

Online Guide to

Educational Systems



Around the World—Republic of Korea



NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

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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.

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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.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

YEARS OF EDUCATION →

	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
1→6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		A			B			C	F	G		H→		L→				
								D				I						
								E				J						
												K						

CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

Secondary

- A Junior high school diploma: awarded by a general junior high school after three years of study beyond grade six
- B Senior high school diploma: awarded by a general, vocational, or special purpose high school after three years of study beyond grade nine

Postsecondary

- C Associate Degree: awarded by a junior college after two years of vocational study; admission requires credential B
- D Associate Degree: awarded by a junior college after two years of technical study; admission requires credential B
- E Pre-Dental or Pre-Medicine, Pre-Pharmacy basic education: program offered by a university for two years of study
- F Associate Degree in Nursing and some other fields: awarded by a junior college after three years of studying in nursing and some other areas; admission requires credential B
- G Bachelor's degree: awarded by a university after four years of study; admission requires credential **B**
- H Master's degree: awarded by a university after at least two years of study; admission requires credential **G**
- I Bachelor of Science in Dentistry: six-year professional program
- J Bachelor of Science in Medicine: six-year professional program
- K Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy: six-year professional program (6year program in Pharmacy starts in 2009)
- L Doctor of Philosophy degree: awarded upon completion of three or more years of study

GRADING INFORMATION

Secondary

Since 2006, high schools use 9 rank system for grading as a student's level of standing on a scale of 1 to 9, with 1 the highest and 9 the lowest. (Before 2006, Korean high schools used grading system of the Su, Wu, Mi, Yang, Ga system.)

The percentages of students in each level are as follows:

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
%	4	7	12	17	20	17	12	7	4

Postsecondary

Letter Grade Scale of ABCDF, with a GPA scale of 4.3 (Some universities use 4.5 as a maximum GPA.)

The percentage of students allotted to each letter grade varies according to the university.

POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION RECOGNITION BODY

Most colleges and universities are recognized by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology - www.mest.go.kr

Higher education institutions established by special act are recognized by the related ministry. These kinds of institutions include KAIST, the Korea National Police University, Army, Navy, and Air Force Academies, Korean National University of the Arts, the Armed Forces Nursing Academy, the Korean National University of Cultural Heritage and others.

RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Print

Education in Korea 2007-2008. Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development, Republic of Korea, 2007

Feagles, Shelley M., editor. *A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World*. Washington, DC: NAFSA, 1999.

Internet

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology - <http://english.mest.go.kr/>

Study In Korea - www.studyinkorea.go.kr

National Institute for International Education (NIIED) - <http://www.niied.go.kr/>

Korean Educational Development Institute - <http://eng.kedi.re.kr/>

Academic Credit Bank System - <https://www.cb.or.kr/english/>

U.S. Education Center within Fulbright Korea -

http://educationusa.or.kr/xe/?mid=en_index_educationusa

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