



5. An Educational Overview

Many changes have been instituted regarding the regulations and school systems since the 1902 Ching Dynasty “Regulations Governing the Establishment of Schools” was first introduced. Over the years, Taiwan has revised its educational policies to fit and meet the needs of its society. The following items will present a brief overview of Taiwan’s present education system.

1. The Educational Process

The present education structure supports 22 years of formal study. Completion times are flexible, depending upon the needs of the students. Normally, the entire process requires 2 years of preschool education, 6 years of primary school, 3 years of junior high, 3 years of senior high school, 4-7 years of college or university, 1-4 years of a graduate school program, and 2-7 years of a doctoral degree program.

2. Compulsory Education for Primary and Junior High School Students

In 1968 (SY68), a compulsory education program for primary and junior high school students, of Taiwan, Kinmen, and Matsu was implemented. A trial ten-year compulsory education program was launched in 1994 (SY94) and implemented nationwide in 1996 (SY96). This program is designed to integrate junior high school and senior vocational school curricula. Junior high school students, who are interested in

beginning a program in vocational training, could now do so during the last year of their junior high school for two years. This specifically designed program addresses their needs and allows them to receive the relevant occupational training that they would need, since they are not going on for further education.

3. Senior High and Senior Vocational Education

There are two types of institutions for students above the junior high school level. They are senior high and senior vocational schools, both being taken three years to complete. Senior vocational schools have seven areas of specialization, agriculture, industry (engineering), commerce, maritime, medical technology and nursing, home economics, and opera and arts.

4. Junior College Education

Junior colleges fall into two categories, each having a different set of admission requirements. Currently, five-year junior colleges will admit junior high school graduates, while two-year



junior colleges will admit senior vocation high school graduates.

5. Teacher Education and Training Programs

In Taiwan, teacher training programs are available at the higher education level and the duration of studies is four years. Those programs fall into the following two categories: (1) programs for training teachers of the secondary schools and institutions; and (2) programs for training teachers of primary schools and kindergartens. The former are mainly offered by normal universities while the latter are chiefly offered by teachers colleges. In addition, universities with the department or college of education or offering the teacher education programs are eligible for teacher training education.

6. University Education

University undergraduate programs require four years of study; however, students who are unable to fulfill their requirements within the designated time, may be granted extensions, up to two years. Specialized undergraduate programs such as dentistry or medicine require six to seven years, including an internship period of one year.

7. Graduate Education

Graduate programs leading to a master or doctoral degree requires one to four years and two to seven years respectively. But students who enter the graduate school as part of on-the-job training can be granted an extension, if they fail to finish the required course or to complete their thesis/dissertation in time. The specifics will be given in the school regulations of each university.



8. Special Education

Only designated schools are allowed to admit students who are mentally and physically challenged. Special education in preschool and primary school requires at least six years, in junior high school, three years, and in senior high and senior vocational school, three years. Otherwise special classes are offered to regular education institutions, including primary, junior, and senior high schools. At the university and college level, resource classes are provided for blind and deaf students.

9. Supplementary Education

Supplementary Education provides citizens with alternative way to achieve their educational goals. Supplementary education is classified into five categories: primary school, junior high school, senior high (vocational) school, junior college, and open university program leading to a degree.

Note: A school year (SY) refers to a one-year period from August 1 of the current year to July 31 of the next year. For instance, SY2002 covered a period from August 1, 2002 to July 31, 2003.



The Current School System



