

The education system of

# Hong Kong

described and compared with  
the Dutch system

This document contains information on the education system of Hong Kong. We explain the Dutch equivalent of the most common qualifications from Hong Kong for the purpose of admission to Dutch higher education.

### Disclaimer

We assemble the information for these descriptions of education systems with the greatest care. However, we cannot be held responsible for the consequences of errors or incomplete information in this document.

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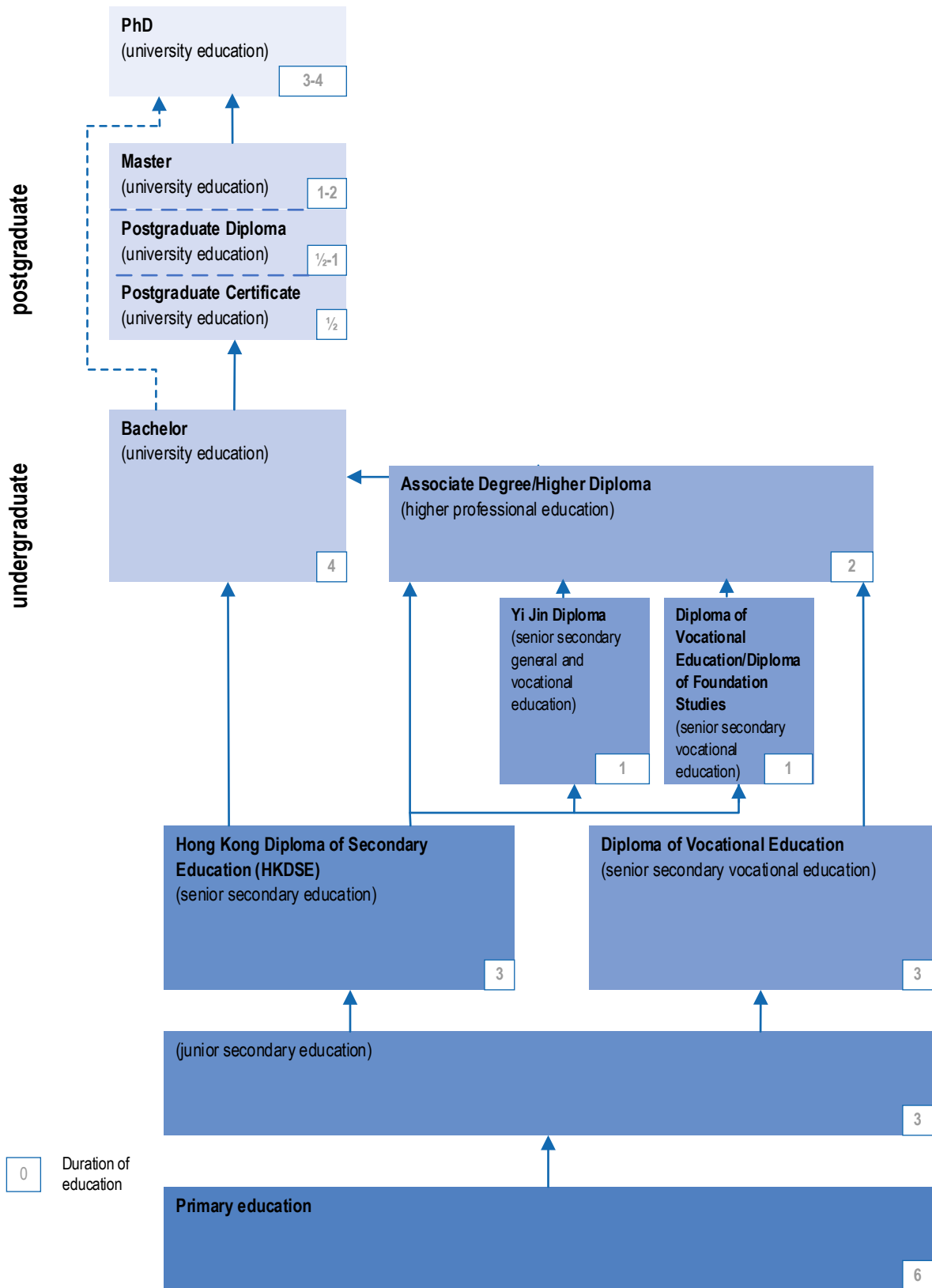


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## ■ Background

- **Country:** Hong Kong, official name: *Hong Kong Special Administrative Region* (HKSAR).
- **History:** From 1842 to 1997, Hong Kong was a colony of the United Kingdom. Since the reunification in July 1997, the Chinese government has applied the policy of "1 country, 2 systems" for Hong Kong. Thanks to the Hong Kong Basic Law, this policy will remain in force for 50 years.
- **Responsible for education:** [Education Bureau \(EDB\)](#).
- **Compulsory education:** 9 years; 6 years of primary education and 3 years of secondary education (junior secondary).
- **Language of instruction:** Chinese (Cantonese), Mandarin Chinese (Putonghua), and English in primary and secondary education; Chinese (Cantonese) and English in higher education.
- **School year:** September to July (secondary education).
- **School examinations:** April/May and October (secondary education).
- **Academic year:** September to July.

■ Flow chart: education system Hong Kong



0 Duration of education

## ■ Evaluation chart

The left-hand column in the table below lists the most common foreign qualifications with corresponding levels in the national qualifications framework. The other columns show the Dutch equivalent along with the corresponding levels in the Dutch and European qualifications frameworks.

| Degree or qualification   | HKQF level | Dutch equivalent and NLQF level                             |    | EQF level |
|---|------------|---|----|-----------|
| Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) in 5 subjects with grades 2-5**, including English and Chinese   | 3          | <a href="#">HAVO</a> diploma                                | 4  | 4         |
| Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) with a mark of 3-5** for the subjects English and Chinese and grades 2-5** for the subjects mathematics, Liberal Studies and 2 electives (6 different subjects in total) | 3          | at least <a href="#">HAVO</a> diploma                       | 4  | 4         |
| Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) in 6 subjects with grades 3-5* of A-E  | 3          | <a href="#">HAVO</a> diploma                                | 4  | 4         |
| Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) in 6 subjects with grades 3-5* of A-C + Hong Kong Advanced Supplementary Level Examinations (HKASLE) with grades A-E   | 3          | at least <a href="#">HAVO</a> diploma                       | 4  | 4         |
| Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) in 6 subjects with grades 3-5* of A-C + Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations (HKALE) with grades A-E  | 3          | <a href="#">VWO</a> diploma                                 | 4+ | 4         |
| Diploma of Vocational Education/ Diploma of Foundation Studies  | 3          | <a href="#">MBO</a> diploma (qualification level 3)         | 3  | 3         |
| Diploma Yi Jin/Yi Jin Diploma   | 3          | <a href="#">HAVO</a> diploma for the general education part | 4  | 4         |

| Degree or qualification                  | HKQF level | Dutch equivalent  | NLQF level | EQF level |
|--|------------|---|------------|-----------|
| Associate Degree/Higher Diploma          | 4          | 2 years of <a href="#">HBO</a>                              | 5          | 5         |
| Bachelor (4 years), obtained after 2012  | 5          | <a href="#">HBO</a> or <a href="#">WO</a> bachelor's degree | 6          | 6         |
| Bachelor (3 years), obtained before 2012 | 5          | <a href="#">HBO</a> or <a href="#">WO</a> bachelor's degree | 6          | 6         |
| Master (1-2 years)                       | 6          | <a href="#">HBO</a> or <a href="#">WO</a> master's degree   | 7          | 7         |
| Master of Philosophy (2 years)           | 6          | <a href="#">WO</a> master's degree                          | 7          | 7         |

NB

- The information provided in the table is a general recommendation from which no rights may be derived.
- HKQF = Hong Kong Qualifications Framework. NLQF = Dutch Qualifications Framework. EQF = European Qualifications Framework.
- The EQF/[NLQF level](#) is not so much a reflection of study load or content; rather, it is an indication of a person's knowledge and skills after having completed a certain programme of study.
- Information about Dutch equivalent qualifications can be found on our website: [education and diplomas the Netherlands](#).
- [The Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market \(SBB\)](#), evaluates statements on foreign qualifications and training at VMBO and MBO level. The evaluation may vary if SBB evaluates the diploma for admission to VET schools or the labour market in the Netherlands.

## ■ Primary and secondary education

### Primary education

Primary school is 6 years (Primary 1-Primary 6), attended by children aged 6-12, and is free at all public schools.

The [school curriculum](#) consists of 3 components:

- 8 Key Learning Areas
- 9 Generic Skills
- Values and Attitudes

### Secondary education

There are various types of schools that provide secondary education:

- government schools;
- subsidised schools;
- Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools (which receive a government subsidy and have more freedom in areas such as curriculum development and admission requirements);
- 'Caput' schools (non-profit private schools that receive a government subsidy);
- private schools (independently funded).

Government schools are free. The subsidised, DSS and Caput schools may charge fees, depending on the total number of pupils and the subsidy they receive.

### General secondary education from 2009 (HKDSE)

A new academic structure for senior secondary and higher education was introduced in 2009: all junior secondary pupils are given the opportunity to study 3 years of senior secondary education. Under this new structure, there is only one public examination leading to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). The HKDSE was administered by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority for the first time in 2012. (For the old system, see the section on [pre-2009 HKCEE, HKASLE and HKALE](#).)

- Duration: 6 years (3 years of junior secondary level + 3 years of senior secondary level).
- Content:
  - main subjects (Chinese, English, Mathematics and Liberal Studies);
  - category A electives ([Senior Secondary subjects](#));
  - category B electives ([Applied Learning subjects](#));
  - category C electives ([Other Language subjects](#)).
- Diploma (after 6 years of school): 香港中學文憑 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE).

The written exams are generally conducted in October/November and April/May depending on the individual subjects. Results of most of the subjects are released in July. The HKDSE certificate is issued in October to students who achieve a *Level-1* grade in at least 1 subject. Most pupils take exams in the 4 main subjects and 2-3 electives from categories A, B or C.

In terms of level, a *Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education* (HKDSE) is comparable to a [HAVO](#) diploma, provided a grade of 2-5\*\* has been achieved in 5 subjects, including English and Chinese.

In terms of level, a *Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education* (HKDSE) is comparable to at least a [HAVO](#) diploma if a grade of 3-5\*\* has been achieved in English and Chinese, and 2-5\*\* in mathematics, Liberal Studies and 2 electives (6 different subjects in total).

#### **Pre-2009 general secondary education (HKCEE, HKASLE and HKALE)**

- Duration: 7 years (5 years of junior secondary level + 2 years of senior secondary level).
  - Content: core subjects and electives; after 5 years the 香港中學會考 [Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination](#) (HKCEE) was held.  
NB: the final HKCEE examinations were held in 2011.
- Diploma: Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE).

In terms of level, a *Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination* (HKCEE) is comparable to a [HAVO](#) diploma, provided grades of 3-5\* or A-E have been obtained in 6 subjects.

The HKCEE granted access to senior secondary school:

- 1-year 香港高級補充程度會考 Hong Kong Advanced Supplementary Level Examinations (HKASLE);
- 2-year 香港高級程度會考 Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations (HKALE);  
NB: The final HKALE examinations were held in 2013.



In terms of level, a *Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination* (HKCEE) in 6 subjects with marks from 3-5\* or A-E plus the *Hong Kong Advanced Supplementary Level Examination* (HKASLE) with a grade from A-E is comparable to at least a [HAVO](#) diploma.

In terms of level, a *Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination* (HKCEE) in 6 subjects with marks from 3-5\* or A-E plus the *Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination* (HKALE) with a mark from A-E is comparable to a [VWO](#) diploma.

### **Secondary vocational education**

After at least 3 years of secondary education, students may decide to continue on to vocational education at one of the member institution of the Vocational Training Council (VTC).

VTC offers the following full-time programmes for secondary school leavers:

- Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE); or
- Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE)/Diploma of Foundation Studies (DFS).

#### **Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE)**

- Duration: 3 years.
  - Content: vocationally-oriented education.
  - Admission requirement: at least 3 years of secondary education (junior secondary).
- Diploma: 職專文憑 Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE).

#### **Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE)/Diploma of Foundation Studies (DFS)**

- Duration: 1 year.
  - Content: vocationally-oriented education.
  - Admission requirement: 6 years of secondary education.
- Diploma: 職專文憑 Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE)/基礎課程文憑 Diploma of Foundation Studies (DFS).

In terms of level, a *Diploma of Vocational Education* or a *Diploma of Foundation Studies* following a 1-year programme is comparable to an [MBO](#) diploma (qualification level 3).

**Diploma Yi Jin (from 2016)/Yi Jin Diploma (from 2012/2013)**

- Duration: 1 year (full-time) or 2 years (part-time).
- Content: general and vocationally-oriented education.
- Admission requirement: complete 6 years of secondary education, or be at least 21 years of age.
- Diploma: 毅進文憑 Diploma Yi Jin (DYJ), formerly known as Yi Jin Diploma/ 毅進計劃 Project Yi Jin.

In terms of level, the [Diploma Yi Jin \(DYJ\)](#) is considered equivalent to an HKDSE ([HKQF 3](#)) with 5 subjects and a Level-2 score. These 5 subjects include English Language, and Chinese Language.

The DYJ programme is run by the following self-financing institutions:

- Hong Kong Institute of Technology
- Lingnan Institute of Further Education
- The Open University of Hong Kong, Li Ka Shing Institute of Professional and Continuing Education
- School of Continuing Education, Hong Kong Baptist University
- Hong Kong College of Technology
- Caritas Institute of Community Education
- School of Business and Information Systems, Vocational Training Council

In terms of level, a Diploma Yi Jin is comparable to a [HAVO](#) diploma for the general education part.

## ■ Higher education

Hong Kong has a unitary education system. This means that, unlike the Netherlands, there are no separate institutions for higher professional education.

There are 21 higher education institutions that issue degrees in Hong Kong:

- 8 self-accrediting universities funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC);
- 1 self-accrediting independently-funded university;
- 1 government-funded institution;
- 11 independently-funded institutions.

Higher education is divided into 2 levels:

- [Sub Degree Level](#)
- [Degree Level](#)

The **Sub Degree Level** consists of Higher Diploma and Associate Degree programmes, most of which take 2 years and are professionally-oriented. These programmes provide access with advanced standing to bachelor's programmes (including top-up programmes) and access to the labour market.

The **Degree Level** consists of 3 stages, each of which conclude with an academic degree: bachelor, master and doctor (PhD).

## ■ Admission to higher education

### **Post-2009**

Generally, students' results from their HKDSE exam are used to determine admission to higher education.

### **Sub Degree Level**

Minimum admission requirement for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma programmes:

- At least Level 2 in 5 subjects, including English and Chinese.

### **Degree Level**

Minimum admission requirements for a 4-year bachelor's programme at institutions funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC):

- at least *Level 3* in the main subjects of Chinese Language and English Language, and;
- at least *Level 2* in the main subjects of mathematics and *Liberal Studies*;
- Institutions also set prerequisites for the 2 or 3 electives.

The government-funded Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) and the independently-funded institutions set the same general entrance requirements for main subjects as the UGC-funded institutions. The elective requirement is a score of Level 2 in 1 elective.

NB Separate admission requirements apply to Chinese for international students.

### **JUPAS**

Students apply for Bachelor Degree/Sub-Degree programmes via the Joint University Programmes Admissions System (JUPAS). This is the main higher-education application route for students with HKDSE results.

Students can use JUPAS to apply for:

- full-time bachelor's degree programmes offered by the 8 UGC-funded [institutions](#);
- independently-funded full-time bachelor's degree programmes offered by the [Open University of Hong Kong \(OUHK\)](#);
- [Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors \(SSSDP\)](#) full-time bachelor's degree programmes.

The other route (for those with diplomas other than HKDSE) is via direct application to the institutions themselves.

### **Pre-2009**

Prior to 2009, students were admitted to higher education based on their HKCEE/HKASLE/HKALE results.

Minimum admission requirements were:

- at least a Level 2/Grade E in at least 5-7 subjects (including 2 language subjects) in the HKCEE and;
- at least a Grade E in Chinese Language and Culture and Use of English in the HKASLE and;
- at least 2 HKALE subjects or;
- 1 subject in HKALE and 2 subjects in HKASLE;
- any additional programme-specific requirements.

## ■ Higher education: Sub Degree Level

Sub Degree Level consists of Higher Diploma and Associate Degree programmes.

### **Associate Degree/Higher Diploma (post-2012)**

- Duration: 2 years.
- Content: a general component and a professional component; more details are described in the [Updated Revised Common Descriptors for Associate](#)

[Degree and Higher Diploma Programmes under the New Academic Structure \(Version as at February 2017\)](#).

- Admission: HKDSE or a Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE) or Diploma of Foundation Studies (DFS).
- Diploma: 副學士學位 Associate Degree, 高級文憑 Higher Diploma.

In terms of level, an *Associate Degree* or *Higher Diploma* following a 2-year programme is comparable to 2 years of higher professional education ([HBO](#)).

Sub Degree Level programmes are provided by both publicly-funded and independently-funded institutions. The range of available programmes has grown considerably due to promotion and investments by the Hong Kong government.

Associate Degree/Higher Diploma-holders are eligible to continue on to bachelor's and top-up bachelor's programmes.

All Sub Degree Level programmes are registered in [JUPAS](#) and in the [Information Portal for Accredited Post-Secondary Programmes](#) (iPASS).

#### **Associate Degree (pre-2012)**

- Duration: 2 or 3 years.
- Content: a mainly general curriculum with some professionally-oriented components.
- Admission to the 2-year programme:
  - 1 subject in the HKALE or equivalent number of subjects in the HKASLE, plus 5 subjects in the HKCEE (including English and Chinese) or 3 subjects in the HKCEE plus at least Level 2 in English and Chinese or;
  - a completed pre-Associate-Degree programme.
- Admission to the 3-year programme:
  - 5 subjects in the HKCEE (including English and Chinese) or;
  - 3 subjects in the HKCEE plus at least Level 2 in English and Chinese.
- Diploma: 副學士學位 Associate Degree.

#### **Higher Diploma (pre-2012)**

- Duration: 2-4 years.
- Content: mainly professionally-oriented.
- Admission to 2 and 3-year programmes: 5 subjects in the HKCEE and/or HKASLE and/or HKALE.
- Admission to the 4-year programme: 5 subjects in the HKCEE.
- Diploma: 高級文憑 Higher Diploma.

## ■ Higher education: Degree Level

There are 3 stages to the Degree Level:

- bachelor
- master
- doctor (PhD)

### **Bachelor (post-2012)**

The introduction of the new academic structure in 2009 reduced the duration of secondary education by 1 year. As a result, bachelor's programmes from 2012 onwards take 4 years instead of 3. Some universities offer teacher education programmes and double-degree programmes lasting 5 years. Programmes in medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine are 6 years. Pharmacy graduates must complete a 1-year internship after graduation before being permitted to practise as pharmacists.

- Duration: 4 years (in exceptional cases 5-6 years).
- Content: the curriculum may include a general component (common core), specialist subjects and an internship and/or final thesis.
- Admission: HKDSE.
- Diploma: 學士學位 Bachelor's degree.

In terms of level, a *Bachelor's degree* following a 4-year programme is comparable to an [HBO](#) or [WO](#) bachelor's degree, depending on the content and nature of the programme.

### **Bachelor (pre-2012)**

- Duration: 3 years.
- Content: the curriculum may include general subjects, minor subjects/electives, specialist subjects, plus an internship and/or final thesis/project.
- Admission: HKCEE and/or HKASLE and/or HKALE.
- Diploma: 學士學位 Bachelor's degree.

In terms of level, a *Bachelor's degree* following a 3-year programme is comparable to an [HBO](#) or [WO](#) bachelor's degree, depending on the content and nature of the programme.

**Postgraduate Certificate**

- Duration: 6-8 or 8-10 months (full-time). NB These programmes are often only offered part-time.
- Content: specialist subjects (core courses) at master's level, plus electives.
- Admission: bachelor's degree.
- Diploma: 深造證書 Postgraduate Certificate.

**Postgraduate Diploma**

- Duration: 6 months-1 year (full-time). NB These programmes are often only offered part-time.
- Content: specialist subjects (core courses) at master's level, plus electives.
- Admission: bachelor's degree.
- Diploma: 深造文憑 Postgraduate Diploma.

**Master**

- Duration: 1-2 years.
- Content: specialist subjects, electives and with or without a final thesis/project.
- Admission: bachelor's degree.
- Diploma: 碩士學位 Master's degree.

In terms of level, a *Master's degree* is comparable to an [HBO](#) or [WO](#) master's degree, depending on the content and nature of the programme.

**Master of Philosophy**

- Duration: 2 years.
- Content: research-oriented curriculum that includes a final thesis.
- Admission: relevant bachelor's degree with first or second-class honours.
- Diploma: 哲學碩士學位 Master of Philosophy.

In terms of level, a *Master of Philosophy* following a 2-year programme is comparable to a [WO](#) master's degree.

**PhD programmes**

- Duration: 3-4 years.
- Content: research-oriented curriculum, dissertation.
- Admission: master's degree including thesis. First-class honours in a bachelor's degree also grants admission to a PhD, however the institution will set additional requirements.
- Diploma: 博士學位 Doctoral Degree.

## ■ Assessment systems

### Secondary education from 2009

Since 2009, the assessments in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) have been divided into 3 categories:

- category A
- category B
- category C

| Category A   | Category B  | Category C  |
|--|---|---|
| <a href="#">HKEAA</a> carries out the assessment.  | HKEAA does not carry out the assessment, but does monitor the quality of the assessment by schools.   | The assessment is carried out by <a href="#">Cambridge Assessment International Education (Cambridge International)</a> . |
| Unclassified (U)<br>Level 1<br>Level 2<br>Level 3<br>Level 4<br>Level 5<br>Level 5*<br>Level 5**<br><br>Level 1 to Level 5**, of which Level 1 is the lowest score and Level 5** is the highest. | Unattained<br>Attained<br>Attained with Distinction<br><br>From 2018:<br><br>Unattained<br>Attained<br>Attained with Distinction (I)<br>Attained with Distinction (II)              | A<br>B<br>C<br>D<br>E<br>Ungraded<br><br>Score A is the highest score. Lower than the score E is indicated with Ungraded. |
|  | The level of Attained with Distinction (I) is equated with Level 3 of Category A.<br><br>The level of Attained with Distinction (II) is equated to Level 4 or higher of Category A. |   |



## Secondary education till 2009

### HKCEE

| Year      | Assessment  |
|-----------|---|
| 1974-1984 | A(1) B(2) C(3) D(4) E(5) F(6) G(7) H(8)<br>A(1) is the highest achievable score.  |
| 1985-1990 | A(1) B(2) C(3) D(4) E(5) F(6)<br>Scores lower than the score F were indicated with unclassified.  |
| 1991-2001 | A(01) B(03) C(05) D(07) E(09) F(11)<br>A(02) B(04) C(06) D(08) E(10) F(12)<br>Each of the scores A-F has 2 sub scores.  |
| 2002-2006 | A(a) B(b) C(c) D(d) E(e) F(f)   |
| From 2007 | A(a) B(b) C(c) D(d) E(e) F(f)<br>The courses Chinese language and English language were assessed with 5 levels, Levels 1 to 5. Level 5 is the highest score and Level 1 is the lowest. Results lower than Level 1 were indicated as unclassified (UNCL). Level 5 candidates with the best results received the symbol * behind their score. |

### HKALE

| Year      | Assessment  |
|-----------|---|
| 1980      | A(1) B(2) C(3) D(4) E(5) F(6) G(7) H(8)<br>A(1) is the highest achievable score.  |
| 1981-1984 | A(01) B(04) C(07) D(10) E(13) F(16) G(19) H(22)<br>A(02) B(05) C(08) D(11) E(14) F(17) G(20) H(23)<br>A(03) B(06) C(09) D(12) E(15) F(18) G(21) H(24)<br>Each of the scores A-H has 3 sub scores. |
| 1985-1991 | A(01) B(04) C(07) D(10), E(13) F(16)<br>A(02) B(05) C(08) D(11) E(14) F(17)<br>A(03) B(06) C(09) D(12) E(15) F(18)<br>Scores lower than the score F were indicated with unclassified.             |
| 1992-2001 | A(01) B(03) C(05) D(07) E(09) F(11)<br>A(02) B(04) C(06) D(08) E(10) F(12)<br>Each of the scores A-F has 2 sub scores.  |
| From 2002 | A(a) B(b) C(c) D(d) E(e) F(f)   |

### Higher education

| Grade | Standard      | Grade Point                     |
|-------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| A+    | Excellent     | 4.3                             |
| A     |               | 4.0                             |
| A-    |               | 3.7                             |
| B+    | Good          | 3.3                             |
| B     |               | 3.0                             |
| B-    |               | 2.7                             |
| C+    | Satisfactory  | 2.3                             |
| C     |               | 2.0                             |
| C-    |               | 1.7                             |
| D+    | Pass          | 1.3                             |
| D     |               | 1.0                             |
| F     | Fail          | 0.0                             |
| P     | Ungraded pass | Not included in GPA calculation |
| DI    | Distinction   | Not included in GPA calculation |

## Qualifications framework

In May 2008, HKSAR government launched its own Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF), containing 7 levels.

| QF Level | Diploma/Degree  |                                  |                                 |                             |                  |                               |
|----------|-----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 7        | PhD (博士)        |                                  |                                 |                             |                  |                               |
| 6        | Master (碩士)     | Post-graduate Diploma (深造文憑)     | Professional Diploma (專業文憑)     | Advanced Diploma (高等文憑)     | Diploma (文憑)     | Certificate (證書)              |
|          |                 | Post-graduate Certificate (深造證書) | Professional Certificate (專業證書) | Advanced Certificate (高等證書) |                  |                               |
|          |                 |                                  |                                 |                             |                  |                               |
| 5        | Bachelor (學士)   |                                  | Professional Diploma (專業文憑)     | Advanced Diploma (高等文憑)     | Diploma (文憑)     | Certificate (證書)              |
|          |                 |                                  | Professional Certificate (專業證書) | Advanced Certificate (高等證書) |                  |                               |
|          |                 |                                  |                                 |                             |                  |                               |
| 4        | Associate (副學士) | Higher Diploma (高級文憑)            | Professional Diploma (專業文憑)     | Advanced Diploma (高等文憑)     | Diploma (文憑)     | Certificate (證書)              |
|          |                 | Higher Certificate (高級證書)        | Professional Certificate (專業證書) | Advanced Certificate (高等證書) |                  |                               |
|          |                 |                                  |                                 |                             |                  |                               |
| 3        |                 |                                  |                                 | Diploma (文憑)                | Certificate (證書) |                               |
| 2        |                 |                                  |                                 |                             | Certificate (證書) | Foundation Certificate (基礎證書) |
| 1        |                 |                                  |                                 |                             | Certificate (證書) | Foundation Certificate (基礎證書) |

For more information, please refer to the [framework qualifications](#).

In 2016, the Education Bureau (EDB) of the HKSAR government and the European Commission (EC) published [the results of a comparative study between the HKQF and the EQF](#).

The table below provides an overview of the 2 qualifications frameworks:

| HKQF                   | EQF     |
|------------------------|---------|
| Level 7                | Level 8 |
| Level 6                | Level 7 |
| Level 5                | Level 6 |
| Level 4                | Level 5 |
| Level 3                | Level 4 |
| Level 2                | Level 3 |
| Level 1                | Level 2 |
| No comparison possible | Level 1 |

HKCEE, HKASLE, HKALE, and HKDSE make reference to the HKQF, but they are not listed in the HKQF per se.

## ■ Accreditation and quality assurance

### Qualifications Register

Concurrently with the introduction of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework in 2008, the HKSAR government launched a qualifications database called the [Qualifications Register \(QR\)](#). It is an online database, containing information on the various qualifications, associated programmes and institutions.

The qualifications listed in the QR are quality-assured and recognised under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework. It is, however, not mandatory for institutions to register their qualifications in the QR.

### Accreditation Authority

According to the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Cap. 592), the [Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications \(HKCAAVQ\)](#) is specified as the Accreditation Authority and the QR Authority. It is tasked with the responsibility of assuring the quality of qualifications recognised under the HKQF and the administration of the QR. The Ordinance enables HKCAAVQ to assess academic and vocational and professional programmes conducted by non-self-accrediting institutions.

### Self-accrediting universities

Self-accrediting universities monitor the quality of their own programmes.

The self-accrediting universities are:

- The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- City University of Hong Kong

- Hong Kong Baptist University
- The Education University of Hong Kong
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Lingnan University
- The Open University of Hong Kong
- The University of Hong Kong

The [QR](#) lists the accredited programmes (HKQF 1-HKQF 7).

In addition to the locally accredited programmes (offered by independently-financed education institutions), the website of the [Information Portal for Accredited Post-secondary Programmes \(iPass\)](#) also lists the programmes not included in [JUPAS](#) (HKQF 1-HKQF 5).

## ■ Checking documents

### Secondary education

Required for a complete file in secondary education:

- [Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education \(HKDSE\)](#); or
- Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) **and** Hong Kong Advanced Supplementary Level Examinations (HKASLE) or Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations (HKALE).

Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) issues these documents as standard with an English translation.

### Higher education

Required for a complete file in higher education:

- a diploma and the corresponding transcript in Chinese;
- an English translation of both documents.

In some cases the institution only issues an English version of the documents.

### Credential evaluation

Nuffic evaluates qualifications according to the principles of the [Lisbon Recognition Convention](#) (1997). A practical implementation of these standards can be found in the European [EAR manual](#).

## ■ Overview higher education institutions

Hong Kong has [21 degree-providing higher education institutions](#).

Institutions funded by the *University Grants Committee* (UGC):

- City University of Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Baptist University

## Education system Hong Kong

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- Lingnan University
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- The Education University of Hong Kong
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- The University of Hong Kong

Publicly funded institutions:

- Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Independently-funded institutions:

- Caritas Institute of Higher Education
- Centennial College
- Chu Hai College of Higher Education
- Gratia Christian College
- The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
- HKCT Institute of Higher Education
- Hong Kong Nang Yan College of Higher Education
- Hong Kong Shue Yan University
- Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) of the VTC
- Open University of Hong Kong
- Tung Wah College
- Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

## ■ Useful links

- [Education Bureau \(EDB\)](#) of The Government of the HKSAR.
- [Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications \(HKCAAVQ\)](#).
- [Hong Kong Qualifications Framework \(HKQF\)](#), including the [comparability study of the HKQF and EQF](#).
- [Hong Kong Qualifications Register \(HKQR\)](#).
- [Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority \(HKEAA\)](#), including the (international) [recognition of HKDSE](#).
- [Joint University Programmes Admissions System \(JUPAS\)](#).
- [Information about the Diploma Yi Jin](#).
- [Vocational Training Council \(VTC\)](#).
- [Information Portal for Accredited Post-secondary Programmes \(iPass\)](#).
- [Concourse for Self-financing Post-secondary Education \(CSPE\)](#).
- [Committee on Home School Co-operation \(CHSC\)](#).
- [Census and Statistics Department](#) of The Government of the HKSAR.
- Information about education in Hong Kong on the [Study in HK website](#) (by the Education Bureau).
- [Fact sheet on education](#), published by the HKSAR Government.

## ■ Glossary

- **Duration:** The official length of the full-time programme (not part-time) without study delay.
- **Graduate programme:** A higher education programme after completion of a bachelor's degree. See also the description in the Nuffic Glossary: [graduate](#).
- **Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC):** The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region, was drafted in 1997 by the Council of Europe and Unesco to facilitate and promote fair recognition among Parties of the Convention. Read more on the [website of the Council of Europe](#).
- **Undergraduate programme:** a programme for an associate degree or bachelor degree. See also the description in the online Nuffic Glossary: [undergraduate](#).