

## **SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE UK**

### **England**

Education in England may differ from the system used elsewhere in the United Kingdom

Basically, there are two systems: one covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland and one covering Scotland. The two education systems have different emphases. Traditionally the English, Welsh and Northern Irish system has emphasised depth of education whereas the Scottish system has emphasised breadth. Thus English, Welsh and Northern Irish students tend to sit a small number of more advanced examinations and Scottish students tend to sit a larger number of less advanced examinations. It should be noted that local English practice can vary from this general picture although Scottish practice is well nigh universal.



### **Education in Wales**

Nowadays education in Wales differs slightly from the system used in England. The statutory national key stage tests in Wales were, until 2000, the same as in England and were managed by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA). In 2000, the National Assembly for Wales took responsibility for these tests in Wales, at which point they were developed by test agencies on behalf of the Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru (ACCAC), whilst the tests in England were developed for the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). In 2002, the Welsh Assembly decided to cease the tests at Key Stage One. Instead, optional teacher assessment materials were provided to schools in 2003 for use in English, mathematics and Welsh. These had been adapted from materials that had originally been developed by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and the other test agencies to be used as statutory assessment materials for 2003. At the end of 2003, the Daugherty Report was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly to undertake a review of the country's assessment procedures. The interim report by the committee was perceived by the media as supporting a complete abolishment of the assessments at key stages two and three.

### **The school years in England and Wales**

In general, the cut-off point for ages is the end of August, so all children must be of a particular age on the 1st of September in order to begin class that month.

- Primary Education
  - Infant School or Primary School
    - Reception, age 4 to 5

- Year 1, age 5 to 6
    - Year 2, age 6 to 7 (KS1 National Curriculum Tests - England only)
  - Junior School or Primary School
    - Year 3, age 7 to 8
    - Year 4, age 8 to 9
    - Year 5, age 9 to 10
    - Year 6, age 10 to 11 (Eleven plus exams in some areas of England, Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Tests)
- Secondary Education
  - Middle School, High School or Secondary School
    - Year 7, old First Form, age 11 to 12
    - Year 8, old Second Form, age 12 to 13
    - Year 9, old Third Form, age 13 to 14 (Key Stage 3 National Curriculum Tests, known as SATs (Standard Assessment Tests))
  - Upper School or Secondary School
    - Year 10, old Fourth Form, age 14 to 15
    - Year 11, old Fifth Form, age 15 to 16 (old O Level examinations, modern GCSE examinations)
  - Upper School, Secondary School, or Sixth Form College
    - Year 12 or Lower Sixth, age 16 to 17 (AS-level examinations)
    - Year 13 or Upper Sixth, age 17 to 18 (A2-level examinations. Both AS-levels and A2-levels)

count towards A-levels  
)

In some regions of England, pupils attend a Lower (Primary) School before going to, a Middle School between 8 and 12 or, more commonly 9 and 13, and then a High School or Upper School. Other, more vocational qualifications offered including GNVQs and BTECs .



## **Education in Scotland**

Education in Scotland differs from the system used elsewhere in the United Kingdom . Basically, there are two systems: one covering [England](#) , [Wales](#) , or [Northern Ireland](#) and one covering Scotland . The two education systems have different emphases. Traditionally, the English, Welsh and Northern Irish system has emphasised depth of education whereas the Scottish system has emphasised breadth. Thus English, Welsh and Northern Irish students tend to sit a small number of more advanced examinations and Scottish students tend to sit a larger number of less advanced examinations.

### **The school years in Scotland**

In general, the cut-off point for ages is the end of August, so all children must be of a particular age on the 1st of September in order to begin class that month.

- Nursery School
  - Year 1, age 3 - 5.
- Primary School
  - Primary 1, age range 4 - 6.
  - Primary 2, age range 5 - 7.
  - Primary 3, age range 6 - 8.
  - Primary 4, age range 7 - 9.
  - Primary 5, age range 8 - 10.
  - Primary 6, age range 9 - 11.
  - Primary 7, age range 10 - 12.
- Secondary School
  - First year, age range 11 - 13.
  - Second year, age range 12 - 14.
  - Third year, age range 13 - 15.
  - Fourth year, age range 14 - 16.
  - Fifth year, age range 15 - 17.
  - Sixth year, age range 16 - 18.

Note that the age ranges specify the youngest age for a child entering that year and the oldest age for a child leaving that year. Also note that children may leave school at the end of any school year after they reach 16 years of age and that they may attend Scottish universities when they are 17. Therefore two sets of national examinations are held. The

first set, the Standard Grade examinations, take place in the Fourth year of secondary school and show basic education level. The second set, the Higher examinations take place in the Fifth and Sixth years. A third level, Advanced Higher, is sometimes taken by students intending to study at an English university, or those wishing to pass straight into second year at a Scottish university, and covers the gap between the Scottish "Higher" level and the English "Advanced" level courses, although there is not always a one-to-one mapping.



## **Education in Northern Ireland**

Education in Northern Ireland differs slightly from the system used elsewhere in the United Kingdom . The Northern Irish system emphasises a greater depth of education compared to the [English](#) and [Welsh](#) systems. The majority of examinations sat, and education plans followed, in Northern Irish schools are set by the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment ( CCEA ).

School holidays in Northern Ireland are also considerably different to the rest of the United Kingdom . Northern Irish schools generally only get 1 day off for the half term holiday (in February, May and October. Christmas holidays usually only consist of a week or so, the same with the Easter vacation, compared to Englands two weeks. The major difference however is that Northern Irish summer holidays are considerably longer with the entirety of July and August off giving a nine week summer holiday.

## **The school years in Northern Ireland**

In general, the cut-off point for ages is the end of August, so all children must be of a particular age on the 1st of September in order to begin class that month.

- Primary Education
  - Primary School
    - Primary 1, age 4 to 5
    - Primary 2, age 5 to 6
    - Primary 3, age 6 to 7
    - Primary 4, age 7 to 8
    - Primary 5, age 8 to 9
    - Primary 6, age 9 to 10
    - Primary 7, age 10 to 11 ( Eleven plus exams to determine secondary school placement.)
- Secondary Education
  - High School or Grammar School
    - First Form, age 11 to 12

- Second Form, age 12 to 13
- Third Form, age 13 to 14
- Fourth Form, age 14 to 15
- Fifth Form, age 15 to 16 (old O-Level examinations, modern GCSE examinations)
- High School, Grammar School, or Sixth Form College
  - Lower Sixth, age 16 to 17 (AS-level examinations, where applicable)
  - Upper Sixth, age 17 to 18 ( A-levels )



## Primary education

Primary or elementary education is the first years of formal, structured education that occurs during childhood. In most Western countries, it is compulsory for children to receive primary education (though in many jurisdictions it is permissible for parents to provide it).

Primary education generally begins when children are four to seven years of age. The division between primary and secondary education is somewhat arbitrary, but it generally occurs at about twelve years of age ( adolescence ); some educational systems have separate middle schools for that period. Primary and secondary education together are sometimes (in particular, in Canada and the United States ) referred to as " K-12 " education, (K is for kindergarten, 12 is for twelfth grade).

Typically, primary education is provided in schools , where (in the absence of parental movement or other intervening factors) the child will stay, in steadily advancing classes, until they complete it and move on to secondary schooling. Children are usually placed in classes with one teacher who will be primarily responsible for their education and welfare for that year. This teacher may be assisted to varying degrees by specialist teachers in certain subject areas, often music or physical education. The continuity with a single teacher and the opportunity to build up a close relationship with the class is a notable feature of the primary education system. Over the past few decades, schools have been testing various arrangements which break from the one-teacher, one-class mold.

The major goals of primary education are achieving basic literacy and numeracy amongst all their students, as well as establishing foundations in science, geography, history and

other social sciences . The relative priority of various areas, and the methods used to teach them, are an area of considerable political debate.

Traditionally, various forms of corporal punishment were an integral part of early education in the UK. This practice has now been outlawed in the UK.



## **Kindergarten**

The German expression kindergarten usually refers to the first level of official education , according to the K-12 educational system. Kindergarten is usually administered in an elementary school .

The equivalent in England and Wales is reception . The Australian equivalent of this is the preparatory grade (commonly called 'grade prep' or 'prep'), which is the year before the first grade. In the state of New South Wales , however, it is called kindergarten. At least in Victoria , kindergarten (distinct from grade prep) is a form of, and used interchangeably with, pre-school .

The first kindergarten was opened in 1837 in Bad Blankenburg , Germany by Friedrich Wilhelm August Fröbel .

The first kindergarten in the United States was established by Margarethe (Margaretta) Meyer Schurz (wife of activist/statesman Carl Schurz ), in Watertown, Dodge County, Wisconsin .

Youngsters , usually aged 4-6 attend kindergarten to learn the finer points of meeting friends (and enemies), professional authority (in the form of a teacher ), playtime , naptime , drawing , music , sometimes the basics of reading and writing , and various other activities. For children who previously have spent most of their time at home, kindergarten often serves the purpose of training them to be apart from their parents without anxiety.

The youngster continues to Grade 1 after kindergarten.

The actual word "kindergarten", as one may guess, translates to "children's garden". Many private businesses in the USA name their day-care businesses 'Kindergarten' or 'Kindergarten'. Kindergarten establishment (day-care) in Germany are for pre-school children of all ages and are often run by churches, city or town administrations. Kindergartens (German plural Kindergärten ) in Germany are not a part of the actual school system, such as in the USA.

Kindergartens often last only for half a day (morning or afternoon), though in many locations there are full-day kindergartens.



## Elementary school

The elementary school consists of the first seven years of school, that is, grades 1 through 5 or 6, as well as [kindergarten](#), a preliminary year of school before grade 1 (known in England and Wales as 'Reception'). Originally, however, it was studied after primary school in the 19th century, (some schools that have only the youngest students are called primary schools to this day). Also known as grammar school in the United States it is a major segment of compulsory education. Until the latter third of the 20th century, however, grammar school (or elementary school) was grades 1 through 8. After grammar school, one usually attends high school . (In many districts, grades 5-8 or 5-9 were called " middle school ", or further separated into " intermediate school ", "middle school", and/or " junior high school ".)



## Secondary education

Secondary education , or secondary school , is a period of education which follows directly after [primary education](#) (such as intermediate school or [elementary school](#) ), and which may be followed by tertiary or "post-secondary" education. The purpose of a secondary education can be to prepare for either [higher education](#) or vocational training . The exact boundary between primary and secondary education varies from country to country and even within them, but is generally around the seventh to the tenth year of education, with middle school covering any gaps. Secondary education occurs mainly during the teenage years. Primary and secondary education together are sometimes (in particular, in Canada and the United States ) referred to as " K-12 " education, ( K is for [kindergarten](#) , 12 is for twelfth grade).



## Grammar schools in the United Kingdom

In education in the United Kingdom , a grammar school is a secondary school attended by pupils aged 11 to 18 to which entry is controlled by means of an academically selective process consisting, largely or exclusively, of a written examination . After leaving a grammar school, as with any other secondary school, a student may go into further education at a college or university .

The examination is called the eleven plus . Partly due to the failure to fully implement the tri-partite system prescribed by the 1944 Education Act, the examination came to be seen as delivering a pass/fail result with the academically selected pupils passing and attending grammar schools and the remaining pupils being deemed to have failed and being consigned to the poorly funded schools euphemistically designated Secondary Modern Schools .

This arrangement proved politically unsustainable, and, over the period 1960 to 1975, non-selective ("comprehensive") education was instituted across a substantial majority of

the country. The eleven plus examination had been championed by the educational psychologist Cyril Burt and the uncovering of his fraudulent research played a minor part in accelerating this process.

To understand grammar schools in the UK, some history is needed. After World War II, the government reorganised the secondary schools into two basic types. Secondary moderns were intended for children who would be going into a trade and concentrated on the basics plus practical skills; grammar schools were intended for children who would be going on to [higher education](#) and concentrated on the classics, science, etc. This system lasted until the 1960s, at which point changes in the political climate led to the general acceptance that this was a discriminatory system which was not getting the best out of all children. This was partly because some authorities tended to prioritise their budgets on the grammar schools, damaging the education prospects of children attending secondary moderns.

The decision was taken to switch to a single type of school designed to give every child a complete education. That is why this new type of school is called a comprehensive school. However the timetable of the changeover was left to the local authorities, some of whom were very resistant to the whole idea and thus dragged their feet for as long as possible. The result is that there is now a mixture. Most authorities run a proper comprehensive system, a few run essentially the old system of secondary moderns and grammar schools (except the secondary moderns are now called "comprehensives"). Some run comprehensive schools along side one or two remaining grammar schools.

The Labour government that came to power in 1997 instituted measures that allowed parents to force a local referendum on whether to abolish grammar schools in their area. The form of this referendum depends on whether there is still a full two-tier system running, in which case all parents with children at primary schools in the area are eligible to vote, or whether there are only a few grammar schools in the area, in which case only those parents with children at primaries that regularly send children to the grammar school are eligible. By 2003, only a few referenda had taken place and none of these had delivered the requisite majority for conversion.

The debate over selective education has been widened by other measures introduced by the Labour government, allowing schools to select a portion of their intake by "aptitude" for a specific subject. There are many who think that selection allows children to receive the form of education best suited for their abilities, while "one-size-fits-all" comprehensives fail everybody equally. One of the greatest attacks on the comprehensive system is that it leads, in essence, to selection on the grounds of wealth as the good schools are generally located in areas with expensive housing, so children from poor areas are denied the possibility of attending them. Conversely, there are many who think that the selection of children at 11 divides them into "successes" and "failures" at that age, and is therefore wrong. The current Labour government, from the party that originally championed comprehensive education, appears to favour the first of these groups, and their introduction of local referenda on grammar schools has been attacked



by opponents of selective education as an unworkable system designed to give the semblance of choice while maintaining the status quo.

Private schools generally give the same sort of education as grammar schools, but there are exceptions; Gordonstoun for one. In areas where the local authority provides a comprehensive education – which some parents don't like for various reasons – independent schools are particularly common.



## Higher education

Higher education is education provided by universities and other institutions that award academic degrees, such as university colleges, and liberal arts colleges .

Higher education includes both the teaching and the research activities of universities, and within the realm of teaching, it includes both the undergraduate level (sometimes referred to as tertiary education ) and the graduate (or postgraduate ) level (sometimes referred to as quaternary education). Higher education differs from other forms of post-secondary education such as vocational education . However, most professional education is included within higher education, and many postgraduate qualifications are strongly vocationally or professionally oriented, for example in disciplines such as law and medicine.



## Degrees and Graduation

There is a three-level hierarchy of degrees ( Bachelor , Master , Doctor ) currently used in the United Kingdom.

A graduate student (also, grad student or grad in American English , postgraduate student or postgrad in British English) is an individual who has completed a bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S./B.Sc., or another flavor) and is pursuing further higher education , with the goal of achieving a master's degree (M.A., M.S./M.Sc., M.Ed., etc.) or doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D., D.A., D.Sc., D.M.A., Th.D., etc.) In the United States, graduate education can also refer to those pursuing a post-master's Educational Specialist degree or post-master's Certificate of Advanced Study. The term usually does not refer to one in medical school and only occasionally refers to someone in law school or business school .

## Admission

Admission to do a research degree in the UK typically requires the sponsorship of a professor. Admission to do a master's degree (based on coursework) depends upon having an undergraduate degree, generally in a related subject.

## Life

Postgraduate work at universities in the UK is very intense.

## **Funding**

It is very difficult to obtain funding for postgraduate study in the UK. There are a few scholarships for master's courses, but these are rare and dependent on the course and class of undergraduate degree obtained. Most master's students are self-funded.

Funding is available for some Ph.D. courses. There is more funding available to those in the sciences than in other disciplines



## **Costs**

The costs for a normal education in the United Kingdom are as follows:

- Primary: No Charge
- Secondary: No Charge
- Further (Secondary) Education in either a sixth form or college: No Charge if under 19 in that particular academic year or on a low income.
- Higher/Tertiary Education (University): A tuition fee per year (around £1,000).

Primary and Secondary education can also be charged for, if a fee-paying ([public](#)) school is attended by the child in question.

## **Public schools in the UK**

A public school, in common British usage, is a school which is usually prestigious and historic, which charges fees, does not arbitrarily restrict admissions, and is financed by bodies other than the state, commonly as a private charitable trust. Often but not always they are boarding schools. Confusingly to a non-native English speaker a public school is actually a private school! In British usage, a government-run school (which would be called a 'public school' in other areas, such as the United States ) is called a state school.

Many of the independent schools in the UK do not refer to themselves as public schools . Many choose to use the term independent school. In part this is due to a sense that some 'minor' public schools have many of the social associations and traditions of public schools but without the quality of teaching and extracurricular activities.

The term 'public' (first adopted by Eton) historically refers to the fact that the school was open to the paying public, as opposed to, a religious school that was only open to members of a certain church, and in contrast to private education at home (usually only practical for the very wealthy who could afford tutors).

Public schools played an important role in the development of the Victorian social elite. Under a number of forward-looking headmasters leading public schools developed a curriculum based heavily on classics and physical activity for boys and young men of the upper and upper middle classes. They were schools for the gentlemanly elite of Victorian politics, armed forces and colonial government. Often successful businessmen would send their sons to public school as a mark of participation in the elite (it was Martin Wiener's opposition to this tendency which inspired his 1981 polemic "English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit: 1850-1980", which became a huge influence on the Thatcher government's opposition to old-school gentlemanly Toryism and, by default, a key reason for the recent upsurge of privately-educated pop singers in the UK).

Public schools often relied heavily on the maintenance of discipline by older boys, both to reduce staffing costs and as preparation for military or public service.

While under the best circumstances the Victorian public schools were superb examples of education, the reliance on corporal punishment and the prefect system could also make them awful. The classics-based curriculum was criticised for not providing skills in sciences or engineering.

The public school system influenced the school systems of the British empire to an extent. Recognisably 'public' schools can be found in many Commonwealth countries.

Today most public schools are highly selective on academic grounds, as well as financial grounds (ability to pay high fees) and social grounds (often a family connection to the school is very desirable in admissions).

The [Independent Schools Council](#) (ISC) has a searchable list of independent/public schools in Britain. However, the head teachers of major British independent schools usually belong to the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), as distinct from the Secondary Heads' Association, and it is generally considered that any school that is a member of HMC is entitled to call itself a Public School.



### **Slang peculiar to or originating from public schools**

The following list includes some commonly used slang terms, and some historic slang, used at public schools in the UK:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Specificity</b>
ABROAD	Out of the sick room.	Winchester

BAD EGG	A nasty and unpleasant person.	-
BEARDS!	An exclamation of surprise.	The Leys
BEDDER	A bedmaker and cleaner.	Also used in Cambridge University
BIBBLING	Six strokes of the cane	Winchester
BRUSHING	Flogging.	Christ's Hospital
CARRELL	A booth for private study	St Paul's School
CHEESE	A dandy.	Cambridge
CHINNER	Wide grin	Winchester
CLIFE	To tell tales.	-
COXY	Conceited	-
EXECUTION	Flogging by the Head Master with a birchrod.	Eton
FAG	A junior boy who acts as servant for a sixth-former.	-
GOD	A prefect or sixth former.	Eton
GOOD EGG	A trustworthy or reliable person (later inversion of BAD EGG ).	-
MAJOR	Such as Smith Major, the elder brother.	-
MAXIMUS	Such as Smith Maximus, the eldest brother (of three or more).	-
MINIMUS	Such as Smith Minimus, the youngest brother (of three or more).	-
MINOR	Such as Smith Minor, the younger brother.	-
MUZZ	To read.	Westminster
NEWBIE	New boy; now a general term.	-
PEPPER	To fill in the accents on a Greek exercise.	-
PLEB	A junior boy.	-
QUILL	To flatter.	Winchester
RAG	A misdemeanour, hence:	-
RAG WEEK	where sponsored 'misdemeanours' are common.	Also used at some universities
SAPPY	Severe flogging.	-
SHELL	A boy in the youngest year	Harrow, St. Edward's, Winchester; org. from Westminster.
TITCHING	caning	Christ's Hospital

<http://www.learnenglish.de/culture/educationculture.htm>

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<http://www.euroeducation.net/prof/usa.htm>

## **United States of America**

### STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION SYSTEM

#### **Pre-higher education:**

Duration of compulsory education:

Age of entry: 6

Age of exit: 16

Structure of school system:

*Pre-Primary*

Type of school providing this education: A) Kindergarten B) Nursery Schools C) Preschool programmes; D) Child/day Care Centres

Length of program in years: 2

Age level from: 3 to: 6

Certificate/diploma awarded: Practice varies. Certificates may be given, especially if needed, to prove attendance for entry into Elementary School.

*Primary*

Type of school providing this education: Elementary School (Grades 1-4 on average, but state and local practice may vary).

Length of program in years: 4

Age level from: 6 to: 10

Certificate/diploma awarded: Practice varies. Awards may be given in States/Districts when necessary for transition to Middle School.

*Primary*

Type of school providing this education: Elementary Schools (Grades 1-6 or 7)

Age level from: 6 to: 14

Certificate/diploma awarded: Practice varies. Awards may be given in States/Districts when necessary for transition to Secondary School.

*Middle*

Type of school providing this education: Middle Schools (Grades 4-6, 5-7 or 6-8)

Length of program in years: 3

Age level from: 10 to: 14

Certificate/diploma awarded: Practice varies. Awards may be given in States/Districts where middle school is a recognized level.

*Secondary*

Type of school providing this education: High Schools (Grades 7-12 or 8-12)

Length of program in years: 6

Age level from: 13 to: 18

Certificate/diploma awarded: High School Diploma (Regular/Standard, Vocational, Honor/Regents, College/Academic Preparatory)

*Junior Secondary*

Type of school providing this education: Junior High Schools (Grades 7-8, 7-9 or 8-9)

Length of program in years: 3

Age level from: 13 to: 15

Certificate/diploma awarded: Practice varies. Awards may be given in States/Districts where secondary education is divided into lower and upper divisions.

*Upper Secondary*

Type of school providing this education: High Schools, Senior High Schools (Grades 9-12 or 10-12)

Length of program in years: 4

Age level from: 15 to: 18

**Certificate/diploma awarded:** High School Diploma (Regular/Standard, Vocational, Honor/Regents, College/Academic Preparatory)

### **School education:**

The age of entry to compulsory education in the U.S. varies, according to the state, between 5 and 7 years of age, 6 being the most common. The age at which compulsory schooling ends varies between 16 and 18 years of age, the most common being 16. School education does not end until age 18, or completion of the 12th year of school and those who leave school at the end of compulsory education without earning a secondary (high school) diploma do not receive any certificate or recognition - they are considered to be secondary school drop-outs. Students may graduate a year earlier or late depending on when they entered school. Gifted students may graduate earlier because they skipped grades, and students may graduate later because they repeat grades. School years are referred to as "grades" in the United States. The length of primary education varies from four to seven years, i.e. grades 1-4, 1-7, etc. Each state determines what grade range constitutes primary education, called "elementary education". According to its length, elementary education may be followed (or not) by a number of years of middle school education (generally three years). Secondary education takes place in grades 7-12, depending upon the laws and policies of states and local school districts. There is no national structure, curriculum or governing law; all laws and policies are set and enforced by the 50 state governments and the over 14,000 local school districts. All states and school districts have set the secondary school graduation level as the completion of 12th grade, and the common name for the secondary graduation qualification is the High School Diploma. This diploma name covers a variety of awards for different curricula and standards. There are Honors/Regents, academic/college preparatory, vocational, and general/basic high school diploma tracks. There are a statewide minimum course requirement and other graduation requirements in each State which usually correspond to the general/basic track. Vocational and academic/college preparatory or honors/Regents diplomas usually have additional set curricular requirements and/or standards which aspiring graduates must meet or exceed. In addition, many US secondary school districts and private schools allow students to participate in the Advanced Placement (AP) programme of the College Board. This programme allows qualified students to take college level introductory courses in selected subjects taught by certified faculty. Examinations are offered in each AP subject at the end of an academic year; a score of 3 or higher generally results in universities awarding advanced standing in that subject - exempting the student from distribution requirements. There are currently over 35 AP subjects with more being planned. A growing number of public and private secondary schools also offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) as an optional track; completion of IB requirements usually requires an additional summer or semester of study beyond the 12th year. The contents of an individual student's programme at any grade level or upon obtaining a diploma or degree are contained in the record of studies leading to it and grades (marks) obtained, called a Transcript. Transcripts are official documents authenticated with the seal of the school or institution and signed by the registrar.

### **Higher education:**

Higher education in the U.S. is also called postsecondary education, but the latter term also refers to all formal education beyond secondary school, whether higher education (defined as degree-granting education) or not. Postsecondary education is broadly divided into two different sectors: postsecondary vocational education and training, which is non-degree but can produce some transferable credits under certain circumstances; and higher education, which includes studies undertaken in degree-granting institutions for academic credit. However, the U.S. higher education system is not legally organized into separate university and non-university sub-systems as are some other national systems, but is comprehensive. It is a diverse and autonomous community of publicly and privately supported institutions. Current data indicate that there are 6,479 postsecondary institutions, including 4,182 non-degree institutions. Of the degree-granting higher education institutions, some 1,732 award only the associate degree plus sub-bachelor's certificates and diplomas; 702 award only the bachelor's degree; 1,094 award degrees and certificates beyond the bachelor's degree but not the research doctorate; and 654 institutions award the research doctorate. The United States does not use an official classification or typology for its higher education institutions. While different institutions offer varying levels of degrees, U.S. accreditation policies result in degrees at any given level adhering to certain minimum standards regardless of the institution that grants them. The privately derived but popular Carnegie Classification organizes U.S. institutions according to different schemes. For more information, see:

<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/Classification/> The U.S. higher education system is characterized by accessibility, diversity, and autonomy and is known for both its size and quality. The federal government has no jurisdiction or authority over the recognition of educational institutions, members of the academic professions, programmes or curricula, or degrees or other qualifications. Nearly all U.S. postsecondary institutions are licensed, or chartered, by a state or municipal government to operate under the ownership of either a government (if public) or a private corporation (if independent), and may be for-profit or not-for-profit enterprises. Religious institutions are considered independent, or private. Quality assurance is achieved via the system of voluntary accreditation by specific accrediting agencies that are recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and meet the standards for membership in the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Accreditation is a self-regulating process of quality control engaged in by the U.S. postsecondary education community to ensure minimum standards of academic capability, administrative competence, and to promote mutual recognition of qualifications within the system. Six (6) regional accreditation associations set minimum standards for institutions chartered in the states of their respective jurisdictions. In addition, there are recognized accrediting agencies for specialized institutions and programmes. While all recognized and accredited institutions are licensed or chartered by state governments, states vary greatly in the degree of supervision and quality control that they exercise, and there is relatively limited reciprocity of recognition across state borders. Accreditation by recognized agencies, therefore, remains the primary means of ensuring academic and institutional quality and the mutual acceptance of credits and qualifications across and outside the United States.

### **Academic year:**



Classes from: Sep to: Jun

**Languages of instruction:** English

**Stages of studies:**

Non-university level post-secondary studies (technical/vocational type):

Non-university level:

There is no legal distinction between "university level" and "non-university level" higher education. The level of studies is delineated by the level of qualification offered in a specific programme rather than by type of institution offering it. Educational programmes corresponding to "non-university level technical/vocational post-secondary studies" would include all technical and occupational programmes that lead to a degree, diploma or certificate below the Bachelor's degree. Education at this level would include (1) all institutions that only award qualifications under the Bachelor's degree; (2) programmes leading to awards under the Bachelor's degree offered at institutions that also award higher degrees.

University level studies:

**University level first stage:** Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree, Advanced Certificate, First Professional Degree:

The Associate degree is the first academic or professional degree that can be awarded in U.S. postsecondary education. Holders of this degree may apply to enter higher degree programmes at the Bachelor's level, but are not qualified to apply directly for advanced (graduate) studies programmes. Programmes of study for this degree are usually designed to take 2 years of full-time study, but some take longer to complete. Those who pursue this degree on a part-time basis also take longer than 2 years to complete their studies. The Associate degree may be awarded in the liberal arts and general studies as an academic qualification or it may be awarded in a professional occupational field. Some professional career programmes at the Associate level are terminal vocational programmes that do not lead to further study, while others do so. Associate degree programmes generally fulfil 2 years of the course requirements needed for a Bachelor's degree. Credit for Associate degree studies is usually transferable to Bachelor's degree programmes, especially where transfer agreements have been established between or among institutions. The Bachelor's degree is the second academic degree that can be awarded in U.S. postsecondary education, and is one of two undergraduate (first) degrees that qualify a student to apply to programmes of advanced (graduate) study (the other such degree is the first-professional degree). Programmes of study for this degree are designed to take between 4 and 5 years, depending on the field of study. Part-time students may take longer to complete the

degree requirements. Honours programmes are offered by many institutions that award the Bachelor's degree. These generally require the completion of additional requirements such as preparation of an undergraduate thesis, honours paper or project, advanced coursework, or special examinations. Advanced certificates requiring a year or less of study following (and sometimes accompanying) completion of a Bachelor's are sometimes awarded to signify a concentration in a sub-specialization or completion of a related set of competences. First professional degrees comprise a limited number of second first degrees. Students are only admitted to first professional degree programmes after completing most, or all, of a Bachelor's degree programme in another subject. Thus, first-professional degrees are considered graduate-level degrees for purposes of admissions and student financial assistance. The study content of the first professional degree programmes is undergraduate in nature and the degrees are prerequisites for entry-level access to certain regulated professions. Confusion sometimes arises because several first professional degrees use the term 'doctor' in the title even though they are not advanced research degrees. First professional degrees are awarded in Medicine (MD), Dentistry (DDS/DMD), Veterinary Medicine (DVM), Osteopathic Medicine (DO), Optometry (OD), Paediatrics (DPM), Chiropractic (DC), Pharmacy (D.Pharm), Divinity (M.Div), Rabbinics (MHL/Rav), and Law (JD).

**University level second stage:** Master's Degree, Post-Master's Degree/Certificate, Diploma/Certificate, Degree of Education Specialist:

The Master's degree represents the second stage of higher education and is the first advanced (graduate) degree. U.S. Master's degrees may be taught (without thesis) or research (with thesis) and may be awarded in academic or professional fields. Most Master's degrees are designed to take 2 years of full-time study, although the time may vary depending upon the subject, the preparation achieved by the student at the undergraduate level, the structure of the programme, and whether the degree is pursued on a full- or a part-time basis. Research-based Master's degrees generally require completion of a series of advanced course and seminar requirements, comprehensive examinations, and an independent thesis. Non-research Master's degrees generally require completion of a special project as well as coursework and examinations. Both types of Master's degree also require the satisfaction of special requirements (such as linguistic or quantitative skill) or a combination. U.S. awards that fall between the Master's and the research doctorate may be of several types, but all of them fall within the second stage of U.S. higher education. Examples of awards given at this level include the degree of Education Specialist (E.Sp. or Ed.S.) and Certificates and Diplomas of Advanced Study (C.A.E., D.A.E.).

**University level third stage:** Research Doctorate:

The Research Doctorate represents the third and highest stage of higher education in the United States and may be awarded in academic disciplines and some professional fields of study. This degree is not awarded by examination or coursework only, but requires demonstrated mastery of the chosen subject and the ability to conduct independent, original research. Doctoral programmes require intensive study and

research in at least one subfield and professional level competence in several others. Following a series of research seminars designed to prepare the individual research proposal, come candidate examinations (covering at least two subfields in addition to the field of research focus, one of which must be in a subject outside the doctoral student's own faculty but related to his/her research). If the candidate examinations are passed at a satisfactory standard (excellent or higher), the student is advanced to candidacy for the doctorate and selects a research committee of senior faculty who will approve the dissertation topic, monitor progress, and examine the student when the research is finished. The conduct of research and preparation of the dissertation can take anywhere from one to several years depending on the chosen subject, available research funding, and the location of the research. When the dissertation is finished and approved as a document by the chair of the research committee, that individual convenes the full committee plus any outside faculty and public guests and presides over the candidate's oral defense of the dissertation. An unanimous vote of the research committee and examiners is generally required to award the doctorate. Most doctoral degrees take at least 4 or 5 years of full-time study and research after the award of a Bachelor's degree or at least 2 to 3 years following a Master's degree. The actual time to obtain the degree varies depending upon the subject and the structure of the programme. Research Doctorates are awarded in the academic disciplines and for theoretical research in some professional fields. The most common of such degrees is the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). There are a variety of equivalent degree titles used in some institutions and disciplines.

## Teacher education:

### Training of pre-primary and primary/basic school teachers

Requirements for education and certification (licensure) of early childhood (nursery, kindergarten, preschool) and elementary (primary) teachers are set by state governments which require multiple exams (subject matter, etc.) prior to entering teacher education and again following completion of teacher education but prior to certification. While state regulations vary, there is a growing uniformity inspired in part by the federal No Child Left Behind law's requirements for having a highly qualified teaching staff. The basic requirement is completion of a prescribed programme of studies at the undergraduate (bachelor's) level in order to qualify for entry-level certification, plus satisfactory completion of a supervised practicum and the passing of qualifying examinations. Pre-professional undergraduate studies must be completed at an accredited institution in nearly all states. While the initial certification may be achieved with a bachelor's degree, most states offer higher levels of certification based on experience and additional education, and many teachers at this level already possess, or soon earn, a master's degree. Continuing professional education is required in order to maintain certification.

### Training of secondary school teachers

The basic pre-certification requirements for secondary teachers are the same as for elementary school teachers. A major difference is that secondary school teachers are certified as competent in one or more academic or vocational subjects and spend their careers concentrating on these subjects, whereas elementary school teachers - especially for the lower grades - may be comprehensively certified to teach the full primary course or may specialize, particularly if teaching in the more differentiated upper elementary/middle school grades. All States certify teachers according to subject specializations as well as grade levels/ranges. Special education teachers are trained in most States in specialized programmes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and are also separately certified. Special education teachers are also certified according to specialty, e.g. education of the deaf, education of the visually impaired, etc. as well as the degree of severity of the handicap with which they are trained to work. While the minimum academic requirement is a Bachelor's degree in special education or a related field (such as developmental psychology), most teachers possess a Master's degree and many earn a higher qualification called an Education Specialist degree. Specialized non-instructional personnel must also be certified in most U.S. States; they include school administrators, school counsellors, school health personnel (psychologists, nurses), school librarians, supervisory teachers and curriculum specialists.

### [Training of higher education teachers](#)

State law varies regarding the requirements for faculty in public postsecondary education, but public faculty are not considered civil servants and the responsibility for determining the academic and professional standards and requirements for faculty positions and for recruitment and promotion rest with the individual institution and its faculty, department, or school. State law, even for public institutions, is confined to ensuring that institutions do not discriminate in hiring or violate other employment or labour laws. Requirements that institutions set may vary depending on the level at which the faculty are expected to teach, the subject or field to be taught, whether research is to be conducted, whether a professional licence or qualification is required, and whether the position is full- or part-time and tenure-track. Accredited institutions also follow any faculty standards set by the regional accrediting association to which they belong and any standards set by the association that accredits programmes in a particular field. Higher education faculty are expected to possess the necessary expertise and qualifications to teach and, where applicable, to conduct research and consult in the discipline or professional field of their specialization. The general requirement is either a terminal research degree (PhD or equivalent) in the subject of specialization or, for some professional and clinical faculty, the appropriate professional qualification plus a record of successful practice and applied research.

### [Non-traditional studies: Distance higher education](#)

Distance education is considered to be a vehicle for delivering education to persons whose location, circumstances or work make remote links necessary or convenient. It is not considered to be a separate type of education. Rather, distance education is considered to be a modality of instruction that differs from traditional campus-based

instruction but is no less legitimate. There is rapid growth in educational programmes at all levels delivered via radio, television, satellite downlink stations, videos, computer terminals and other means. Many programmes are offered for credit and lead to Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees; others are designed for leisure studies, personal enrichment or specific work-related education and training. Distance education programmes are accredited by recognized associations and the good programmes benefit from significant recent advances in designing, implementing and monitoring these learning environments and their support tools.

### [Lifelong higher education](#)

Frequently called continuing education. Institutions operate specific continuing education programmes, some very extensive and parallel to regular institutional degree offerings, whilst others are short or specialized programmes. Continuing education may be structured to lead to Certificates, Diplomas or Degrees, or unstructured and used to provide general and leisure study opportunities. Some continuing education is offered through distance learning methods while other programmes are offered at an institution or provided at a branch site. When offered in order to provide further education and training for professionals who already hold basic qualifications, it is usually called continuing professional education. Credit for work completed in such programmes may be recognized and accepted by regular higher education authorities through policies developed by institutions, and it is also recognized and accepted by state licensing authorities and professional associations.

### [Higher education training in industry](#)

This is considered a specific form of continuing professional education and is referred to as employer-sponsored training. Programmes are offered by employers or through contract by postsecondary institutions, professional associations, unions or consulting organizations. Education or training may be provided at the work site or elsewhere. Continuing professional education or training ranges in length and depth from short courses intended to refresh or introduce new skills up to full degree programmes. Credit for work completed in such programmes may be recognized and accepted by regular higher education authorities through policies developed by institutions. A specific form of employer-sponsored training of major interest to many U.S. postsecondary institutions, especially at the sub-Bachelor's degree level, is training received in the U.S. armed forces and how to award credit for it when personnel re-enter civilian life. Detailed guidelines have been jointly developed by U.S. institutions and the armed forces.

### [Other forms of non-formal higher education](#)

Many varieties of education and training opportunities exist that are not formally structured, do not result in recognized awards and are not intended to result in transferable credit or professional recognition. They include courses and programmes provided by libraries, museums, parks and recreation authorities, clubs and others that

are intended for members or the public. Some programmes provided by employers are not intended to result in formal recognition, such as informal seminars and presentations on topics related to work issues and products.