

COUNTRY NAME: VIETNAM ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Location: The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is in Southeastern Asia bordering the Gulf of Thailand, Gulf of Tonkin, and South China Sea, as well as China, Laos and Cambodia.

Language(s) of Instruction: Vietnamese is the most common language at the elementary and secondary education level.

Grading Scale(s): The most common grading scale (since 1993) is a 10-point scale with a minimum passing grade of 5.00. Please see below for the most common scale. Please also note that there are additional ten point scales which have more extensive ranges from 0-10 but 5 still remains the minimum overall grade for passing the year. No more than three out of nine subjects can be failed and still pass the year.

<u>Transcript Grade</u>	<u>Verbal Grade</u>	<u>Suggested U.S. Grade</u>
9.0-10.0	<i>Xuat sac</i> / Excellent	A
7.0-8.9	<i>Kha</i> / Good	B
5.0-6.9	<i>Trung binh</i> / Fair	C
0-4.9	<i>Kem</i> / Fail	F

MOET scale since 2006

<u>Transcript Grade</u>	<u>Verbal Grade</u>	<u>Suggested U.S. Grade</u>
9.0-10.0	<i>Xuat sac</i> / Excellent	A
8.0-8.9	<i>Gioi</i> / Very Good	B+
7.0-8.9	<i>Kha</i> / Good	B
6.0-6.9	<i>Trung binh Kha</i> / Fairly Good	C+
5.0-5.9	<i>Trung binh</i> / Pass	C
0-4.9	<i>Kem</i> / Fail	F

Academic Calendar: The academic year is comprised of two semesters of 17-18 weeks (for a total of 35 weeks) from September to May/June. Students usually attend 5 days a week at elementary and lower secondary education levels and 6 days a week at the upper secondary level. Most programs are half days and taught in two shifts due to school shortages.

Principal Educational Authority: Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)

Literacy Rate: According to the CIA World Factbook, literacy among adults is 94.5%.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE: 5+4+3 system

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Preschool/Kindergarten:

Early childhood education include creches for children 3 months to 3 years, kindergartens for children 3 to 6, and combination schools. This level is not compulsory but is very popular with approximately 90% of five year olds attending kindergarten. Early childhood education is available in both public and private schools.

Elementary:

General education, or giáo dục phổ thông, is comprised of five years beginning at age 6. It is divided into two cycles of 3 and 2 years, respectively. The first cycle focuses on arts, mathematics, nature and society, Vietnamese language, morality, and physical education. In the later cycle, studies continue in most of those subjects but also basic technology, geography and history, and music. Primary education is free and compulsory; completion of fifth grade represents the end of compulsory education. Completion of primary schooling leads to further education through academic lower secondary education or vocational training. Please note that a primary school diploma may no longer be awarded.

Leaving Certificate: Bằng Tiểu Học (Primary Education Diploma).

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Lower Secondary School:

Admissions to lower secondary education requires completion of primary school. Most students are age 11 when they begin the four years of trung học cơ sở, or lower secondary education. This stage is also referred to as intermediate education, basic secondary education, or junior secondary school. The Ministry of Education and Training mandates the curriculum. Lower secondary education covers the same subjects as primary school with the addition of civics, foreign language, natural science subjects, and Vietnamese language and literature.

Students are assessed continuously throughout the year. Upon completion of ninth grade, students are awarded the Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung Học Cơ Sở (Lower Secondary Education Graduation Document), which grants access to upper secondary education or vocational/training programs.

Leaving Certificate: Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung Học Cơ Sở (Lower Secondary Education Graduation Diploma)

Upper Secondary School:

Admission to upper secondary education (trung học phổ thông) in Vietnam requires the Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung Học Cơ Sở and passing the National University Entrance Examination (NUEE). Upper secondary education is streamed into academic programs, which lasts 3 years, vocational (short-term and long-term) programs lasting 1-3 years, and technical & vocational education, which lasts from 3-4 years.

In academic upper secondary programs, students are streamed natural science, social science and humanities/foreign language, or technology. The Ministry of Education and Training values mathematics so upper secondary education includes 4-5 hours of mathematics (algebra, geometry, trigonometry, etc) per week for all three years. Other classes common to the three academic streams include social sciences (art, civics, geography, history, literature, foreign language), natural sciences (chemistry, physics, biology), technology, Vietnamese, physical and military education, and other subjects. Students may enroll in general upper secondary schools, schools that are specialized towards a specific field such as music or science, or one of the approximately 60 high schools for the gifted.

In Vietnam, general upper secondary students receive a study book (Học Bạ) issued by the high school, which lists the subjects and grades earned for each semester of the three-year upper secondary general education curriculum. Students who complete the required curriculum sit for the nationally administered Secondary School Leaving Examination (SSLE) in six subjects.

Successfully passing the leaving exam leads to the award of the high school graduation diploma and allows graduates to sit for university entrance examinations in 3 compulsory subjects (mathematics, literature, and a foreign language) and three other subjects. Each of the six subjects is worth a maximum value of 10 points, for a total of 60 possible points. In order to graduate, students need to have at least a cumulative average of 30 points. A score below this amount will disqualify them from sitting for the university entrance examination. Successfully passing the exam leads to the Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung học Phổ Thông (Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education).

The Time Line later in this document also shows the prior names for this credential. Applicants for evaluation are expected to provide both their Học Bạ and their high school graduation diploma. The diploma will indicate the applicant's overall average on the leaving examinations, even though the leaving examination subjects and scores are not indicated on either the Học Bạ or the final, official graduation diploma.

Leaving Certificate: Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung phổ Thông (Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education)

Vocational Training:

After lower secondary education, students may also choose to enroll in vocational or technical upper secondary education. Vocational training (dạy nghề) is offered in both short- and long-term programs. Short-term vocational training programs last for 3 months to a year and lead to employment certificates. Completion of a short-term vocational program allows students to start employment as semi-educated workers but does not allow access to higher education. These programs result in a Bằng Tốt nghiệp Nghề (Vocational Diploma) that do not lead to further education.

Longer term vocational upper secondary education lasts for 1-3 years at vocational training schools depending on the student's previous education. Three year programs require completion of lower secondary education for admission. Students can complete the basic academic high school curriculum during their vocational enrollment to receive an additional academic upper secondary qualification in order to enroll in post-secondary education.

Graduates of an academic upper secondary program can complete this vocational upper secondary qualification in one year. Graduation leads to the Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung Cấp Nghề (Graduation Diploma of Vocational Education), which leads to employment.

Leaving Certificate:

Bằng Tốt nghiệp Nghề (Vocational Diploma)

Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung Cấp Nghề (Graduation Diploma of Vocational Education)

Technical and Vocational Upper Secondary:

Technical and Vocational Upper Secondary, Trung Cấp Chuyên Nghiệp or Trung học Chuyên nghiệp, lasts for three to four years beyond ninth grade. Technical upper secondary programs can be completed in one to two years for those students who enroll after already completing upper secondary education in the academic stream.

Since 2006, students are typically awarded a Bằng Tốt Nghiệp Trung Cấp Chuyên Nghiệp (Diploma of Intermediate Professional Education), but earlier credentials include the Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung học Chuyên nghiệp (Diploma of Vocational Upper Secondary Education). This grants access to further education at colleges and universities and employment.

Leaving Certificate:

Bằng Tốt Nghiệp Trung Cấp Chuyên Nghiệp (Diploma of Intermediate Professional Education)

Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung học Chuyên nghiệp (Diploma of Vocational Upper Secondary Education)

TIME LINE: Years of education from preschool through 13th grade.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
					A				B	C		D	
												E	E
												F	F
												G	G

- A. Primary Education Diploma
- B. Lower Secondary Education Graduation Diploma
- C. Short-term Vocational Diploma
- D. Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education (see Variations below)
- E. Graduation Diploma of Vocational Education
- F. Diploma of Intermediate Professional Education
- G. Diploma of Vocational Upper Secondary Education

Variations on the Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education:

Bằng Tốt Nghiệp Trung học Phổ thông (Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education); awarded 2003-present

Bằng Trung học Phổ thông (Diploma for General Upper Secondary Education); awarded 2000-2003

Bằng Tú tài, Phổ thông Trung học (Diploma for High School, General Upper Secondary Education); awarded 1996-1999

Bằng Tốt nghiệp Phổ thông Trung học (Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education); awarded 1980-1995

Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trường Phổ thông (Graduation Diploma for General School); awarded 1977-1979

Useful Vocabulary:

Cả năm / CN: Annual average grade. This often appears next to the two columns of semester grades on secondary school transcript.

Chính quy: Full-time, regular enrollment

Điểm trung bình chung các môn học / ĐTB các môn: Grade point average of all subjects. This is usually listed on each page of the study book and listed for each semester and total yearly average.

Điểm trung bình hoặc xếp loại các môn: Grades for each subject

Giấy Chứng Nhận Tốt nghiệp THPT [Tam Thời]: Certificate for Graduation from General Upper Secondary Education [TEMPORARY]. This temporary certificate may be issued while the actual Diploma is being prepared since that process may take a year or more.

Học Bạ: Study book; secondary school course booklet), or transcript. In Vietnam, general upper secondary students receive a study book (*Học Bạ*) issued by the school that lists the subjects and grades earned for each semester of the three-year upper secondary education curriculum.

Học kỳ / Hkỳ: Semester. This may appear as Hkỳ I to represent Semester I or Hkỳ II on an upper secondary transcript.

Hệ bổ túc: Supplementary Education. This refers to educational completed through the system of continuing education, often by adults. A student may complete upper secondary education via the supplementary system when enrolled as an alternative to regular school system, when the student does not successfully pass the secondary school leaving examination, or when a student does not otherwise complete the traditional system.

Trung Học Phổ Thông / THPT: secondary school

Trường Phổ Thông Trung Học / TPTTH: upper secondary school

Trường trung học phổ thông / Trường THPT: upper secondary school

Trường THPT chuyên: Gifted High School

Xếp loại tốt nghiệp: high school leaving examination average grade as reported on the Diploma of Completion of Upper Secondary Education

Resources/Websites:

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

Evaluation of Foreign Degrees and Qualifications in the Netherlands: Country Module – Vietnam. NUFFIC, 2009.

NAFSA Guide to Educational Systems around the World: Vietnam. NAFSA, 2016.

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Tools for Evaluating Educational Documents from Vietnam. Educational Credential Evaluators, 2008.

Vietnam: A Study of the Educational System of Vietnam and Guide to the Academic Placement of Students in Educational Institutions in the United States. AACRAO/NAFSA, 2000.

Vietnam: Educational System Update and Techniques for Credential Evaluation. Educational Credential Evaluators, 2012.

Vietnam: Elementary and Secondary Education. International Evaluation Service, 2008.

The Vietnamese Education System Described and Compared with the Dutch System. NUFFIC, 2015.

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