

Online Guide to

Educational Systems



Around the World—The Gambia



NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

Submitted by Susan Whipple
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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: <http://www.nafsa.org/aceforums>. For information on how to subscribe to the network, please visit www.nafsa.org/networksubscribe.

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 - 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

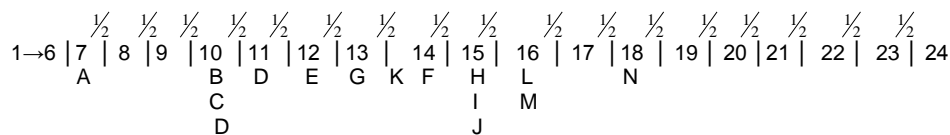
Foreign terms are used whenever possible, and are translated literally, in most cases. Literal translations are used to avoid subjectivity. We have attempted to be consistent with translations across languages, though readers may notice some differences between countries because of preferences indicated 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.

THE GAMBIA

YEARS OF EDUCATION →



CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

Secondary

- A Primary School Leaving Certificate: Awarded after completion of 6 years of primary school; last awarded in 2001.
- B Junior School Leaving Certificate: Awarded after completion of 3 years of junior school; last awarded in 2001.
- C Gambia Basic Education Certificate: External examination awarded after completion of 9 years of lower and upper basic school; first awarded in 2002.
- D General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level)/ GCE O-Levels/ International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE): Completion of a total of 11 years of education.
- E Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSSC): awarded by West African Examinations Council (WAEC). External examination awarded after 3 years of senior secondary school after credential **C**.

Postsecondary

- F Certificate: awarded after completion of 2 years of post-secondary study at Gambia College. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- G International General Certificate of Secondary Education Advanced Level (IGCSE A-Level). Two years of study beyond credential **D**.
- H Gambia Primary Teacher's Certificate: Awarded after completion of 3 years of post-secondary teacher training. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- I Higher Diploma in Architecture: Awarded after completion of 3 years of post-secondary study at Gambia College. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- J Certificate of State Registered Nurse: Awarded after completion of 3 years of post-secondary nursing study at Gambia College. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- K Certificate of State Certified Midwife: Awarded after completion of 18 months of post-secondary midwifery study at Gambia College. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- L Higher National Diploma in Public Health/West African Health Examination Board Diploma: Awarded after completion of 4 years of post-secondary study in public health. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- M Bachelor's Degree: Awarded after completion of 4 years of post-secondary study. Requires credential **E** for admission.
- N Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (M.B. Ch. B.): Awarded after completion of 6 years of post-secondary study in medicine. Requires credential **E** for admission.

GRADING SCALES

Secondary

West African Examinations Council

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Description</u>
A	1	Passing
B	2	Passing
C	3	Passing
D	4	Passing
E	5	Passing
F	6	Failing

Postsecondary

University of the Gambia

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Rating</u>
A+	4.3	
A	4.0	Excellent
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	
B	3.0	Good
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	1.7	
D	1.0	Marginal Pass
F	0.0	Fail or withdrawn after deadline

POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION RECOGNITION BODY

Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education: www.edugambia.gm

RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Print

Foreign Educational Credentials Required, Fifth Edition. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), 2003.

Guide to Higher Education in Africa. International Association of Universities (IAU) and Association of African Universities (AAU), UNESCO, 1999.

On-line

AACRAO's EDGE Electronic Database: <http://aacraoedge.aacrao.org>

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Guide to International Academic Standards for Athletics Eligibility
http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/okla/genrel/auto_pdf/20080905_04_int_acad_standards.pdf.

UK NARIC (International Comparisons database): www.naric.org.uk/

West African Examinations Council: www.waecgambia.org/

West African Examinations Council Results: www.waecgambia.org/results.html

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