



Statement

pre-university education ('VWO') nature and health profile

from 2014 onwards

The aim of this course of education is to ensure that pupils develop in broad sense and to prepare them for entry into academic higher education ('WO').

VWO is the collective name for two types of education. It includes the *gymnasia* (where classical languages are a compulsory part of the curriculum) and the *athenea* (without classical languages).

According to Article 7.24 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), pupils with a VWO diploma may be admitted to a Dutch university or to higher professional education (HBO). Additional requirements may be set for admission to an HBO programme or a university programme, depending on the VWO profile chosen. Candidates who do not meet these additional requirements are obliged by the institution concerned to take a preparatory examination in the relevant subject. The educational institution determines how this obligation is fulfilled.

The curriculum for VWO consists of a core phase (the first three years of study) and an advanced phase (the last three years of study).

This programme has been categorized at level 4+ within the Dutch Qualification Framework (NLQF). The NLQF level is comparable to level 4 of the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

NLQF level: 4+

EQF level: 4

A profile for the advanced phase must be selected at the end of the core phase. A profile consists of a cohesive programme of education which prepares pupils for their subsequent education. Four profiles are available:

- nature and technology
- **nature and health**
- economics and society
- culture and society

For each profile, the education and examination package for VWO consists of:

- one component which is common to all profiles: the common component;
- a profile-specific component, which is specific to that profile;
- a free-choice component, in which pupils may choose a minimum of one subject, depending on the chosen profile.

In order to enable a comparison between the Dutch system of assessment and the systems of assessment that are in place in other countries, each grade between 1 and 10 is described below:

10 - outstanding
9 - very good
8 - good
7 - more than satisfactory
6 - satisfactory

5 - almost satisfactory
4 - unsatisfactory
3 - very unsatisfactory
2 - poor
1 - very poor

The final examination consists of two parts: the school examination and the central examination. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science determines the programme of examinations for the entire final examination. This includes a decision regarding which material must be examined and how this material is to be divided between the school examination and the central examination. The profile paper is part of the school examination. The paper demonstrates that the pupil has sufficient knowledge, insight and skills in relation to that particular profile. The final examination includes a compulsory arithmetic test. The arithmetic test is separate from the subject of mathematics. The arithmetic test determines whether the pupil has sufficient understanding, knowledge and skills in relation to performing calculations.

The programme has a nominal duration of six years (ages 12 to 18 years). It begins after eight years of primary education (ages 4 to 12 years), and is part of the Dutch system of general secondary education. VWO is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and is fully funded by national government. This type of education is regulated by the Secondary Education Act ('WVO').