



Knowledge  
Resource  
Exchange

# EDUCATION IN SAUDI ARABIA

*Presented by*

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February 12, 2015



# Agenda

PART I: Introduction

PART II: Education System of Saudi Arabia

PART III: Sample Credentials

PART IV: Q & A

# Part I: Introduction



# Country Overview



## KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Population: 27.345 million  
(Source: CIA World Factbook, 2014)
- Language of Instruction: Arabic
- Education is administered by the:
  - Ministry of Education
  - Ministry of Higher Education
  - Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC)
  - Academic year: September to June

# General Information: Secondary

Secondary-Level Enrollment	approximately 6,685,000 (2013)
Compulsory Education	Grade 6
Primary Enrollment	3,583,488 or 102.78% of eligible
Intermediate Enrollment	1,604,531 or 102% of eligible
Secondary Enrollment	1,497,111 or 116.17% of eligible
Literacy Rate	94.43%

Source: UNESCO and Central Department of Statics and Information, Saudi Arabia, 2013

# Student Mobility in 2013: Number of Saudi students in Canada

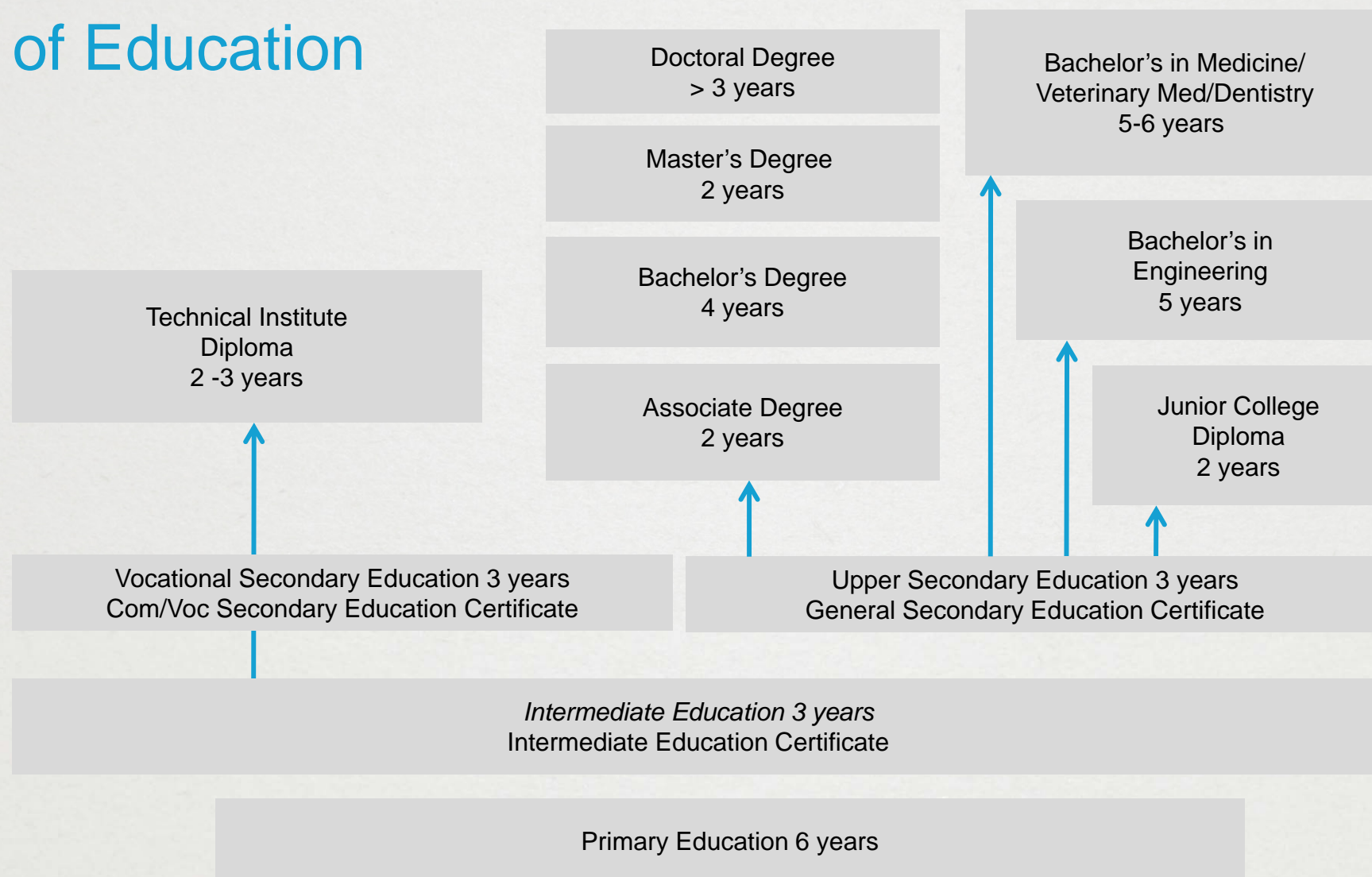
Source country	# of students (2013)	% of total IS population
China	95,160	32.42%
India	31,665	10.79%
South Korea	18,295	6.23%
Saudi Arabia	14,235	4.85%
France	13,090	4.46%
United States	12,065	4.11%
Japan	6,780	2.31%
Nigeria	6,080	2.07%
Mexico	5,370	1.83%
Iran	4,335	1.48%
Vietnam	3,990	1.36%
Hong Kong	3,835	1.31%
Brazil	3,415	1.16%
Pakistan	3,125	1.06%
Russia	2,970	1.01%
United Kingdom	2,775	0.95%
Taiwan	2,635	0.90%
Germany	2,605	0.89%
Morocco	2,140	0.73%
Bangladesh	2,120	0.72%
United Arab Emirates	1,960	0.67%
Turkey	1,875	0.64%
Philippines	1,785	0.61%
Malaysia	1,765	0.60%
Venezuela	1,610	0.55%
Ukraine	1,485	0.51%
Tunisia	1,360	0.46%
Thailand	1,330	0.45%
Colombia	1,305	0.44%
Libya	1,185	0.40%
Other source countries	41,140	14.03%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>293,485</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

14,235 students studying in Canada in 2013 compared to 6,765 in 2009/2010 academic year (*Canadian Arab Institute*).

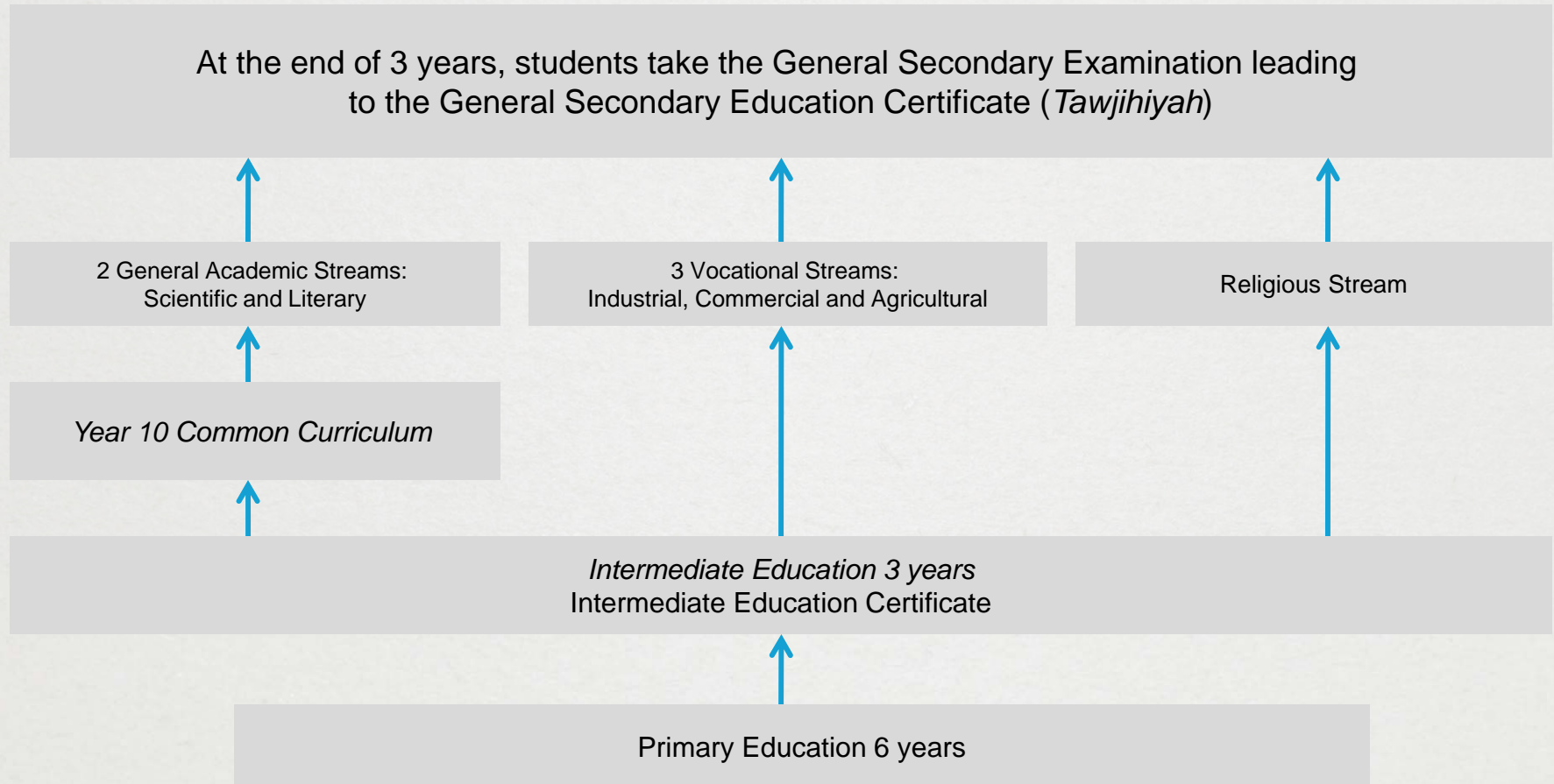
# Student Mobility: The King Abdullah Scholarship Program (KASP)

- Established in 2005
- Saudi government decides the majors students can choose from
- Renewed every 5 years
- Provides full scholarship, monthly stipend, medical coverage, roundtrip tickets
- Duration is 4 years for Bachelor's degrees, 2 years for Master's degrees and 3 years for Ph.Ds.
- Covers 1-year ESL training for students to prepare for academic programs
- The Saudi government currently invests \$2.4 Billion (US) in the KASP initiative
- Covers academic funding and living expenses for over 100,000 students

# Structure of Education



# Upper-Secondary Education System



## Part II: Secondary Education



# Secondary Education

- Secondary education administration and financing is centralized under the **Ministry of Education**
- Medium of instruction is Arabic
- Public and private secondary schools
- Private secondary schools follow curricula approved by the Ministry of Education
- Secondary education is administered by 44 regional Departments of Education
- Students follow national curricula and examinations are administered and supervised by the secondary schools
- English language studies begin at Grade 4

# Secondary Education: Curriculum

- Following the completion of intermediate education and after a common Year 10 curriculum students enter into specific streams
- **Upper Secondary** education is divided in three 3-year **branches: General Academic, Religious and Vocational**
- The **General Academic branch** is divided in two streams:
  - **Scientific / Literary**
- **The Vocational branch is divided in three streams:**
  - **Commercial / Agricultural / Industrial**
- At the end of Year 10 students are examined and those who average 60 percent or above in all subjects can choose between the scientific academic and vocational stream
- Those averaging 50-60 must enter the literary stream. Entry to religious schooling is based on performance at intermediate school

# Upper-Secondary Curriculum (Scientific Stream)

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Courses	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Religious Education	5	5	5
Arabic Language and Literature	6	3	3
Social Sciences	2	-	-
Natural Sciences	6	13	13
Mathematics	5	6	6
English Language	4	4	4
Computer Science	2	2	2
Library and Research	1	-	-
National Education	1	1	1
Physical Education	1	1	1
General Activities	1	1	1
<b>Total Weekly Periods:</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>

Number of weekly periods per year. A period means an hour of instruction time in a subject.

# Upper-Secondary: Qualifications

- General Elementary Education Certificate
- Intermediate School Certificate  
(*Shahadat Al-Kafa'at Al-Mutawassita*)
- Secondary Education Certificate  
(*Shahadat al-Thanawiyyah al-'Aama* or *Shahadat al-Marhalat al-Thanawiyyat*)
- Secondary Vocational School Diploma  
(Industrial, Commercial, or Agricultural)  
(*Diplom al-Madaaris al-Thanawiyyah al-Mihaniyyah*)

# Secondary Education: Tawjihiyah

- At the end of three years, students take the General Secondary Examination leading to the General Secondary Education Certificate (*Tawjihiyah*).
- Passing Grade: The passing mark is 50%.
- The examination counts for 70% of a student's final secondary school grade, with the remaining 30% being derived from prior classroom assessments.
- Grading at the secondary level tends to be towards the upper level, with a lot of high marks in the upper 80s, 90s, and even perfect scores.
- Students who graduate from secondary school can apply for tertiary study depending on the stream of education completed.
- Graduates of religious secondary schools can only go on to study in the humanities or social sciences at the university level.

# Secondary Grading System

Saudi Grades	Canada Equivalents
90-100 (Excellent)	A
75-89 (Very Good)	B
60-74 (Good)	C
50-59 (Pass)	D
0-49 (Fail)	F

# Secondary Documents

## Required Documents Checklist

- General Secondary Education Certificate (Tawjihiyah)  
– available only in Arabic
- General Secondary Certificate/School Transcript  
(last three years or, last year)
- Transcripts issued in English by the MOE and sent by the  
Regional Governorate of Education

# How to Obtain Authentic Secondary Documents

What is the degree of difficulty in obtaining authentic secondary documents?

- Documents can be obtained directly from the regional offices of the MOE

How long does it take for the regional offices of the MOE to send secondary documents?

- Documents are sent within a few days of request by student
- Documents are most often sent by DHL, Fed Ex, UPS, etc

# How to Obtain Authentic Secondary Documents

## How are the secondary documents received?

- Dual language documents (English and Arabic)
- Signed by the Director General of Education of the regional office at the MOE
- Envelopes bear the logo of the MOE
- Envelopes are stamped on the back flap with the stamp of the regional office of the MOE

# Regional Offices of the MOE

وزارة التربية والتعليم بالمملكة العربية السعودية Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia

الأربعاء 23 شوال 1432 هـ | Wednesday 21 September 2011

الوزارة الإدارات العامة إدارات التربية والتعليم الخدمات الإلكترونية

## وزارة التربية والتعليم

إدارة التربية والتعليم بالرياض	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بعبدة	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمهد	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالنماص	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بوادي الدواسر	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم ببيشة	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بحفر الباطن	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالأفلاج	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالقريات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بمحافظة محاليل	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالزلفي	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بعفيف	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بعسير	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمدينة - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالشرقية - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالطائف - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالنماص - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالرياض - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بجدة - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بتيوك - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالأحساء - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بوادي الدواسر - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بالدمي - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بعفيف - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بينبع - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بعسير - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم للبنات بالقوية	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل
إدارة التربية والتعليم بحائل - بنات	إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة حائل

آخر تحديث 1432-5-4هـ

Source: <http://www.moe.gov.sa/Pages/Default.aspx>

# Regional Offices of the MOE

الثلاثاء 22 شوال 1432 هـ | Tuesday 20 September 2011



E-Services

Education departments

Public administrations

Ministry

## Ministry of Education

Department of Education, Riyadh  
 Department of Education and the city  
 Department of Education in Taif  
 Department of Education in Najran  
 Department of Education, Al-Jouf  
 Department of Education in Hail  
 Department of Education, Al-Baha  
 Department of Education and the brightest men  
 Department of Education Aldawadmi  
 Department of Education in Yanbu  
 Department of Education Anayzah  
 Department of Education Majma'ah  
 Department of Education Balguenvzh  
 Department of Education in Makkah  
 Department of Education Sabya  
 Department of Education, Al-Kharj  
 Department of Education, Al-Ola  
 Department of Education Bhoth Bani Tamim  
 Department of Education Bashqra  
 Department of Education, Province Kowaiyia  
 Department of Education in Makkah  
 Department of Education, Qassim  
 Department of Education Ahsa  
 Department of Education in Jeddah  
 Department of Education, Eastern Region  
 Department of Education, Tabuk  
 Department of Education in Jizan  
 Department of Education Northern border  
**Department of Education Balgat - Girls**

Department of Education Rass  
 Department of Education Bsrah Obeida  
 Department of Education cradle  
 Department of Education Balnmas  
 Department of Education and the Valley of propellants  
 Department of Education Bisha  
 Department of Education, Gov.  
 Department of Education Aflaj  
 Department of Education Qurayat  
 Department of Education, Province ISO Quality  
 Department of Education Balzifa  
 Department of Education Bafeef  
 Department of Education and Asir  
 Department of Education and the city - Girls  
 Department of Education, Eastern Region - Girls  
 Department of Education in Taif - Girls  
 Department of Education Balnmas - Girls  
 Department of Education in Riyadh - Girls  
 Department of Education, Jeddah - Girls  
 Department of Education, Tabuk - Girls  
 Department of Education Ahsa - Girls  
 Department of Education, Valley propellants - Girls  
 Department of Education Aldawadmi - Girls  
 Department of Education Bafeef - Girls  
 Department of Education in Yanbu - Girls  
 Department of Education and Asir - Girls  
 Department of Education & Sports  
 Department of Education, Hail - Girls

Last updated 04/05/1432 e

# Section III: Higher Education



# Higher Education: Administration

## Ministry of Higher Education

- Public and private universities

## Technical and Vocational Training Corporation

- Technical and vocational institutions

## Saudi Commission for Health Specialties

- Health-related public and private institutions

## Additional government agencies

- Ministry of Religious Affairs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of the Interior
- Ministry of Defense

# Language of Instruction

- Medium of instruction is Arabic
  
- English as the language of instruction:
  - Private institutions of higher education
  - Medical fields
  - English instruction is compulsory in the preparatory/freshman year

- In May of 2014 the Saudi government approved a five-year plan worth \$21.33 billion to develop the country's education system
- That is on top of the 25% of the Kingdom's overall budget for 2014 that has been dedicated to education, approximately \$56 billion, and one of the largest in the world
- The 2014 budget includes provisions for the creation 8 new universities and the development of new campuses and facilities in newly opened universities
- An estimated \$1.39 billion has been dedicated to new vocational and technical projects
- Finally, \$5.9 billion has been allocated to finance overseas scholarship programs for 200,000 Saudi students and their families

# Types of institutions: Universities

## Universities: Public and Private

- Public universities are typically larger than private universities, and are comprised of many colleges and faculties
- Some are single sex, although co-educational universities operate with segregated classes
- Most research activity takes place at large public universities
- Public universities operate under royal decree
- In April of 2014 an additional 3 universities were issued royal decrees
- There are currently 25 public universities and 9 private universities
- Private universities tend to be much smaller and focused at the undergraduate level in specific disciplines
- Private universities operate under licensure from the Ministry of Higher Education



# General Information: Undergraduate

- 25 public universities in 2013
- University enrollment: 1,165,093
- Undergraduate enrollment: 1,064,880
- Kind Abdulaziz University largest enrollment: 177,234
- King Faisal University 134,942
- Overall tertiary enrollment: 50.94% of eligible
- Saudi Arabia invests 10% of its overall budget in higher education

# Types of institutions: Non-University Institutions

## Community colleges:

- Offering two- to three-year degree programs in a range of fields
- Attached to public universities
- Have articulation pathways to bachelor's degree programs

## Girls' Colleges:

- Tend to be specialized institutions offering limited fields of study, many specializing in education
- Offer associate and bachelor degrees, some colleges offer a few graduate programs
- Require higher credit loads than other programs
- In 2005 a number of girls' colleges merged to form the Riyadh University for Women, now the Princess Nora Bint Abdulrahman University
- Others just joined existing universities based on geographical location



# Types of institutions: Vocational/Technical

## Industrial and Vocational Institutes:

- Award labor-market-focused certificates and diplomas
- Accept males only
- There are currently 70 institutes across the country

## Colleges of Technology:

- Award a range of qualifications from certificates to bachelor's degrees
- Accept males only
- Highly competitive
- There are currently 35 institutes across the country

## Private Colleges:

- The vast majority of technical and vocational institutions
- Represent half of all technical and vocational enrollments
- Entry tends to be much less competitive than for the public colleges and institutes



# Qualifications Framework and Quality Assurance

- The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was established in 2009 by the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA).
- NCAAA is Saudi Arabia's higher education regulatory and quality assurance agency.
- The NQF is intended to ensure consistency within the Kingdom in the standards of student learning outcomes regardless of institution attend.
- The framework is based on credit requirements and the learning outcomes that each program is expected to develop.
- Accreditation decisions from the NCAAA are valid for seven years.
- All qualifications awarded by public universities and private colleges must comply with the National Qualifications Framework.

# Degree Structure

- Public universities and private colleges award qualifications that must comply with the National Qualifications Framework
- Higher education system is patterned after the United States
- Undergraduate curricula offer a wide range of general education and elective courses along with the degree specialization
- Academic year is organized in a semester basis
- A non-credit foundation/preparatory year is offered by most universities

# Admission Requirements

- General Secondary Education Certificate
- Entry to specific programs is based on the secondary stream, scores acquired in the General Secondary Education Certificate, and performance on aptitude (qudrat) and proficiency (tahseeli) tests.
- Some programs require completion of a preparatory year first

# Programs and Degrees

Level	Qualification	Credit Requirement
Entry	Secondary School Certificate	N/A
1	Associate Diploma	30 (one year)
2	Diploma or Associate Degree	60 (two years)
2.5	Advanced Diploma	90 (three years)
3	Bachelor Degree (BA, B.Sc)	120 (four years)
4	Higher Diploma Graduate Diploma Postgraduate Diploma	24
5	Master (Science or Arts)	24 to 39
6	Doctor of Philosophy	12 to 30

Source: NCAAA



# Credit Hours

- Periods of study are quantified in credits.
- The Saudi credit system suggests 15 credit hours per semester as a full-time undergraduate load, and 30 credit hours in an academic year.
- Credit hour calculations are based on a formula in which one 50-minute lecture, or two or three 50-minute laboratory or tutorial sessions over a 15-week teaching semester are regarded as one credit hour.
- Higher education programs in professional fields often include periods of fieldwork or internship

# Level 1 Qualifications

- The *Associate Diploma* requires the completion of a minimum of 30 credits following at least one year of full-time study.
- Professionally focused in administrative and para-professional fields.
- Focus on general education as an introductory postsecondary programs.
- Holders of the Associate Diploma typically use it as a basis for further study towards a higher qualification



# Level 2 Qualifications

- The *Diploma* requires two years of full-time study and is offered in administrative and para-professional fields specific to a particular profession.
- The *Associate Degree* is awarded after a minimum of 60 and a maximum of 90 credit hours of full-time study.
- Associate Degrees in professional fields must consist of at least 50 percent specialization subjects.
- The *Advanced Diploma* is an intermediate degree between Level 2 and Level 3 that is not included on the NQF, but requires at least 90 credit hours and may be awarded as an early exit qualification in a Bachelor Degree program.



# Level 3 Qualifications

- The *Bachelor Degree* is awarded after a minimum of 120 credit hours, normally following four academic years of full-time study.
- Undergraduate curricula offer a wide range of general education and elective courses along with degree specialization, much like in the U.S. system.
- Students often also take a non-credit-bearing preparatory year before starting their bachelor program, especially those pursuing engineering degrees
- Professional fields: Architecture, Pharmacy, Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dentistry, and Engineering usually require five or more years of full-time study.



# Level 4 Qualifications

- The *Higher Diploma* (or graduate diploma) is awarded after completion of a minimum of 24 credit hours.
- The program offers advanced academic or professional training in an existing specialization.
- Although intended as a final qualification, students completing a Higher Diploma may proceed to further study at the Master's level.



# Level 5 Qualifications

- The *Master's Degree* is awarded after a minimum of 24 credit hours of coursework plus a thesis (8 credits) in a research degree program, or 39 credit hours for coursework plus a significant project.
- Typically programs will be structured with one year of coursework and one year of thesis work, or two years of coursework with a major research project.



# Level 6 Qualifications

- The *Doctor of Philosophy* requires a minimum of 30 credit hours of advanced coursework plus a major dissertation normally taken over two full-time academic years following a Master's Degree.
- An alternative program structure with greater concentration on independent research is available in selected fields at some institutions involving a minimum of 12 credit hours and a more extensive dissertation.



# Most Common Grading Scale for Higher Education

Saudi Equivalent	Canada Equivalent
5/4.75, A+/A	A
4.5, B+	B
4, B	B
3.5, C+	C+
3, C	C+
2.5, D+	C
2, D/SC	C
1, F	F

# Most Common Grading Scale for Higher Education

Saudi Equivalent	Canada Equivalent
4.0, A	A
3.67, A-	A-
3.33, B+	B+
3.0, B	B
2.67, B-	B-
2.33, C+	C+
2.00, C	C
1.67, C-	C-
1.33, D+	D+
1.00, D	D
0.67, D-	D-
0, F	F

# Higher Education Documents

- Clear, legible photocopies of all degree certificates or diplomas issued in English by the institutions attended e.g. Bachelor, Master, Ph.D.

- AND -

- **Academic transcripts issued by the institutions attended sent directly to your office for all post-secondary programs.**
- **For completed doctoral programs, a letter confirming the awarding of the degree sent directly from the institution.**



# How to Obtain Authentic Higher Education Documents

## What is the degree of difficulty in obtaining authentic post-secondary documents?

- Documents can be obtained directly from the attending higher education institution
- How long does it take for the higher education institutions to send post-secondary documents?
- Documents are sent within a few days of request by student
- Documents are most often sent by DHL, Fed Ex, UPS, etc



# How to Obtain Authentic Higher Education Documents

## How are the post-secondary documents received?

- Dual language degree certificates (English and Arabic)
- Signed by appropriate higher education officials, ie. College Dean/Vice Dean for Trainees' Services (TVTC), Dean of Admissions and Registration/Dean of Graduate Studies (Universities)
- Envelopes bear the logo of the issuing institution/authority
- Envelopes are stamped on the back flap with the stamp of the issuing institution/authority



# Online Resources

- Ministry of Higher Education  
<http://www.mohe.gov.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx> (English)
- Ministry of Education  
<http://www.moe.gov.sa/Pages/Default.aspx> (Arabic)
- Technical and Vocational Training Cooperation  
<http://www.tvtc.gov.sa/English/Pages/default.aspx> (English)
- WES Saudi Arabia Required Documents <http://www.wes.org/required/index.asp>
- WENR: Education in Saudi Arabia <http://www.wes.org/ewenr/01nov/practical.htm>
- WENR: Education in Saudi Arabia <http://wenr.wes.org/2014/11/higher-education-in-saudi-arabia/>
- <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/worldwide/unesco-regions/arab-states/saudi-arabia.html>



# QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS



Please enter your questions into the chat box to your right (send to Host and Presenter)