

Educational Systems of Swaziland:

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Education in Swaziland is not required and it is not free for the majority of students. The Swaziland education system is made up of three parts:

Primary Education

- Primary education consists of seven levels. The first two are called Grades one and two and the next five years are called Standards one to five.
- Primary education starts around ages six or seven, and most kids in Swaziland, about ninety three percent, obtain a primary education.
- As of January 2010, the first two years (Grades one and two) are free, and the Swazi government is looking to expand the number of years of free education as much as their funds allow.
- During Primary education, children in school study English, siSwati (the Swazi language), math, science, social sciences. Some schools teach classes in agriculture, home economics, physical education and developmental studies.
- At the end of the seven years, the Swaziland Primary Certificate Exam is administered, which helps determine which students are eligible for continuing their education.

Secondary Education

- Secondary education is not free, and only about twenty percent of children of school age are able to go to primary school, mostly because families need their children working on farms at home or because they can only afford to send one child to school. Availability of spaces also accounts for the chance that a student has of going to a secondary school.
- The first three years of secondary school are called Forms I to III. Completion of these years results in the student earning their Junior Certificate, or J.C. by the Swaziland Ministry of Education. The J.C. is the most common entry-level qualification for employment.
- The curriculum for a J.C. includes English, integrated sciences, math, and siSwati as its core and also includes development studies, history, geography, and practical subjects like book-keeping or agriculture.
- During the next two years, Forms IV and V, students study for the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (C.O.S.C.) examinations at the Ordinary (O) level.
- There is a Form VI in which students prepare for their Advanced (A) level examinations, but it is only offered at three schools in the entire country.
- There are two possible paths to take the C.O.S.C. exams:
- The arts curriculum includes English, math and biology, siSwati or French, geography, history, two subjects of development studies, and one practical subject.
- The Cambridge Science curriculum includes English, math, biology, and physical science.

Tertiary Education

- Only about five percent of students of schooling age will receive a tertiary education.
- Schooling is paid for by the government for students who qualify for a higher education.
- The government sponsors the University of Swaziland (UNISWA), which has two campuses. Aside from the two campuses, there are three teacher-training colleges, two nursing colleges, vocational institutions, and the Swaziland College of Technology.

- In order to be admitted to degree courses at college, the C.O.S.C. and a credit in English and math is required. Students who meet this requirement may go on to earn a bachelors degree, a masters, or even a Ph.D.
- Degrees in the arts, sciences, commerce, education, and law are available, with supplementary courses offered in accounting, business management, and marketing.
- Grades are given on an A to F scale. Earning an A is very unlikely, and Bs and Cs are considered to be strong grades. A D is a respectable grade, but anything lower than a D is not passing.