

Online Guide to

Educational Systems



Around the World—Ghana



NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

Submitted by Nancy Keteku
July 2009

About NAFSA

NAFSA: Association of International Educators promotes the exchange of students and scholars to and from the United States. The association sets standards of good practice and provides professional education and training that strengthen institutional programs and services related to international education and exchange. NAFSA provides a forum for discussion of issues and a network for sharing information as it seeks to increase awareness of and support for international education in higher education, in government, and in the community.

In 1948, NAFSA pioneered the concept of providing professional services for postsecondary exchange students. Early efforts to enhance living and learning environments for exchange students have blossomed into today's active association of accomplished professionals whose numbers continue to grow worldwide.

Notice of Liability

The information in these documents is distributed on an "As is" basis, without warranty. While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of each document, neither the submitter(s) nor NAFSA shall have any liability to any persons nor entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in any of these documents. Please note that while NAFSA periodically verified the Web site links included in these e-Publications, NAFSA cannot guarantee that every link will be current at the time of download.

Acceptable Use Guidelines

Electronic resources are provided for the benefit of the international education community. However, commercial use, systematic or excessive downloading, or electronic redistribution of these publications are all expressly prohibited.

© 2009 NAFSA: Association of International Educators. All rights reserved.

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

Susan Whipple, Editor

December 2008

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.

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.

GHANA

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	F	G	G	K	L	M	O	Q	Q	Q	Q
						F	E	G	H	H	L	M	N	P				
							F	H	I	I	M	N	O	Q				
							G	I	J	J	N	O	P					
										K		P	Q					

CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

Secondary

- A Basic Education Certificate Examination/BECE: since 1990
- B Middle School Leaving Certificate/MSLC: 1957-1990 & 1992 (resit only)
- C School Certificate/General Certificate of Education - Ordinary Level/GCE-O: 1959-1994 for regular school candidates and through 1999 for private candidates
- D (a) Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination/SSSCE: 1993-2005 for regular school candidates and 1993-2007 for private candidates; represents three years of study requiring credential **A** for admission
- D (b) West African Senior School Certificate Examination/WASSCE: since 2006 for regular school candidates and 2008 for private candidates; represents three years of study requiring credential **A** for admission
- D (c) West African Senior School Certificate Examination/WASSCE: beginning in 2011; represents four years of study requiring credential **A** for admission¹
- E General Certificate of Education – Advanced Level/GCE-A: 1959-1996 for regular school candidates and through 1999 for private candidates; represents two years of study requiring credential **C** for admission

Postsecondary

- F Certificates in a variety of fields awarded by universities and other tertiary institutions; represents one year of study requiring credential **C**, **D**, or **E** for admission. Credit does not transfer into relevant degree programs.
- G Certificates and diplomas in a variety of fields awarded by university and non-university post-secondary or tertiary institutions²; represents two or three years of study requiring credential **C**, **D**, or **E** for admission. Limited credit may transfer into relevant degree programs.
- H Postsecondary Teachers Certificate A; represents three years of study requiring credential **C**, **D**, or **E** for admission. Renamed Diploma in Education 2007
- I State Registered Nurse; represents three years of study requiring credential **C**, **D**, or **E** for admission
- J Higher National Diploma/HND, awarded by polytechnics; represents three years of study requiring credential **D** or **E** for admission. One or two years' credit may transfer into relevant degree programs.
- K Bachelor's Degree: represents three years of study beyond credential **E**, or four years of study beyond credential **D**
- L Postgraduate Diploma in Education: represents one year of study requiring credential **K** for admission and confers certification for secondary school teaching

- M Postgraduate certificates (1 year) and diplomas (2 years) in a variety of fields requiring credential **K** for admission.
- N Master's Degree (Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Business Administration, etc.): one- or two-year program requiring credential **K** for admission
- O Master of Philosophy/M.Phil.: represents two or three years of study requiring credential **K** for admission
- P Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Surgery: represents six years of study beyond credential **E** or six to seven years beyond credential **D**; may also represent three years of study requiring credential **K** in human biology for admission
- Q Doctor of Philosophy: represents two or more years of study requiring credential **N** or **O** for admission

Notes

1. The four-year WASSCE program affects classes entering senior high school in 2007 and 2008, who will graduate in 2011 and 2012 respectively. As at mid-2009 no decision has been taken by government on whether to continue the four-year program or revert to the three-year program. The curriculum for both programs is the same.
2. The distinction between *tertiary* and *postsecondary* applied to institutions enrolling students with A-levels and O-levels respectively; with the advent of the SSCE/WASSCE, there is no longer any distinction, and 'tertiary' is defined by the National Council on Tertiary Education as all institutions requiring successful completion of SSCE/WASSCE for admission and awarding a diploma or degree.

GRADING SCALES

Secondary

SSCE	WASSCE	Interpretation	Points	Frequency
<i>Credit Grades:</i>				
A	A1	Excellent	1	3%
B	B2	Very Good	2	2%
C	B3	Good	3	11%
D	C4, C5, C6	Credit	4	28%
<i>Pass Grades: not acceptable for tertiary admission</i>				
E	D7, E8	Pass – no credit	5	30%
<i>Failing Grade:</i>				
F	F9	FAIL		24%

Entrance requirements for all tertiary education (credentials **H-K**): Credit grades (A-D on SSSCE or A1-C6 on WASSCE) in core English, core Math, Integrated Science and three elective subjects, totaling aggregate points of 6-24, with cutoffs determined by each university department or faculty. Standards are slightly relaxed for credentials **F** and **G**.

GCE A-level:

A	Excellent	1 point
B	Very Good	2
C	Good	3
D	Credit	4

E	Pass	5
S	Subsidiary Pass	
F	Fail	

Entrance requirements for university (credential **K**): aggregate of 3-14 points, with cutoffs determined by each university department or faculty.

University

Both letter (A-F) and percentage grades are used by the various institutions. The grading scale is normally noted on transcripts.

RESOURCES

Internet

National Accreditation Board, www.nab.gov.gh

Includes lists of accredited tertiary institutions and contact information

As of February 2009, NAB accredited:

- 8 Public universities
- 2 Other public tertiary institutions
- 4 Chartered private tertiary institutions
- 45 Private tertiary institutions
- 10 Public regional polytechnics
- 38 Public teacher training colleges
- 1 Private teacher training college
- 14 Public nursing training colleges
- 4 Private nursing training colleges

West Africa Examinations Council, www.ghana.waecdirect.org

For confirmation of all BECE, SSCE and WASSCE examination results since their inception. Students must buy a scratch card and send you the PIN.

Public Universities

University of Ghana: www.ug.edu.gh

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology: www.knust.edu.gh

University of Cape Coast: www.ucc.edu.gh

University of Education, Winneba: www.uew.edu.gh

University for Development Studies: www.uds.edu.gh

University of Mines and Technology: www.umat.edu.gh

Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration: www.gimpa.edu.gh

Ghana Telecom University College: www.gtuc.edu.gh

Institute of Professional Studies: www.ips.edu.gh

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/inhea/pubs_country/Ghana.htm: bibliography of publications on education in Ghana, in Boston College's Center for International Higher Education's *International Network for Higher Education in Africa*.

Profile of Ghana's higher education system can be found at http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/inhea/profiles/Ghana.htm.

<http://www.iie.org/opendoors>: Enrollment data on Ghanaian students in the United States.

www.ghanauiversities.com: Universities of Ghana Overseas Office, needs updating.

<http://www.wes.org/ewenr/00march/practical.htm>. *Education in Ghana*, by Robert Sedgwick, 2000

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~univghana/ghanahed.htm>. *The Universities in Ghana*, revised December 1996, by G.F. Daniel, as originally published in *The Commonwealth Universities Year Book 1997-98; Vol.1; pp 649-656*).

Print

Guide to Higher Education in Africa (first edition 1999, second edition 2002, third edition 2004, fourth edition 2007). Association of African Universities/International Association of Universities/UNESCO. New York/London, Palgrave Macmillan.

African Higher Education: An International Reference Handbook. Damtew Teferra and Philip G. Altbach, editors. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2003.

A History of Education in Northern Ghana, 1907-76. R. Bagulo Bening, Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 1990.

The African Experience with Higher Education, J.F. Ade Ajayi, Lameck K.H. Goma, & G. Ampah Johnson. Accra, Association of African Universities in conjunction with Ohio University Press, Athens OH, 1996.

A Political History of Ghana, 1850-1928. David Kimble, Oxford University Press, 1963.

Unpublished: Available from Author

Education Reform in Ghana: The Senior Secondary School. Nancy Keteku, Accra, 2000-present.

Submitted by
Nancy Keteku
Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Institute of International Education, Accra, Ghana
July 2009