwards)
45	720
44	698
43	676
42	654
41	632
40	611
39	589
38	567
37	545
36	523
35	501
34	479
33	457
32	435
31	413
30	392
29	370
28	348
27	326
26	304
25	282
24	260

International Baccalaureate (IB) Course

Higher Level		Standard Level		Core requirements	
Grade	Tariff points	Grade	Tariff points	Grade	Tariff points
7	130	7	70	3	120
6	110	6	59	2	80
5	80	5	43	1	40
4	50	4	27	0	10
3	20	3	11		

Students who register for an IB Diploma but do not successfully complete all elements can achieve UCAS Tariff points from their achievement in individual courses and the core requirements of the Diploma curriculum (extended essay, theory of knowledge (TOK) and creativity, action, service (CAS)).

Students who register for individual IB DP courses rather than the IB Diploma can collect Tariff points from the core.

IB Career-Related Certificate

QUALIFICATION ABBREVIATION

IBCC

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK LEVEL

Level 3

BACKGROUND

The IBCC (International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate) is an IB programme, designed to be taken over two years, and to complement career-related/vocational courses. It is the school's responsibility to determine the appropriate career-related/vocational course that is linked to the IBCC, and should be determined by the local context and aligned with student needs, whether they are used to support further studies or to assist direct employment opportunities. The IB is not responsible for the choice and administration of the career-related/vocational course offered to students; however, schools need to ensure that the course is

recognised by local, national or international authorities, and that it is usually taken over a two-year period.

The IBCC:

- provides flexibility to allow for local differences
- is relevant and creative
- sets appropriate and achievable attainment requirements
- encourages significant school and student input in the curriculum and assessment
- provides breadth and balance.

DATE OF FIRST AWARD

May 2009

NUMBER OF UNITS/STRUCTURE

The IBCC is a framework that consists of three key elements:

1. Candidates choose a minimum of two IB Diploma Programme courses from any of the six Diploma groups, at Higher Level (HL), Standard Level (SL) or a combination of both.
2. In addition to the Diploma courses requirements, students must also complete the IBCC core which consists of an internally assessed Approaches to Learning course and Community and Service programme, as well as an internally assessed and externally moderated Reflective Project. Students must also complete a language development course relevant to their needs.
3. The above requirements must all be studied concurrent with a career-related course of study.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

With regard to the Diploma courses, assessment in the IB varies widely across the disciplines and includes externally assessed multiple choice, essay, data analysis, short answer and structured questions. In most subjects the teachers contribute 20% of the marks through internal assessment which is then moderated by external examiners. Students are assessed on the whole course in final examinations held at the end of the two years. The courses are not modular. Assessment procedures are kept constantly under review to ensure both integrity and quality. Their validation includes, amongst other activities, question paper and marking scheme review by external advisers, standardisation of examiners, marking, moderation, grade awarding and arbitration procedures, an enquiry upon results service, and public reporting of statistics.

The Approaches to Learning and Community and Services aspects of the IBCC are internally assessed and can take the form of either formative or summative assessment. The Reflective Project is internally assessed and externally moderated against rigorous assessment criteria. In the case of the language development course, schools can offer a wide range of provision, e.g. an externally assessed course or an internally assessed module. The requirement is that students must fulfil the minimum requirements as set out in the Guide.

EXAMINATION TIMING

May and November.

DATE OF RESULT PUBLICATION

Early July and early January.

GRADING SYSTEM

Each Diploma course is graded 1–7 (see the information on IB Diploma Courses above). The recommendation for the award of the final grade in each subject is normally the responsibility of the Chief Examiner. A grade will not normally be awarded to a candidate in any subject for which any of the required assessment components have not been completed.

The Reflective Project is marked out of 30 and graded A–E.

All assessment components for the IBCC core must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IBCC.

The Career-related Certificate of the International Baccalaureate and the statement of results will be issued subject to satisfactory completion of the following requirements by a student:

- a grade 3 or above in two Diploma courses
- a level D or above in the Reflective Project
- satisfactory completion of the internally assessed aspects of the IBCC core (Language development, Community and Service and Approaches to Learning).

Students must also complete a concurrent course of study in a recognised career-related field of choice. This must be a Level 3 course for UK-based students.

Where a student does not satisfy the requirements for the award of the Career-related Certificate of the International Baccalaureate, they will be eligible to receive only the statement of results.

UCAS Tariff points are currently available for the individual IB subject components and the vocational elements of the IBCC but are not currently available for the IBCC Core. However, HEIs are encouraged to consider the skills students develop on the Core, including the graded Reflective Project.

PROGRESSION/ARTICULATION

The IBCC prepares students for flexibility and mobility in a range of employment opportunities as well as continuing lifelong learning. Employers have as an emphasis, the importance of work ethic and values, maturity and responsibility, linguistic proficiency and critical-thinking skills, as well as job-specific skills. These 'life skills' ensure adaptability in a society whereby jobs are created and eliminated annually. Further education institutions, including universities, place emphasis on academic strength, curriculum fit and reading and writing skills – all of which IBCC students experience during their two years of study. This blend of learning styles ensures that multiple pathways are enabled for more students.

Appendix D – Option Internationale du Baccalauréat

The Option Internationale du Baccalauréat (OIB or BOI) is a special version of the French Baccalauréat Général and is thus acceptable as a group certificate satisfying general entrance requirements. A fully bilingual, as well as a bicultural examination, the OIB evaluates candidates' performance in a dual curriculum taught and assessed in two languages (French and English in the case of the British version) at an equal, first language level. It is available to students within a number of schools designated by the Ministry of Education. Within the educational context of the French 'Baccalauréat Général' taught within French international lycées, students benefit from two different national approaches to teaching, assessment and examination practices.

The OIB is available in the three academic streams of the French Baccalauréat. These are:

- L – Languages and literature
- ES – Economics and social sciences
- S – Mathematics and sciences

The OIB was developed as a special version of the French Baccalauréat, based on partnerships between the French Ministry of Education and a growing number of foreign authorities. These partners quality-assure and accredit examinations in language & literature, and history-geography in their own language and according to national assessment criteria appropriate to post-16 university-entrance level education in their own respective countries. For the UK, A level standards are applied. These OIB subjects are fully integrated into the French Baccalauréat.

The British version of the OIB is built upon a long-standing Anglo-French partnership between Cambridge International Examinations and the French Ministry of Education.

In the British version of the OIB, two subjects, English language & literature and history-geography, are added to the full syllabus of the mainstream French 'Baccalauréat Général'. History-geography is taught bilingually in French and English. In English language & literature, the literature component is examined and assessed at a level equivalent to A level English Literature, and linguistic performance is assessed by reference to appropriate first language usage. The standard of the examinations in history-geography is broadly equivalent to A level. The scope and content of the syllabi and the level of demand of the final examinations are validated by Cambridge International Examinations. Students who wish to read these subjects at a British university, and who are successful in these papers, are thus appropriately prepared to do so. Students are prepared to read other subjects at university by their studies in subjects taught in French, and by the general academic education offered by the 'Baccalauréat Général'.

Because of Cambridge International Examinations' role in validating the assessment of the two subjects examined in English (English language & literature and history-geography) and their equivalence with A level, and because of the success of OIB students in higher education at a range of institutions and on a range of courses, the British version of the OIB is widely accepted

by British universities as proof of English language competence, without the need for further proficiency tests. The linguistic demands of these exams are focused on the use of English in an academic context. This makes them an appropriate preparation for university study in English in any subject. The levels of linguistic achievement for successful candidates correspond to C1 or higher on the CEFR, or 'educated native speaker/writer'. Unlike conventional English language certificates, the OIB British Option requires an ability to write, as well as to present and to discuss and debate in English in the oral exams. These form part of both subjects, in an extended analytical mode, demonstrating an appropriate level of competence in English for university study in Britain.

Students who pass the OIB also fulfil all the requirements of the French Baccalauréat and qualify for French university entrance (see entry for France).

British option OIB examinations are set and moderated by examiners who are appointed jointly by Cambridge International Examinations and the French Ministry of Education. Standards are overseen by inspectors appointed by Cambridge. Each subject within the British option is examined by a four-hour written paper and an oral examination.

All candidates for the 'Baccalauréat Général' will have studied at least six academic subjects and will receive marks for individual subjects, as well as a weighted aggregate mark for performance in the Baccalauréat as a whole. The dual curriculum of the OIB presents an unusually heavy workload in terms of guided learning hours (typically at least a third more than the number advised for four A levels) and independent work.

GRADING SYSTEM

The official result of the 'Baccalauréat Général', and thus of the OIB, is expressed as an overall mark out of 20. Students do not have to achieve above 10 in all subjects to pass the Baccalauréat; they pass if their overall weighted aggregate score is above 10. 20 is the maximum score and 0 the minimum, both for each subject and for the overall aggregate score. Scores for individual subjects are given as whole numbers; overall weighted averages may include decimals.

For the overall score, the marks between the pass level of 10 and the maximum of 20 are divided into 'honours' or 'distinctions' grades ('mentions' in French).

16–20: 'mention très bien'
14–15.9: 'mention bien'
12–13.9: 'mention assez bien'
10–11.9: 'passable'

In practice, the top mark-band (16–20) is awarded to a very small percentage of candidates. In 2011, for example, only 4.2% of all baccalauréat candidates in France achieved a *mention très bien* (an overall average mark of 16/20 or better), while 5.17% of A level candidates in England achieved at least three A* grades, and 13.29% were awarded three A grades or higher.

Further information about the OIB can be obtained from ASIBA (see Appendix I).

Appendix E – International foundation programmes

International foundation programmes are usually one-year diploma courses designed especially for international students who wish to study for a degree in the UK. A programme's design depends on the individual institution, although the aim is the same: to bridge the gap for those students whose school-leaving and/or English language qualifications require an extra year's study to be appropriate for entry to a UK undergraduate degree course.

Foundation programmes usually include a set number of subject modules (for example, economics, business, law, politics) and a number of compulsory modules (for example, English language, academic writing, university studies, project). Some institutions will also include one or two other modules from Year 1 of the undergraduate curriculum.

HEPs that offer their own foundation programmes may take foundation students on as undergraduates if their performance meets the entrance requirements for the institution. Some programmes will guarantee progression, while others may specify overall grades and/or a certain mark for specific courses. HEPs will often accept students from other foundation programmes, provided that they are suitably validated.

Programmes usually range between 30–36 weeks and can be geared to a number of different degree destinations so that students are able to start their studies prepared for the specific academic demands of their chosen degree.

Some providers will cater specifically for students within the European Union, while others may concentrate mainly on those outside it. All courses will be tailored to those students who wish to obtain recognised and accredited qualifications that satisfy the general entrance requirements for a British degree programme.

Foundation programmes are also available through FE colleges, which are often linked to a local university and validated by them. Additionally, an increasing number of private language schools run foundation programmes.

HEPs should ensure that the programmes have been suitably validated.

International Foundation Programme – Scotland (IFPS)

The programme is an established and recognised course for overseas students hoping to enter Scotland's unique system of higher education.

The purpose of the foundation programme is to enable overseas students to obtain the grades needed to enter their chosen courses, by way of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) qualifications and foundation examinations.

Prospective university students sit SQA Highers which may include ESOL.

Appendix F – English language proficiency

In the case of a candidate whose mother tongue is other than English, the following may be acceptable as evidence of proficiency in English. The most up-to-date list of approved English language tests is available on the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration).

Anglia Examination Syndicate

- AcCEPT Proficiency is the Ascentis Anglia ESOL International Proficiency level assessment designed for non-native English speakers requiring English for higher education. It is managed by Ascentis and Anglia Examinations
- For information on the mapping of the qualification to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference), please see www.anglia.org/institutions/CEFR.

British Institutes Certificates

- British Institutes examinations test the following competences in the English language: reading, free writing, listening, speaking and use of English at every level set out in the CEFR
- Universities may accept the following certificates for entry:
 - ESOL B2 Vantage
 - ESOL C1 Effective Proficiency
 - ESOL C2 Mastery.

For more information visit www.britishinstitutes.org

Cambridge English Examinations

Cambridge English exams are accepted by almost all UK universities and colleges as proof of English language skills. They are also accepted by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for Tier 4 student visas. They can be taken in over 2,800 centres in over 130 countries. To find your nearest centre visit: www.cambridgeenglish.org/centres

Various tests are offered:

- Cambridge English: Advanced, commonly known as the Certificate in Advanced English – CAE (NQF Level 2)
- Cambridge English: Proficiency, commonly known as the Certificate of Proficiency in English – CPE (NQF Level 3)
- Cambridge English: First, commonly known as the First Certificate in English – FCE (NQF Level 1)
- Cambridge English: Business Certificates Higher, commonly known as Business English Certificate Higher – BEC H (NQF Level 2)
- Cambridge English: Business Certificates Vantage, commonly known as Business English Certificate Vantage – BEC V (NQF Level 1)
- ESOL Skills for Life Level 2 (NQF Level 2).

For more information visit www.cambridgeenglish.org

Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)

- GCE O level English Language – grade C or better
- IGCSE First Language English – grade C or better
- IGCSE English as a second Language – grade C or better.

For more information visit www.cie.org.uk

University of Central Lancashire English Language Examinations

Examinations have reading, writing, listening, speaking and use of English components graded separately from the overall grade on the transcript. Each examination is graded pass, merit or distinction.

For more information visit www.uclan.ac.uk

Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life

Offered by Ascentis, Cambridge ESOL, City and Guilds, Pearson Edexcel, Education Development International plc, English Speaking Board, Learning Resource Network, NOCN and Trinity College London. The levels are set to equivalent NQF levels.

For more information visit the individual awarding organisation websites.

City & Guilds

City & Guilds International ESOL (IESOL) and International Spoken ESOL (ISESOL) qualifications are available at six levels and have been mapped to levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The qualifications are accepted by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), as meeting the minimum English language requirements for UK visa applications, including Tier 4 applications.

- Preliminary: CEFR A1
- Access: CEFR A2
- Achiever: CEFR B1
- Communicator: CEFR B2
- Expert: CEFR C1
- Mastery: CEFR C2.

For more information visit www.cityandguildsenglish.com

Pearson Edexcel

- Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in English Language – grade C or better
- International GCSE English language – grade C or better
- International GCSE English as a second language – grade C or better
- GCSE English language – grade C or better.

For more information visit www.edexcel.com

Education Development International (EDI) Certificates in English Language Skills (ESOL)

- EDI Entry 1 Certificate in ESOL International (JETSET Level 2)
- EDI Entry 2 Certificate in ESOL International (JETSET Level 3)
- EDI Entry 3 Certificate in ESOL International (JETSET Level 4)
- EDI Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (JETSET Level 5)
- EDI Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (JETSET Level 6)
- EDI Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (JETSET Level 7).

For more information visit www.ediplc.com

English Speaking Board

- ESB Entry Level Certificate in EFL Entry 1 (ESOL)
- ESB Entry Level Certificate in EFL Entry 2 (ESOL)
- ESB Entry Level Certificate in EFL Entry 3 (ESOL)
- ESB Level 1 Certificate in EFL (ESOL)
- ESB Level 2 Certificate in EFL (ESOL)
- ESB Level 3 Certificate in EFL (ESOL).

For more information visit www.esbuk.org

Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

- Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination: Use of English – grade E or better
- Hong Kong Advanced Supplementary Level Examination: Use of English – grade E or better
- Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCEE) Prior to 2007: English Language (Syllabus B) – grade C or better; 2007 onwards: English Language Level 3 or better
- Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) – English Language.

For more information visit www.hkeaa.edu.hk

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

IELTS is accepted by over 7,000 institutions worldwide, and is offered in over 500 test centres up to four times a month. IELTS assesses all English language skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking. The speaking module is assessed in a face-to-face conversational interview with a qualified examiner.

Candidates receive an IELTS Test Report Form which details their test scores. IELTS scores are given in bands from 1–9, including half bands. Most universities and colleges in the UK will require between bands 5.0 to 7.5, depending on the content of the course. IELTS Test Report Forms have a recommended validity of two years and can be verified by the institution receiving them via a secure online service.

IELTS is jointly managed by British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations. To find a list of test centres, which institutions are recognising the test and for general information visit www.ielts.org

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) International Qualifications

- English for Business (EFB) – Pass at level 3
- English for Commerce (EFC) – Pass at level 3
- English Language Skills Assessment (ELSA).

For more information visit www.lcci.org.uk

Malaysian University English Test (MUET)

For more information about the Malaysian University English Test, please contact the Malaysian Examinations Council (contact details in Appendix I).

Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)

MELAB evaluates advanced-level English language competence of adult non-native speakers of English. MELAB is a secure test battery and is administered only by authorised official examiners.

For more information visit www.cambridgemichigan.org/melab

The Password Test

Password is an online English language test designed for students preparing for academic study. It is most suitable for students joining international foundation programmes, pre-sessional courses, pre-master's programmes and courses in English for academic purposes. Password is also used to pre-test students joining undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The test is aligned to the CEFR and discriminates between CEFR level A2 to C1. Password is securely delivered online, and gives instant test results.

Further information, including the location of Password test centres is available at: www.englishlanguagetesting.co.uk

Pearson Language Tests**PEARSON TEST OF ENGLISH GENERAL (PTE GENERAL)**

Consisting of two parts: a written paper and a spoken test. The written paper tests listening, reading comprehension and writing skills. Both parts are externally assessed. Universities and colleges may accept Level 3 (Council of Europe Level B2), Level 4 (Council of Europe Level C1) or Level 5 (Council of Europe Level C2) for entry at an undergraduate or postgraduate level.

PEARSON TEST OF ENGLISH ACADEMIC (PTE ACADEMIC)

A computer-based test of international academic English recognised by over 2,500 programs worldwide including hundreds of universities around the UK. Test takers receive an overall score and sub-scores for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

The test is available throughout the year at secure test delivery centres around the world. Scores are available online typically within five business days and students can prepare using official PTE Academic practice tests. Most institutions will require a PTE Academic score in the range of 50–64. Some institutions may list a higher or lower score depending on the course.

Further more information visit www.pearsonpte.com/testme

Trinity College London

Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE):

- Grades 2–6 (elementary) (NQF Level entry 1–entry 3)
- Grades 7–9 (intermediate) (NQF Level 1)
- Grades 10–12 (advanced) (NQF Level 2–3).

Integrated Skills in English (ISE):

- ISE 0–1 (NQF Level entry 2 – entry 3)
- ISE II (NQF Level 1)
- ISE III (NQF Level 2)
- ISE IV (NQF Level 3).

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

The TOEFL is offered in internet-based (iBT) and paper-based (PBT) formats.

Please visit www.ets.org/toefl/locations to locate your nearest test centre.

The TOEFL iBT consists of four sections: reading, listening, speaking and writing, and the entire test is four hours long. Scores are reported for each of the four sections and an overall total score is also provided. Scores are available online around 10 days after the test date.

The test is recognised and accepted in over 9,000 institutions globally. View the complete list of universities and colleges that accept TOEFL at www.ets.org/toefl/ukdirectory. Each institution will list their TOEFL score requirements on their website and these may vary.

In the paper-based test, a score of 550 or above (600 or above is recommended for degrees with a literary content) is usually required. Comparable scores for the computer-based test are 213 or above, and 250 and above. Comparable scores for the internet-based test are 79 or above, and 100 and above. Scores are posted approximately five weeks after the test date.

University of Reading

Test of English for Educational Purposes (TEEP)

Reading, listening, writing and speaking are reported on the performance certificate as an overall score. An additional Language Knowledge paper is expressed as 'average', 'above average' or 'below average' and used to adjust the overall grade in borderline cases. Minimal acceptance levels for joining academic courses usually vary from 5.0 to 7.5 overall. Results are usually available within 10 days, by email.

For more information visit www.reading.ac.uk/isli

Appendix G – ECL European modern languages examination

European Consortium for the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Languages

OVERVIEW

The ECL examination system is a global European language assessment scheme which provides accreditation for language ability on a scale of levels from beginner to advanced in 15 European languages in Europe:

Bulgarian	German	Romanian
Croatian	Hebrew	Russian
Czech	Hungarian	Serbian
English	Italian	Slovak
French	Polish	Spanish

The ECL exam levels are fully aligned with the levels described by the CEFR framework (Common European Framework for Reference), published by the Council of Europe in 2001 which describes language learners' ability in terms of speaking, reading, listening and writing at six different reference levels from basic to proficient user levels.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The ECL exam system operates in several EU countries on the basis of the harmonised activities of four organisational-administrative levels that are built upon each other.

1st level: International ECL Examination Centre

2nd level: National ECL Exam Centres (NEC)

3rd level: ECL Examination Site (EES)

4th level: ECL Exam Preparatory Centres (PC)

AIMS

The ECL exam system is an association of institutions representing European languages. Its aim is:

- To promote the mutual teaching of the languages of Europe (with special respect to the less widely taught and used languages), both in and outside the school context by developing and disseminating a standardised language course system
- To provide unified, reliable and valid standards for the assessment of attained language knowledge with the help of the ECL language exam, a standardised testing system adapted to the languages of the member states of the European Union and those of the candidate countries
- To provide the comparability of certificates obtained and exam results achieved in the individual languages for both the candidates and the users.

It is the International ECL Examination Centre that co-ordinates the activities of the test writing institutions related to test construction and test development. It also manages the activities of the National ECL Exam Centres related to the organisation of language courses and the conduct of exams.

Successful candidates of ECL exams shall be awarded certificates.

TEST FORMAT

The test is divided into two parts: Oral (Speaking and Listening) and Written (Reading and Writing). Each skill is allocated 25 points, to make a total possible score of 100. The exam is successful if the candidate reaches at least 40% of the total score in each skill, and a minimum of 60% in each partial exam (Oral and/or Written).

Listening comprehension:	25 points
Reading comprehension:	25 points
Written communication:	25 points
Oral communication:	25 points
Maximum total:	100 points
Minimum pass level for a complex exam:	60 points
Pass level per skill for a partial exam:	10 points

LEVELS

There are four levels. For university entry, only the higher two levels, B2 and C1 are used as only these attract points for university entry. As an indication, B2 can be matched with the Cambridge First Certificate in English examination.

GLOBAL SCALES

A2 (beginner level)	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
B1 (elementary level)	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
B2 (intermediate level)	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
C1 (advanced level)	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

TOPICS (FOR THE HIGHER LEVELS)

LEVEL B2 – INTERMEDIATE	LEVEL C1 – ADVANCED
1. The individual	1. The individual
2. Partnership	2. Partnership
3. Family	3. Family
4. Place of living	4. Place of living
5. Travelling/transport	5. Travelling/transport
6. Shopping/shops	6. Shopping/shops
7. Communication/keeping in contact	7. Communication/keeping in contact
8. Services	8. Services
9. Culture/entertainment	9. Culture/entertainment
10. Time/weather	10. Time/weather
11. Health/illnesses	11. Health/illnesses
12. Sport	12. Sport
13. Media	13. Media
14. Hobby	14. Hobby
15. Studying/work	15. Studying/work
16. European Union	16. European Union
17. Culture and civilisation. The home country and the target language country	17. Culture and civilisation. The home country and the target language country
18. Public life	18. Public life
19. Environmental protection	19. Environmental protection
20. Current topics/events	20. Current topics/events
	21. Globalisation
	22. Current questions of ethics
	23. Current questions on economy/society

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

LEVELS	A2	B1	B2	C1
READING	TOTAL			
Time (minutes)	35	35	45	45
Number of parts	2	2	2	2
				There may be more than one text in each part.
Number of words (only of the texts and tasks)	Total 400–500	Total 500–700	Total 800–1000	Total 1000–1300
Correct answers	Total: 20 (10 each part)	Total: 20 (10 each part)	Total: 20 (10 each part)	Total: 20 (10 each part)
WRITING				
Time (minutes)	45	50	75	90
Number of tasks	2	2	2	2
Number of words	Total 150 (75–75)	Total 250 (125–125)	Total 400 (200–200)	Total 600 (300–300)
LISTENING				
Time (minutes)	ca 25	ca 25–30	ca 30–35	ca 35–40
Number of parts	2	2	2	2
Number of words (only of the recorded texts)	Total 400–500	Total 500–700	Total 800–1000	Total 1200–1500
Correct answers	Total: 20 (10 each part)	Total: 20 (10 each part)	Total: 20 (10 each part)	Total: 20 (10 each part)
RECORDING (PAUSES)				
Before the first playing	Depending on the difficulty of the task			
After the first playing	10 seconds		30 seconds	
After the second playing	up to 2 minutes		up to 2 minutes	

Quality Assurance**FEATURES OF THE TEST**

The content and overall validity of the tests are established after extensive research by specialists and pilot tests on specific target groups. The ECL exams test oral and written ability to use the language of everyday discourse on practical, professional and personal topics at varying degrees of complexity.

COMPARABILITY

Comparability is one of the important characteristics of the ECL tests. To ensure this, examinations as well as test materials and certificates are built on uniform principles. According to these uniform principles the parameters and criteria of evaluation and the types of tasks are the same in each language.

RELIABILITY

Each specialist member of the Consortium is responsible for test construction and marking in their own language. To ensure maximum reliability for the ECL tests, all items are pre-tested, test constructors and markers are trained before each session, and a system of double marking is used. A committee of specialists from each of the languages being examined monitors the standards of question-setting, marking and awarding to ensure equivalence between levels of achievement across the languages.

For more information about the ECL please contact University of Pécs (contact details in Appendix I).

Appendix H – The UCAS Tariff

INTRODUCTION

Admission to higher education courses in the UK is generally dependent upon an individual's achievement in Level 3 or equivalent qualifications, such as GCE A levels, BTEC (QCF) qualifications, the International Baccalaureate and OCR Cambridge Technicals.

There are currently over 3,000 Level 3 (or equivalent) qualifications available in the UK alone. Different qualifications can have different grading structures (alphabetical, numerical or a mixture of both).

The UCAS Tariff is the system for allocating points to qualifications used for entry to higher education (HE) in the UK. It was developed to allow for broad comparisons to be made about a wide range of qualifications by universities and colleges and to help them with their management information. A new Tariff is being introduced for the 2017 admissions cycle. For more information, see www.ucas.com/about-us/our-work-sector/ucas-consultations

Universities and colleges can use the UCAS Tariff to make comparisons between applicants with different qualifications. Tariff points are sometimes used in entry requirements, although other factors are often taken into account.

Visit www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/entry-requirements/tariff-tables to see which qualifications attract Tariff points and how many points each qualification is allocated.

Although Tariff points can be accumulated in a variety of ways, not all qualifications will be acceptable for entry to a particular HE course. The achievement of a points score does not give an automatic entitlement to entry, and many other factors are taken into account in the admissions process. HEPs are autonomous and set their own entry requirements.

A new Tariff will be implemented for the 2017 admissions cycle, i.e. for students making applications from September 2016 for HE courses starting from September 2017. Information about the new Tariff, including timetables for its implementation and resources for HEPs, applicants, schools and colleges and advisers, will be available on the UCAS website from September 2014.

The UCAS search tool at www.ucas.com is the best source of reference to find out what qualifications are acceptable for entry to specific courses.

HOW DOES THE UCAS TARIFF WORK?

- Qualifications attract UCAS Tariff points as described in the Tariff tables (see above).
- Students can gain UCAS Tariff points based on their qualification achievement.
- Certain qualifications within the UCAS Tariff build on qualifications in the same subject. In these cases some HEPs may only count the Tariff points from the qualification with the higher Tariff score (although this is entirely at the discretion of the provider). For example, this principle may be applied to:
 - GCE Advanced Subsidiary level and GCE Advanced level
 - Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers
 - speech, drama and music awards at grades 6, 7 and 8.
- Some providers may also restrict the Tariff points they recognise if they perceive a certain level of overlap

in content in different subjects or qualifications, for example a provider may not count Tariff points gained through a graded music examination if the applicant also has Music A level.

- Where the Tariff tables refer to specific awarding organisations, only qualifications from these awarding organisations attract Tariff points. Qualifications with a similar title, but from a different qualification awarding organisation do not attract Tariff points.

Further information regarding the specific entry requirements for individual HEPs and courses can be found on the UCAS search tool (search.ucas.com).

HOW DO UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES USE THE TARIFF TO SUPPORT ADMISSIONS?

The Tariff provides a facility to help universities and colleges when expressing entrance requirements and when making conditional offers.

Not all universities and colleges use the UCAS Tariff. Most prefer to express their entry requirements and make offers in terms of qualifications and grades rather than in Tariff points. Around one third of course entry requirements make reference to the Tariff.

For the minority of courses that refer to UCAS Tariff points in their entry requirements, there are different approaches:

- some list their entry requirements and make offers using only Tariff points – with no reference to specific qualifications or grades
- some ask for specific qualifications and a set number of Tariff points
- some link the Tariff points required to specific qualifications and grades.

For example:

- 280 Tariff points. A levels, Scottish Highers, BTEC National Diplomas are acceptable qualifications
- 280 points. Points from key skills, general studies A level, AS levels, key skills and CoPE will not be considered
- 280 Tariff points gained from at least three A levels or equivalent 18 unit qualifications
- 280 Tariff points including A levels in chemistry and biology
- 80 Tariff points, including at least grade B and C at A level
- 280 Tariff points, including 120 points in chemistry A level.

INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS ON THE TARIFF

There are a select number of international qualifications included on the UCAS Tariff:

- Advanced Placement Programme (US and Canada)
- Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education
- Irish Leaving Certificate.

Most UK institutions have specific entry requirements for applicants from outside of the UK which may not refer to Tariff points. All applicants should visit the UCAS search tool and providers' international websites to check whether they meet the entry criteria for their chosen course of study.

Appendix I – Additional sources

Accredited Institutions of Post-Secondary Education and Programs

American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle NW, Washington DC 20036-1193, USA

t (001) 202 939 9300
e comments@acenet.edu
w www.acenet.edu

Anglia Examination England Syndicate

Chichester College, Westgate Fields, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1SB

t 01243 812943
f 01243 784531
w www.anglia.org

AQA

Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XJ

t 0161 953 1180
f 01483 300 152
e eos@aqa.org.uk
w www.aqa.org.uk

ASIBA (Association des Sections Internationales Britanniques et Anglophones)

British Section, Lycée International, 2 bis rue Fer à Cheval, 78101 Saint Germain-en-Laye

e info@asiba.info
w www.asiba.info

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

Woburn House, 20-24 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9HF

t 020 7380 6700
f 020 7387 2655
e info@acu.ac.uk
w www.acu.ac.uk

The Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE)

e info@alte.org
w www.alte.org

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

Level 10, 255 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia

t (0061) 2 8098 3100
e info@acara.edu.au
w www.acara.edu.au

BMBF – Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs

Minoritenplatz 5, 1014 Vienna, Austria

t (0043) 1 53 120 0
f (0043) 1 53 1203099
e ministerium@bmbf.gv.at
w www.bmbf.gv.at

The British Council

British Council Information Centre, Bridgewater House, 58 Whitworth Street, Manchester M1 6BB

t 01619 577755
e general.enquiries@britishcouncil.org
w www.britishcouncil.org/new/

Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)

1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU

t 01223 553554
f 01223 553558
e info@cie.org.uk
w www.cie.org.uk

Caribbean Examinations Council

The Garrison, St Michael, Barbados BB14038

t (001) 246 227 1700
f (001) 246 429 5421
e cxcezo@cx.org
w www.cxc.org

Canadian Universities, Directory of (published annually)

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Central Application Office (CAO)

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College Entrance Examination Board

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Eire Department of Education and Skills

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e info@education.gov.ie
w www.education.ie

English Speaking Union

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w www.esu.org

Eurydice

Eurydice Unit for England, Wales and Northern Ireland,
National Foundation for Educational Research, The Mere,
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e eurydice@nfer.ac.uk
w www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice/

Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)

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w www.fetac.ie

Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

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e info@hkeaa.edu.hk
w www.hkeaa.edu.hk

International Association of Universities, (IAU)

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e centre@iau-aiu.net
w www.iau-aiu.net

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e ibca@ibo.org
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e icce@christian-education.org
w icce-global.org

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) International Qualifications

LCCI International Account Services, One90 High Holborn,
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e internationalenquiries@pearson.com
w www.llci.org.uk

Malaysian Examinations Council

Persiaran 1, Bandar Baru Selayang, 68100 Batu Caves,
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

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e ppa@mpm.edu.my
w webmpm.mpm.edu.my/bi/main.php

Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)

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Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48103-4978, USA

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f (001) 734 763 0369
e info@cambridgemichigan.org
w www.cambridgemichigan.org/melab

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)

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e lsc@nios.ac.in
w www.nios.ac.in

NCC Education

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w www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

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e contact@englishlanguagetesting.co.uk
w www.englishlanguagetesting.co.uk

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e internationaleo@pearson.com
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Singapore Ministry of Education

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Singapore 138675

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f (0065) 6775 5826
e contact@moe.gov.sg
w www.moe.edu.sg

South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

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Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

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w www.ub.bw

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University of Pécs

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