The education system of

Poland

described and compared with
the Dutch system
This document contains information on the education system of Poland. We explain the Dutch equivalent of the most common qualifications from Poland 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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## Evaluation chart

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree or qualification</th>
<th>Dutch equivalent and NLQF level</th>
<th>EQF level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Świadectwo ukończenia szkoły zawodowej (Basic vocational school)</td>
<td>MBO diploma (qualification level 2)</td>
<td>2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świadectwo ukończenia liceum zawodowego (Vocational lyceum – 4 years)</td>
<td>HAVO diploma for its general education component</td>
<td>4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum zawodowego (Vocational lyceum – 4 years)</td>
<td>VWO diploma for its general education component</td>
<td>4+ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świadectwo ukończenia technikum zawodowego (Technical lyceum – 4 or 5 years)</td>
<td>HAVO diploma for its general education component</td>
<td>4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świadectwo dojrzałości technikum zawodowego (Technical lyceum – 4 or 5 years)</td>
<td>VWO diploma for its general education component</td>
<td>4+ 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Świadectwo ukończenia liceum ogólnokształcącego (General lyceum)</td>
<td>HAVO diploma</td>
<td>4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum ogólnokształcącego (General lyceum)</td>
<td>VWO diploma</td>
<td>4+ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyplom with the degree of Licencjat/ Inżynier</td>
<td>HBO or WO bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>6 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyplom with the degree of Magister</td>
<td>HBO or WO master’s degree</td>
<td>7 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NB**
- The information provided in the table is a general recommendation from which no rights may be derived.
- 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.
Introduction

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Poland once again became an independent state with a free market economy. The Republic of Poland (Rzeczpospolita Polska) joined NATO in 1999 and has been a member of the European Union since 1 May 2004.

As of January 1999 Poland has been made up of 16 administrative provinces (wojewodztwo), 376 districts (powiaty), and 2,489 local government bodies (gminy). From 1975 to 1999 the country was divided into 49 districts. Poland was under Soviet control between 1945 and 1989.

After the Second World War the organization of Polish education was highly centralized and characterized by a uniform curriculum with Marxist-Leninist ideology and Russian as compulsory subjects. There were numerous professionally oriented programmes and 1961 saw the emergence of adult education. The objective of education was to reduce illiteracy, to train skilled workers, and to make education available for everyone. Education was compulsory up to the age of 16, with the obligation to at least complete primary education. Between 1961 and 1999 the nominal duration of primary education was eight years. Education was free. In 1947 all private education institutions were nationalized.

From 1972 onwards primary and secondary (vocational) education was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Upbringing, while the Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Technology was responsible for higher education. Today, the Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej (Ministry of National Education) is responsible for primary, secondary and vocational education and the Ministerstwie Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego (Ministry of Science and Higher Education) is responsible for higher education. Specialized institutions, such as academies for medical and nautical studies come under the appropriate ministries.

The Polish education system took on its current form as of 1989. In 1990 the ‘Act on Schools of Higher Education’ was adopted, which granted higher education institutions more autonomy. The nominal duration of primary education was set at nine years (six plus three) and general secondary education at three to four years. This law also made private education possible again. Until then, the only private higher education institution had been the Catholic University of Lublin. These private institutions primarily provide three-year higher professional study programmes in Management, Marketing, Economics and Business Administration. Permission to establish a private higher education institution is granted by the Minister of Education.

Education is compulsory up to age 18. The language of instruction is usually Polish.
The academic year is divided into 2 semesters, and for primary and secondary education it lasts from September to June. For higher education the academic year lasts 38 to 40 weeks, from October to June.

**Primary and secondary education**

**Situation as of 1999**
In September 1999 the ‘Act of the 8th of January 1999 implementing Provisions for the Reform of the School System’ came into force. This educational law affected education in Poland as follows:

The duration of primary and lower secondary education was increased from 8 to 9 years and applies to children between the ages of 7 and 16. The former 8-year primary school was replaced by a 6-year primary school and a 3-year gimnazjum. The last class of the ‘old system’ completed their 8-year primary education in the school year 2000/2001.

**General secondary and secondary vocational education**
After primary school all pupils go on to the 3-year gimnazjum, the new lower secondary education. The gimnazjum is for pupils between the ages of 13 and 16 and provides a general curriculum, taught by subject teachers, that is intended to identify a pupil’s talents and interests. This is part of the current compulsory education. Upon passing the final examination the pupils receive the Certificate of Completion of Education in the Gymnasium (Świadectwo ukończenia gimnazjum), which enables them to progress to one of the various tracks of senior secondary education.

After the gimnazjum pupils have the choice of 6 different types of school providing senior secondary education:

- The 3-year general lyceum (liceum ogólnokształcące); this type already existed before the educational reform but used to last 4 years. This type of school prepares pupils for higher education and provides general education to pupils aged 16 to 19. Since 2005 on the completion of the general lyceum, pupils are awarded a school leaving certificate (Świadectwo ukończenia liceum ogólnokształcącego). It gives access to Matura exam in order to obtain the Świadectwo dojrzałości. Before 2005, pupils who passed a maturity exam were awarded a maturity certificate (Świadectwo dojrzałości), those who did not, received a school leaving certificate (Świadectwo ukończenia liceum ogólnokształcącego).
- The 3-year specialized lyceum (liceum profilowane); this type of education was introduced in September 2002. Here, pupils can follow general secondary education plus a certain subject cluster: chemical, economic, biological, technical, agricultural and environmental, social, or the arts. At the end of the study programme, pupils are awarded the Świadectwo
uctuńczenia liceum profilowanego, which grants access to post-secondary education in Poland. Pupils can take the Matura exam in order to obtain the Świadectwo dojrzałości, which grants access to higher education in Poland.

- The 4-year technical secondary school (technikum). Since 2006 in addition to the Świadectwo ukończenia technikum, pupils are also awarded the diploma confirming vocational qualifications (dyplom potwierdzający kwalifikacje zawodowe) which substituted the diploma of vocational title (dyplom uzyskania tytułu zawodowego), and is issued after passing the examination confirming vocational qualifications (egzamin potwierdzający kwalifikacje zawodowe) run by the Regional Examination Boards, similarly to Matura. The examination (also called vocational examination) was introduced in 2004-2008. The Diploma confirming vocational qualifications is intended for the labour market and indicates which (technical) specialist training the education included. Pupils can take the Matura exam in order to obtain the Świadectwo dojrzałości, which grants access to higher education in Poland.

Before 2006 pupils who passed a maturity exam were awarded a Maturity certificate (Świadectwo dojrzałości). Those who did not received a school leaving certificate (Świadectwo ukończenia technikum).

- The 2-year vocational school (zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa) was implemented in 2002/2003 for pupils aged 16 to 18. Pupils are awarded the certificate of the completion of the basic vocational school (Świadectwo ukończenia zasadniczej szkoły zawodowej) and diploma confirming vocational qualifications (dyplom potwierdzający kwalifikacje zawodowe) which substituted the diploma of vocational title (dyplom uzyskania tytułu zawodowego), and is issued after passing the examination confirming vocational qualifications (egzamin potwierdzający kwalifikacje zawodowe) run by the Regional Examination Boards. The certificate for this vocational programme grants access to two types of further education:
  1. the 2-year 'supplementary lyceum' (liceum uzupełniające) was introduced in 2004/2005 for pupils aged between 18 and 20. On completing this programme the pupils can obtain the Świadectwo ukończenia or the Świadectwo dojrzałości. The Świadectwo dojrzałości grants access to higher education.
  2. the 3-year supplementary technical secondary school (technikum uzupełniające), which can also be completed with the Świadectwo ukończenia or the Świadectwo dojrzałości.

The Diploma confirming vocational qualifications is intended for the labour market and indicates which (technical) specialist training the education included.

The Świadectwo dojrzałości (Maturity certificate) is awarded upon passing the Maturity exam (Matura). The egzamin dojrzałości (Matura exam) is a national
exam at the end of secondary education and is held annually in May. In 2005-2009, the maturity exam included a written and an oral exam. The written exam was held in each province and consisted of the subjects Polish language and literature, and an optional subject from the pupil’s study programme. The oral exam was for a foreign language, Polish language and literature, and an elective. As of 2010, mathematics became compulsory for the written part, and it thus substituted the elective. Besides, students may choose to sit exams in up to 3 additional subjects for their Maturity exam.

The Świadectwo dojrzałości (Maturity Certificate) is the only certificate that grants access to higher education in Poland.

In terms of level, the Świadectwo dojrzałości is comparable to a VWO diploma.

In June 2005 a new Maturity Certificate (Świadectwo dojrzałości) was introduced, with a different layout. This certificate is awarded to Polish secondary school pupils who have passed the Matura exam. The new Maturity Certificate is awarded by a Central Examining Board (Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna). The old Maturity Certificate used to be issued by the secondary schools. The regulations stipulate that the new Świadectwo dojrzałości is to be awarded no later than 30 June each year for the summer examinations and no later than 28 February for the Matura exams held in winter.

The Matura exam itself was also reformed in June 2005. The new Matura exam is held twice a year, in summer and winter, supervised at schools by regional examining boards. As with the old Matura, this is a two-part exam: an oral exam and a written exam. Polish language is a compulsory subject for both the oral and the written exams. The exam can be taken at two levels: basic and advanced.

The Matura exam is not compulsory for pupils. If the pupil has successfully completed the subjects of the study programme but does not take the Matura exam, the Świadectwo ukończenia (Certificate of completion) is awarded. This certificate does not grant access to higher education but does grant access to post-secondary education in certain cases.

In terms of level, the Świadectwo ukończenia is comparable to a HAVO diploma.

Post-secondary education
In Poland post-secondary education is provided by szkoły policealne and szkoły pomaturalne (post-secondary schools).
These post-secondary professional programmes (policealne studium zawodowe) are intended for pupils who cannot or do not want to go on to higher education after the general lyceum or specialized lyceum, because they failed the Maturity exam or the entrance exam for the higher education institution, for instance. Students sometimes wish to enter the labour market for economic reasons (the term policealne literally means ‘post-lyceum’). The minimum admission requirement for the szkola policealna is the Świadectwo ukończenia. Both types of post-secondary school provide (final) programmes of study. For the majority of professions the study programme will last 2 to 2½ years, for some professions it lasts only 1 year.

Upon successful completion of a study programme at a szkola policealna the Świadectwo ukończenia szkoły policealnej (Certificate of Completion of Education in szkola policealna) is awarded with the professional qualification technik (technician). This professional qualification is comparable to the professional qualification obtained at a technical secondary school. Pupils can continue to study for a vocational exam that leads to a Dyplom uzyskania tytulu Zawodowego (Vocational title diploma).

Szkolę pomaturalną offered short professional programmes in nursing and midwifery. At this moment, following a university programme is the only possibility for obtaining a professional qualification for these professions. Upon completion, pupils are awarded the Dyplom ukończenia szkoły pomaturalnej (Diploma of completion of education in szkoła pomaturalna). Szkoły pomaturalne supervised by the Minister of National Education do not exist any more. However, there are still schools of this kind under the supervision of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, training librarians and culture animators. These types of programmes usually last 2½ years. Post-secondary programmes are purely practically oriented and based on the curriculum of the vocational lyceums. The extent of the general education component is small.

Depending on the duration and orientation both diplomas may be equivalent from intermediate vocational levels to levels of higher professional education. For individual diplomas please contact Nuffic.

**Situation up to 1999**

Up to 1999 nursery, primary and secondary education was provided at the following schools: the 3-year nursery school (przeszkole), 8-year primary school (szkola podstawowa), 4-year general lyceum (liceum ogólnokształcące), 3-year vocational (business) school (zasadnicza szkola zawodowa), 4-year vocational lyceum (liceum zawodowe), 5-year specialist technical college (technikum) and post-secondary vocational schools, the latter of which have a duration of 2 years. Education was compulsory for children aged between 7 and 17.
Polish children aged between 3 and 6 were not obliged to attend nursery school. A uniform curriculum laid down by the Minister of Education applied for all primary schools. At the end of primary school, pupils were awarded the Certificate of Completion of Education in the Primary School (Świadectwo ukończenia szkoły podstawowej). Pupils could then choose between various types of secondary education.

**General secondary education (up to 1999)**
The general lyceum (liceum ogólnokształcące) provided general secondary education and prepared pupils aged between 15 and 19 for higher education. Admission was based on an entrance exam in the subjects Polish language, mathematics and an optional subject. Courses in the lyceum were organised within several branches or sections, such as mathematics and physics, humanities, biology and chemistry, ecology, general education and sports. One of these sections was chosen by the pupil at the start of education in the lyceum. It was, however, possible to change the section if it turned out that the original choice didn’t correspond to the pupil’s abilities and interests. Some schools taught part of the curriculum in a foreign language. Upon completing the 4-year programme, pupils were awarded the Certificate of Completion of General Secondary School (Świadectwo ukończenia liceum ogólnokształcącego). In Poland this certificate did not provide the right to admission to higher education.

However, if the pupil then passed the Maturity exam (Matura), they were awarded the Maturity Certificate from General Secondary School (Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum ogólnokształcącego). This certificate did provide the right to admission to higher education in Poland.

In terms of level, the Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum ogólnokształcącego is comparable to a VWO diploma.

**Secondary vocational education (up to 1999)**
The 3-year vocational (business) school (zasadnicza szkola zawodowa) provided courses in both the industrial sector, such as steel processing and shipbuilding, and the agricultural sector. No entrance exam was required unless the number of pupils enrolling exceeded the number of places available.

The entrance requirement was the Certificate of Completion of Education in the Primary School (Świadectwo ukończenia szkoły podstawowej). Approximately 50% of all pupils leaving primary school went on to this kind of vocational education.
The curriculum consisted of a general education component and a vocational component, and there were both full-time and part-time courses. At the end of the programme pupils were awarded the Certificate of Completion of Basic Vocational School (Świadectwo ukończenia szkoły zawodowej). With this certificate the majority of students entered the labour market. A small number of pupils progressed, without an entrance exam, to a Complimentary Technical Secondary School (technikum uzupelniajace) or a Complimentary Lycéeum (liceum uzupelniajace) for an additional 2 or 3-year study programme.

In terms of level, the Świadectwo ukończenia szkoły zawodowej is comparable to an MBO diploma at qualification level 2.

From the early 1970s up to 1999 the 4-year vocational lycéeum (liceum zawodowe) offered vocational education for approximately four percent of the primary school leavers. The programme granted access to higher education. There were specialized licea, such as the lycéeum of economics (liceum ekonomiczne), the lycéeum of medicine (liceum medyczne) and the lycéeum of visual arts (liceum sztuk plastycznych).

The curriculum consisted partly of general education (50%) and partly of vocational training and non-technical subjects. The programme trained pupils for the Maturity Certificate of Completion of Vocational Lycéeum (Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum zawodowego), which they received if they passed the Maturity exam. This diploma granted access to higher education in Poland. If a pupil did not take the Maturity exam, the programme led to the Certificate of Completion of Vocational Lycéeum (Świadectwo ukończenia liceum zawodowego), yet this diploma did not grant access to higher education in Poland. The diploma specified the professional qualification, for example technik ekonomista (economics technologist) or polozna (midwife).

In terms of level, the 4-year Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum zawodowego is comparable to a VWO diploma for its general education component.

In terms of level, the 4-year Świadectwo ukończenia liceum zawodowego is comparable to a HAVO diploma for its general education component.

Approximately 20% of the pupils leaving primary school went on to study at a 4 or 5-year secondary technical school (technikum). The curriculum consisted of both a general education component (50%) and a technical vocational component.
including an internship amounting to 7 weeks. Pupils who successfully completed the Technikum, were awarded the Technical College Certificate of Completion (Świadectwo ukończenia technikum zawodowego) with a professional qualification. This certificate did not grant access to higher education in Poland.

If the student passed the Maturity exam, the Technical Matriculation Certificate (Świadectwo dojrzałości technikum zawodowego) was awarded with the professional qualification technik plus the specialisation, for example technik chemik (chemical technologist). This diploma granted access to higher education in Poland.

In terms of level, the 4 or 5-year Świadectwo dojrzałości technikum zawodowego is comparable to a VWO diploma for its general education component.

In terms of level, the 4 or 5-year Świadectwo ukończenia technikum zawodowego is comparable to a HAVO diploma for its general education component.

### Admission to higher education

Since 1990 the higher education institutions have been given more autonomy and have since been allowed to determine their own admission policy. In Poland the Świadectwo dojrzałości grants access to higher education. In addition to obtaining this certificate pupils will sometimes be required to take an entrance examination. The entrance examinations vary for each institution and sometimes even for each faculty.

### Higher education

There are several different kinds of higher education institutions in Poland:

- **Uniwersytety** (universities)
- **Politechniki** (technical universities)
- **Akademie Rolnicze** (agricultural HEIs)
- **Akademie Ekonomiczne** (HEIs for Economics)
- **Wyższe Szkoły Pedagogiczne** (pedagogical HEIs)
- **Akademie Medyczne** (medical academies)
- **Akademie Teologiczne** (HEIs for Theology)
- **Szkoly Morskie** (nautical schools)
• Akademie Wychowania Fizycznego (Academies of Physical Education)
• Akademie Muzyczne, Sztuk Pieknych, Teatralne i Filmowe (music, art, theatre and film academies)
• Państwowe Wyższe Szkoły Zawodowe (Schools of higher vocational education)
• Szkoly Wojskowe (military schools)

In the 1990s there was a significant increase in the number of higher education institutions in Poland, nearly 200 of which were private institutions. Students can receive higher education as daytime, evening, part-time or non-formal study programmes.

In Poland there is no strict and clear division between higher professional education and the more theoretical research-oriented higher education, as there is in the Netherlands. The extent to which a programme of study is more academic or practically oriented can be deduced from the curriculum. The institution providing the study programme is less significant in this respect. Some professional study programmes are not only provided at institutions designated as higher professional education institutions but also at universities.

**University education**

Since 1990 the higher education institutions have been given more autonomy and are allowed to determine their own admission policy. After achieving the Świadectwo dojrzałości students may therefore be required to take entrance examinations at the various institutions of higher education.

**Licencjat**

The Polish higher education system is a two-cycle system. During the first cycle the Dyplom with the degree licencjat (licence) is awarded after 3 or 4 years of study and submission and defence of the thesis if it is foreseen in the study programme. The degree Inżynier (Engineer) is awarded for technical studies after 3 ½ to 4 years of study. The degree inżynier (Engineer) is awarded for technical studies. The entrance requirement is a Świadectwo dojrzałości and (possibly) an entrance examination.

In terms of level, the Dyplom with the degree Licencjat/Inżynier is comparable to an HBO or WO bachelor’s degree, depending on the specialisation.

**Magister**

The second cycle leads to the Magister degree (Master), the duration of which is 1½ or 2 years. At the end of a technical or agricultural study, the degree Magister Inżynier (Master of Engineering) is awarded. The master’s degree awarded for
Programmes in the arts is Magister Sztuki (Master of Fine Arts) and for architectural studies this is Magister Inżynier Architekt (Master in Architecture).

A Magister degree can be obtained in one of two ways. Firstly, once they have obtained the Świadectwo dojrzałości students may take a 4½ or 5-year programme. The Magister degree can also be obtained after a supplementary programme with a nominal duration of 1½ or 2 years, following a Licencjat or Inżynier programme. The Magister diploma is awarded to those who have passed all compulsory examinations and defended a master thesis or a project equivalent to a master thesis - if the thesis is foreseen in the programme.

In terms of level, the Dyplom with the degree Magister is comparable to an HBO or WO master’s degree, depending on the specialisation.

**Doktor and Doktor habilitowany**

In Poland it is possible to pursue a doctorate, leading to the academic degree of doktor (PhD). The entrance requirement is a magister, magister inżynier, lekarz or equivalent degree. Qualifications awarded as an equivalent of the doctor degree in artistic disciplines are kwalifikacje pierwszego stopnia (first degree qualifications).

The academic degree of doktor habilitowany is conferred to a person who holds the academic degree of doctor, has remarkable scientific or artistic achievements, has submitted a habilitation dissertation, received favourable assessment of his dissertation from three reviewers, passed a habilitation examination. Qualifications awarded as an equivalent of the doctor habilitowany degree in artistic disciplines are kwalifikacje drugiego stopnia (second degree qualifications).

**Higher professional education**

Since 1998 many new institutions have been established in Poland, especially in the private sector, many of which carry the term Wyszwa Szkoła Zawodowa (‘higher professional school’) in their names. These institutions provide 3 or 4-year study programmes.

The programmes often include an internship and are very practically oriented. They can be followed as daytime, evening or part-time programmes. The extent to which a programme is academic or practically oriented can be deduced from the curriculum.
**Teacher-training programmes**

For a long time there was a shortage of teachers in Poland as a result of which there were extremely diverse tracks to qualifying as a teacher. Therefore, teacher-training programmes are extremely diverse and it is often not clear to which age category and which type of school a teaching qualification applies. The description below is, for the most part, a general description. If you have any questions regarding a specific teacher-training programme, please contact the team International recognition at Nuffic.

As from October 1990 teacher-training for nursery schools, primary schools, the gimnazjum, and secondary schools is provided by teacher-training colleges or foreign-language teacher-training colleges. The programmes last three years and are completed with the Dyplom ukonczenia kolegium nauczycielskiego (Diploma of completion of education in the teacher training college) with the degree Licencjat. A teacher-training college may only operate on the basis of collaboration with a higher education institution that also provides teacher training. After obtaining the Licencjat diploma, students may move on to a Magister study programme.

Before 1990 teacher training for nursery and primary schools was provided by various teacher-training schools at secondary and post-secondary levels. If the teacher-training programme was taken immediately after primary education, it lasted 4 to 6 years. If secondary education had already been completed, the programme lasted 2 to 3 years.

A teaching qualification for secondary education can be obtained at a teacher-training college or through a university study programme completed with a Magister degree and a teacher-training programme. This teacher-training programme must last at least 270 lesson hours and include at least 150 hours of teaching practice.

**Medical degree programmes**

Medical degree programmes last 6 years and are completed with the Dyplom with the professional qualification lekarz medycyny (Doctor of Medicine). In Poland, this diploma plus a 1-year academic internship allow the holder to practise as a doctor. The Ministry of Public Health is the competent authority. The first 2 years of the degree programme focus primarily on general medical subjects. Clinical subjects are studied from the third year onwards. In Poland medical degree programmes are mostly provided by medical academies (Akademia Medyczna).

Dentistry degree programmes last 5 years and are completed with the Dyplom with the professional qualification lekarz dentysta (dentist). Up until 30 April 2004 the Dyplom was awarded with the professional qualification lekarz stomatolog.
(dentist). The first 2 years focus primarily on pre-clinical subjects such as anatomy, medical chemistry, biology and physiology. Clinical subjects such as microbiology, medical psychology, dentistry and neurology are provided from the second to the fifth study year. In Poland dentistry degree programmes are usually provided by medical academies (Akademia Medyczna).

Veterinary degree programmes last 6 years and are completed with the Dyplom with the professional qualification lekarz weterynarii (veterinary surgeon). In Poland this diploma allows the holder to practise as a veterinary surgeon.

Pharmacy degree programmes last 5 years and are completed with the Dyplom with the professional qualification Magister farmacji (Master of Pharmacy). In Poland, this diploma plus a 1-year post-graduate internship allow the holder to practise as a pharmacist. The first 3 years of the degree programme constitute the basic training. During the fourth and fifth year the programme focuses on the specialisation of pharmacy.

Assessment systems

In Poland, the following grading scale was used for primary, secondary and higher education until 1990:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bardzo dobry (bdb)</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dobry (db)</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dostateczny (dst)</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Niedostateczny (ndst)</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following grading scale is used for primary & secondary education from 1991:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Celujący (cel)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bardzo dobry (bdb)</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dobry (db)</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dopuszczający (dop)</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Niedostateczny (ndst)</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With the introduction of a new Maturity Certificate, which is awarded to students who pass the Matura exam, the grading system has also been adjusted. As of June 2005 exam results are graded on a scale of 0-100%.

The following grading scale is used for higher education from 1991:

In Poland each school of higher education establishes its own grading system, the most common one is, however, given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bardzo dobry (bdb)</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Dobry plus (db+)</td>
<td>Good plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dobry (db)</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Dostateczny plus (dst+)</td>
<td>Satisfactory plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dostateczny (dst)</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Niedostateczny (ndst)</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some higher education institutions have a 6-grade system (the same as used in the primary and secondary schools):

The higher education institutions in Poland generally implement the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). In this system 60 credits represent 1 year of study. More information on ECTS is available in the ECTS User’s Guide issued by the European Commission.

More information about the value of foreign grades can be found on our website (Dutch only).

**Bologna Process**

Poland was one of the 29 participating countries to sign the Bologna Declaration in June 1999. The Polish higher education system was already based on 2 cycles before the Bologna Declaration. In accordance with the Higher Education Act of the 12th of September 1990, Polish higher education institutions had the right to provide a uniform master-level studies as well as undergraduate professional studies, postgraduate master studies and doctorate studies.

More information is available on the website of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
Qualification frameworks

As of early 2011, there has been an ongoing debate in Poland about the model of Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF) organised under the project European qualifications. PQF is created with joint contributions of academics, employers, employees and teachers. For more information [in Polish].

Quality assurance and accreditation

The tasks of the Polish Accreditation Committee (Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna - PKA), in the broadest sense of the word, consist of judging and monitoring the quality of all types of education. The PKA is also responsible for assessing the new higher education institutions and new study tracks and Master’s degree programmes. The PKA has all the tasks of the former State Accreditation Committee (SAC). The PKA evaluates the establishment of new higher education institutions, the establishment of new faculties, disciplines, or programmes of study within existing higher education institutions and determines whether a higher education institution is authorized to provide a particular programme of study. In addition, the PKA is responsible for the quality of education, including the verification of the criteria for providing particular programmes of study. This is, by far, the most important task of the PKA.

The PKA’s evaluations are binding upon the Minister of Education. The PKA visits all existing institutions once every 5 years and examines the quality of the facilities and the education provided. Should this result in a negative assessment of the quality, the PKA will be authorized to recommend improvements to the institution, which the institution must follow. The Minister may, upon recommendation by the PKA, discontinue a programme or close an institution.

The members of the PKA are appointed by the Minister. They are selected from candidates recommended by various bodies representing the Polish academic community. More information can be found on the Polish Accreditation Committee website, in Polish: Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna (PKA).

International treaties

Poland signed the Lisbon Convention in 1997 and ratified it in 2004. In addition, Poland has concluded (bilateral) treaties with several countries. An overview of these treaties is available on the website of the Polish ENIC/NARIC.

Diploma Supplement

As of 2005 institutions in Poland are obliged to issue a Diploma Supplement. More information is available on the Europass website.
Composition of file

The diploma of secondary education is awarded with a transcript. These must both be submitted. Higher education students will be required to submit the Dyplom and the Indeks (the Polish grade book in which all study results are recorded) or a summary of these with a translation. Nowadays Polish higher education institutions increasingly issue diplomas and grade lists (summaries of the Indeks) in English.

Overview of higher education institutions

An overview of higher education institutions supervised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education:

- National institutions and private institutions.

Other higher education institutions:

- Higher education institutions supervised by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage.
- Higher education institutions supervised by the Minister of Health.

Useful links

- Ministry of National Education, Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej (in English and Polish).
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Ministerstwie Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego (in English and Polish).
- The Polish ENIC/NARIC, National Agency for Academic Exchange/Narodowa Agencja Wymiany Akademickiej (in English and Polish) with an overview of bilateral agreements.
- The Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna (PKA), the website in English: Polish Accreditation Committee.
- Eurydice website (by the European Commission) with information about the Polish education system.
Diplomas

Świadectwo dojrzałości
Maturity Certificate:
Świadectwo dojrzałości
Maturity Certificate – translation, page 1:

CERTIFIED TRANSLATION FROM THE POLISH LANGUAGE
[original document protected against copying with a watermark]
[page 1 of 1]
[national emblem of Poland] OFFICIAL COPY

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
SECONDARY SCHOOL MATURITY CERTIFICATE

Date of birth: 
Place of birth: Warszawa
PESEL number: 

Passed the maturity exam [Polish: egzamin maturalny] with the following results:

**Obligatory subjects:**
**Oral part of the exam:**
- Polish language: 68% of points
- English language: 97% of points

**Written part of the exam – basic level:**
- Polish language: 46% of points (the same or worse result was achieved by 29% of candidates)
- English language: 96% of points (the same or worse result was achieved by 84% of candidates)
- Mathematics: 96% of points (the same or worse result was achieved by 94% of candidates)

**Additional subjects:**
**Written part of the exam – advanced level:**
- Mathematics: 32% of points (the same or worse result was achieved by 62% of candidates)
- English language: 90% of points (the same or worse result was achieved by 91% of candidates)
Świadectwo dojrzałości

Maturity Certificate – translation, page 2:
Licencjat
Bachelor:
Licencjat
Bachelor – Diploma Supplement, page 1: