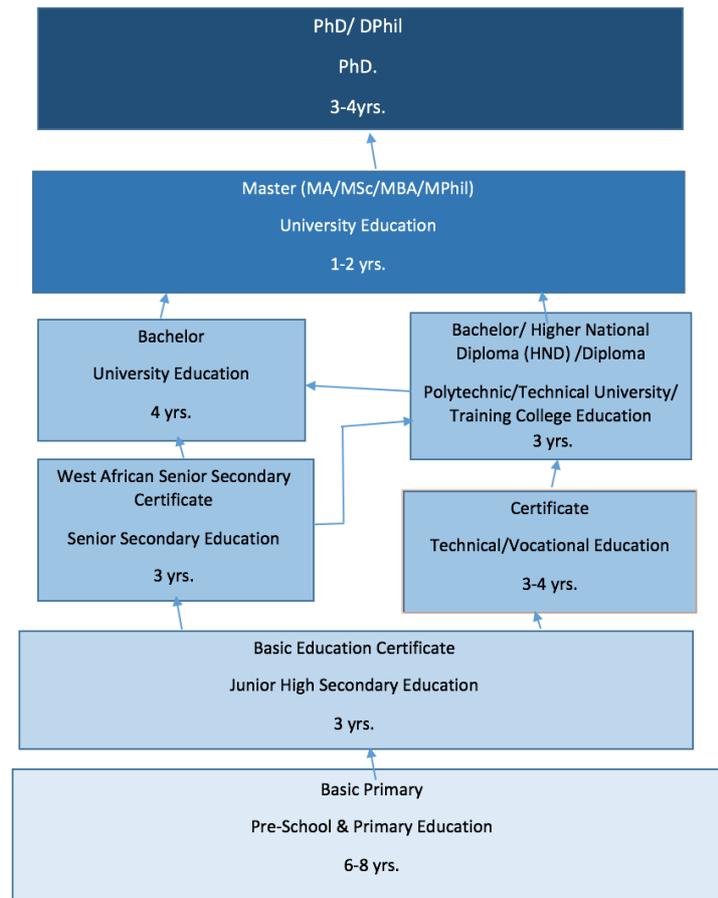




EDUCATION FACT SHEET - GHANA

<p>In Brief</p>	<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>Ghana Population: 26.21 million (2016) Ghana Size: 238,533 sq km/92,099 sq mi</p> <p>National Curriculum: Yes</p> <p>Literacy: 76.6% (82% of males, 71.4% females) Youth Literacy: 90.6% (2015 projected) Female Youth Literacy: 89.9% (2015 projected)</p> <p>Years of Public School: 12 Primary: 6 Secondary: 6 years</p> <p>Language of Instruction: English</p> <p>High School Leaving Exams: West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), which is considered below the standard of A-level standard. Date of Exams: April/May (approximately a month to complete)</p>
<p>Education Overview</p>	<p>THE STRUCTURAL SET-UP OF GHANAIAN FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM (see below)</p>



Courtesy: EP-Nuffic, 2015

Binary Focus on Higher Ed Outcome

Ghana's education system is characterized in principle by a binary structure, with universities on the one hand, and polytechnics on the other. Since the reforms were introduced in 1987, the education system has had formally a 6+3+3+4 structure.

However, depending on the age a child may start school, the six may extend to eight, when the pre-school class period is considered. This means six years of primary education, followed by two three-year stages of secondary education (junior secondary and senior secondary) and four years of higher education (bachelor's degree programs). Master's degree programs have a nominal duration of one or two years.

Education is compulsory between the ages of six and 15. The official language of instruction in Ghanaian education is English, except for in the first years of primary education when the most common indigenous language in each region is used as the language of instruction. The academic year runs from August to May, inclusive.

School System

Basic Education Includes Problem-Solving Skills

Basic education (primary and secondary school) is freely accessible in Ghana due to declaration of the 1996 Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) Program. Every Ghanaian child of school-going age is assured access to high-quality basic education. They are obliged to start schooling latest by the age of six in case he or she fails to attend preschool class. Formally, primary education lasts for six years (excluding two years of preschool class) and consists of a three-year lower primary phase and a three-year upper primary phase. During primary education the curriculum places an emphasis on reading and writing, arithmetic and the development of problem-solving abilities.

Pupils are taught subjects such as English and the regional indigenous language, arithmetic, biology, music, dance, handicrafts and citizenship education. No certificate is awarded upon completion. Pupils are usually 12 years old on completing primary education. The school year in primary education lasts 40 weeks.

• Two Phases in Secondary Education

Secondary education in Ghana consists of a junior phase and a senior phase, each lasting three years. The junior secondary phase concludes the compulsory school-age years. Children are then usually 15 years old. During the junior secondary phase pupils are taught subjects such as English, mathematics, social studies and integrated science in addition to basic design and technology, religious and moral education, French and ICT. At the end of the junior phase pupils sit examinations to obtain the Basic Education Certificate. A school year in the junior secondary phase lasts 45 weeks.

During senior secondary education, pupils are taught English, mathematics, social studies and integrated science. In addition to these subjects they can choose from a number of electives. These electives are followed in the specializations of agriculture, business, technology and trade, as well as general education (arts or sciences).

Senior secondary education concludes with examinations for the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate (WASSCE), which has since 2007 replaced the Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSSCE). These examinations are held by the West African Examinations Council, Ghana National Office. To obtain the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate, pupils take exams in four compulsory subjects, namely English, mathematics, social studies and integrated science. In addition, they must sit examinations in three or four electives (in the specializations listed above). Pupils are usually 18 years old on completing senior secondary education. A school year in this phase lasts 40 weeks.

• Secondary Vocational/Technical Education

As well as the transition to senior secondary education, junior secondary pupils also have the option to continue studying within secondary vocational/technical education.

In Ghana, secondary vocational/technical education is offered at technical and vocational training institutes. These institutes offer study programs in various technical and vocational fields, for instance programs for pupils who want to become carpenters, electricians or tailors. These programs usually conclude after 2 or 3 years with traditional examinations that lead to various diplomas or certificates.

Higher Education Options

At the end of their secondary education, pupils sit examinations for the WASSCE. In order to be admitted to undergraduate programs at Ghanaian universities, candidates must in principle have obtained a pass (grade A to E) – grade A to D for SSSCE - in at least six subjects (three compulsory subjects and three electives) for the WASSCE with a maximum aggregate score of 24, or grade A1 to C6 in at least three core and three elective subjects with an aggregate not exceeding 36.

Depending on the chosen field of study, additional requirements may be imposed with regard to the electives for which the candidate must have passed the examinations. In order to be admitted to programs at polytechnics/the Technical Universities, candidates must formally meet the same requirements.

In principle, Ghana's higher education system is characterized by a clear binary structure, with universities on the one hand, and technical professionally-oriented polytechnics on the other hand. There are also university colleges, theological colleges and tutorial colleges. The country currently has three recognized theological colleges, 20 university colleges, six tutorial colleges, 10 polytechnics (technical universities) and nine universities (traditional-orthodox), the majority of which are public institutions. Currently, more than half of all the polytechnics have been (and the rest are in the offing of being) converted into, full-fledged universities, under the technical university development program.

University education in Ghana consists of three cycles, namely bachelor's degree programs, master's degree programs and PhD programs.

• Bachelor's Degree Programs

In order to be admitted to bachelor's degree programs, candidates must in principle hold a West African Senior Secondary School Certificate with six passes and a maximum aggregate score of 24. Depending on the chosen specialization, bachelor's programs have a nominal duration of two to four years (depending on whether it is a top-up or direct entry degree). Most bachelor's programs last four years, however programs in the specializations medicine and surgery or dental surgery have a nominal duration of six years. Each year of a bachelor's program is assigned a level: the first-year is level 100, the second year-level 200, the third- year level 300 and the fourth-year level 400. Bachelor's degree programs in Ghana generally involve a very large degree of specialization.

Programs usually focus on one major subject, although it is possible to choose a second (related) specialization. Not all bachelor's degree programs conclude with a final paper. In principle, a bachelor's degree grants Ghanaian students access to master's degree programs. In practice, however, students must hold a bachelor's degree with at least second-class honors in order to be admitted to master's degree programs.

• Higher Professional/Technical Education

Higher education programs with a professionally technical focus are primarily provided in Ghana by technical universities. Until their very recent conversion into technical universities, the most common programs offered at polytechnics led to the Higher National Diploma (HND) award. Polytechnics offered nominal three-year HND programs in the specializations of applied sciences, technology and business administration. The

programs were highly vocational. Having converted into technical universities, the polytechnics' current focus of study is technical creativity aimed at meeting the technological needs of local industries in particular and the domestic economy at large.

Functional Literacy Program

Besides the formal educational system, there exists an informal mechanism to bridge the literacy gap, mostly among adults at the community level. The non-formal education division of the Ministry was established in 1991 and tasked to carry out the eradication of adult illiteracy in Ghana by the year 2011. The first phase of the Functional Literacy Program reduced the overall national illiteracy rate from 69% to 52% by 2000. Government with support of the World Bank is committed to reducing the rate further to below 40% under the second phase.

Vital Literacy Statistics of Ghana by UNICEF and UNESCO

Youth (15-24 years) literacy rate (%) 2008-2012*, male	88.3
Youth (15-24 years) literacy rate (%) 2008-2012*, female	83.2
Primary school participation, survival rate to last primary grade (%) , 2008-2012*, survey data	99.5
Pupil-teacher ratio, primary (average) 2014	30.08
Secondary school participation, net attendance ratio (%) 2008-2012*, male	39.7
Secondary school participation, net attendance ratio (%) 2008-2012*, female	43.6
Pupil-teacher ratio, secondary (average) 2014	15.82

Evolution of Literacy Rate Over Time						
x	Adult literacy (15+)			Youth literacy (15-24)		
	Ave.	M	F	Ave.	M	F
2000	57.9	66.4	49.8	70.7	75.9	65.4
2010	71.5	78.3	65.3	85.7	88.3	83.2
2015 (projection)	76.3	81.5	71.0	90.6	91.3	89.9

Courtesy: UNICEF, 2013; UNESCO, 2013

Issues with the Education System

Financing Largely by Global Donors

The Ghanaian State dedicated 23% of its total expenditure into education in 2010. This amount is estimated to include only 8.2% of the GDP. Meanwhile more than 90% of this budget is spent by the Ministry of Education and its agencies: Primary education (31% of the expenditure) and tertiary education (21.6%) receive the most. The expenditures are partly funded by donors, among them the [World Bank](#), the United States (through the [USAID](#)), the United Kingdom (through the [DfID](#)) and the European Union. Their participation is usually project-focused and granted under certain conditions, giving them a certain influence

Access and Exclusion Factors

With more than 12,000 primary schools, 5,500 junior secondary schools, 700 senior secondary schools, 18 technical institutions, 21 nurse training colleges, three theological colleges, 20 university colleges, six tutorial colleges, 10 polytechnics, six public universities and three chartered private universities, the majority of Ghanaians have relatively easy access to education. While much of the rich/ affluent/middle/working class tilt heavily toward private schools at the basic/primary level, the reverse is the case at the senior secondary level. The public schools have witnessed heavy enrollment at the senior secondary level, a condition made more acute due to the recent Free SHS policy implementation among the public schools at senior secondary level.

Being a woman or living in a rural area can reduce the chance of reaching tertiary education. Socioeconomic status is also a factor of exclusion, as studying at the highest level is expensive. Public universities have no tuition fee but usually demand payment for other charges: registration fee, technology fee, examination fee, academic facility user fee, medical services fee.

These charges can lead to self-censorship behaviors, some students choosing, for instance, teacher training colleges (where students can receive stipends) instead of joining a university.

Higher education is more heavily male than female, and more wealthy than poor. A "Girls Education unit" has been created by the government within the Ghana Education Service, in order to reduce gender-biased disparities. The unit tries to tackle the problem at its source, focusing on the "Basic Education" to avoid high female school drop-out from JHS to SHS. Progress has been made: the proportion of girls in Higher Education has increased from 25% (1999) to 32% (2005). Yet gender still generates inequality, for numerous reasons: hostile school environment, priority given to the boys in poor families, perpetuation of "gender roles" (a woman belongs to the household), early customary marriages, teenage pregnancy.

Academic Calendar

TERM	PERIOD	FROM	TO	WEEKS
TERM 1	School session	Mid September	22nd December	15
BREAK		23 December	Early January	2
TERM 2	School session	Early January	Mid April	14
BREAK		Mid April	Late April	2

	TERM 3	School session	Early May	Mid July	11
	BREAK		Mid July	Mid September	8
Inter-national Schools in Ghana	The Takoradi International School, Tema International School, Galaxy International School, The Roman Ridge School, Lincoln Community School, Faith Montessori School, American International School, Association International School, New Nation School, SOS Hermann Gmeiner International College and International Community School all offer the International Baccalaureat, Advanced Level General Certificate of Education and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE).				
Scholars Abroad	In 2014, Study-USA estimated about 3100 Ghanaians in all had travelled to the United States for undergrad and graduate studies. Meanwhile, the German International Cooperation's higher education promotion section DAAD estimated only 402 Ghanaians had benefited from their program to travel to Germany for higher education by 2016. In addition, Study-London estimated only 300 Ghanaians went through their program to embark on higher education.				
SAT Test Centers	There are five test centers in Ghana. Ghana Intl School, Accra; Lincoln Comm School, Accra, SOS-Hermann Gmeiner Intl College, Tema; Tema International School, Tema; International Community School, Kumasi.				
ACT Test Centers	There are 3 ACT centers in Ghana: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACE Consult, Kumasi 2. Ghana International School, Accra 3. Tema International School, Accra 				
IELTS/TOEFL Centers	TOEFL test is conducted in two cities only, Accra and Kumasi.				
Best Time to Visit Schools	During Term 3 (Mid July to Mid September)				
HALI Contacts	<p>Nolbed Foundation Inc. Email: salia.daud@nolbed.org Phone: +233509106036</p> <p>Ahaspora Young Professionals Email: info@ahaspora.org Phone: +233548296739</p> <p>African Science Academy Email: info@africangifted.org Phone: +233247507506</p>				

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