AACRAO EDGE USERS GUIDE

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

July 2015
Table of Contents

1) Introduction
2) The EDGE Homepage
3) How to Navigate a Country Profile
4) Overview of the Education System
5) Educational Ladder
6) Grading Systems
7) Credentials
   i) Description
   ii) Advice to Admissions Officers
   iii) Author Notes
   iv) Required for/Leads to
   v) Sample Credentials
8) Institutions
9) Resources
10) Author
11) Glossary
12) User Feedback: Help Keep EDGE Up to Date and User Friendly
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 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

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.
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 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.
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 *baccaulaureate* 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 *titulo*
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th>Diploma de conclusion de estudios de educacion diversificado or Bachillerato</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**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

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.
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

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.
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.