ISCED LEVELS

**ISCED 0: Early Childhood Education**
Programmes at this level are typically designed with a holistic approach to support children's early cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and introduce young children to organised instruction outside of the family context. ISCED level 0 refers to early childhood programmes that have an intentional education component.

**ISCED 1: Primary education**
Programmes at this level are typically designed to provide students with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics (i.e. literacy and numeracy) and establish a solid foundation for learning and understanding core areas of knowledge, personal and social development, in preparation for lower secondary education.
Age is typically the only entry requirement at this level. The customary or legal age of entry is usually not below 5 years old nor above 7 years old. This level typically lasts six years, although its duration can range between four and seven years.

**ISCED 2: Lower secondary education**
Programmes at this level are typically designed to build on the learning outcomes from ISCED level 1. Students enter ISCED level 2 typically between ages 10 and 13 (age 12 being the most common).

**ISCED 3: Upper secondary education**
Programmes at this level are typically designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education or provide skills relevant to employment, or both. Pupils enter this level typically between ages 14 and 16.

**ISCED 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education**
Post-secondary non-tertiary education provides learning experiences building on secondary education, preparing for labour market entry as well as tertiary education. Programmes at ISCED level 4, or post-secondary non-tertiary education, are typically designed to provide individuals who completed ISCED level 3 with non-tertiary qualifications required for progression to tertiary education or for employment when their ISCED level 3 qualifications do not grant such access. The completion of an ISCED level 3 programme is required to enter ISCED level 4 programmes.

**ISCED 5: Short-cycle tertiary education**
Programmes at this level are often designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Typically, they are practically based, occupationally-specific and prepare students to enter the labour market. However, these programmes may also provide a pathway to other tertiary education programmes. Entry into ISCED level 5 programmes requires the successful completion of ISCED level 3 or 4 with access to tertiary education.

**ISCED 6: Bachelors’ or equivalent level**
Programmes at this level are often designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. Entry into these programmes normally requires the successful completion of an ISCED level 3 or 4 programme with access to tertiary education. Entry may depend on subject choice and/or grades achieved at ISCED levels 3 and/or 4. Additionally, it may be required to take and succeed in entry examinations. Entry or transfer into ISCED level 6 is also sometimes possible after the successful completion of ISCED level 5.

**ISCED 7: Master’s or equivalent level**
Programmes at this level are often designed to provide participants with advanced academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a second degree or equivalent qualification. Typically, programmes at this level are theoretically-based but may include practical components and are informed by state of the art research and/or best professional practice. They are traditionally offered by universities and other tertiary educational institutions.

Entry into ISCED level 7 programmes preparing for a second or further degree normally requires the successful completion of an ISCED level 6 or 7 programme. In the case of long programmes that prepare for a first degree equivalent to a Master’s degree, entry requires the successful completion of an ISCED level 3 or 4 programme with access to tertiary education. Entry into such programmes may depend on subject choice and/or grades achieved at ISCED levels 3 and/or 4. Additionally, it may be required to take and succeed in entry examinations.

For the full details on each ISCED level, please consult: