

COUNTRY NAME: THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Language(s) of Instruction: Mandarin is the most common language, although instruction in other dialects is possible.

Principal Educational Authority: Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China

Grading Scale(s): The five-point grading scale, with 60 as the minimum passing grade, is the most commonly used scale. However, the four-point scale is also used in some programs. Always refer to the transcript for which scale to use.

5-point scale:

Transcript Grade				Suggested U.S. Grade	
A	90-100%	优	Excellent	A	4.0
B	80-89%	良 or 良好	Good	B	3.0
C	70-79%	中 or 中等	Average/Fair	C	2.0
D	60-69%	传 or 及格	Satisfactory/Pass	D	1.0
E	0-59%	不传	Fail	F	0

Some courses, such as electives, are graded on a pass (合格) /fail (不合格) system.

4-point scale:

Transcript Grade				Suggested U.S. Grade	
A	85-100%	Excellent		A	4.0
B	75-84%	Good		B	3.0
C	60-74%	Average/Fair		C	2.0
F	0-59%	Fail		F	0

Some courses, such as electives, are graded on a pass (合格) /fail (不合格) system.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE: 6+3+3 system

Basic Education: In 1986, the Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China was passed for the purpose of “promoting elementary education and the building of a socialist society that is advanced culturally and ideologically as well as materially”. In compliance with this law, all children required to have nine years of formal education. The compulsory education includes elementary and lower-secondary education.

Primary Education: Primary education in China lasts for 6 years and includes preschool and kindergarten.

Preschool: Children enter preschool as early as age 3 and then typically enter elementary school at age 6. The first three years of preschool are not compulsory.

Kindergarten: The Kindergarten curriculum generally includes Chinese Language, Mathematics, and play/socializing activities.

Elementary: Elementary education lasts 6 years and is the first part of compulsory education. Though students sit for a graduation examination upon completion of the 6 th year, graduation from elementary school is based only upon results in Mathematics, and Chinese Language.

Secondary: Secondary education in China is comprised of three years of junior-secondary and 3 years of senior secondary education.

Lower-Secondary: Lower secondary education begins in the seventh grade and has a 3 year duration. After completing ninth grade, students sit for the graduation examination and a graduation certificate is awarded. The graduation examination is designed and administered by local education authorities, or by individual schools, according to provincial guidelines, and usually has six subjects – Chinese, Mathematics, Foreign Language, Politics (open-book), Physics, and Chemistry.

After completing an entrance examination, pupils can choose between the three-year senior middle school (高中 gaozhong) or a three or four-year vocational programme (中专 zhongzhuan) at a vocational senior middle school (中等专业学校 zhongdeng zhuan ye xuexiao).

Upper-Secondary Education: Upon completion of compulsory education (9 th grade), students take entrance exams towards Senior Secondary School (gaozhong), Technical School (Zhigao) and Vocational School (jixiao). General Senior Secondary Schools prepare students for the National University Entrance Exam, which provides access to higher education, when passed.

Upon completion of twelfth grade, students from either stream, academic or vocational, must pass the Joint Academic Upper Middle School Graduation Examination (JAUMSGE) in order to graduate. Student who pass the JAUMSGE are issued a Graduation Certificate (毕业证书). Students who do not pass, or do not retake the exam are issued a certificate of completion.

From 2002-2010, the Ministry of Education reformed curriculum and made changes to the examination system, replacing the huikao (会考) system in place. In this new senior secondary system education, credits have been introduced. Students must obtain a total of 144 credits in order to complete the program, broken down as 116 credits from compulsory subjects and 28 credits from elective subjects. New subjects have also been added to the curriculum, including social service, physical education and art subjects. Each subject is made up of various 36-hour modules which are worth 2 credits, except for arts and physical education, which are worth 1 credit each.

Subjects are also subdivided into eight areas of study, namely: language and culture, mathematics, humanities and society, science, technology, art, physical education and health, and a combination of practical activities. A distinction is now drawn between compulsory and elective subjects. One hundred points can be obtained for each subject (sometimes less for electives, this differs between provinces). The points score is then converted into a letter according to a slightly modified assessment system made up of letter grades. (See grading scales)

The examination is conducted twice per year, and pupils can sit the exam from the second year of senior middle school onward (except for the three compulsory subjects of Chinese, mathematics and foreign language; these must be examined in the third year). The highest score obtained in any subject is the one that counts. The results for electives are only valid for the same year, as opposed to the results of compulsory subjects, which are valid for three years.

Academic Upper-Secondary: Admission to academic upper secondary schools are limited to students who score exceedingly high on upper secondary entrance exams. These schools offer two streams of study – liberal arts and sciences. Students who complete 12 th grade and pass the JAUMSGE receive the graduation certificate issued from the upper secondary school.

Vocational/Technical Upper Secondary: Vocational/technical upper secondary schools offer diverse specializations and years of study. These programs range from 2-4 years in length, and each leads to a different type of credential. Students in a vocational/technical upper secondary school must also pass the JAUMSGE in order to receive a Graduation Certificate. Students not continuing on to Higher Education may receive completion certificates, such as a Training Certificate, or a Qualification Certificate.

National College Entrance Examination (NCEE): Also sometimes translated as the National Matriculation Examination, commonly known as Gaokao (高考). This is a prerequisite for entrance into almost all higher education institutions at the undergraduate level. While the NCEE is normally taken by students in the 12 th grade, there have been no age restrictions since 2001. While rare, occasionally a student is exempted from standardized exams due to exceptional, or special talent.

The overall mark received by the student is generally a weighted sum of their subject marks.

Only the Graduation Certificate grants access to the National College Entrance Exam (NCEE) and higher education.

TIME LINE: Years of education from preschool through 12th grade.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
									A			B

A. 毕业证书 (Graduation Certificate): Awarded upon completion of junior/lower middle school and represents completion of compulsory education.

B. 毕业证书 (Graduation Certificate): Awarded upon completion of senior/upper middle school. May be academic or vocational/technical.

Useful Vocabulary:

Academic Record: 学术纪录

Average/Fair: 中 or 中等

Certificate of Completion: 结业证书

Certificate of Graduation: 毕业证书

College: 学院

Credit: 学分

Diploma: 文凭

Elementary/Primary School: 小学

Entrance Examination (gāokǎo): 高考

Examination: 考试

Excellent: 优

Fail/Not Qualified (bù hégé): 不合格

Female: 牝

Final Examination (huikao): 会考

First Name: 名字

General Ability Test: 学业水平考试

Good 良 or 良好

Graduate: 毕业

Graduation Certificate: 毕业证书

Junior High School: 初中

Kindergarten: 幼儿园

Male: 男

Ministry of Education: 教育部 National Entrance Examination: 高考

Pass/Qualified (hégé): 合格

Quality Assessment: 综合素质评价

Notary Public Certificate (unofficial): 公证人证书

Satisfactory/Pass: 传 or 及格

Secondary Education: 中学教育

Secondary School: 中学

Semester/Term: 学期

Senior High School: 高中

Senior Middle School: 高中

Specialized Secondary School (Vocational Senior Middle School): 中等专业学校

Student Record: 学生记录

Studied: 学习

Surname: 姓

Technical Education: 技术教育

Transcript: 抄本

Upper Secondary Education: 高中教育

Vocational Education: 职业教育

Vocational High School: 职业中学

Resources/Websites:

AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education (EDGE).

<http://aacraoedge.aacrao.org/>

CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>

China Education and Research Network:

<http://www.edu.cn/HomePage/english/resources/universities/index.shtml>

Ministry of Education (English):

http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_2792/index.html

Ministry of Education (Chinese): <http://www.moe.edu.cn>

NAFSA Online Guide to Educational Systems:

http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/ges/China%20PRC.pdf

World Educational Information Center, The Ministry of Education:

<http://www.wei.moe.edu.cn/>

Contact Information:

O. Dodson

Transcript Research

olivea@transcriptresearch.com

www.transcriptresearch.com/training