

Internal vs. External Credential Evaluations... Which is best for your Institution?

Florida Association of International Education

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Presenters

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Session Objectives:

- 1. Determine whether internal or external credential evaluation will best serve your institution and your international student population.*
- 2. Learn which credential evaluation resources are necessary and best practices for international admissions processing.*



Benchmarking

- What type of institutions are represented in the room today?
 - Community College, 4-Year Public University, 4-Year Private University, Technical/Vocational College, K-12, Private Organization?
- What different areas of International Education are represented in the room today?
 - International Enrollment Management, Study Abroad, International Student Services/Advising, Mixed Service?
- How long have you been working in the field of International Education?
 - 1-3 Years/ 3-5 Years/ 5-7 Years/ 7+ Years?



What are Foreign Credential Evaluations?

- Acknowledgement and Comparison of education completed in one country to another.
- May be used for Furthering Education, Gain Employment/Licensure, Immigration, etc.
- Formats vary by purpose.
- Contains crucial information pertaining to the academic credential, including institutional history, accreditation, and credit/grade conversions.
- Performed by Educational Institutions, Recognized Agencies, or Governments.



History of Foreign Credential Evaluations

- Pre WWII: Primarily English Language Study & Study Abroad
- Post WWII: Major Destruction of Educational Systems in Europe and Asia
- Programs established to promote scholarly exchange including Fulbright.
- Cold War Era: European Colonies in Africa and Asia gained independence.
- Overall increase of in-bound foreign students led to organizations such as NAFSA, AACRAO International, TAICEP, and other specialized credential evaluation association to be created.



Recognition and Evaluation Agencies

- The U.S. Department of Education does not regulate the process of Foreign Credential Evaluation.
- Two Organizations:
 - NACES: National Association of Credential Evaluation Services
 - AICE : Association of International Credential Evaluators
- 29 Total Recognized Evaluation Companies around the U.S.
- Other countries also have practices for Foreign Credential Evaluations.



Future of Foreign Credential Evaluations

- Blockchain Technology is on the rise!
- Digital ledger of data that becomes incorruptible.
- Caribbean Examinations Council
 - Piloting Digital Certificates as of 2018
- World Education Services
 - Piloting Digital Badges as of 2018
- University of Basel & Business and Technology University in Tbilisi
- Challenges: Institutional Policy and Current Infrastructure
- Stay up-to-date and alert!



In-House Evaluations

Benefits

- Greater control over grading scales & credit conversion.
- No additional cost to students.
- Potential for greater consistency.
- Ability to recognize trends and patterns.
- More holistic review possible.

vs.

Challenges

- Need for dedicated staff (not an entry level position).
- Additional cost to the university.
- Time-consuming depending on number of applicants.
- Equivalencies can be challenged by students.
- Staying up to date with changes to credentials and grading scales.



External Evaluations

Benefits

- Experts completing each evaluation.
- No additional university staff needed.
- Agencies may be more likely to recognize fraud.
- Students may challenge the evaluation with the agency.

vs.

Challenges

- Agencies may use different standards, scales, credit conversions.
- Potential for high cost to students.
- Not all evaluations are accompanied by copy of credential.
- Some do not include literal translations.
- Evaluations are meant to be advisory in nature for the receiving institution.



USF Practices & Procedures Secondary

- Require native language document and certified English translation to perform secondary school GPA evaluation.
 - Unofficial accepted for initial decision, but official required if student enrolls.
- External evaluation not required or used for admissions purposes.
- High School GPA evaluated based on native scale and then converted to comparable U.S. GPA.
- We only include academic subject areas in the GPA calculation.
- In-house GPA converter has requirements for INTO USF language program and direct entry admission (comparable to 2.50 and 3.00).



International Students GPA Converter

Load Previous Evaluations:

Country: 1 Bonus Points - Job Aid

Native GPA:

Total Credits:

USF GPA:

Pathway Entry Requirements:

Direct Entry Requirements:

Calculate Grades

	Credits	Native	AP/DE/Hnrs/IB	Total Score
▶	1	5		5.00
	1	5		5.00
	1	5		5.00
	1	4		4.00
	1	4		4.00
	1	3		3.00
	1	5		5.00
*	0			

Application Information

Program:
Name & ID#:

Evaluation Information

Evaluator:
Date Completed:

Academic Credential Information

Country:
Documents Submitted:
Final Transcript? (Y/N):
HS Completion Equivalency? (Y/N):
GPA Weighted? (Y/N):
Credential Name (if completed):
Duration of Study:

Outstanding Documents

Comments

Resources

Save **Create PDF** **Exit**
Clear All

	USF GPA	Native GPA
▶	4	5
	4	5
	3	4
	2.5	3.5
	2	3



USF Practices & Procedures Postsecondary

- Require official postsecondary documents for all transfer admission evaluation.
 - Unofficial not accepted for transfer processing, even for initial decision.
- External evaluations are accepted as a means of authentication and guide for more complex evaluations.
 - External evaluations are considered incomplete if not accompanied with a verified copy of the native transcript.
- Convert credit hours and grades for individual countries based on in-house library of resources.
 - Default to AACRAO-Edge for guidance.



Recommended Resources

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- AACRAO Edge
- NAFSA Country Guides
- ECE Connection Advantage
 - TAICEP

Free

- NCAA International Standards
- ECE Connection (everything but Advantage)
 - WES Country Resources
 - IERF Vault
 - WHED



AACRAO Edge

- AACRAO's Electronic Database for Global Education includes profiles for most countries as well as archived Country Study guides for historical data.

The screenshot shows the AACRAO Edge website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, CONTACT/FAQ, LOGOUT, MY ACCOUNT, and USER GUIDE. Below this is a search bar with a 'Go' button and a 'Select Country' dropdown menu. A legend indicates that green text means 'Coming Soon' and red text means 'Archived Country Study Available'. The 'North America' tab is selected, displaying a list of countries and territories with red asterisks indicating archived studies. The list includes:

- Canada: Ontario*
- Canada: Prince Edward Island*
- Canada: Quebec*
- Canada: Saskatchewan*
- Canada: Yukon*
- Cayman Islands
- Costa Rica*
- Cuba*
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic*
- El Salvador*
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guatemala*
- Haiti*
- Honduras*
- Jamaica*
- Martinique
- Mexico*
- Montserrat
- Netherlands Antilles
- Nicaragua*
- Panama*
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Pierre and Miquelon
- Saint Vincent and The Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago*
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- U.S. Territories and Minor Outlying Islands
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- United States of America*

OVERVIEW EDUCATIONAL LADDER GRADING SYSTEM CREDENTIALS INSTITUTIONS RESOURCES AUTHOR

North America / Jamaica / Jamaica Overview

Archived Country Study (pdf): 1979

OVERVIEW

At fifty-two miles wide and 140 miles long, Jamaica is the largest English-speaking Caribbean island. Between 1655 and 1962 Jamaica was a British colony, and it is still a part of the British Commonwealth. English is the language of instruction for the two and one-half million people that inhabit the island, and all written communication is completed in English. However, a dialect called *patois* is commonly used throughout the island when speaking, and a dictionary has been written to help define this language.



Education

Prior to its independence in 1962, the Jamaican education system grew without any specific plan; church schools formed the core of the educational system. Education was primarily for the elite who could afford the cost. For many years after independence the British education system continued to be the dominant force throughout the island, and the Cambridge and London education centers continued to monitor the progress of students through the administration of the general certificate of education (GCE) at the ordinary (O) and advanced (A) levels. The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) was established in 1972 to place the responsibility of secondary education in the hands of the people of the Caribbean. The CXC is responsible for the development and awarding of the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), which took the place of the GCE O level.



AACRAO Edge continued...

- Grading System tab includes numerous secondary and postsecondary scales.
- Credentials tab lists name of credential, equivalent in the U.S., placement recommendations, and some sample documents.
- Institutions tab lists tertiary institutions, provides links to recognition bodies, some provide information on unauthorized institutions.

Brazil General Education Grading Scales

General Education Grading Scale		
Indigenous Grade Points	Indigenous Grade Percentage	Suggested U.S. Equivalence
9.0 — 10.0	90 — 100%	A
7.0 — 8.9	70 — 89%	B
5.0 — 6.9	50 — 69%	C
0.0 — 4.9	0 — 49%	F

Alternate Grading Scale I		
Indigenous Grade Points	Indigenous Grade Percentage	Suggested U.S. Equivalence
9.0 — 10.0	90 — 100%	A
8.0 — 8.9	80 — 89%	B+
7.0 — 7.9	70 — 79%	B
6.0 — 6.9	60 — 69%	C+
5.0 — 5.9	50 — 59%	C
0.0 — 4.9	0 — 49%	F

Diploma/Certificado de Ensino Fundamental (formerly, 1º Grau) (Certificate of Elementary Education) ▾

Credentials in Brazil		
Sequence	Credentials	Description
1	Diploma/Certificado de Ensino Fundamental (formerly, 1º Grau) (Certificate of Elementary Education)	<i>[Certificate of Elementary Education]</i> . Completion of fundamental education (grades 1 to 8).
2	Diploma/Certificado de Ensino Médio (formerly, 2º Grau) (Certificate of Secondary Education)	<i>[Certificate of Secondary Education]</i> . Awarded following 3 years of secondary education.
3	Diploma/Certificado de Técnico de Nível Médio (formerly, 2º Grau) (Certificate of Secondary Technical Education)	<i>[Certificate of Secondary Technical Education]</i> . Awarded upon completion of 3 or 4 years of secondary level vocational education, depending on the program.
4	Diploma/Certificado de Professor (grades 1 to 4) (Teacher Certificate)	<i>[Teacher Certificate]</i> . Awarded upon completion of three years of secondary level education.
5	Diploma de Professor de Educação Infantil e Séries Iniciais do Ensino Fundamental (Teacher Diploma in Early Childhood Education)	<i>[Teacher Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Initial Grades of Fundamental Education (1 to 4)]</i> . Awarded following 3 years of secondary education.



NAFSA Credential Guides

- NAFSA Guides to Educational Systems Around the World are available with NAFSA membership.
- Years of Education show at what point a student should earn each credential and number of years of study.
- Guides include Credentials or Documentation list of secondary and postsecondary documents issued in each country.
- Grading Scale explanation provided but does not always list a suggested U.S. equivalent.
- Postsecondary Institution Recognition Body.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



YEARS OF EDUCATION

1-6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			A		D	C	E	G	G	H	H	H	H	L	L	L	L	L
			B		D	E	F	G		I	I	I	I					
										J	J	K	K					
													L					

CREDENTIALS OR DOCUMENTATION

Secondary - 基础教育 (Basic Education)

- A 初中毕业证书 (Junior Middle [School] Graduation Certificate)¹: awarded upon completion of junior (初中 or lower) middle school and represents completion of compulsory education (nine years).
- B 技术初中毕业证书 (Technical Junior Middle [School] Graduation Certificate): awarded upon completion of technical junior middle school and represents completion of compulsory education (nine years).
- C 高中毕业证书 (Senior Middle [School] Graduation Certificate): awarded upon completion of senior (高中 or upper) middle school (three years).
- D 毕业证书 (Graduation Certificate) from secondary vocational schools: awarded upon completion of vocational/technical senior middle school program at 职业高级中学/职高 (Vocational Senior Middle Schools) or 技术工人学校/技校



TAICEP

- The Association for International Credential Evaluation Professionals
- Free lists of Available Online Resources include Multi-Country Databases, Country Resources, Regional Resources.
- Membership needed to access Glossary of Acronyms and Terms, Verification Sources for Educational Documents, Best Practices, Webinars, Past Conference Presentations, Newsletter, etc.

A screenshot of the TAICEP website. The top left features the TAICEP logo and tagline: "The Association for International Credential Evaluation Professionals®". A blue navigation bar contains the following menu items: ABOUT, MEMBERSHIP, RESOURCES (highlighted), PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATE PROGRAM, and SPONSORSHIP. A dropdown menu is open under RESOURCES, listing: Newsletter, Glossary of Acronyms and Terms, Available Online Resources, Recommended Publications, Best Practices: Electronic Transcripts and Verification Portals, Verification Sources for Educational Documents, Past Conference Presentations, and Member Benefit Program. Below the navigation bar, a breadcrumb trail reads "YOU ARE AT: Home » Resources". The main content area is titled "RESOURCES" and contains introductory text: "This section is dedicated to providing the essential working tools for knowledge and growth within the profession. The intent is to offer a to determining academic and professional credential comparability programs, degrees, and documents have been added. Exploring mobility efforts to promote global acceptance." At the bottom, a note states: "The compilation of resources is managed by the Resources for Members Committee. To add, edit, or update these resources, please contact the committee chair, Christopher Adams at adamschr@iu.edu."



NCAA Guide to International Academic Standards

- Issued annually to provide specific criteria as a guide in reviewing initial eligibility for student athletes, includes ~180 countries, and is free to access.
- Lists Acceptable Forms of Proof of HS Graduation and Not Acceptable Forms (not equivalent to HS completion in the U.S.).
- Grading Scales provided for secondary education including recommended U.S. equivalents.



NCAA Eligibility Center

Colombia

Background:

Academic Calendar	February-December
What is year nine called?	Year 9 of 11, Noveno Grado
Where is year nine typically located?	Final year of middle school
Native Language(s)	Spanish
Graduation Timeline	
5 + 4 + 2 = 11	11 years total: five years primary school, four years middle school and two years secondary school

Acceptable Forms of Proof of High School Graduation:

1. Bachillerato/Bachiller [Secondary School Diploma]

Expected Timeline of Completion	11 years (three years or six semesters from the initial start of year nine)
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2. Titulo de Maestro/Maestro Superior/Normalista Superior [Title/Diploma of Teacher/Advanced Teacher/Advanced Educator]

Expected Timeline of Completion	11 years (three years or six semesters from the initial start of year nine)
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NOT Acceptable Forms of Proof of High School Graduation:

1. Certificado de Aptitud Profesional [Certificate of Professional Aptitude]
2. Certificado de Equivalencia del Grado de Bachiller [Certificate of Equivalence to the Bachiller Diploma]
3. Diploma de Experto [Diploma of Expert] from a secondary-level commercial, industrial or technical school
4. Certificado de Conclusion del Ciclo Basico [Certificate of Completion of Lower Secondary School]

Crediting Policies:

If course credits are indicated on the transcript, the following units provided on the document will be awarded credit as follows:

Units of Credit	U.S. Equivalent Credit Per Year
4+	1
3	0.75

Units of Credit	U.S. Equivalent Credit Per Year
2	0.5
1	0.25

Grading Scales:

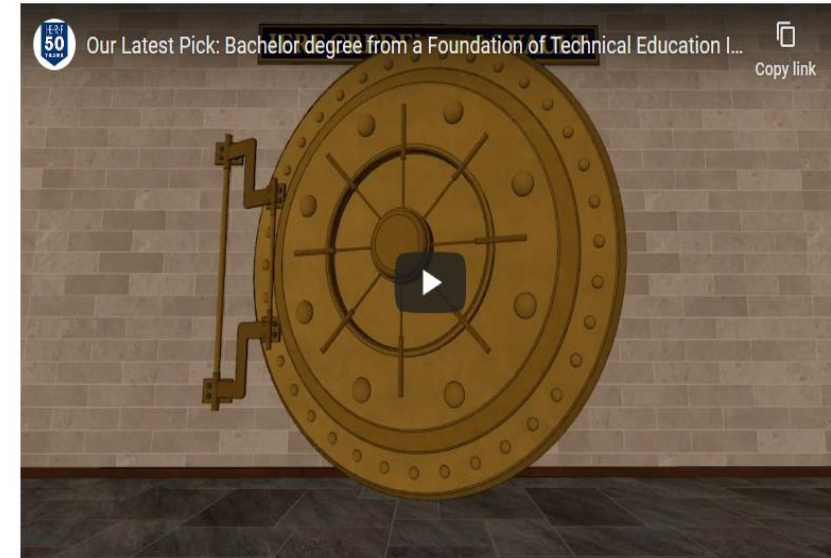
Grade	Translation	U.S. Grade Equivalent	Quality Points
Excelente	Excellent	A	4
Bueno/Sobresaliente	Outstanding	B	3
Aceptable	Acceptable	C	2
Deficiente	Deficient	F	0



International Education Research Foundation (IERF) Vault

- Country Index Volume I and II have similar content to AACRAO, cost \$125 and \$150
- Free publications
 - Index of Secondary Credentials
 - Index of Educational Terms
 - Index of Academic Calendars & Dates
 - Index of Languages
 - A Guide to International Academic Records
- Presentations and Articles
- Credentials Video Library provide very brief overview of specific credentials.

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World Education Services

- WES Profile for each country includes quick facts, document requirements, detailed grading scale with U.S. equivalent, and educational ladder.
- Details on credentials for different levels of education are also provided.



GRADING SCALE & WES CONVERSION

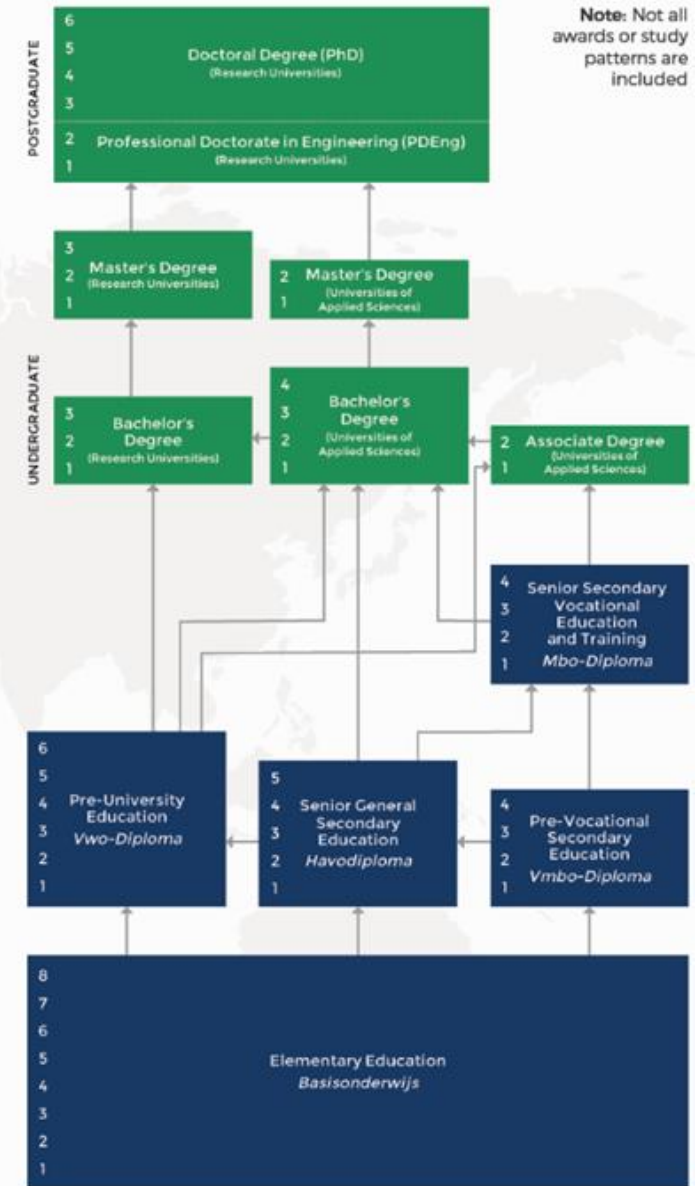
The Grading Scale of the Netherlands		
Grade	Descriptor	WES Conversion
10	Excellent	A
9	Very Good	A
8	Good	A
7	Very Satisfactory	B
6	Satisfactory	C
5	Almost satisfactory	C (5.5 or higher) F (below 5.5)
4	Unsatisfactory	F
3	Very Unsatisfactory	F
2	Poor	F
1	Very Poor	F

WES DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

Required Documents	
Secondary Education	
Graduation Certificate (Diploma HAVO, Diploma VMO, Diploma VMBO etc.)	- sent directly by the institution attended
Higher Education	
Degree Certificate (Bachelor, Master, <i>Getuigschrift Hoger Beroepsonderwijs, Doctoraalexamen</i>)	- submitted by the applicant
Diploma Supplement (or academic transcript for incomplete programs)	- sent directly by the institution
For completed doctoral programs, a letter confirming degree conferral - sent directly by the institution	

Note: WES requires that applicants submit precise English translations of all documents not issued in English. For more information on WES documentation requirements, please visit wes.org.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included

Source: NUFFIC



World Higher Education Database (WHED)

- Database providing authoritative information on higher education systems, credentials and institutions worldwide.
- Breakdown of types of HEIs and credentials issued by country.
- Researching specific institutions: history, academic year, admission requirement, languages, accrediting agency, academic departments and degrees awarded.
- Collaboration with UNESCO.

Address	Street: University Post Office City: Cape Coast Tel.: +233(332) 132440 Fax: +233(332) 132484 WWW: http://www.ucc.edu.gh
Institution Funding	Public
History	Founded 1962 as University College of Cape Coast, acquired present status and title 1971.
Academic Year	October to July (October-February; March-July)
Admission Requirements	General Certificate of Education/advanced level or recognized foreign equivalent, or senior secondary school certificate and entrance examination
Tuition Fees	National: Foreign Students, 600-1,500 per semester (USD)
Language(s)	English
Accrediting Agency	National Accreditation Board
Student Body	co-ed



You checked all the resources and still not sure what to do?

Post a question or search on a **message board** to get a second opinion!

- AACRAO International Activities
 - lists.aacrao.org/mailman/listinfo/internationalactivities
- ECE Connection
 - Free and easy to search message board.
 - Presentations & Reference Guides.
 - Educational Diagrams, list of credentials, samples, and grading scales.
 - Additional cost for Connection Advantage subscription.
- NAFSA
 - Access available with NAFSA membership.



What if my institution isn't willing to pay for any resources?

- Download every free PDF from IERF Vault.
- Download NCAA Guide to International Academic Standards document.
- Sign up for ECE Connection to access free materials and message board.
- Access WES Country Resources for free grading scales and educational ladders.
- Check library for IERF Country Index Volumes I & II.
- Find someone at your institution with NAFSA membership and download NAFSA Country Guides.



Practical Advice to Get Started

- Evaluators must understand how to calculate a domestic GPA first.
- Determine grading scales you will use and/or which resource will be your default for countries where you receive the most applications.
- Weighted scales (IB, AS/A levels, CAPE) may go as high as 5.0 out of 4.0.
- Some scales might use +/- but not all.
- When evaluating transfer credits a year = a year.
- Not all countries have a D grade, so some scales may only have A, B, C, F.
- Create way to document evaluations to show your work.
- Digital credential library – save examples for future reference, training new employees, and any unusual or rare credentials you receive.



Quiz Time!!!

Chocolate is involved :)



Thank you

Questions?