

Education

Since its establishment, the Macao SAR Government has actively optimised non-tertiary and tertiary education, with a view to implementing the goals of “developing Macao through education” and “cultivating talents for the development of Macao” in various aspects, including institutions, resource allocation and planning. In addition, in adhering to the principle of diversity in tertiary education, the Government supports the autonomy of tertiary institutions, and coordinates the development of different tertiary institutions to raise their academic quality.

Non-tertiary Education

Macao is the first region in Greater China that provides 15 years of free education.

Since the promulgation of the Fundamental Law on Non-tertiary Education in 2006, non-tertiary education in Macao has been classified into two types: formal education and continuing education. The former includes kindergartens, primary schooling, secondary schooling, and special education; the latter includes family education, recurrent education, community education, vocational training and other education activities. Vocational and technical education, which may be implemented as part of formal education or recurrent education, are only offered at senior secondary school level. The Macao school system comprises a free education network of public schools and subsidised private schools, together with private schools.

Private schools in Macao can be classified into two types: those following the local education system and those following a non-local education system. Non-profit private schools that follow the local education system may apply for entry into the free education network. The Government encourages schools to develop their own characteristics and style in terms of mission, curriculum and teaching mode according to their backgrounds. The Government also supports the development of a diversified school system, to nurture more talent for society.

According to Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEJ) statistics, there were 75 schools in Macao during the 2022/2023 academic year, of which eight were public schools, while the remaining 67 were private. Among the 67 private schools, 64 offered formal education, and three offered only recurrent education. Among the

74 schools (including 10 public schools and 64 private schools) that offered formal education, 67 were under the free education network, four were under the paid education network, and one followed a non-local education system.

During the 2022/2023 school year, 87,184 students received non-tertiary education. There were 7,762 teachers in non-tertiary education in the same period, an increase of 1.9 percent over the previous school year.

Free Education

Since the 2007/2008 academic year, free education has been extended to cover the entire 15-year period of compulsory education: three years of kindergarten, six years of primary, three years of junior secondary and three years of senior secondary schooling.

To create favourable conditions for small-class teaching, the Government has reduced the number of pupils for each class from 35-45 pupils to 25-35 students. This began in the 2007/2008 academic year, initially covering the first year in preschool education, and was subsequently expanded to cover more senior levels in the following academic years. By the 2017/2018 academic year, the ceiling for pupils per class had been expanded to every grade of formal schooling.

In the 2022/2023 academic year, the class-teacher ratios in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools were enhanced to 1:2.2, 1:2.2, and 1:2.7, respectively. Also, the teacher-student ratios in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools were enhanced to 1:12.8, 1:13.3 and 1:10.7, respectively in the 2021/2022 academic year.

Free Education Subsidies and Tuition Fee Subsidies

The Government offered free education subsidies to private schools within the free education network. Students studying in schools that did not provide free education were provided tuition fee subsidies.

Education Level	2022/2023 Academic Year Free Education Subsidies (patacas)	2022/2023 Academic Year Tuition Fee Subsidies (patacas)
Kindergarten	1,063,800 per class	20,970 per student

Primary	1,159,100 per class	23,140 per student
Junior Secondary	1,396,800 per class	25,480 per student
Senior Secondary	1,584,300 per class	25,480 per student

In addition, during the 2022/2023 academic year the Government continued offering textbook allowances to students who are Macao residents receiving formal education in Macao. The textbook allowances for each kindergarten pupil, primary school pupil and secondary school student were 2,400 patacas, 3,000 patacas and 3,550 patacas, respectively.

The DSEJ launched a pilot scheme in the 2012/2013 academic year to provide tuition fee subsidies for Macao students who studied in full-time regular high schools or full-time secondary vocational schools (high school level) in Zhuhai and Zhongshan, Guangdong Province. In the 2017/2018 academic year, the eligibility for the subsidies was extended to Macao high school students and preschool pupils studying in 21 cities in Guangdong, and stationery allowance was introduced in the 2019/2020 academic year.. The subsidies for each senior secondary, junior secondary and primary school student and kindergarten pupil were raised to 6,000 and 8,000 patacas per academic year, respectively in the 2021/2022 academic year, while the stationery allowance for each senior secondary, junior secondary and primary school student and kindergarten pupil were raised to 1,700, 1,700, 1,450, and 1,150 patacas per academic year, respectively.

Starting from the 2021/2022 academic year, the DSEJ integrated programmes for studying in Portugal organised by various public entities, including the Programme for Cultivating Chinese-Portuguese Bilingual Talents in Multiple Disciplines, into the Selection Programme for Macao Students to Study in Portugal, to further support Macao residents with studying in Portugal – for post-secondary courses, postgraduate diploma programmes, as well as bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes. In the 2022/2023 academic year, 34 students were selected to pursue degree programmes in Portugal.

The Government established the Education Development Fund in 2007, to support and drive programmes and projects with good development prospects in non-tertiary education. The School Development Scheme is a major subvention scheme launched by the Education Development Fund. In 2021, the Education Development Fund provided subsidies amounting to about 590 million patacas

Life-long Learning

During the 2022/2023 academic year, two public schools and five private schools offered recurrent education, to provide education opportunities to residents who have not completed formal education within school age. The DSEJ provides recurrent education subsidies to private schools offering recurrent education. The subsidies amounted to a maximum of 899,600 patacas, 1,073,800 patacas and 1,210,600 patacas per class for primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools, respectively.

Tertiary Education

Macao has 10 tertiary educational institutions. Four of them are public and six are private. The four public ones are the University of Macau, Macao Polytechnic University, Institute for Tourism Studies, and Academy of Macao Public Security Forces; while the private ones include the Asia International Open University, Macau Inter-University Institute (IIUM), Kiang Wu Nursing College, Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau Institute of Management, and Macau Millennium College. During the 2022/2023 academic year, there were 2,813 teaching staff and 49,594 registered students. Meanwhile there were 347 programmes in operation including doctorate, master's and bachelor's degree programmes, and higher diploma programmes (including associate degrees).

In addition, overseas institutions were granted approval in 2022 to offer 11 tertiary educational programmes.

In 2021, the Tertiary Education Fund disbursed grants and subsidies totalling about 168 million patacas, including the Textbooks and Stationery Allowances for Tertiary Students, Postgraduate Scholarships, Macao Tertiary Institutions and Subsidies for Professional Development of Tertiary Teaching Staff, Tertiary Student Activity Fund, Education and Research Cooperation Subsidy Scheme for Macao Tertiary Institutions, Specialised Subsidy Scheme for Macao Higher Education Institutions in the Area of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences, Specialised Subsidy Scheme for the Tourism Education and Training for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and Macao Tertiary Education Quality Assessment System Subsidy Scheme.