

FACTSHEET

Higher Education

Estonia

Access Qualifications

General secondary education qualifications

The general access requirement for higher education studies is the *Gümnaasiumi lõputunnistus* (Certificate of General Secondary Education) or a corresponding qualification.

The *Gümnaasiumi lõputunnistus* is awarded after 12 years of study, including 9 years of basic education and 3 years of general secondary education. Until 1995 the name of the Certificate of General Secondary Education was *Keskkooli lõputunnistus*. In the 1988/1989 school year the transition from 8-year to 9-year basic school, as well as from 11-year to 12-year secondary school took place at schools where the language of instruction was Estonian. Accordingly, the first graduates, who had completed the 12-year secondary education programme, finished school in 1998.

Since 1997 the *Gümnaasiumi lõputunnistus* has been issued together with the *Riigieksamitunnistus* (State Examination Certificate). Effective 2009, the State Examination Certificate is not issued in paper format. The certificate is available in electronic format through the official state portal *eesti.ee*.

Since 2003 graduation the Certificate of General Secondary Education and the transcript of grades (*hinneteleht*) are issued as two separate credentials.

Vocational secondary education qualifications

General secondary education can also be obtained at a vocational secondary school (*kutseõppeasutus*) where it is combined with vocational education.

Those who have finished basic school and complete a programme leading to vocational secondary education are awarded *Kutsekeskhariduse lõputunnistus* (Certificate of Vocational Secondary Education). Studies for obtaining vocational secondary education on the basis of basic education last a minimum of three years and include general secondary education courses).

The former qualifications of vocational secondary education giving access to higher education are:

- *Lõputunnistus kutsekeskhariduse omandamise kohta* (Certificate of Vocational Secondary Education Based on Basic Education)
- *Lõputunnistus põhihariduse baasil kutsekeskhariduse omandamise kohta* (Certificate of Vocational Secondary Education Based on Basic Education)
- *Diplom* (Diploma of Specialised Secondary Education)
- *Lõputunnistus kutse- ja keskhariduse omandamise kohta* (Certificate of Vocational and Secondary Education)
- *Lõputunnistus keskerihariduse omandamise kohta* (Certificate of Specialised Secondary Education)