

Online Guide to

# Educational Systems



Around the World—Turkey



**NAFSA**

Association of  
International Educators

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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 Web site:  
[http://www.nafsa.org/knowledge\\_community\\_network.sec/recruitment\\_admissions/admissions\\_and\\_credential/forums](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

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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.

# TURKEY

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## YEARS OF EDUCATION →

	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
1→6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
			A	A1	B		D	E	E	F	J	K		L	L	L			
				C				F	G	H	K								
									H	I									
									I	J									
										K									

## CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

### Secondary

- A *Lise Diploması* (Secondary School Diploma) issued prior to 2008.
- A1 *Lise Diploması* (Secondary School Diploma) 2008 to present. Until 2005, high school lasted three (3) years. The Ministry of Education later extended this by one year. Students who graduated before 2008 studied three (3) years at high school instead of four (4).

### Post Secondary

- B *Meslek Yüksek Okulu Diploması* (Vocational Higher School Diploma): two-year program based on credential **A**
- C *Ön Lisans Derecesi* (Pre-Licentiate Degree: Associate Degree: Pre-Bachelor's Degree): two-year program based on credential **A**. Credentials B and C are considered equal in the Turkish system.
- D *Lisans Diploması* (Licentiate Diploma: Bachelor's Degree) in fields other than Architecture, Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Science: four-year program based on credential **A**, or two-year program based on credential **C**\*
- E *Lisans Diploması* (Licentiate Diploma) in Architecture, Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Science: five year program based on credential **A**\*
- F *Yüksek Lisans Diploması* (Higher Licentiate Diploma: Master Degree): one- or two-year program requiring credential **D** or **E** for admission, or five-year program requiring credential **A** for admission\*
- G *Lisans Diploması* (Licentiate Diploma: MD) in Medicine: six-year program based on credential **A**\*
- H *Bilim Uzmanlığı Diploması* (Science Specialist Diploma): two-year program requiring credential **D** or **E** for admission. Credentials H and F are considered equal in the Turkish system.
- I *Uzmanlık Belgesi* (Specialist Certificate): two-year program in Agriculture, Pharmacy, or Veterinary Science; requires credential **D** or **E** for admission
- J *Güzel Sanatlar Ustalık Belgesi* (Fine Arts Mastery Certificate): three-year program requiring credential **D** for admission; or two-year program beyond credential **G**
- K *Doktora Diploması* (Doctoral Diploma): two-year program requiring credential **F**, **H** or **I** for admission, or three-year program requiring credential **D** or **E** for admission

L *Uzmanlık Belgesi* (Specialist Certificate) in Medicine: six-year program requiring credential **F** for admission; it is considered in Turkey to be the equivalent of credential **K**

\* In professional fields such as Architecture, Dentistry, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Science, graduates might receive an *ünvan* or *ünvanı* (title) instead of, or in addition to, credential **D**, **E**, **F**, or **G**.

### **The Turkish Education System – Length of Study:**

1-3 years pre-school (Optional)

8 years of compulsory basic education: 5 years elementary + 3 years secondary.

4 years of high school education (Some schools might have an additional year of language preparation) **Until 2005, high school lasted 3 years. The Ministry of Education later extended this by one year. Students who graduated before 2008 studied 3 years at high school instead of 4.**

4 years of university education or 2 years of community college. (Some schools have an additional year of language preparation)

Graduate study: Under normal circumstances

- Master's 2 years
- PhD 3-5 years

**Elementary and Secondary Education:** Central and monolithic system run by the Ministry of Education. The students who successfully complete 8 years of education are awarded with a diploma and may then enter a country wide examination to try and go to the most competitive high schools. The ones who do not score high on this examination or do not take it can continue at regular high schools if they so wish.

**High School Education (*lise*):** High school education takes 4 years to complete and graduates are awarded with "*Lise Diploması*" (High School Diploma).

### **Types of High Schools:**

#### "Normal Lise" or "Düz Lise" (Public High Schools):

Any student who successfully completes 8 years of basic education can go onto these schools. Graduates of public high schools, if successful in the nationwide University Entrance Examination (ÖSS), can go onto higher education institutions. Graduates are awarded with the *Lise Diploması*.

#### Meslek Liseleri (Vocational High Schools):

Some of these schools may take an additional year to complete. Graduates can automatically go on to higher vocational schools (*Meslek Yüksek Okulları* - 2 year vocational colleges) in their respective fields of study if they wish. Alternatively, if successful in the university entrance examination, they can go onto 4-year schools in their respective fields.

#### "Anadolu Liseleri" (Anatolian High Schools):

One year of English preparation followed by 3 years of regular high school education, additional hours for English. Math and science lessons at these schools are sometimes taught in English.

As mentioned, the medium of instruction for the science courses in most of these schools used to be English, but there are some Anatolian high schools where this could be German or French instead.

“Süper Lise” (Super High Schools):

The difference between these and normal high schools is that one year of English prep followed by the regular high school education with several more hours in English education. They differ from Anatolian high schools in that the language of instruction for math and science courses is always Turkish and less hours are allotted to English lessons.

Fen Lisesi (Science High Schools):

Special public schools for students who have exceptional aptitude in the sciences. These very competitive high schools train students specifically for higher education in the sciences, technical and medical fields, which most of their graduates indeed go on to. There is also *Anadolu Fen Liseleri* (Anatolian Science High Schools), where the medium of instruction for math and sciences can be in English.

Private High Schools (Özel Liseler):

Most private high schools charge very high tuition and some of them are very competitive. Schools such as Robert College, German High School, Austrian High School, Italian High School, Saint Benoit, and Saint Joseph are of foreign origin. Students need to score very high on private high school entrance examinations.

**Universities (Üniversite) and Higher Vocational Schools (Meslek Yüksek Okulları)**

The university system in Turkey is governed by the Higher Educational Council (YÖK). Turkey has 94 state and 36 private universities (a total of 130 institutions of higher learning), 5 of which are located in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. All institutions are accredited through the Higher Educational Council. Normally, undergraduate education takes 4 years at universities, but some fields such as medicine (6 years), dentistry (5 years), and veterinary science (5 years) take longer. Unlike the American system, Turkish high school graduates go directly into fields of study such as medicine, law, dentistry and so on. No tuition is charged at public schools (*devlet üniversites*); students pay only a small basic fee. Students need to pass a nationwide University Entrance Exam (ÖSS) to enter a university. The medium of instruction at some state universities is English.

*Meslek Yüksek Okulları* (Higher Vocational Schools), offer 2 years of undergraduate study after high school and are very much like the community colleges in the U.S. the only difference is that students cannot easily transfer to 4-year schools as in the US due to fewer places at the 4-year schools. Two year graduates must take the national Vertical Transfer Test (*Dikey Geçiş Sınavı*) and have a high GPA to be able to apply to 4-year schools.

The graduates of 4-year programs are awarded with the *Lisans Diploması* (Bachelor's Degree) and the graduates of 2-year programs are awarded with the *Ön Lisans Diploması* (Associate's, or directly translated as a *Pre-Bachelors* Degree).

Private or Foundation Universities (Özel / Vakıf Üniversiteleri):

The medium of instruction in most private universities is English. Almost all have one year of English preparation for those who are not found to be proficient upon entrance. Private universities charge tuition ranging from 6,000-20,000 USD.

## GRADING INFORMATION

**Grading in High Schools:** The grading system used to be on a scale of 0-10, “10” being the highest. Nowadays, normally a scale of 0-5 is used, “5” being the highest.

<u>Numeric</u>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Translating</u>
5	A	Pekiyi	Very good
4	B	İyi	Good
3	C	Orta	Average
2	D	Geçer	Passing
1	E	Başarısız	Failure

**Grading at universities:** Some universities use a scale of 0-100, 100 being the highest, some use the typical American A-F scale and the GPA is calculated over a scale of 4.00.

## POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION RECOGNITION BODY

YÖK (Higher Education Council) - [www.yok.gov.tr](http://www.yok.gov.tr)

## RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Print

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

Frey, James S. 1992. ECE Presents: *The Educational System of Turkey*, Milwaukee: Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc.

Frey, James S. Turkey: Update on Education 1997-2004.

### Useful Websites

Turkish Ministry of Education - [www.meb.gov.tr](http://www.meb.gov.tr)

YÖK (Higher Education Council) - [www.yok.gov.tr](http://www.yok.gov.tr)

ÖSYM (Student Selection and Placement Center) - [www.osym.gov.tr](http://www.osym.gov.tr)

Turkish Educational Institutions - [http://www.yok.gov.tr/universiteler/uni\\_web.htm](http://www.yok.gov.tr/universiteler/uni_web.htm)

Turkish Fulbright Commission - [www.fulbright.org.tr](http://www.fulbright.org.tr)

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