

Online Guide to

Educational Systems



Around the World—Singapore



NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

Submitted by Karen Kaylor
December 2008

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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.

SINGAPORE

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		D	H	J	O	Q	P		V					
				C		E	I	K		R	T							
					N	F	L	M		S	U							
						G												

CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

Primary and Secondary

- A** Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE)
- B** Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education, N Level Examination: Four year academic OR technical stream program following credential **A**
- C** Singapore Cambridge General Certificate of Education, O Level Examination: Four year program following credential **A**
- D** Singapore Cambridge General Certificate of Education, A Level Examination: six year program (Integrated Program) following credential A, two year program following credential **C**
- E** International Baccalaureate, IB Diploma: six year program awarded by IB International following credential A, or two year program after credential **C**
- F** High School Diploma, 6 year program awarded by individual school after credential **A**

Postsecondary

- G** National ITE Certificate: two year program awarded by ITE following credential **B**
- H** Higher National ITE Certificate: one year program awarded by ITE following credential **G**
- I** Diploma: three year program awarded by a Polytechnic following credential **C** or **H**
- J** Advanced Diploma: one year program awarded by a Polytechnic following credential **I**
- K** Specialist Diploma: one year part time program awarded by a Polytechnic following credential **I**
- L** Diploma in Education: one year program awarded by National Institute of Education following credential **D** or **I**
- M** Diploma in Physical Education: two year program awarded by National Institute of Education following credential **D** or **I**
- N** Diploma in Arts: one year program awarded by LaSalle College of Arts or Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts following credential **C**
- O** Bachelors Degree: three year program awarded by a university following credential **D**, **E**, **F**, or **I**
- P** Bachelors Degree (Education): four year program awarded by National Institute of Education following credential **L** or **M**
- Q** Bachelors Degree (Honors): one year program awarded by a university following credential **O**
- R** Bachelors Degree (Medicine or Law): five year program awarded by a university following credential **D**, **E**, or **F**

- S** Postgraduate Diploma in Education: one year program awarded by National Institute of Education after credential **O**, **P**, or **Q**
- T** Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Physical Education): two year program awarded by National Institute of Education after credential **O**, **P**, or **Q**
- U** Masters Degree: minimum one year program awarded by a university after credential **Q**
- V** Doctor of Philosophy Degree awarded by a university: minimum two year program after credential **U**

GRADING INFORMATION

General Certificate of Education N Level: Graded on a numerical scale of 1-5 with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest passing grade

General Certificate of Education O Level: Graded on numeric and alphabetic scale

<u>Numeric</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
1-2	A	Highest Passing Grade
3-4	B	Pass
5-6	C	Pass
7	D	Below Pass
8	E	Below Pass
9	Ungraded	Fail

General Certificate of Education A Level: Graded on an alphabetic scale of A to F with A being highest and E being the lowest pass grade. F is not a pass.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Polytechnics: Graded on a alphabetic scale of A to F and P

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
AD or Dist	Distinction
A	Excellent or Very Good
B	Very Good or Credit
C	Good or Good Pass
D	Pass
E	Subsidiary Pass
F	Fail
P	Ungraded Pass

Universities

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
Dist	Distinction
A	Excellent
B	Very Good
C	Good
D	Pass
E	Compensation Pass
F	Fail
P	Ungraded Pass

POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION RECOGNITION BODY

Ministry of Education
1 North Buona Vista Drive
Singapore 138675
Republic of Singapore
Telephone: 65 6872 2220 Fax: 65 6775 5826
www.moe.gov.sg

RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Singapore Government: www.gov.sg
Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization: www.semeo.org

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December 2008