Curriculum, subjects and number of hours

Both qualification-stream education and dual vocational education and training prepare the pupil for the exercise of a profession.

The Community Commission of Professions and Qualifications (CCPQ), replaced by the French-Language Professions and Qualifications Service (SFMQ) [1], created by a cooperation agreement between the French Community, the Walloon Region and the French Community Commission (Cocof – Brussels-Capital Region), has defined qualification profiles (reference guides describing the activities and skills of fully competent workers in companies) and training profiles (reference guides setting out in a structured fashion the skills to be acquired in order to obtain a qualification certificate). Each qualification profile has a corresponding training profile.

Nine fields of study are offered in both technical and vocational qualification-stream education, and a single one (fine arts) in artistic qualification-stream education. These sectors are further divided into sub-sectors associated with various trades depending on the form of education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Qualification-stream technical education</th>
<th>Vocational education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agronomics</td>
<td>Horticultural technician, agricultural technician, etc.</td>
<td>Skilled horticultural worker, skilled agricultural worker, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Graphical industry technician, etc.</td>
<td>Garage mechanic, gunsmith, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>Lumber industry technician, construction draughtsman, etc.</td>
<td>Skilled construction worker – basic construction, cabinetmaker, construction equipment operator, carpenter, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel management and catering</td>
<td>Hotel/restaurant manager, etc.</td>
<td>Butcher, ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and textiles</td>
<td>Operator of textile product manufacturing machines, technical worker in fashion and creative industry, etc.</td>
<td>Sales assistant/seamstress, qualified tailor/dressmaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied arts</td>
<td>Habitat structure technician, graphic designer, etc.</td>
<td>Advertising assistant, jeweller, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>Tourist information officer, office worker, etc.</td>
<td>Salesman, clerk, receptionist, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care services</td>
<td>Educational assistant, candidate nurse, etc.</td>
<td>Caregiver, childminder, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied science</td>
<td>Optician, pharmaceutical assistant, etc.</td>
<td>Agri-food industries production worker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In full-time education

The qualification stream (technical and vocational humanities) provides a humanist education as outlined in the general objectives of education. This form of education consists of general courses plus qualification-oriented training, which is designed to attain the competencies detailed in a training profile. The primary purpose of the qualification streams is entry into working life through the gaining of a qualification certificate, while retaining the possibility of continuing studies in higher education.

A transition stream (general and technological humanities) is also organised. It provides a humanist education, from the point of view of the general objectives of education: the prime goal of the transition streams is to prepare pupils for higher education, whilst maintaining the possibility of entering the labour market.

The skills and knowledge required in humanist education upon completion of a vocational and technical humanities course have been defined: final achievement targets and core knowledge required of all pupils upon completion of a qualification stream leading to an upper secondary education certificate, final achievement targets and core knowledge required of all pupils upon completion of a qualification stream leading to the certificate of completion of 6th year vocational education; minimum communication competencies in a language other than French (when the study of a modern language is part of the curriculum); and the required knowledge and skills in physical education.

In parallel to humanist education, the vocational and technical humanities must also develop the competencies detailed by the training profiles: these training profiles form the basis of certification.

The reference guides serve as learning guides and assessment safeguards. For all schools, they represent the entire reference set which determines the study level and around which curricula are structured: the curricula, meanwhile, for which the controlling authorities are responsible, stipulate the resources to be deployed.

In the third stage of the Vocational Education, in some streams (garage mechanic, beautician, hairdresser), a device (Certification by Units: CPU) has been implemented. This device aims at improving the attractiveness of vocational education by offering young people more marked routes, routes better adapted to the learning rhythms and most rewarding ones because more meaningful. Reference guides cut the subject matters on the stage in several Units of learning outcomes. After each qualification exam to validate learning outcomes by the qualification board, each student who succeeded is issued the certificate of the validation of the unit concerned.

Unlike in the common first stage and transition-stream education, qualification-stream education is organised on the basis of schedules which differ not just with the type of education chosen but also with the network.

The different qualification-stream education schedules must include at least 16 (technical or artistic qualification stream) or 18 periods per week of grouped options. The courses from the common core relate in overall terms to the same subjects as transition-stream education, but the orientation and the number of teaching hours may differ greatly. The learning of a modern language has been compulsory in vocational education since 2015.

The two years of the 3rd qualification stage must be followed in the same study orientation and with the same timetable (with the exception of the transition from the 5th qualification-stream technical year to the 6th vocational year or a change of study orientation between the 5th and 6th vocational years, as long as the correspondence between the study orientations has been defined in the
regulations). A reorientation year is possible in the 4th year.

Two schedules used in the education organised by the French Community are presented below by way of example.

Weekly Schedule for the Second Vocational Stage in Schools Organised by the French Community, 2017-2018 School Year, in 50-minute Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Common core</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion/ethics/education to philosophy and citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific education (mathematics, exploration of scientific and geographical realities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Language I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUB TOTAL:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthening</strong> (common core)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthening</strong> : specific for French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Free options:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional courses: Grouped core option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Number of periods</th>
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<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In dual vocational education and training

Dual vocational education and training consists of both general education – including social and personal development – and preparation for employment.

It should be noted that, in the case of people who have already satisfied their compulsory schooling obligation by attending dual education and training, courses may cover only job training.

Under the terms of the decree of 8 January 2009, all dual vocational education and training courses must be based on the training profiles drawn up by the SFMQ. However, as a transitional measure, the apprenticeship training courses organised by the IFAPME and the SFPME which are already recognised by the Commission for the Recognition of Apprenticeship Courses, but whose training profile still needs to be defined by the SFMQ, will also lead to the apprenticeship certificate. The dual vocational education and training provider draws up an individual training plan for every young person wishing to enter this form of education, making the most of what he or she has already learnt and his or her vocational plans, while adhering to the training profiles.

In the CEFAs in ordinary education, two forms of dual education and training are distinguished: one that leads to the same certificates and qualifications as full-time qualification-stream education (known as ‘alternance article 49’) and one that aims at lower levels of qualification via specific profiles (known as ‘alternance article 45). Transition mechanisms from one form to another are provided.

Teaching methods and materials

It will be recalled that, in education, the choice of teaching methods rests with the respective controlling authority.

In full-time education

Use of textbooks is not very widespread. The decision to use a textbook or not, and which one, is left to the teachers. Under the terms of a decree of 19 May 2006, financial support is granted to pre-secondary and secondary schools for the purchase of approved textbooks or collections of textbooks and software by the Steering Committee on the basis of formal opinions issued by the competent inspection services according to the criteria defined by the legislators (primarily equality, non-discrimination and conformity with official achievement targets).

A reform of vocational education has introduced the following educational and methodological resources: interdisciplinarity, reduced-size educational teams, project-oriented and workshop class teaching methods, time-management changes (pupils’ learning speeds and methods are taken into account), developing the
relationship between school and the world of work, educational coordination and support and (subject-related) remedial classes.

As part of the fight against school failure, for promotion and wellness in schools, the project "Expairs" was launched for students in the second degree of the ordinary vocational education. Several schools had the opportunity to suggest educational and organizational innovation projects. The mechanisms put in place were evaluated in order to perpetuate the best ones and possibly adjust legal texts.

Secondary education schools are gradually developing activities in cooperation with companies in their region, e.g. when schools do not have adequate equipment at their disposal.

The 'Contract for School' [3] signed on 31 May 2005 as well as the decree of 11 April 2014 [2] guaranteeing educational equipment for vocational education have improved the quality of the qualification streams of technical and vocational education through two types of measures: investment in teaching materials and the creation of new infrastructure in the French Community, the ‘advanced technology centres’ (CTAs), which help improve the quality of training and qualification-type education, in particular by making sophisticated equipment available to pupils and teachers.

Moreover, the government subsidises a non-profit organisation which seeks out companies that could give away equipment to schools, informs companies about schools’ needs for equipment, and distributes on a fair basis the equipment obtained among schools in the different networks.

The decree of 11 April 2014 [2] implements the Social Catchment Areas for Education - Training - Employment. This permanent and structured device aims at facilitating collaboration between the stakeholders in the world of vocational education (secondary, tertiary and social advancement), professional training and employment. This will facilitate a real consistency between vocational education and professional training provision, as well as with the socio-economical needs of each social catchment area. These social catchment areas will also facilitate the development of joint projects to improve vocational education and professional training at local level. Wallonia opts for a strong local partnership between the worlds of education and training on the one hand, and the social partners (organized at a sectoral or an intersectoral level) on the other hand, aiming at a better harmonization of the training supply and an improvement of its quality. They will also develop "synergies poles" around vocational pathways or promising jobs, particularly in order to permit optimum use of resources both in personnel and equipment or buildings.

Other initiatives are not specific to qualification-stream education.

In the late 1990s, every secondary school was equipped with a multimedia centre, and thanks to agreements between the French Community, the Walloon Region, the federal government, and the access provider, every school was able to have access to the Internet under very favourable terms.

Significant investment had been made since 2011 in equipping schools in the French Community with the resources needed to foster student acquisition of strong ICT skills and promote innovative teaching practices, including providing internet connections for Walloon schools (EUR 35 million) and multimedia equipment for schools in the Brussels Capital Region (EUR 6 million).

Since 2011, under the initiative of Wallonia, the Walloon Government, the French Community and the German-speaking Community Governments have launched, respectively in 2011, 2013 and 2014, three calls for "Digital School" projects aimed at promoting innovative uses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for the benefit of education.

At the end of these first three calls for projects, no less than 300 pilot schools were selected on the basis of innovative projects experimenting with innovative pedagogical scenarios.

As part of the "Digital Wallonia" digital strategy 2016-2019, the Walloon Government, building on the experience acquired in this field, launched the "Digital School" scheme every year: a call for projects that supports about 500 projects per year.
In the Brussels-Capital Region, the "Fiber to the School" initiative (investment of 10 million euros) enabled the deployment of broadband connections in secondary schools between 2014 and 2019. On 13 August 2019, there were 151/177 connections.

In October 2018, the Digital Strategy for Education [5] was adopted by the Government of the French Community.

By presenting an integrated vision of the digital transition for compulsory education in the French Community, the Strategy underlines the need to invest in digital skills from compulsory education onwards, to empower and empower all citizens.

The French Community thus joins the initiatives of the federal and regional governments aimed at developing a long-term digital vision for society.

Conceived by the General Administration of Education, based on the report of the "digital transition" working group and the guidelines adopted within the framework of the Pact for Excellence in Teaching, the Digital Strategy for Education in the French Community identifies five complementary lines of action:

Priority 1 - Defining digital content and resources for learning;
Priority 2 - Supporting and training teachers and school leaders;
Priority 3 - Defining the methods for equipping schools;
Priority 4 - Sharing, communicating and disseminating;
Priority 5 - Developing digital governance.

The Strategy makes the digital transition a cross-cutting issue in several areas of the Pact for Excellence in Teaching: the new reinforced core curriculum, the transformation of the teaching profession, the management of the classroom heterogeneity, collaborative work, support and training, the dissemination of pedagogical innovation, the decompartmentalization of schools and classes, and the management of the school system and schools.

On 02/04/2019, the educational resource platform e-classe.be was made available to the teachers of the French Community. e-classe.be aims to support teachers in the development of their lesson sequences. The aim of the platform is to provide a central, online location, bringing together quality, reliable and validated resources for their potential pedagogical exploitation.

The e-classroom platform joins the global dynamic generated in the French Community to accelerate the digital transition in education. This project, coordinated by the General Service of educational Digitalisation of the General Administration of Education in the French Community and by SONUMA (audiovisual archives) for the technical and audiovisual parts, is the result of an original collaboration with the RTBF (French-speaking Belgian radio and television) teams.

The digital strategy foresees that from 2020 onwards, digital skills will occupy a more important place than before in the common curriculum for all pupils. The aim will be to integrate digital skills as a learning object (digital education) but also as a support for other subjects (digital literacy). Digital literacy will require active practice in all subjects, with each subject area having a specific use of digital technology that students will need to be introduced to. Furthermore, reflecting the importance of new technologies in all production processes, digital literacy will play a key role within the learning domain that brings together mathematics, sciences, manual, technical and technological skills, gradually raising awareness of computer sciences, including algorithmic sciences, from the core curriculum.

Digital literacy and media literacy will also be approached through the learning domain relating to citizenship and human and social sciences.

From 2022, new reference frameworks adapted to the new streams in upper secondary education will also
Each network has its own media education resource centre. A Media Education Council was created in 1995.

In addition to a new subject on Education to Philosophy and Citizenship, responsible citizenship and development education have been the subject of several initiatives. An inter-network unit, ‘Democracy or Barbarism’ [6]’, coordinates citizenship education issues.

Since 2007, a decree imposes the organisation of interdisciplinary activities for a responsible and active citizenship at least once during each cycle or stage and the setting up of participative structures for pupils (election of class representatives by their peers, councils of pupils representing specific cycles or stages). On 13 March 2009 [2], the Government of the French Community passed a decree on the remembrance, particularly with respect to young people, of genocide crimes, crimes against humanity, war crimes and acts of resistance or resistance movements against the regimes responsible for such crimes.

The education departments that are either part of the French Community or the different controlling authorities that administer grant-aided schools produce teaching aids that are designed to attain the skills prescribed by the educational targets. These teaching aids can be used by all schools organised or grant-aided by the French Community.

Two education information servers have been set up: one common to the different networks [7] and the other specific to schools organised by the French Community [8]. A database of educational reference material [9] is available online.

Finally, part of the timetable in secondary education may be organised in a modern language other than French, in the form of immersion [10] learning.

**In dual vocational education and training**

The information given above about the methods and tools used in full-time education also applies to the CEFAs.


The decree of 11 April 2014 [2] implements the Social Catchment Areas for Education - Training - Employment. This permanent and structured device aims at facilitating collaboration between the stakeholders in the world of vocational education (secondary, tertiary and social advancement), professional training and employment. This will facilitate a real consistency between vocational education and professional training provision, as well as with the socio-economical needs of each social catchment area. These social catchment areas will also facilitate the development of joint projects to improve vocational education and professional training at local level. Wallonia opts for a strong local partnership between the worlds of education and training on the one hand, and the social partners (organized at a sectoral or an intersectoral level) on the other hand, aiming at a better harmonization of the training supply and an improvement of its quality. They will also develop "synergies poles" around vocational pathways or promising jobs, particularly in order to permit optimum use of resources both in personnel and equipment or buildings.

The CEFAs establish vocational insertion agreements for a maximum one-year term, for pupils who are subject to a part-time schooling obligation or who enrolled in a CEFA before 31 December of the year in which they turn 18 during the school year that follows their enrolment in the CEFA. These socio-occupational integration agreements are recognised by the Labour Code or approved by the government of the French Community. Such agreements, which may be renewed to enable students to complete their training cycle, are concluded between the centre, the host company, and the student with the approval of the parents or legal guardian. The agreement outlines the reciprocal obligations of the student and the host company and the amount of the training allowance payable to the student. On the job training
activities in companies can also be covered by an apprenticeship contract for professions exercised by salaried workers, or any other form of contract or agreement recognised by employment legislation that has been approved by the Government of the French Community.

At each CEFA, supervisors are responsible for organising the search for and monitoring of internships, contracts and agreements, forming and developing contacts with local and regional socio-economic circles and professional associations, establishing regular contacts with the Centre for Psychological, Medical and Social Services in charge of pupil guidance and more generally taking any initiative that is likely to promote the pupil’s social and cultural development.

At the IFAPME and the SFPME, dual vocational education and training is the subject of apprenticeship contracts. An apprenticeship contract, which usually lasts three years, is a contract signed by the head of company and the apprentice through the appointed supervisor, who will oversee the training. The contract determines the training obligation, the contractual parties’ rights and obligations and the progressive monthly allowances that the apprentice will receive throughout his or her training.

In terms of supervision, the appointed supervisors have the role of informing, guiding and assisting anyone who wishes to enter into an apprenticeship contract or internship agreement, devising a personalised training plan with the young person and more generally facilitating relationships between the apprentice, the employer and the training centre.

At both the CEFAs and at the IFAPME or the SFPME, for pupils subject to the schooling obligation and for adult pupils who are excluded, the training can be preceded by an individualised instruction module which includes the elaboration of a life project, guidance towards a trade, education about the rules of community life, upgrading the elementary knowledge base, and the acquisition of the minimum competencies required for access to training in a company.

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