

Diploma Description

Issued to: Mr / Ms X

The Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (Nuffic) is an independent, non-profit foundation working closely with Dutch universities and other institutions of higher education. Nuffic prepares Diploma Descriptions for those who hold Dutch educational qualifications and who wish to work or study abroad. These descriptions aim to provide information about these qualifications as well as to offer a suggestion for the evaluation of these qualifications in the country in which they are presented. Relevant features of the higher education system, as well as the status of Nuffic, are outlined in the Notes below.

Mr/Ms X is a graduate of the [name of Dutch educational institution] in the Netherlands. This [hogeschool/university] is a [university of applied sciences / research university], offering [hoger beroepsonderwijs (HBO - higher professional education) / wetenschappelijk onderwijs (WO – academic education)]. This institution is recognized by Dutch law and authorized to award nationally recognized titles and degrees. Mr/Ms X obtained the degree of Bachelor of [...] in [yyyy] upon completion of 4 years of full-time [higher professional / academic] education. Possible addition: In the Netherlands, the degree of [...] gives the right to practise the profession of [...] without further licensing or examination.

In Nuffic's opinion, the Bachelor of [...] obtained by Mr/Ms X is comparable to a bachelor's degree in [...] awarded by [name of destination country] universities.

The higher education system

The Netherlands has a binary system of higher education: academic education (*wetenschappelijk onderwijs, WO*), traditionally offered by research universities, and higher professional education (*hoger beroepsonderwijs, HBO*), traditionally offered by *hogescholen*, or universities of applied sciences. The system is organized around a three-cycle degree system awarding bachelor, master and PhD degrees. Programmes offered by universities of applied sciences prepare students for particular professions and tend to be more practically oriented. Programmes offered by research universities focus on theoretical aspects of the discipline in question and provide the necessary skills for independent research.

For admission to bachelor's programmes offered by universities of applied sciences, the minimum requirement is the *HAVO*-diploma. This is a secondary school diploma obtained after completion of 12 years of primary and general secondary education.

For admission to bachelor's programmes offered by research universities, the *VWO* diploma is required. This is a secondary school diploma obtained after completion of 13 years of primary and general secondary education. Students who have successfully completed the first year of study at a university of applied sciences are also eligible for admission.

Titles

The Higher Education and Research Act regulates the award of *HBO* titles and degrees. Graduates of an *HBO* programme in technical and agricultural sciences receive the title of *ingenieur*, abbreviated to *ing.* Graduates in all other disciplines obtain the title of *baccalaureus*, abbreviated to *bc.*

Grading and credit system

The grading system used in higher education in the Netherlands is on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 10 (outstanding). The lowest passing grade is 6; 9s are seldom given and 10s are extremely rare. The workload is measured in ECTS credits, which include both contact hours and hours spent studying and preparing assignments. One ECTS credit represents 28 hours of full-time study and 60 credits represent one year.



One of the main goals of Nuffic is to strengthen international cooperation in higher education. In the Netherlands, its main partners are the universities and other institutions of higher education, and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

In the international context, Nuffic maintains close contact with universities and Ministries abroad, and participates in the networks for international credential evaluation. By appointment of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Nuffic serves as National Equivalence Information Centre for the European Union (NARIC), and the Council of Europe and UNESCO (ENIC). It is also the National Contact Point for professional recognition under the European Directive (2005/36/EC). Within Nuffic, these three functions have been delegated to the International Recognition Department. Among other things, this department gives information and advice about education systems and educational qualifications in the Netherlands and other countries, and how these may be compared.

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