



Statement

Senior general secondary education in the Netherlands (havo, until 1999)

Havo (hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs) is covered by the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and is funded entirely by central government. It is governed by the Secondary Education Act (Wet op het voortgezet onderwijs – WVO).

The course has a normal duration of five years (age 12 to 17), after eight years of primary education (age 4 to 12), and is part of the system of general secondary education.

The aim is to provide pupils with a general secondary education, and to prepare them for entrance to higher professional education. Though havo diploma holders are entitled to admission to higher professional education, applicants may be required by ministerial order to have past the final examination in one or two specified subjects in order to be admitted to certain courses.

Persons who do not meet these requirements may be asked by the faculty concerned to sit a preparatory examination in the subject or subjects in question. The board of the chosen institution decides how to fulfil these requirements, during the first year of the study or preceding the study (section 7.25 of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act) (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek - WHW).

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

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:

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