



THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF MADAGASCAR

(source: Ministry of National Education of Madagascar – Educational Advisor)

Madagascar operates on a 5-4-3-4 system:	Primary School	--	5 years
	Junior Secondary School	--	4 years
	Senior Secondary School	--	3 years
	University Bachelor’s degree	--	4 years

Language: Madagascar’s official language of instruction has been successively switching from French to Malagasy over the past years. At a given time, during the 70’s and 80’s, the Government of Madagascar attempted to use Malagasy as the only medium of instruction which later turned out to be a failure. Thus, the following decade witnessed a strong push for French even in public schools. However, French has not totally overshadowed Malagasy. In addition to this well-established bilingualism in the Malagasy education, the Government has recently announced English as the third official language of the country. Introduction of English in primary schools has become one of the current focal points of the global government policy. However, French remains the major language of instruction as far as tertiary education is concerned.

Structure of Educational system: Education is compulsory for children aged between six and eleven. The current education system provides primary schooling for five years, from ages six to eleven. Secondary education lasts for seven years and is divided into two parts: a junior secondary level of four years from ages twelve to fifteen and a senior secondary level of three years from ages sixteen to eighteen. At the end of the junior level, graduates receive a certificate, and at the end of the senior level, graduates receive the Baccalaureat (the equivalent of a high school diploma), commonly called “Bacc.” A vocational secondary school system, the *Collège professionnel* (vocational school), is the equivalent of the junior secondary level: The *Collège technique* (Technical school), which awards the Baccalaureat technique (technical diploma) is the equivalent of the senior level. This diploma opens door to university studies. The government is currently in the process of transitioning to the LMD system.

Senior Secondary School: At the end of ninth grade, Malagasy students take the Brevet d’Etudes du Premier Cycle (BEPC) to be admitted to the last three years of Senior Secondary School. To finish high school, students take the final public exam “Baccalaureat” at the end of senior level or twelfth grade. Each provincial city has its own leading public high schools and vocational high schools. Antananarivo, the capital, has for example four major high schools -- Lycee Andohalo, Lycee Faravohitra, Lycee Rabearivelo, and Lycee Ampefiloha. The other five provincial cities also have their respective main high school as shown below:

Toamasina:	Lycee Rabemananjara
Fianarantsoa:	Lycee Fianarantsoa
Mahajanga:	Lycee Philibert Tsiranana
Antsiranana:	Lycee Joffre
Tulear:	Lycee Botokeky

Most public High Schools require core curriculum composed of Malagasy, foreign languages (English, Spanish, and German), Mathematics, Science, and Philosophy. Depending on the option students have taken, (Serie A or C or D), they may take some elective subjects, i.e. Science students may choose to take English as elective subject and a student of Human Studies Physics or Biology.

The secondary school transcript should contain grade (out of 20) for each subject, for each of three terms, for the three years of senior secondary school, equivalent to the tenth through twelfth grades. Students’ Term Reports (report cards) contain rank in class for each subject as well as grades for classwork and end of term exams. The grading system is akin to the French system which displays the grades out of 20. The passing grade is 10 out of 20 (or 10/20). High school students may exceptionally be awarded full grade (20/20) but transcripts with all 20s are unlikely to be genuine. In general, best students’ GPA would be 17 to 18/20.

At the end of Senior Secondary School (twelfth grade), all students take the Bacc which is given nationwide in mid-July each year, but the results are not available until the following October.

The minimum university standard for admission to post-secondary education is a 10/20. But since the entrance to the university has become competitive through exams, the passing grade has been raised up to 12/20 to 14/20 depending on the departments, which unfortunately dismisses so many mid-level students.

University Education:

The University of Madagascar maintains six separate, independent branches in Antananarivo, Antsiranana, Fianarantsoa, Toamasina, Toliara, and Mahajanga. The university system consists of several faculties, including law and economics, sciences and letters and human sciences and numerous schools that specialize in public administration, management, medicine, social welfare, public works, and agronomy. Universities, technical institutes of higher education and teacher training colleges, mainly provide higher education. The universities are autonomous institutions. Each university is headed by a President of University (formerly called "Rector") and administered by a Board of Directors (Conseil d'Administration). Public polytechnics offer five-year Higher National Diplomas in engineering, agronomy, computer science and technology fields. Some private institutions are also accredited by the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research.

Main grading system used by higher education institutions:

Marking scale: 0 (zero) to 20; 20 being the highest score

Passing scale: 10 out of 20

Grading system for thesis defense:

10-12: Passing; 12-14: Honorable mention; 14-16: Honors; 16-18: High Honors; 18 and above: Superior Honors

Degrees:

Licence, a three-year degree (not to be confounded with Bachelor's degree)

Maitrise, 4-year degree (equivalent to the US Bachelor's)

Diplome d'Etudes Approfondies (equivalent to the US Master's degree)

Doctorat, Ph. D level degree (only could be earned in a very few fields of study)

Madagascar's tertiary institutions: Université d'Antananarivo - Université de Toamasina - Université de Fianarantsoa - Université de Mahajanga - Université d'Antsiranana - Université de Toliara

Leading private tertiary schools:

Institut National des Sciences de Comptabilité et Administration d'Entreprises (INSCAE)

Institut Catholique de Madagascar (ICM)

Institut Supérieur de Comptabilité, d'Administration et de Management (ISCAM)

Malagasy in the United States: 136 Malagasy students (the highest rate ever recorded), from both public and private schools, are enrolled in U.S. institutions.

Testing: SAT, TOEFL, GRE are offered in paper-based format at the American Cultural Center, the only authorized opening center in Madagascar. Supplemental test dates are negotiated with ETS and College Board if deemed necessary. SAT and TOEFL are three to four times a year whereas GRE once or twice based on requests. GMAT, however, is no longer offered in Madagascar. Students who wish to take it have to travel to neighboring countries such as Mauritius, South Africa or Kenya.

Educational Advising: The Educational Advising Center in Antananarivo sponsored by the Public Affairs Section of the United States Embassy serve over 4,000 students per year in a wide range of programs designed to strengthen students' applications and their readiness for U.S. higher education. We are eager to work with you to make it possible for more Malagasy students to enroll in your institution. Please contact the Educational Advisor, in Antananarivo:

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