

The education system of

Georgia

described and compared with
the Dutch system

This document contains information on the education system of Georgia. We explain the Dutch equivalent of the most common qualifications from Georgia 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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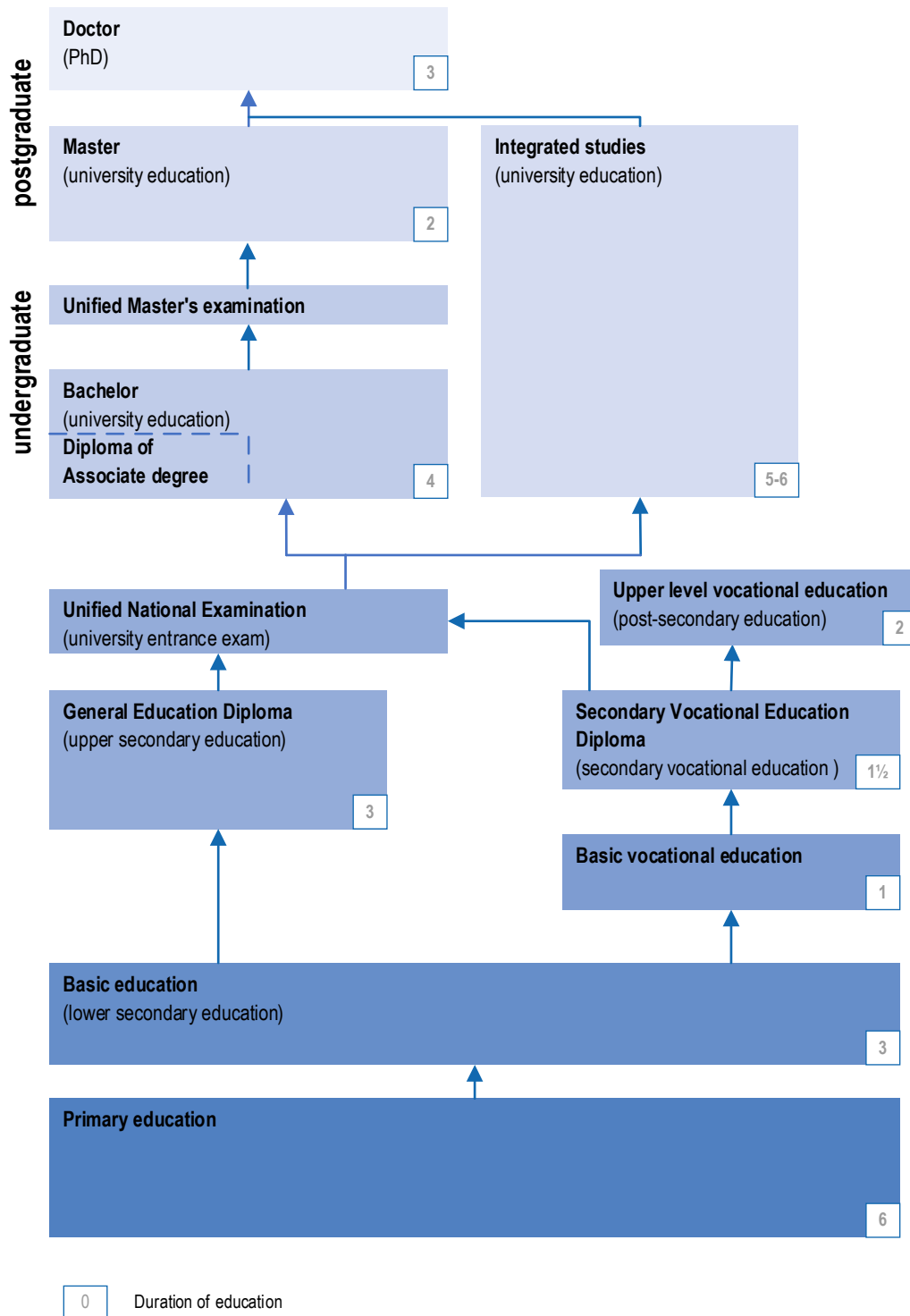


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■ Background

- **Country:** Georgia (Georgian: საქართველო/*Sakartvelo*). Georgian has its own alphabet. It is only used for the most important terms in this description. Georgia used to be a part of the Soviet Union and became an independent republic in 1991. Until that time, it used the education system of the Soviet Union.
Note: The territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia are the subject of conflict between Georgia and Russia. It is difficult to accredit institutions within these regions.
- **Responsible for education:** the [Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport](#). The National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) is responsible for carrying out procedures of quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and programmes.
- **EU membership:** Georgia is not an EU member. The country signed an association treaty with the European Union in 2015. It is not a formal candidate for membership.
- **Bologna process:** Georgia has been a member of the Bologna process and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) since 2005. See also the page about Georgia on the [EHEA website](#).
- **International treaties:** Georgia has ratified and implemented the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1999.
- **Compulsory education:** ages 6-14/15 (basic education, including lower secondary education, in total 9 years).
- **Language of instruction:** in principle, the language of instruction is Georgian, but in the Abkhazia region there is a choice between Abkhaz and Georgian.
- **School year:** from September to June. For most classes, the school year lasts 34 weeks (33 weeks for classes I and XII).
- **School exams:** usually in May.
- **Academic year:** from September to May/June, usually divided into 2 semesters.

■ Flow chart: education system Georgia



Evaluation chart

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

Foreign qualification	Dutch equivalent and NLQF level	EQF level
<i>General Education Diploma</i>	HAVO diploma 4	4
<i>Bachelor's Diploma</i>	HBO or WO bachelor's degree 6	6
<i>Master's Diploma</i>	HBO or WO master's degree 7	7

Note:

- 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 or 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

Reforms

Georgia initiated major educational reforms in 2006. Since 2008-2009, primary and secondary education have been extended by 1 year (Year XII was added), for a total of 12 years. In addition, education has become more activating since then. There is no longer an exclusive focus on knowledge transfer, while the attention to nature, technology and languages has increased.

Primary education

Primary education lasts 6 years:

- Years I through VI;
- for pupils between the ages of 6 and 12.

Generally speaking, primary education conforms to the national curriculum, with the following subjects:

- language
- mathematics
- a foreign language
- nature and technology
- social studies
- art
- music and sport

From as early as Year I, children are taught a foreign language as well as the subject of nature and technology. They are taught a 2nd foreign language from Year V. Years I through IX represent compulsory education.

Secondary education

Secondary education comprises 2 phases:

- 3 years of lower secondary education (in Georgian terms, basic education), Years VII through IX;
- 3 years of upper secondary education (in Georgian terms, secondary education), Years X through XII.

Georgia has in excess of 2,000 public schools and little over 200 private schools in secondary education. Both types of schools conform to the [national curriculum](#).

Lower secondary education

Lower secondary education comprises Years VII through IX (ages 12 through 15).

- [Duration](#): 3 years.
- [Content](#): schools mostly conform to the national curriculum laid down and have minor freedom for their own implementation. There is a wide range of subjects: Georgian language and literature, mathematics, a 1st and 2nd

foreign language, history, geography, and the general subject of nature and technology in Year VII, which is afterwards divided into biology, physics and chemistry. Attention is also paid to creative subjects, music and sport. Pupils complete lower secondary education by taking a national examination.

- Diploma: *Basic General Education Diploma*, საბაზო ზოგადი განათლების ატესტატი/*sabazo zogadi ganatlebis atestati*. This diploma grants access to upper secondary education as well as vocational programmes.

Upper secondary education

Upper secondary education comprises Years X through XII (ages 15 through 17).

- **Duration:** 3 years.
- **Content:** the [Ministry of Education and Science](#) sets out the national curriculum, with which the schools must comply. Pupils complete upper secondary education by taking an examination. See also the paragraphs [National curriculum](#) and [National examination](#).

- Diploma: *General Education Diploma*, სრული ზოგადი განათლების ატესტატი/*sruli zogadi ganatlebis atestati*. The diploma of pupils with high marks will state 'Golden Medal Award'.

Note: Pupils who fail their exam will receive an 'upper secondary education certificate'. This certificate does not grant admission to higher education.

In terms of level, the *General Education Diploma* is comparable to a HAVO diploma.

National curriculum

For the most part, all pupils have the same curriculum, which prepares them for work or further study. There is a wide range of subjects: Georgian language and literature, mathematics, a 1st and 2nd foreign language, history, geography, biology, physics and chemistry. Attention is also paid to art, music and sport. Pupils may choose 1 or 2 elective subjects.

National examination

At the end of upper secondary education, pupils have taken a computerised national examination since 2011, the Computerised Adaptive Test (CAT). This examination covers 8 subjects: Georgian, a foreign language (usually English), history, mathematics, biology, chemistry, geography and physics.

Note: The CAT national examination will be replaced by a school examination as from May 2020.

Vocational education

Georgian vocational education has included 3 types of vocational programmes since 2019:

- Basic vocational education, with an average duration of 1 year (or 3 years in case of a combined general and vocational programme).
- Secondary vocational education, with an average duration of 1½ years.
- Upper level vocational education (post-secondary education), with an average duration of 2 years.

Students may enrol in:

- basic vocational programmes after completing 9 years of primary and secondary education;
- secondary vocational programmes after completing 9 years of primary and secondary education, after 12 years of primary and secondary education, or after completing basic vocational programme;
- upper level vocational programmes after completing 12 years of general education or after completing a secondary vocational programme.

Students complete each level with a diploma. The *Secondary Vocational Education Diploma*, obtained via secondary vocational programmes, grants admission to higher education in Georgia after passing the university entrance exam (Unified National Examination).

Types of institutions

Pupils may enrol in vocational education at various types of institutions:

- vocational colleges;
- schools for general secondary education that also offer vocational study programmes;
- higher education institutions that are also authorised to offer vocational study programmes.

■ Higher education

Georgia implemented the Bologna structure for study programmes in higher education between 2005 and 2008: Bachelor-Master-Doctor (3 cycles). All institutions have adopted this model since the 2007-2008 academic year.

Georgia does not have a binary system; there are no separate higher professional education institutions, as there are in the Netherlands. It is also often unclear from the study programme or diploma name whether the qualification is academic or professional in nature.

Types of institutions

There are 3 types of institutions in Georgia:

- universities, which offer bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes;
- teaching universities, which offer bachelor's and master's programmes;
- colleges, which only offer bachelor's programmes.

As of January 2020, there are 19 public and 45 private higher education institutions in Georgia.

■ Admission to higher education

The *General Education Diploma* and *Secondary Vocational Education Diploma* grant admission to higher education in Georgia. Students need to take the Unified National Examination as well.

Entrance examinations

The Unified National Examination was introduced in 2005. It consists of a General Aptitude Test (GAT) and 3 compulsory subjects:

- Georgian language;
- foreign language (usually English);
- an elective subject (depending on the follow-up study programme chosen).

Students compete for places on the results of their Unified National Examination. School marks are irrelevant for admission to a Georgian university.

Additional requirements

Additional admission requirements may apply to certain study programmes, including arts, sports and military programmes.

■ University and higher professional education

The usual diplomas that students can obtain through higher education are the following:

- *Diploma of Associate degree*
- *Bachelor's diploma*
- *Master's diploma*
- *Doctor's diploma*

Diploma of Associate degree

- **Duration:** 2 years (120 [ECTS](#)).
- **Content:** profession-oriented programmes within or linked to the bachelor's programmes.
- **Admission requirements:** the *General Education Diploma* or *Secondary Vocational Education Diploma*, and the results of the Unified National Examination.
- **Diploma:** ასოცირებული ხარისხის დიპლომი/*Asocirebuli khariskhis diplomi/Diploma of Associate degree.*

Bachelor's diploma

- **Duration:** 4 years (240 ECTS).
- **Content:** usually different modules; first general introductory courses, then in-depth courses and finally specialised courses. The programme allows for minors and/or electives. Institutions may adopt their own teaching and examination methods. For example, students can carry out a project, do a work placement and/or write a thesis, although the latter is far from universal.
- **Admission requirements:** the *General Education Diploma* or *Secondary Vocational Education Diploma*, and the results of the Unified National Examination.
- **Diploma:** ბაკალავრის დიპლომი/*Bakalavris diplomi/Bachelor's diploma.*

In terms of level, the *Bachelor's Diploma* is comparable to an HBO or WO bachelor's degree, depending on the nature of the study programme.

Master's diploma

- **Duration:** 2 years (120 ECTS).
- **Content:** research-oriented or profession-oriented, the follow-up to the bachelor's programme. Students generally write a thesis (30 ECTS). While some of the courses are compulsory, the programme also allows for electives.
- **Admission requirements:** a *Bachelor's diploma* and passing an entrance exam, the Unified Master's examination.
- **Diploma:** მაგისტრის დიპლომი/*Magistris diploma/Master's diploma.*

In terms of level, the *Master's Diploma* is comparable to an HBO or WO master's degree, depending on the nature of the study programme.

Doctor's diploma

- **Duration:** at least 3 years (180 ECTS).
- **Content:** students obtain no more than 60 ECTS in courses and spend the remainder on research. They write and defend a dissertation.
- **Admission requirements:** a *Master's diploma*.
- **Diploma:** დოქტორის დიპლომი/*Doktoris diplomii/Doctor's Diploma/PhD*.

Other diplomas and certificates

There are also integrated study programmes, at master level, with a workload of 300-360 ECTS. Admission requirements for students are the same as to bachelor's programmes (the General Education Diploma or Secondary Vocational Education Diploma, and the results of the Unified National Examination). In practice, integrated programmes are combined bachelor's and master's programmes.

Integrated study programmes

- Medical programmes of 6 years (360 ECTS).
- Dentistry and veterinary programmes of 5 years (300 ECTS).
- Teacher-training programmes of 5 years (300 ECTS). Note: This integrated study programme was introduced in 2017. There is also a 1-year undergraduate teacher-training programme (following a bachelor programme).

State examination

Students must take a state examination to complete these medical and teacher-training (integrated study) programmes. They will obtain their master's diploma if they pass all courses and the state examination. While master's diplomas for medical programmes are usually not comparable to Dutch master's degrees in medical specialisations, teacher-training programmes are comparable to Dutch master's degrees in higher professional education (HBO).

These integrated study programmes, as mentioned above, grant access to doctoral degree programmes in Georgia.

■ Assessment systems

Secondary education

The grading system applied in general education institutions is a 10-point scale. The highest and lowest points are 10 and 1, respectively. A 5 represents the lowest positive mark (sufficient), as indicated in this table:

Numbers	Meaning
10, 9	high
8, 7	above average
6, 5	average
4, 3, 2, 1	below average, insufficient

Higher education

Higher education institutions use a 100-point system, with 51 being the minimum pass mark and 100 the highest mark. Some prefer a system with the letters A through E, with an A as the highest score and E as the lowest possible passing mark. Other schools and institutions use both figures and letters.

ECTS

Georgia uses the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) since 2017. One ECTS credit represents 25 hours of work.

For more information about the ECTS, consult the [ECTS Users' Guide](#) published by the European Commission.

■ Qualification frameworks

Georgia has a [national qualifications framework \(NQF\)](#) since 2010. It parallels the structure and levels of the European qualifications framework (EQF). The qualifications for general (basic and upper secondary) education and VET are placed at levels 1-5 in the NQF. The qualifications for higher education are placed at levels 5-8. There have been some revisions in 2019.

The next page shows the 8 levels of the Georgian NQF with the corresponding certificates and diplomas.

For more information about the levels, please see '[NQF: Level of Qualifications](#)'.

NQF level	Qualifications
1	Level 1 Georgian language certificate
2	Basic general education diploma Level 2 Georgian language certificate
3	Basic vocational education diploma Level 3 Georgian language certificate
4	General education diploma Secondary vocational education diploma Level 4 Georgian language certificate
5	Higher vocational education diploma (upper level vocational education) Diploma of Associate degree
6	Bachelor's diploma Teacher training certificate
7	Master's diploma Diploma of Doctor of Dental Medicine Diploma of Medical doctor Diploma of Master of Education Diploma of Master of Veterinary Medicine Veterinary training certificate
8	PhD/Doctor's diploma

Source: [NCEQE, National Qualification Framework - Levels of Qualification and Qualifications](#).

■ Accreditation and quality assurance

The [National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement \(NCEQE\)](#) is responsible for quality assurance. The NCEQE is the Legal Entity of Public Law (LEPL), a part of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

NCEQE provides 2 types of accreditation:

- institutional accreditation (authorisation); and
- programme accreditation.

Institutional accreditation

The authorisation of a public or private institutions is valid for 6 years. Standards and procedures are available on the [NCEQE website](#), but partly in Georgian only. Reports in English are available at the web page [decisions & reports](#), and in their [online database](#).

Programme accreditation

In principle, study programmes undergo accreditation voluntarily. Compulsory accreditation of study programmes exclusively applies to regulated professions such as doctor, dentist, veterinarian or teacher, and to doctoral degree programmes.

New accreditation is valid for a period of 4 years. Renewed accreditation is valid for a period of 7 years. The [NCEQE website](#) provides more information.

■ **Checking documents**

Secondary education

There is a fixed format for diplomas in secondary and vocational education, which has been laid down by law. A diploma with this fixed format clearly shows that it originates from a recognised school.

At least the following documents are required for the assessment of a secondary education diploma:

- the General Education Diploma or Secondary Vocational Education Diploma;
- the list of marks for Years X-XII of secondary education.

Higher education

While higher education diplomas do not have a fixed format, there are statutory regulations on the text to be stated on the diploma. This text is provided in Georgian and English.

The following documents are required for the assessment of a higher education diploma:

- the diploma;
- usually the diploma supplement, otherwise the list of marks.

Diploma supplement

Georgia uses the European model of the diploma supplement. This provides an overview of completed exams, marks and ECTS credits obtained.

More information on the diploma supplement (DS) is available on the [Europass website](#).

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 of institutions of higher education

The National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) maintains a [list of recognised higher education institutions \(HEIs\)](#).

The NCEQE website also provides lists of all [secondary schools](#) and [vocational educational institutions](#).

■ Useful links

- [National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement \(NCEQE\)](#) is also the ENIC-NARIC-bureau of Georgia.
- The Georgian [Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport](#).

■ Glossary

- **Bologna process:** The process that started after 29 European Ministers of Education signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999, with which they agreed, among other things, to create a European Area for Higher Education (EHEA): "An open space that allows students, graduates, and higher education staff to benefit from unhampered mobility and equitable access to high quality higher education". This includes setting up a system based on 2 cycles, undergraduate and graduate, also known as the bachelor-master structure. In 2003 a [third cycle](#) was added for doctoral programmes. The EHEA currently has [48 members](#).
- **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 a bachelor's degree. See also the description in the Nuffic Glossary: [undergraduate](#).