



Statement

Junior general secondary education in the Netherlands (mavo)

In 1999 the Dutch junior general secondary education (**middelbaar algemeen voortgezet onderwijs - mavo**) merged with the pre-vocational education (voorbereidend beroepsonderwijs - vbo) into the pre-vocational secondary education (voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs - vmbo). mavo was covered by the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and was funded entirely by central government. It was governed by the Secondary Education Act (Wet op het voortgezet onderwijs – WVO).

The course had a nominal duration of four years (age 12 to 16), after eight years of primary education (age 4 to 12), and was part of the system of general secondary education.

Mavo should be regarded principally as a preparatory course for various forms of further education, including upper secondary vocational education (middelbaar beroepsonderwijs - mbo). Mavo diploma holders also had the possibility to be admitted to the fourth year of senior general secondary education (hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs - havo), depending on the level at which they sat their examinations.

Pupils had to sit examinations in six subjects, Dutch and one foreign language being compulsory while the other four were optional.

Pupils had to choose to sit their examinations at either of two levels, the lower of these, C- level, being sufficient to gain admission to many mbo courses, though this varied from school to school and from course to course. The higher D-level also gave access to the mbo and was generally needed if pupils were to go on to havo. In addition, those who passed the mavo examinations at C- and D-level had many opportunities to continue their studies in other areas of secondary education, for example in the apprenticeship scheme.

To enable a comparison with the marking system in another country, here is an explanation of the marks 1 to 10 in the Dutch system:

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 10 - excellent | 5 - almost satisfactory |
| 9 - very good | 4 - unsatisfactory |
| 8 - good | 3 - very unsatisfactory |
| 7 - very satisfactory | 2 - poor |
| 6 - satisfactory (pass) | 1 - very poor |