

Online Guide to

Educational Systems



Around the World—Romania



NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

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

Susan Whipple, Editor

May 2011

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 |
 ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½
 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.

ROMANIA

YEARS OF EDUCATION →

1	→	6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16		17		18		19		20		21		22		23		24	
										A	C	E	E			J	J	J	J	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
										B	D	F	F				K	M	L	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	
												G	G				L	O	M																				
												H	H				M		O																				
												I					O																						

CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

Secondary Education *Învățământ liceal și profesional* (High school and professional education)

- A *Certificat de Absolvire a Ciclului Inferior al Liceului* (Graduation Certificate of the Lower Secondary Education Cycle) attests one's completion of compulsory education (10 academic years including primary and middle school, as well as the first two years of secondary education).
- B *Certificat de Absolvire a Școlii de Arte și Meserii* (Graduation Certificate of the School of Arts and Trades) is awarded upon completion of courses at a *Școală de Arte și Meserii*, a type of 2-year secondary institution that offers technical vocational training in a number of fields such as agriculture, food industry, building, welding, etc. Upon completion of years 9-10 at such an institution, students are also awarded a *Certificat de Calificare Profesională Nivelul 1* (Vocational Qualification Certificate, Level 1).
- C *Certificat de Absolvire a Anului de Completare* (Supplementary Completion Year Graduation Certificate) is granted upon completion of secondary education, part-time (night classes), which leads to a 13-year long study program instead of 12 years of secondary education. The Ministry of Education includes the supplementary completion year in the professional secondary education category.
- D *Certificat de Calificare Profesională Nivelul 2* (Vocational Qualification Certificate, Level 2) is granted upon completion of 11th grade as completion year at a School of Arts and Trades.
- E *Diplomă de Absolvire a Liceului* (Secondary Education Graduation Diploma) is a document that attests completion of school years 1-12 (or 13 for part-time study).
- F *Diplomă de Bacalaureat* (Baccalaureate Diploma) is awarded upon completion of school years 1-12 or 1-13, as the case may be, after the student has also passed the National Baccalaureate Exam. The diploma details the student's secondary education background (institution they graduated from, educational profile, etc.), as well as their grades in every section of the Baccalaureate exam and their average mark.
- G *Diplomă de Merit* (Merit Diploma) is awarded upon graduation of secondary education with yearly average grades of min. 9.50 (out of 10). To receive a *Diplomă de Merit*, the student must pass all the *probe* (tests) that make up the Baccalaureate exam with a score of 10 out of 10.

- H *Certificat de Calificare Profesională Nivelul 3* (Vocational Qualification Certificate, Level 3) is awarded upon completion of *ciclul superior al liceului* (upper secondary education) at a technical or vocational high school. Students generally need to take an exam to qualify for this certificate.
- I *Certificat de Competențe Profesionale Școală Postliceală sau Maiștri* (Vocational Competencies Certificate – Postsecondary or technical school): Post-secondary non-tertiary education ensures further specialized technical vocational education and certification of a higher vocational qualification, level 3.

The Romanian secondary education system includes:

- **Colegii naționale** (national colleges; singular *colegiu național*): The most prestigious and internationally-connected secondary institutions in Romania. All offer the theoretical pathway and boast a very strong tradition in education that started, for some, as early as 3 centuries ago);
- **Colegii militare** (military colleges; singular *colegiu military*): They are administered by the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice and other such ministries, alongside the Ministry of Education);
- **Colegii economice** (economic colleges; singular *colegiu economic*) and **colegii tehnice** (technical colleges; singular *colegiu tehnic*): Both offer academic programs geared towards technical/service industry training;
- **Licee** (high schools; singular *liceu*): Usually a *liceu*'s name is indicative of its academic focus - *liceu teoretic* (theoretical high school), *liceu economic* (economic high school);
- **Grupuri școlare** (school groups; singular *grup școlar*): Two schools together, generally a high school offering technical or service industry programs and a School of Arts and Trades.

Școala de Arte și Meserii (School of Arts and Trades) is a 2-year institution that provides one with a qualification such as salesman, builder, etc. To continue on to high school, students need to complete an *an de completare* (supplementary completion year) before continuing to 11th and 12th grades at a four-year institution.

Depending on the type of secondary institution they are attending as well as their personal preference, students may choose from three *filiere* (educational tracks), each track featuring several *profiluri* (profiles) that lead to a number of *specializări* (specializations):

1) *Filiera teoretică* (the theoretical track):

- **Profilul umanist** (humanities profile) with the following specializations: *filologie* (philology) and *științe sociale* (social sciences); and
- **Profilul real** (sciences profile) with the *matematică-informatică* (math-computer science) and *științe ale naturii* (earth sciences) specializations;

2) *Filiera tehnologică* (the technology track):

- **Profilul tehnic** (technical profile);
- **Profilul servicii** (services profile); and
- **Profilul resurse naturale și protecția mediului** (natural resources and environment protection profile);

3) *Filiera vocațională* (vocational training):

- **Profilul militar** (military profile) with the *științe sociale* (social sciences) and *matematică-informatică* (math-computer science) specializations;
- **Profilul teologic** (theological profile) with the following specializations: *teologie: teologic ortodox* (theology: orthodox theology), *teologie: patrimoniu cultural* (theology: cultural heritage), and *teologie: teologic catolic, teologic unitarian, teologic reformat, teologic baptist, teologic pentecostal, teologic adventist, teologic musulman* (theology: catholic, unitarian, reformed, baptist, pentecostal, adventist, moslem theology);
- **Profilul artistic** (arts profile) with the following specializations: *arhitectură* (architecture), *arte ambientale și design* (ambient arts and design), *arte plastice și decorative* (graphic and decorative arts), *muzică* (music), *coregrafie* (choreography) and *arta actorului* (performing arts);
- **Profilul pedagogic** (teacher training profile) with the specializations: *învățător-educatoare* (elementary teacher - pre-school teacher), *bibliotecar-documentarist* (librarian - document researcher), *instructor pentru activități extrașcolare* (instructor for extracurricular activities), and *pedagog școlar* (school educator);
- **Profilul sportiv** (sports profile).

Length of Secondary Studies

As a rule, high school studies span four years, out of which only the first two are compulsory (school years 9 and 10). However, graduating high school and passing the National Baccalaureate exam at the end of the secondary education cycle are prerequisites to entering higher education. Students attending high school night classes and students who start their secondary studies at a School of Arts and Trades usually complete their studies in five years.

National High School-leaving Examination: **Bacalaureat (Baccalaureate)**

Students are considered to have passed the Baccalaureate (BAC for short) exam and can receive their Baccalaureate diploma only if they scored a min. of 5 out of 10 in all the tests comprised in the BAC exam and their BAC grade – that is the 2 digit arithmetic mean of the grades received in all the oral and written tests making up the BAC – is no lower than 6.

Irrespective of having passed the Baccalaureate or not, all high school graduates who have successfully passed the language tests - native language plus one of the foreign languages studied in high school, commonly English or French - and the digital competencies tests in the Baccalaureate exam are issued *certificate* (certificates) documenting their proficiency level in these areas, according to European standards. According to the Education Act of 2011, students who take international language exams such as the TOEFL, Cambridge or IELTS for English, DELF/DALF for French, etc. during their secondary education are exempt from sitting the foreign language test(s) in the BAC if they so choose and receive, instead, a grade that is the local equivalent of their international test score.

University Admissions: The Bologna System in Romania

Passing the Baccalaureate exam is a prerequisite for admission to higher education. Students apply to a *facultate* (department/school) within a university. Admission usually depends on one's BAC grade and yearly averages in secondary education, the student's score in a university-organized admissions exam, an interview, and more (usually a mix of these factors).

Romania is a signatory of the Bologna agreement, therefore undergraduate education involves 3-year major-intensive degrees in chosen fields, in the context of a still rigid core curriculum with very few electives compared to U.S. standards and a timidly emerging personalized curriculum.

Postsecondary Education *Învățământ superior*

Note: The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and European Qualifications Framework (EQF) are in use in accredited Romanian universities.

- J *Diplomă de licență* (Bachelor's diploma) is awarded to graduates of the first higher education cycle. With Romania part of the Bologna system, most undergraduate degrees take 3 years to complete, with 4-year programs in law and engineering (180-240 ECTS credits), 5-year programs in pharmaceuticals, and 6-year professional programs in fields such as architecture, medicine, veterinary medicine, and dentistry. Upon graduation, as a rule, students are usually issued an *adeverință* (attestation) valid for 1 year; upon its expiry, graduates receive the Bachelor's Degrees and Diploma supplements issued by the Ministry of Education. Some BA/BSc diplomas in specific fields may be awarded by other ministries than the Ministry of Education: for example police officers' BA/BSc diplomas are issued by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs.
- K *Diplomă de inginer* (Engineer's diploma) is granted to *Politehnică* (Polytechnic) universities graduates.
- L *Diplomă de urbanist/arhitect* (Architect's diploma) is awarded to graduates of the School of Architecture.
- M *Diplomă de master* (Master's diploma) is presented to graduates of the second higher education cycle who have successfully defended their dissertation. Completion of the Bachelor's degree cycle is a prerequisite to entering Master's programs, which usually take 1-2 years to complete (60-120 ECTS transferable credits). Students may choose between:
- *Master profesional* (professional master, geared towards professional specialization);
 - *Master de cercetare* (research master, aimed at perfecting research competencies; is often the equivalent of the 1st year of doctoral studies);
 - *Master didactic* (teaching master).
- Master's degrees can be *masterat de aprofundare* (advanced MA/MSc in the same field as the BA/BSc) or *masterat complementar* (complementary MA/MSc, in a field other than the undergraduate major).
- N *Diplomă de doctor* (Doctor's diploma; Ph.D.) is awarded after completion of the third higher education cycle which consists of a study program at the doctoral school, an independent research or arts project, and the successful defense of one's thesis. Admissions to Ph.D. studies is based on prior completion of a master's program.

Doctoral studies usually take 3 years to finish, but can be extended to 4-5 years with the university's approval. The Ph.D. diploma grants holders the *Dr.* title (for scientific doctoral studies graduates) or *Dr. P.* title (in case of a Ph.D. in a professional field).

- O *Certificat de absolvire a unui curs postuniversitar* (Non-degree graduate certificate) is awarded to Bachelor degree holders who complete a *program postuniversitar de formare și dezvoltare profesională continuă* (graduate continuous specialization and professional development program), which usually takes 1-2 years (2-4 semesters), and pass relevant exams.

Diploma Supplement

As with all Bologna compliant university education systems, Romanian higher education graduates are issued free of charge Diploma supplements in the language of instruction and an international language (usually English or French).

Funding for Education

Secondary education at public schools is free of charge. At tertiary level, any student is eligible - based on merit and/or need - for government-subsidized study programs as follows: one Bachelor's, one Master's, and one Doctoral program.

Life-long Training

Based on market demands and the need for professional reconversion, universities are beginning to offer life-long non-degree training and development programs.

Recent Changes: University Tiers

In line with the 2011 National Education Act, all Romanian universities are currently undergoing an evaluation and classification process overseen by experts of the European University Association <http://www.eua.be/Home.aspx>. By the end of summer 2011, universities are to be divided into three tiers: *universități centrate pe educație* (universities focused on education), which will offer only Bachelor's degrees; *universități de educație și cercetare științifică* (universities focusing on education and scientific research) and *universități de educație și creație artistică* (universities focusing on education and art), offering Bachelor's and Master's programs; and *universități de cercetare avansată și educație* (universities with an advanced research and education focus), which offer Bachelor's, Master's, as well as Ph.D. degrees.

The evaluation process is meant to promote university autonomy -- each institution will develop a mission that resonates with one of the three categories above; based on external and comparative evaluation each institution will be assigned to the relevant category. The study programs offered, access to government funding, as well as the credentials awarded by a university will depend exclusively on the university classification.

As the university classification process is to be finalized in summer 2011, a number of universities have announced that they will open the admissions process to their graduate programs in late summer or even early fall.

A classification of the fields of study is due in 2014.

GRADING SCALE

Romanian students receive grades ranging from 1 to 10, where 10 is the highest mark and 5 the lowest pass. All grades are integers – no half-points are awarded.

Language of Instruction

The official language of instruction is Romanian, but teaching is also provided in the language of linguistic minorities (Hungarian, German, etc.), as well as in international circulation languages such as English and French.

POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION RECOGNITION BODIES

Ministerul Educației, Cercetării, Tineretului și Sportului (Ministry of Education, Research, Youth, and Sport) www.edu.ro. Website available in Romanian only as of June 2011.

Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior (The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) deals with university accreditation issues and includes information on accreditation procedures, legislation, and a list of accredited public and private universities. English version of its official website: <http://www.aracis.ro/nc/en/about-aracis/>.

RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Printed

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

Online

EducationUSA Romania: Fulbright Educational Advising Center, Romanian-U.S. Fulbright Commission, U.S. Educators section <http://www.fulbright.ro/educational-advising-center/48-us-educators.html>

Societatea Academică din România (Romanian Academic Society)

Established as a think tank in 1996, the Romanian Academic Society (SAR) aims to further the ideas of freedom, democracy, and good governance in Eastern Europe. Under Projects/ Education they offer in-depth analyses and challenge the official educational policies, often times acting as watchdog. http://www.sar.org.ro/cat/projects/education_-69-en.html

The European Commission's Executive Agency for Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA): The EURYDICE platform offers detailed information on education systems and policies in Europe http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php#romania

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44_en.htm.

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