

Online Guide to

# Educational Systems



Around the World—Colombia



**NAFSA**

Association of  
International Educators

Submitted by  
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# Instructions for Using the *Online Guide to Educational Systems Around the World*

Susan Whipple, Editor

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These documents are updates to those in the 1999 publication *A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World* (which was an update to *The Handbook on the Placement of Foreign Graduate Students*, published in 1990 and colloquially known as the "Graduate Handbook.")

**It is important to note that these documents do not replace either of the earlier publications, which should be used for credentials issued prior to 1999, the period those publications cover.**

Readers familiar with the original version of *A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World* will note that these updates use the same format:

1. Each of these publications provides lists of credentials and other data that can be used both for undergraduate and graduate admissions.
2. "Advice for admissions officers" is intentionally not provided. We have attempted to avoid all types of subjective interpretation, relying instead on objective data. Users of these updates should use the information provided in conjunction with other resources to determine their own placement recommendations and possibility of transfer credit. Questions about credentials can be posted on the Admission and Credential Evaluation discussion forum on the Recruitment, Admissions, and Preparation Knowledge Community Web site:  
[http://www.nafsa.org/knowledge\\_community\\_network.sec/recruitment\\_admissions/admissions\\_and\\_credential/forums](http://www.nafsa.org/knowledge_community_network.sec/recruitment_admissions/admissions_and_credential/forums).

Please note that these updates should be supplemented by additional written materials that describe complete foreign educational systems, including data on specific institutions, and by professional training in the theory and practice of credential evaluation. Many of these resources are available from NAFSA, either as printed publications or on-line. The need for institution support for budgetary resources and training for undergraduate and graduate admissions personnel remains important, regardless of the increased availability of resources on the Web.

These publications were compiled by many authors using a standardized template and style. Although minor variations among entries do occur, the basic guidelines are explained as follows:

## Educational Ladder

1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2  
1 - 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |  
A B B

The year or half-year at which a credential is awarded is the point at which the corresponding credential letter is placed. In the example above, credential A is awarded after the 9th year of education. Note that the corresponding letter is placed directly below the number 9.

All *normal* possibilities of the total number of years of education that a credential might require are indicated on the ladder. This occurs for credential B, in which the credential can be awarded after either 12 or 13 total years of education. An explanation is provided in the description of the credential whenever a letter appears on the ladder more than once. There are a few cases when this multiple-listing style was not used; in these cases, there are explanatory comments.

An arrow (→) is used after a credential letter in cases where no maximum length of study for a particular program is specified, or where the study time is open-ended. For example, a doctor of philosophy degree program may require a minimum of three years of enrollment. The corresponding credential letter with an arrow will appear under the minimum number of total years of education required to earn the Ph.D.

## Explanations About Documents

Credentials are divided into two categories: secondary and postsecondary. The decision to include the credential under one or the other category is not a subjective one—a credential is determined to be either secondary or postsecondary according to its designation by the country of origin, regardless of how individual institutions might perceive the level (and recommend transfer credit).

Numerical endnotes, placed directly after the complete list of credentials, are used when a lengthy explanation about a credential is necessary.

## Foreign Terms and Words

Foreign terms are used whenever possible, and are translated literally, in most cases. Literal translations are used to avoid subjectivity. We have attempted to be consistent with translations across languages, though readers may notice some differences between countries because of preferences indicated by the submitters. Credential evaluators and admissions personnel should always rely on official foreign language documents, using translations only as guides.

## Grading Information

Only the most common grading scales used in each country are listed. Evaluators understand that variations in grading are common and that one should always consult the grading information that may be provided on official transcripts. Rather than making grade equivalency statements, the submitter(s) of the update provided information regarding grading practices within the countries.

# COLOMBIA

## YEARS OF EDUCATION

1→6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16		17		18		19		20		21		22		23		24	
								A						B		C		D		D		E		F		G		I									
																					E		F		G		I		I								
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## CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

### Secondary

- A *Bachiller* (Bachelor, High School Graduate), awarded upon completion of five years of secondary education for a total of 11 years of study; the basic requirement for admission to post-secondary education. Curricular tracks include academic, classical arts, commercial, industrial, and social studies.

### Postsecondary

- B *Técnico Profesional Intermedio* (Intermediate Professional Technician): two or two and one-half years of study based on credential **A**
- C *Tecnólogo en \_\_\_\_\_* (Technologist in \_\_\_\_\_): three or three and one-half years of study based on credential **A**
- D *Licenciado* (Licentiate): four to five years based on credential **A**; length could vary depending if admitted based on credential **B** or **C**
- E *Especialista* (Specialist): one year (or one year and one-half) in a field other than medicine based on credential **D**
- F *Doctor en Medicina/Médico* (Physician), *Médico Cirujano* (Surgeon): five to seven years of medical studies based on credential **A**
- G *Especialista* (Specialist) usually in the field of medicine: one year or more (usually an internship) of study based on credential **F**
- H *Magister/Maestría* (Master's degree): usually two years of research with thesis based on credential **D**
- I *Doctor* (doctoral degree): research and dissertation usually four years based on credential **D** or two years based on credential **H**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Not to be confused with the title of *Doctor* awarded prior to 1980-considered comparable to credential **D** (for example: *Doctor en Derecho* or *Doctor en Medicina Veterinaria*).

## GRADING SCALE

### Secondary

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Translation</u>
10.00	<i>Excelente</i>	Excellent
9.0 - 9.9	<i>Sobresaliente</i>	Outstanding
8.0 - 8.9	<i>Bueno</i>	Good
6.0 - 7.9	<i>Aceptable</i>	Sufficient, Average
0.0 - 5.9	<i>Insuficiente</i>	Insufficient, Fail

10 is the highest grade and 6.0 is the lowest passing grade and is sufficient for promotion.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Translation</u>
4.6 - 5.00	<i>Excelente</i>	Excellent
4.0 - 4.50	<i>Bueno</i>	Good
3.0 - 3.99	<i>Aceptable</i>	Sufficient, Average
0.0 - 2.99	<i>Insuficiente</i>	Insufficient, Fail

5.00 is the highest grade and 3.00 is the lowest passing grade and is sufficient for promotion.

### Postsecondary

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Translation</u>
5.00	<i>Excelente</i>	Excellent
4.50 - 4.99	<i>Sobresaliente</i>	Outstanding
3.50 - 4.49	<i>Bueno</i>	Good
3.00 - 3.49	<i>Aceptable</i>	Sufficient, Average
0.00 - 2.99	<i>Insuficiente</i>	Insufficient, Fail

5.0 is the highest grade and 3.0 is the minimum passing grade and is sufficient for promotion.  
3.5 is the minimum passing grade for most graduate programs.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Translation</u>
10.00	<i>Excelente</i>	Excellent
8.50 - 9.99	<i>Sobresaliente</i>	Outstanding
7.50 - 8.49	<i>Bueno</i>	Good
6.00 - 7.49	<i>Aceptable</i>	Sufficient, Average
0.00 - 5.99	<i>Insuficiente</i>	Insufficient, Fail

10 is the highest grade and 6.0 is the lowest passing grade and is sufficient for promotion.

## POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION RECOGNITION BODY

Instituto Colombiano para el Fomento de la Educación Superior (ICFES), Apartado Aéreo 6319, Santafé de Bogotá, D.C., Colombia.

Tel: +91-281-9311, 334-2162, 283-6778

Fax: +91-286-8016, 286-8064

[www.icfes.gov.co](http://www.icfes.gov.co)

## RESOURCES USED AND SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Apartado Aereo 077983, Bogota, Colombia.

Tel: +57-1-222-3311

Telex: 42456 sgmen co, Fax: +57-1-222-4578

<http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1621/channel.html>

Asociación Colombiana de Universidades (ASCUN), Apartado Aereo 012300, Santafé de Bogota, D.C., Colombia.

Tel: +57-1-218-5127

Fax: +57-1-218-5098

<http://www.ascun.org.co/>

Stanley Wellington, Ph.D., *Colombia: A Study of the Educational System of Colombia and a Guide to the Academic Placement of Students from Colombia in Educational Institutions of the United States*, 1984. WES, AACRAO, Washington, D.C.

Fulbright – Colombia: <http://www.fulbright.edu.co/index.php>

UNESCO - World Academic Data Base 98. [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=40286&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=40286&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

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