



EDUCATION FACT SHEETS - NIGERIA

In Brief	<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>Nigeria Population: 190.6 million Nigeria Size: 923,768 sq km/356,668 sq mi</p> <p>National Curriculum: Yes</p> <p>Literacy: 59.6% (2015) Youth Literacy: 72.8% Female Youth Literacy: 58.0%</p> <p>Years of Public School: 9 (compulsory) Primary: 6 Junior Secondary: 3 (Senior Secondary: 3)</p> <p>Language of Instruction: English</p> <p>High School Leaving Exams: Yes Date of Exams: May-July</p>
Education Overview	<p>After Nine Years, Academic Paths Diverge Nigerian law requires compulsory education for all students between the ages of 5 and 15. Students in primary and secondary school attend three equally divided sessions from September through July, with about a month vacation between sessions.</p> <p>In 1982, Nigeria switched to the American system of six years in primary, three years in junior secondary, and three years in senior secondary school, but the rigid examination system remained.</p> <p>To qualify for entry into Junior Secondary School (JSS), Senior Secondary School (SSS), and higher education, nationwide examinations are held each year. Because exam scores determine a student's future educational choices, schools tend to stress memorization of facts, rather than creative problem-solving. There are not enough senior secondary schools in Nigeria, so most students who finish JSS go into the workforce.</p> <p>Special Education Certain federal and state agencies plan and carry out special education programs. Teachers receive training to teach in these programs. Mostly, though, the government encourages the integration of special education students into the regular schools. The Ministry of Social Development, Youth, and Sports also runs centers throughout the nation to help train people with special needs.</p> <p>Higher Education</p>

	<p>There are three major categories of higher or tertiary education. One is postsecondary, which is non-university level training in technical and vocational fields. Students receive certificates of training for completing work-oriented courses.</p> <p>The second type of higher education institution consists of higher technical, but non-university level programs offered at technical colleges, polytechnics, and colleges of education. They usually offer a variety of options for students that lead to a National Diploma (ND) for two years of study or a Higher National Diploma (HND) for four years of study.</p> <p>The third type of tertiary institution is the degree-granting institution offering bachelor's and higher degrees. The tertiary sector as a whole offers opportunities for undergraduate, graduate, and vocational and technical education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities: 155 • Other institutions: 65+ <p>Scholars Abroad According to data from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), the number of Nigerian students studying abroad at the tertiary level increased by 164 percent in the decade between 2005 and 2015 alone– from 26,997 to 71,351.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages: English (official), Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba major languages (students learn at least one until Junior Secondary 3/Grade 9)
<p>School System</p>	<p>Uniform Policy The federal government policy on education is adhered to by all secondary schools in Nigeria. The nine years of compulsory basic education includes six years of elementary school and three years of junior secondary school, but not the three years of senior secondary school.</p> <p>Private organizations, community groups, religious bodies, the states, and the federal government establish and manage secondary schools in Nigeria. All private and public schools offer the same curriculum, but most private schools include the Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGSCE) curriculum to enable their students to write the IGSCE examination during their final year in high school. Few private schools offer A-levels which usually serve as a gap year after graduation for the few Nigerian students who are interested.</p> <p>From Junior to Senior Secondary The Junior Secondary Certificate Examination (JSC) is taken the last year of basic school (the ninth grade). Students who pass this exam at credit level (see the grading the system below) in not less than six subjects may proceed to senior secondary school level (grade 10) at either the same institution or may transfer to another institution of their choice.</p> <p>All Senior Secondary students are required to study English, Mathematics, one science subject, and one Nigerian language. All the other subjects are electives and are selected based on the students' interest either in the Sciences, Social Sciences or the Arts.</p> <p>University Requirements The <u>West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE)</u> is taken the last year of high school (SS 3). It is also one of the requirements for undergraduate admission into a Nigerian University. A student must get at least a C in English and four other courses relevant to his major. A student applying for admission to study Medicine, Computer Science or Accounting, for example, will be required to have a minimum of a C in Mathematics as well as in English whereas a student applying for a program in History will not necessarily require a C in Math.</p>

Final Exams

Final examinations include the General Certificate Examination (GCE) and the WASSCE, formerly known as Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE).

The SSCE was established in place of the GCE/O Level and GCE became a supplementary examination. While the WASSCE is conducted at the end of the secondary school studies in May/June, the GCE is conducted in October/November for those students who did not get the required credits from their WASSCE results. The standards of the two examinations are the same. A body called West African Examination Council (WAEC) conducts both the WASSCE and GCE. A maximum of nine—and a minimum of seven—subjects are required for each student with Mathematics and English being compulsory.

National Examination Council (NECO)

NECO was established by the Federal Government and started operation in 2000. The body is responsible for conducting both the National Common Entrance Examinations (a competitive qualifying examination for admissions into federal and state secondary schools) and WASSCE for all Senior Secondary schools in the country. The curriculums are of the same standard as that of the WAEC.

A maximum of nine grades are assigned to each subject in both WAEC and NECO Examinations ranging from:

Grading System

A1	75%-100%	5	EXCELLENT
B2	70%-74%	4	VERY GOOD
B3	65%-69%	3	GOOD
C4	60%-64%	2.75	CREDIT
C5	55%-59%	2.50	CREDIT
C6	50%-54%	2.00	CREDIT
D7	45%-49%	1.50	PASS
E8	40%-44%	1.00	PASS
F9	0%-39%	<1.00	FAIL

Result verification

The fastest and most reliable way of verifying a student's results from Nigeria is through the websites of the WAEC, <http://www.waecdirect.org>, or NECO, <http://www.mynecoexams.com/results>. The student provides a PIN number purchased for the equivalent of \$3 (available at any post office, banks or WAEC regional office), that is used to retrieve a printable copy of their WAEC results.

Nigerian University System

Federal and state governments established and managed university education until 1999 when private sectors started the establishment of private universities. Presently there are 155 universities: 40 federal and 46 state-owned universities and 69 privately owned ones. The National Universities Commission (NUC) is the federal organization which oversees the administration of higher education in Nigeria. With 40 federal universities and dozens of teaching hospitals and colleges under its wing, the NUC has the potential to change the lives of a million Nigerian scholars and academics: <http://www.nuc.edu.ng>

In addition to the number of universities, there are 65 federal and state-owned polytechnic colleges and several privately owned polytechnics, monotecnics and colleges of education across the country. The latter were established to train technical, middle-level manpower professional teachers. Some of the colleges are beginning to award degrees. The colleges are evaluated and accredited by the National Board for Technical

Education (NBTE). Web Address: <http://www.nbte.gov.ng>

Letter Grade	GP/Nigerian	Percentage	U.S. Grade Equiv.	Eqv. Degree Rating	GPA - American
A	5	70-100	A	1 st Class	4.0
B	4	60-69	B+	2 nd Class Upper	3.2
C	3	50-59	B	2 nd Class Lower	2.4
D	2	45-49	C+	3 rd Class	1.6
E	1	40-44	C	Pass	0.8
F	0	<0.00 – 0.99		Fail	

University Admissions

Until the 1970s, Nigerian universities set their own admissions standards. Due to the growing number of universities in Nigeria's sprawling higher education system, this practice became problematic, and, in 1978, the Nigerian government established the **Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB)** to oversee a centralized admissions test called the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME).

The fiscal crisis of the Nigerian government has recently led to discussions about **abolishing the JAMB as a cost-cutting measure**. In November of 2016, the JAMB **announced** that it no longer had adequate funds to effectively conduct the nation-wide UTME. Despite these financial difficulties, all public universities are presently mandated to use the governmental admissions test in their admissions decisions, even though some universities have additional requirements going beyond the UTME.

Issues with the Education System

Inadequate Access

The country's education system has not kept pace with its rapidly growing school-age population. The quality of basic education is extremely poor, leading to low demand and unacceptably low academic performance. Of the 30 million primary school-aged children in the country, it is estimated that up to 10 million are not enrolled in recognized schools. Of those students currently in primary school, less than one-third will attend junior secondary school and even fewer will proceed to senior secondary school. While education indicators are poor nationwide, they are weakest in the northern states.

Specialized programs have also been designed for such disadvantaged groups as the nomads and migrant fishermen and for the disabled, especially blind or visually impaired. These groups, for environmental and economic reasons, cannot benefit from formal education offered in the normal schools, so it becomes necessary to extend access to them.

Inadequate Funding, Mismanagement of Funds

The managers of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria are in consensus that these institutions are grossly under-funded. Evidence exists on the degree of dilapidation that characterizes the primary and secondary school buildings in parts of the country; the non-payment of teacher salaries and allowances, resulting in the strikes which are the order of the day; the lack of necessary teaching and learning materials at all levels; poor working conditions of all teachers in the country, among other indices. It has also been argued that financial mismanagement and lack of accountability by officials lead to diverting substantial resources from the educational institutions to other ends.

Two issues are relevant: the need for enough funds and the need for responsible and

	<p>proper management of the funds. How to achieve these two is a major problem in the Nigerian educational system, and achieving them holds the key to educational development in the country.</p> <p>“Brain Drain” State and national crises in the universities have led to "brain-drain". Academics drift away from the universities in search of greener pastures in other sectors of the Nigerian economy or outside the country. If the trend is not checked through improved working conditions for academics and appeals to the patriotic spirit, the result could be disastrous for the country.</p>
Academic Calendar	<p>The academic year typically runs from September to July. All secondary/high schools run from September to December (first term), January to March (second term) and April to July (third term).</p> <p>Most universities use a semester system of 18 – 20 weeks. Others run from January to December, divided into three terms of 10 -12 weeks.</p>
SAT Test Centers	<p>There are several SAT centers in Nigeria spread around the country for easy access. Most major cities have test centers where students can take the test.</p>
ACT Test Centers	<p>The ACT is new in Nigeria; testing started in December 2017. The number of students who sit for the ACT cannot be compared to SAT. There are only two centers now but schools who can test more than 35 students on a test day can become a center.</p>
IELTS/TOEFL	<p>The language of instruction in Nigerian institutions is English. Students who have graduated from the secondary schools with credit in the English Language often meet the required minimum of 71 points on the TOEFL iBT. Some students request English proficiency waivers which sometimes is granted.</p> <p>IELTS and TOEFL computer-based centers are available in more than five major cities.</p>
Best Time to Visit Schools	<p>Students take the national high school national exams between May/July results are out in August/ September. Best time to visit high schools is before their termly examinations. First term (October – November), the Second term (January – February), the Third term (April – May) however only Senior Secondary two/Grade 11 students and below can be available during the third term window since the students in Senior Secondary three/Grade 12 will be taking their final exams.</p>
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Sources:

- World Education News and Reviews: <https://wenr.wes.org/2017/03/education-in-nigeria>
- National Universities Commission: <http://nuc.edu.ng/>
- Nigerian Newspaper: <http://www.nigerian-newspaper.com/educational-system.htm>
- USAID: <https://www.usaid.gov/nigeria/education>

<http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1102/Nigeria-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html>

EducationUSA Nigeria Country Fact Sheet