



CYPRUS

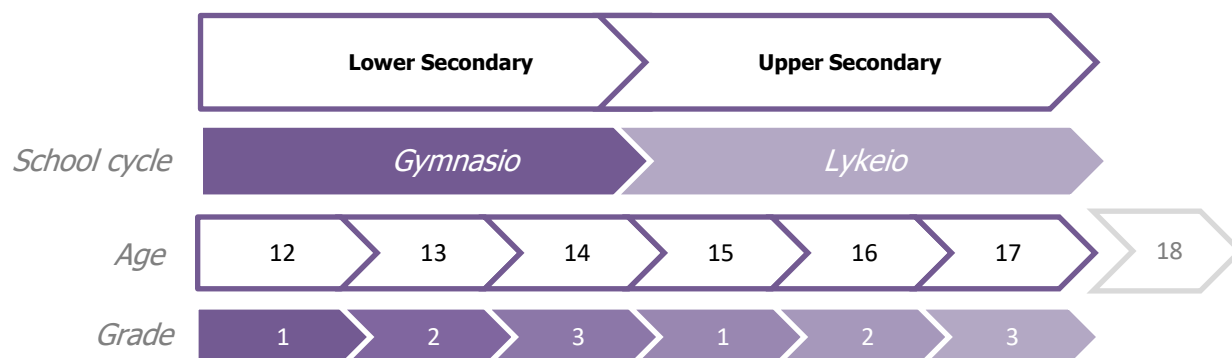
INFOPACK - RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD IN GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

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The information below gives an overview of procedures¹ for the recognition of learning periods abroad in general secondary school. It can be consulted by pupils, as well as their families and teachers, who are or plan to be involved in long-term individual pupil mobility programmes abroad. Please note that this general overview does not include details on different programme types (which may be run by governmental agencies, civil society organisations, private companies or schools themselves) and such information can be obtained directly from the provider of the respective mobility programme.

GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM



¹ Based on data gathered in February 2021.

Education is compulsory until 15 years of age. General upper secondary education (*Lykeio*) is a three-year cycle.

In the first grade, pupils take 16 common core subjects and two orientation subjects that belong to one of the following four orientations: Ancient Greek and History; Mathematics and Physics; Mathematics and Economics; or Economics and English.

In the second grade, pupils start to specialise and take eight common core subjects and choose four advanced level subjects from one of six specialisation subject groups (Classical studies and humanities; Foreign languages and European studies; Natural sciences/biosciences, Computer science/technology; Economic sciences; Commerce and services; Arts). The possibilities of choice among specialisation subject groups are determined by the stream followed in the first grade, however the Arts specialisation is open to everyone. Pupils may choose to follow a different stream than the one they followed in first grade provided they pass the necessary examinations.

In the third grade, pupils take seven common core subjects and continue their second year of specialisation, consisting of four subjects².

Graduation and Certification

From 2022, pupils in third grade of *Lykeio* will have to pass two semester examinations in order to be awarded the school leaving certificate (*Apolyterion*). The examinations are standardised and organised centrally by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth while the certificate is issued by the *Lykeio*.

In order to enrol in a public university, pupils who have been awarded the school leaving certificate (*Apolyterion*) need to take the Pancyprian examinations. These exams are organised at State level by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth and test competences related to the curriculum of the final grade of *Lykeio*. It should be noted that pupils who pass the Pancyprian examinations can compete for a place at Greek universities, as long as they have attended at least two years of *Lykeio* in Cyprus.

For more information on the structure and features of the different national education systems in Europe please see the Eurydice overview: National Education Systems | Eurydice (europa.eu).

INFORMATION FOR PUPILS GOING ABROAD FROM CYPRUS

Age and grade

Pupils can only go on a mobility during the first two grades of *Lykeio*, between 15 and 17 years old. However, they are usually advised to go during first grade for several reasons linked to access to higher education. Curricula in the last two grades are interlinked and performing well in the third grade would be difficult if pupils miss second grade. In addition, during the last two grades of upper

² Eurydice, National Education Systems, Cyprus, Assessment in General Upper Secondary Education
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/assessment-general-upper-secondary-education-11_en

secondary general schools, pupils prepare for their entrance to higher education institutions, which is highly competitive. Finally, they would not meet the prerequisite for entrance to Greek universities, namely having attended the last two grades of *Lykeio* in Cyprus.

Registration in the sending school

As an exchange pupil, you will need to be enrolled in your school in Cyprus during your mobility if you go abroad for less than a full school year.

RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD

The following information addresses learning periods abroad lasting less than a school year, or a full school year. According to the analysis conducted, there is no information available on recognition procedures for periods abroad of any duration shorter than a full school year and finishing after the end of the school year in Cyprus. In fact, mobility programmes foreseeing these timings and durations are not usually offered.

The same procedures are applied, irrespective of which country the learning period is spent in (EU or non-EU), apart from stays abroad in Greek schools which are automatically recognised³.

Please note that in the case of a mobility within a school-to-school partnership⁴ (e.g. Erasmus+) the learning agreement between sending and host school can be used as recognition tool only for periods shorter than a full school year. In the case of a full school year abroad, the procedure described below applies, on the top of a possible learning agreement.

Periods of between 2 and less than a full school year

If you decide to spend 2-6 months abroad you will be re-enrolled in your sending school upon return by providing a school attendance certificate. If you have missed the first semester exams you will have to sit the second semester exams at the end of the year. You will be asked to provide proof of attendance from your host school.

First grade pupils take exams in Greek language and advanced level or common core Mathematics and two more subjects, depending on the stream they have chosen. Second- and third- grade pupils take exams in Greek language and the four advanced level subjects depending on the specialisation subject group they have chosen.

A full school year

Recognition of a full school year abroad in general upper secondary education is under the responsibility of the District offices of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth and their decision depends on the certificate of attendance, school report with subjects and marks, and comments from the host school, which you need to provide. Based on these documents, they decide

³ Learning periods abroad (2 months-full school year) in a school following the Greek curriculum in any country are automatically recognised due to an existing bilateral agreement between Cyprus and Greece.

⁴ within a school-to-school partnerships, learning outcomes are usually recognised based on a learning agreement developed between the schools concerned

on the subjects that you may need to be tested on in September, in order to re-enter the school system and be promoted to the next class level.

The exams concern Greek language and any other stream or advanced level specialisation subjects deemed necessary by the Ministry, that will allow you to follow the two final grade or the final grades and enable you to sit the semester exams in order to be awarded the school leaving certificate.

It is your responsibility to catch up with the subject-related knowledge you have missed while abroad.

INFORMATION FOR PUPILS HOSTED IN CYPRUS

Registration in the host school

It should be noted that hosting foreign pupils for periods of between 2 months and a full school year in public or private schools is fairly uncommon. In order to enrol in a public school, you must first provide proof of completion of the previous grade in your home country. In addition, you must sit those exams as set in the Secondary Education Regulations⁵ and by the Directorate of Secondary Education. Depending on your level of proficiency in the Greek language, you might be placed in a class with pupils of your age. However, should your level of Greek be low, you will be asked to attend special Greek language learning programmes.

The case is different for pupils coming from public secondary schools in Greece or other schools recognised by the Hellenic Republic and that use Greek as their main language. They do not need to sit a qualifying examination for their mobility in Cyprus, unless they wish to choose a subject which requires that they followed a given stream previously⁶.

Funding for the host school

Public Schools receive funding for all pupils attending classes.

Certification for hosted pupil

Depending on the length of your exchange period in Cyprus, you will receive either a short-term or long-term (i.e., a full school year) certificate attesting the subjects studied and your marks⁷. For a long-term mobility, you need to pass the semester class exams in order to receive a certificate.

Possibility of graduating in the host country during the exchange

Hosted pupils who successfully complete a school year in Cyprus by taking the semester exams in the second grade of the *Lykeio* can register to attend the third and final year of school. During the third grade of *Lykeio* they can take the semester exams in order to be awarded the general upper

⁵ Secondary Education regulations
http://www.moec.gov.cy/dme/nomothesia/mesi/b_peri_leitourgias_dimosion_scholeion_mesis_ekpaidefsis_kanonismoi_kdp_60_2017.pdf

⁶ see section on General secondary school system

⁷ Secondary Education regulations, Registrations in school http://www.moec.gov.cy/dme/kan_6_engrafes_metengrafes.html

secondary school leaving certificate. With the school leaving certificate (*Apolyterion*) the hosted pupil will be entitled to take the *Pancyprian* examination. This also applies to pupils hosted in the third grade, provided they can prove their proficiency in the Greek language. However, this is a rare practice.

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