

AACRAO EDGE USERS GUIDE

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and
Admissions Officers
Electronic Database for Global Education

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AACRAO EDGE USERS GUIDE

Introduction

Welcome to the AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education (EDGE). The information contained in EDGE is meant to provide easy access to up-to-date information on the educational systems of the world. Every effort has been made to make the information comprehensive yet succinct. Links are provided for those who need more detailed information. Step-by-step guidance through the various sections of EDGE is provided in the sections which follow.

We have also added to this manual information which explains how decisions concerning grading scale conversions and placement recommendations are made. The information provided in this manual is meant to maximize the utility of EDGE to you, the user. It is our hope that this information makes your user experience with EDGE an enjoyable and productive one.

Your feedback is always welcome at edge@aacrao.org

The EDGE Homepage

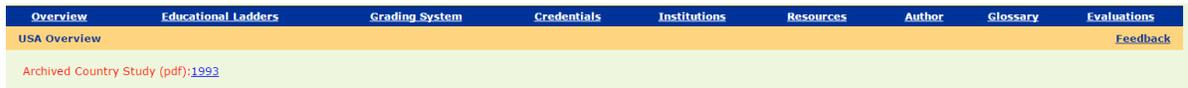


The 231 country profiles contained in EDGE can be accessed in two ways.

The EDGE Homepage contains alphabetical lists of countries divided into six geographical regions: Oceania, Europe, Asia, Africa, North America and South America.

A drop down menu which contains an alphabetical list of all 231 profiles is also provided. Simply click on the name of the country you wish to visit.

How to Navigate a Country Profile



After you have selected a country, information contained in that country profile will appear under eight tabs which are aligned horizontally across the top of the page. The tabs are labelled as follows: Overview, Educational Ladder, Grading Systems, Credentials (which includes placement recommendations and sample credentials), Institutions, Resources, Author, and Glossary. Simply click on the tab heading in which you are interested.

In the following sections you will find a description of the contents of each tab and how to use the information found there.

Overview of the Education System

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education

Search Go Select Country

North America : United States of America : Overview

Overview Educational Ladders Grading System Credentials Institutions Resources Author Glossary Evaluations

USA Overview [Feedback](#)

[Archived Country Study \(pdf\):1993](#)

The United States is composed of 50 states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia. As a result, education in the U.S. is highly decentralized. Each state has the authority to implement its own educational policy as long as that policy does not violate the U.S. constitution or federal law.

Unlike most other countries, the federal government does not have responsibility over educational requirements or recognition or authorization of institutions at any level. There is no national system of education. The federal government's primary responsibility with respect to education is making available federal funding to those institutions that qualify based on accreditation, which is described briefly below and detailed in the Glossary. Education in the United States is extremely diverse and autonomous, with public and private institutions at all levels.

The academic year runs from August to May or from September to June. Education in most states is compulsory until the age of 16, with variations of 17 or 18 in some states. The language of instruction is English.

The U.S. education structure also differs from many others in that there is one secondary leaving credential, the high school diploma, and one major credential representing completion of each of the three stages of higher education: Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral degrees.

The philosophy of liberal arts education is unique to U.S. higher education. It focuses on a well-rounded academic education, developing the student's verbal, written, and reasoning skills. It includes courses in a wide variety of studies, including liberal arts and humanities, languages, social sciences, and physical sciences. Students must complete courses from a wide range of subjects regardless of their major area of study.

Most U.S. colleges and universities assign credit hours or units to each subject, whereby a theoretical course in an academic subject which meets for 3 hours per week, for a 15-16 week semester, is assigned 3 semester hours of credit. Credit for laboratory or performance subjects is assigned as 1 credit for every 2 hours of laboratory or practice time. A full academic load per semester is typically 15 semester credit hours at the undergraduate level and 9-12 semester credit hours at the graduate level. Detailed information concerning the academic year, semester system credits and the quarter system (an alternative to the semester calendar) follows.

Educational Structure

Elementary (Primary) and Secondary Education



Each country profile begins with a map and relative geographic location information. This is followed by a brief history of the country in order to provide context for the presentation of the education system which follows.

A brief overview of the educational system, when used in conjunction with the Educational Ladder, provides a thumbnail sketch of the educational system. From these two sections of EDGE, the user should be able to locate the academic credential in question and place it in its proper chronology in the system.

Educational Ladder



The educational ladder is a graphical representation of the education system. This building block format includes *benchmarks* which represent completion of the following levels of education: primary/elementary school, middle school, secondary school, vocational programs, undergraduate education, postgraduate education, professional programs (such as medicine), doctoral programs and postdoctoral studies. These benchmarks correspond with the Placement Recommendations contained in the [Advice to Admissions Officers](#) section of EDGE.

More than one educational ladder may be provided when a substantial reorganization of the education system of a country has occurred. When this is the case, ladders will be labelled Pre 19xx and Effective19xx. Simply click on the ladder which corresponds to the years of study reflected on the educational document to be evaluated. Educational ladders are attached as *pdf files*. Should you experience difficulty in opening the educational ladder pdfs, be sure your computer *pop up blocker* is disabled.

Grading Systems

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education Search Go

North America : United States of America : Grading System

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USA Grading System

Grading in the U.S. is non-standardized, though there are a few primary scales utilized at all levels of education:

4.0 Scale:

4.0	A	Excellent
3.0	B	Good
2.0	C	Average, Fair
1.0	D	Poor, Minimum Pass
0.0	F	Failure

Percentage Scale:

90-100%	A	Excellent/Superior
80-89%	B	Very Good/Above Average
70-79%	C	Average
60-69%	D	Minimum Pass/Poor
0-59%	F	Failure

This small list includes some of the many variations on the scales listed above:

95-100%	A	4.0
85-95%	B	3.0
75-84%	C	2.0
65-74%	D	1.0

Grading systems for both secondary and tertiary education are provided. Where national standards apply, that scale is provided. Links to Ministry of Education web sites (and those of other ministries, where applicable) are provided if information concerning grade distribution is available. Such information is useful when establishing institutional policies concerning which grades are acceptable for admission and transfer credit. The AACRAO International Education Standards Council (IESC) also uses this and other information in determining U.S. grade equivalencies.

Where grading scales differ from institution to institution in a given country, that information is available under the name of each institution link provided under the Institutions tab of EDGE. The Grading Systems tab may also contain a sampling of these institutional scales where the number of postsecondary institutions in a country is small. If the grading scale on the document you have received differs from that posted in EDGE, we suggest that you do two things: (1) use the grading scale on that document, and (2) forward a copy of the document to AACRAO International Education Services, One Dupont Circle, Washington DC, or attach the information to an e-mail and send it to edge@aacrao.org

Credentials

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education

Search Go Select Country

India : Credential

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Secondary School Certificate / School Leaving Certificate

Credentials in India

Sequence	Credentials	Description
1	Secondary School Certificate / School Leaving Certificate	Awarded after completion of seven or eight years of primary education and two or three years of secondary education and after passing external examinations.
2	All India Secondary School Certificate (AISIC)	Awarded after completion of seven or eight years of primary education and two or three years of secondary education and after passing external examinations.
3	Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE)	Awarded after completion of seven or eight years of primary education and two or three years of secondary education and after passing external examinations.
4	Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC), Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC)	Awarded after completion of two years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent) and after passing external examinations.
5	Senior Secondary Certificate, Pre-University Certificate, Pre-Degree Certificate	Awarded after completion of two years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent) and after passing external examinations.
6	Intermediate Examination	Awarded after completion of two years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent) and after passing external examinations.
7	All India and Delhi Senior School Certificate	Awarded after completion of two years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent) and after passing external examinations.
8	Indian School Certificate Examination	Awarded after completion of two years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent) and after passing external examinations.
9	Diploma in Engineering	Awarded upon completion of three years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent).
10	Diploma in Nursing	Awarded upon completion of three years of study beyond the Secondary School Certificate (or equivalent).

1 2 3 4 5 6 Next

When you click on the **Credential** tab, a chronological list of credentials will appear along with a brief description for each credential. You can either click on the name of the credential to obtain more detailed information, or -- since some credential lists contain several pages -- you may wish to click on the *dropdown menu* labelled **Select a Credential**. A chronological list of *all credentials* will appear. Simply highlight the credential you wish to review and click **Go**.

Each credential contained in EDGE contains the following four sections:

Credential Description: The name of the credential in the local language and an English translation are provided along with the number of years required to earn that credential. If the number of years required to earn the credential in question has changed, the effective date of that change will be provided. And, if the credential was phased out and/or has been replaced by a new credential, that information will also be provided (see Credential Author Notes below).

Credential Advice: This tab includes academic placement recommendations. Benchmark credentials are described in terms of their U.S. counterparts. If the credential in question falls short of a U.S. benchmark, advice concerning grade placement or the amount of transfer credit (where applicable) will be provided. Users should beware of false cognates, e.g., the *bacculaureate* represents completion of secondary school in France, and the *bachiller* or *bachillerato* is awarded upon completion of secondary school in several Latin American countries. Similarly, the bachelor's degree in several Latin America is *titulo de ____*. Most bachelor's degrees in these countries qualify the graduate to practice a profession; thus, the *titilo*

de ingenieur (title of engineer) qualifies one to work as an engineer. EDGE placement recommendations are proposed by country profile authors and reviewed by the AACRAO International Education Standards Council (IESC).

Credential Author Notes: This section allows the author and AACRAO IESC to provide additional information concerning the credential in question. Here is an example of an Author's Note from the EDGE profile on Costa Rica:

Credential Diploma de conclusion de estudios de educacion diversificado or Bachillerato	
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Author Notes:

Admissions officers should require the record of courses as well as the record of examination results. Prior to 1973 Bachiller was the term used to describe the completion of secondary school. Review credentials carefully.

Required for Admission /Leads to: This section places the credential in its chronological sequence by providing the name of the credential required for admission to the program which leads to the credential in question. Once earned, the credential leads to the next level of study and/or employment. Credentials which are terminal in nature lead only to employment. The Required for Admission/Leads to section may be used in conjunction with the educational ladder and to properly place the credential under consideration.

Sample Credentials:

In the upper left hand corner of the Credentials page, sample credentials are attached as pdf files. Should you experience difficulty in opening the sample credential pdfs, be sure your computer pop up blocker is disabled.

We have included as many benchmark credentials as possible, but continue to search for legible copies to include in EDGE. Your assistance as a user would be greatly appreciated. If you have original, verified authentic documents, please send such records to us so that we might add them to the Sample Document image files available under the Credentials tab. (We will of course preserve privacy by removing student identification information.) Scanned documents can be sent to edge@aacrao.org

Older educational credentials: Since we often encounter older educational credentials -- whether it be for college or university

admission, professional licensure. Another value-added feature of EDGE is the inclusion of earlier AACRAO publications from the World Education Series and Project in International Education (PIER) series. These out-of-print resources are invaluable in determining proper placement for those presenting credentials from earlier iterations of the educational system that may not be available even on the internet.

Useful Tip: To select another credential from the same country, it is not necessary to return to the credentials page. Simply click on **Select a Credential** for the drop down menu of all credentials for that country. Highlight the credential you wish to review and click **Go**.

Institutions

ACIRAO Electronic Database for Global Education

Search GO

via : India : Institution

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India Institution [Feedback](#)

Listings of information regarding educational institutions in India are available through the following sites:

List of unapproved institutions http://www.aicte-india.org/downloads/unapproved_institutions_231210.pdf

University Grants Commission

- Home Page - <http://www.ugc.ac.in/>
- Fake University Alerts - <http://www.ugc.ac.in/page/Fake-Universities.aspx>
- State-wise List of Universities as per University Grants Commission's Notification - <http://www.ugc.ac.in/stateuniversity.aspx>
- List of Universities under Section 2(f) and Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 <http://www.ugc.ac.in/oldpdf/alluniversity.pdf>
- List of unapproved "fake" universities <http://www.ugc.ac.in/page/Fake-Universities.aspx>

All India Council for Technical Education

- Home Page - <http://www.aicte.ernet.in/>
- List of NBA Accredited Programmes from January 2009 onward - <http://www.aicte-india.org/downloads/laccreditedprogrammes.pdf#toolbar=0>
- List of Unapproved Institutions - http://www.aicte-india.org/downloads/Alphabetical_cosolidated_list_of_unapproved_institutions-final_16%5B1%5D_07.pdf

India Institution Overview

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in most countries provides comprehensive on-line lists of educational institutions at all levels. Links to these MOE lists are provided and supplemented through other sources. In many countries, specialized institutions are supervised by ministries *other than the Ministry of Education*.

The Ministry of Health, for example, may be responsible for nursing and public health education; the Ministry of Interior may be responsible for military academies and police training; the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for agricultural education; and, the Ministry of Religion (or Religious Affairs) for theological education.

By whatever name, these ministries are responsible for the quality assurance of curricula and standards, if not testing and grading of national examinations, at the secondary level. But, just as in the United States, higher education institutions enjoy more autonomy and often set their own standards.

Resources

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education
Oceania : Australia : Resource

Search GO Select Country

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Australia Resources [Feedback](#)

Online Resources

Australian Government, Australian Education International, Australia Country Education Profile, 2012 (includes educational system information, higher education, school education by state/territory with grading systems, vocational education and training, higher education with grading systems, lists of recognized institutions): <https://aei.gov.au/Services-And-Resources/Services/Country-Education-Profiles/About-CEP/Documents/Australia.pdf>

Australian Qualifications Framework Web site: <http://www.aqf.edu.au/>

Australian Qualifications Framework booklet in pdf: <http://www.aqf.edu.au/Portals/0/Documents/2013%20docs/AQF%202nd%20Edition%20January%202013.pdf>

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, School Education: link to the Education Department in each state and territory:
<http://deewr.gov.au/school-education>

Information on Assessing the Australian 3-Year Ordinary Degree for Graduate Admission [Assessing the Australian 3-Year Ordinary Degree for Graduate Admission \(Power Point Presentation\)](#)

Printed Resources

Aldrich-Langen, Caroline. 1983. *The Educational System of Australia*. AACRAO.

Aldrich-Langen, Caroline. 1990. *The Educational System of Australia; An Update of the 1983 World Education Series Volume; A Special Report*. AACRAO.

Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee. 2001. *University Facts 2001*. AVCC.

Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee. 2002. *Country Education Profiles: Australia*. National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, Australia.

The New Country Index: Making Sense of International Credentials. 2004. (IERF)

International Handbook of Universities. IAU. 19th edition, August 2005

Foreign Educational Credentials Required, 5th Edition. AACRAO

Country Guide – Australia, 2003. AACRAO

A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World, 1999. NAFSA.

Contacts

Department of Education, Science and Training
Head: Julie Bishop, Minister GPO Box 988014-16 Mort Street Canberra, ACT 2601 Australia

Both print and on-line bibliographic resources are provided in each country profile. Every effort has been made to include the most up-to-date resources. The comprehensive resource lists included in EDGE are a reflection of the painstaking research efforts of the dozens of authors, reviewers and editors who worked so diligently on the AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education (EDGE), and the AACRAO International Education Standards Council (IESC) which continues to review and update EDGE country profiles.

Users are encouraged to send questions and suggestions for improvement to edge@aacrao.org

Author

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education

Search Go Select Country

Europe : Poland : Author

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Poland Author [Feedback](#)

Linda Kosene, who passed away in 2009, completed the initial EDGE profile on Poland in the same year. Her warm collegiality and numerous contributions to the field of applied comparative education are sorely missed. Linda was the AACRAO Associate Director of Marketing for AACRAO International Education Services. Linda worked for 20 years in the area of college/university admissions and records. In that capacity, she was responsible for developing policies and procedures for international students and, additionally, serving as the designated service officer. Toward the end of her career, Linda worked to promote a not-for-profit in the field of foreign credential evaluation and spoke frequently on this topic at regional conferences. She also completed two major independent research projects: one in the area of intercultural communications and the other on career counseling for returning adult students and presented her findings at regional conferences. Linda had also worked extensively as a freelance writer in South Florida. She had a Bachelor's Degree in Humanities from Thomas A. Edison State College and a Master's Degree in Counseling from Rowan University, both New Jersey institutions.

Ann M. Koenig is the Southwest Regional Director of Foreign Credential Evaluation Services for AACRAO International Education Services. Her international education career spans almost 18 years, including foreign credential evaluation work in three private foreign credential evaluation services, and various positions in admissions, student academic advising, and student records management in a variety of campus settings in the United States and Germany. She has done in-depth research on education in several countries, and is a co-author of the PIER workshop report on Poland (1992), author of the ECE monograph An Overview of the Educational System of Albania (1993), contributor to the NAFSA publication A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World (1999), and writer for the AACRAO quarterly journal College & University. Ann has given numerous workshop and conference presentations on country educational systems and best practices in international admission and credential evaluation, for AACRAO, NAFSA, EAIE (European Association for International Education) and other US and European organizations. Through her involvement with the Russian and East European Studies Consortium (REESC) at Arizona State University, Ann has been working with the International Relations Office of the University of Prishtina, Kosovo, in developing aspects of its international admissions and student records management systems, and training programs for international relations officers at higher education institutions in the region of southeastern Europe.

This section contains a short biographical sketch of the author(s) responsible for each profile. The date information in the profile was last updated is listed at the bottom of the author section as well as at the bottom of the Overview tab.

Glossary

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education

Search Go Select Country

Sia : China : Glossary

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China Glossary [Feedback](#)

Chinese terms and translations are included in the [PDF File](#).

Benke – 2 to 6 years of undergraduate studies leading to a Bachelors' degree

Middle School –

1. Lower Middle School (other translation: Lower Secondary School, Junior Middle School) = US Junior High School
2. Upper Middle School (other translation: Upper Secondary School, Senior Middle School) = US (Senior) High School

Minban – non-governmental, private education; the fast growing sector of education in China. Minban institutions must charge fees for tuition and are not authorized to award degrees.

National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) – Admission to college/university for undergraduate programs is determined by the applicant's score on the highly competitive National College Entrance Examination administered by the Ministry of Education. The NCEE covers 5 subjects, depending on the applicant's intended major in the university. Applicants must indicate their intended field of study prior to taking the exam. A reform of this national matriculation test is underway, however, offering more freedom to higher education institutions and to students to determine the subjects of the test. Institutions publish the NCEE scores required by a particular department. The scores vary greatly from year to year depending on the difficulty of the test. The exam is held in April.

Zhuanke – (specialized studies); no degree, graduation certificate program lasting two to three years. Similar to the US junior college's AAAS programs.

Where appropriate, a glossary of educational terms is included. Users may be surprised to discover that glossaries for English speaking countries are under development. By defining these unusual educational terms in American English, it is our sincere hope that we no longer be "divided by a common language."

**User Feedback:
Help Keep EDGE Up to Date and User Friendly**

We solicit subscriber participation in the EDGE updating process. The Placement Recommendations found under the Credentials tab require frequent revision due to the dynamic nature of educational systems around the world. Should you discover new information on a country's educational system we ask you to send that information to us at edge@aacrao.org so that we may consider it for inclusion in EDGE.

If you have original, verified authentic documents, please send such records to us so that we might add them to the Sample Document image files available under the Credentials tab. (We will of course preserve privacy by removing student identification information.)

If you discover that a link to resources outside the AACRAO EDGE no longer functions, please let us know at edge@aacrao.org

The EDGE Admin team is responsible for the functioning of the AACRAO EDGE database and the International Education Standards Council (IESC) is responsible for EDGE content. Research on foreign educational systems is on-going and is vetted at regularly scheduled meetings of the IESC. In this volunteer enterprise, we look to subscribers to assist us in keeping EDGE an up-to-date, valuable and user-friendly resource.

Thank you.