

## **International Education in The Netherlands**

Compulsory education under Dutch law applies to children of all nationalities from five to eighteen years who are residing in the Netherlands.

International schools can be a good choice for the children of foreign parents who are staying temporarily in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, the majority of international schools are partly subsidized by the Dutch Ministry of Education and are thus bound by ministry rules, while others are privately operated. These so-called 'Dutch International Schools' are spread throughout The Netherlands. The subsidy provided by the Dutch Ministry of Education makes it possible for these schools to offer English language education to the global standard of international schools for a reasonable fee.

The qualifications for admission to these schools are set by the Dutch Ministry of Education. Students may be admitted who originate from:

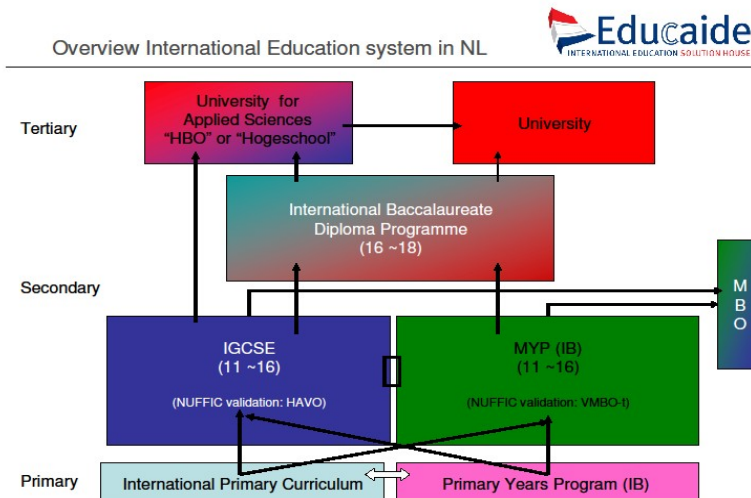
- A **non-Dutch** family staying in the Netherlands for a limited period of time with an expatriate status.
- An internationally mobile Dutch family, whose children have been largely educated abroad, and for whom an international education will be more advisable to ensure continuity.
- A Dutch family bound for an international assignment, whose children will be switching from education in Dutch to English. This transition is limited to a period of one year.

In general, private international schools only have English language education, but the so-called "Foreign National Schools": like the French, German, Japanese and Korean schools, teach their national curricula in their native tongue as do the American and British schools.

### **PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Primary education starts at the age of 4 and continues up until the age of 11 or 12.

Dutch International Primary Schools and the private regular international schools use either the [International Primary Curriculum \(IPC\)](#) or the [International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme \(IBPYP\)](#).



## SECONDARY EDUCATION

During the first four to five years of international secondary education, the Dutch International Secondary Schools prepare their students for the [International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme \(IBMP\)](#) or the [International General Certificate of Secondary Education \(IGCSE\)](#).

The IGCSE is the globally recognised equivalent+ of the British GCSE and the Dutch HAVO.

Students who have successfully completed the IBMYP or the IGCSE can be admitted to the two-year [International Baccalaureate Diploma programme \(IB-DP\)](#).

The **IB diploma** is widely recognised as providing a well-balanced pre-university education. It is an accepted entrance qualification for top universities around the world.

Private schools may have different curricula for both junior and senior secondary school, but the American School of The Hague and the British School in the Netherlands also give students the option to follow the IB-DP in the final two years of highschool.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE Diploma Programme	A-LEVEL (UK)	AP (USA)
International qualification with IBO* based in Geneva	Internationally recognised UK based qualification	Internationally recognized US based qualification
Six subjects - 3 at standard level & 3 at higher level. Compulsory breadth.	Any 4 (or 5) subjects taken at AS level (Year 12). Three (or 4) of those subjects taken at A level. Free choice.	6 subject areas with many choices of courses within the subject areas. Free choice (37-38 courses to choose from)
All 6 subjects together with the 3 core elements TOK, CAS and Extended Essay form part of the IB diploma which will be awarded if all subjects have been passed	Individual subject qualifications can be taken and will be recognised.	Individual subject qualifications can be taken and will be recognized.
Regulated by IBO; independent of national governments	Regulated by QCA (UK government institution)	Regulated by the Advanced Placement Section of the US College Board
Linear assessment, i.e. no modules but final examination	Modular assessment, i.e. periodic examinations taken in modules	Internally assessed throughout the course, externally examined once/year at the end of the course (May)
Examinations can be retaken either in November of the same year or one year later	Modules can be retaken	Examinations cannot be retaken in the same year, but no limit as to the number of times an exam can be taken. An AP exam can be taken without taking the course (as a self-study)
Final assessment by external examination or internal assessment which is externally moderated	Final assessment by external examination or internal assessment which is externally moderated	Final assessment by external examination

Private schools may have different curricula for both junior and senior secondary school, but the American School of The Hague and the British School in the Netherlands also give students the option to follow either the national curriculum or the IB-DP in the final two years of highschool.

## SECONDARY LEVEL VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

If a student has successfully completed the IGCSE or IB-MYP but is not admitted to the IB-Diploma Programme, the MBO (3-4 years) might be a good option. In The Netherlands students can follow several english language programmes in e.g. Business and Hospitality ([www.mbo-raad.nl](http://www.mbo-raad.nl)). The IBO is currently developing a new curriculum, the IBCC.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher or tertiary education is offered at two different levels: vocational (HBO) and academic (WO).

### HOGESCHOLEN OR “UNIVERSITIES for Applied Sciences”

After having obtained the IB Diploma (and in some cases the IGCSE Diploma or an MBO Diploma) students can enroll in the so-called 'universities of applied sciences' (HBO, or *Hogeschool*), which provide third level vocational education. The HBO schools include institutions that offer general education as well as institutions specialising in one of the seven HBO sectors: agriculture, engineering and technology, economics and business administration, healthcare, fine and performing arts, education/teacher training, and social welfare.

Throughout the country many 'hogescholen' or 'universities of applied sciences' offer programmes in English. You may visit <http://www.hbo-raad.nl> for more information.

### UNIVERSITIES

In The Netherlands academic education or third level degree education (universiteit) is offered in Maastricht, Eindhoven, Tilburg, Nijmegen, Wageningen, Enschede, Groningen, Utrecht, Amsterdam (UvA, VU), Leiden, Delft, Rotterdam, and Middelburg.

University programmes are organised around a bachelor's or undergraduate phase lasting three years and a masters or graduate phase lasting one to two years. As many Dutch universities have partner institutions in other EU countries, students can study part of their course abroad.

Europe's Higher Education market is unifying rapidly. Increasingly, European students wish to compare their study options across national borders, also, Europe is becoming more attractive for students from overseas. Nevertheless, most information resources are still at a national level. Student's opportunities are rising fast, often they are not aware what their options are. The Mastersportal fills this information vacuum and helps students to find and choose Master's programmes across Europe. [StudyPortals](#) currently lists master programs in 23 European countries, and aims to stimulate student mobility and promote European Higher education.

## TEACHING IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is the only country in the world where the government subsidizes international education. This means that the teachers, with foreign teaching credentials who want to teach in The Netherlands, need to meet the standards, set by the Dutch Ministry of Education. In order to see if you will likely qualify along the rules and regulations you can obtain a personal information form from Educaide.

On basis of the provided information on the completed [form](#), Educaide will be able to give you proper advise on the roads to take in order to obtain the accreditation as well as other possible red-tape procedures. You can contact [teach@educaide.nl](mailto:teach@educaide.nl) for more information.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, or confused, you can visit the websites of [NUFFIC](#) (Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education) in The Hague, the [StudyPortals](#), the [DUO](#) in Groningen, [Foundation of International Education in the NL](#), [the International Parents Students Support Group of the NL](#), or [The Dutch International Schools](#) for additional information.

If you are looking for information about living in The Netherlands, you may check the following websites: [www.access-nl.org](http://www.access-nl.org), [www.expatica.com](http://www.expatica.com), [www.xpat.nl](http://www.xpat.nl), [www.hollandbooks.nl](http://www.hollandbooks.nl), and the website of [The Netherlands Foreign Investments Agency](#).