

Swedish  
school for  
new arrivals

Engelska



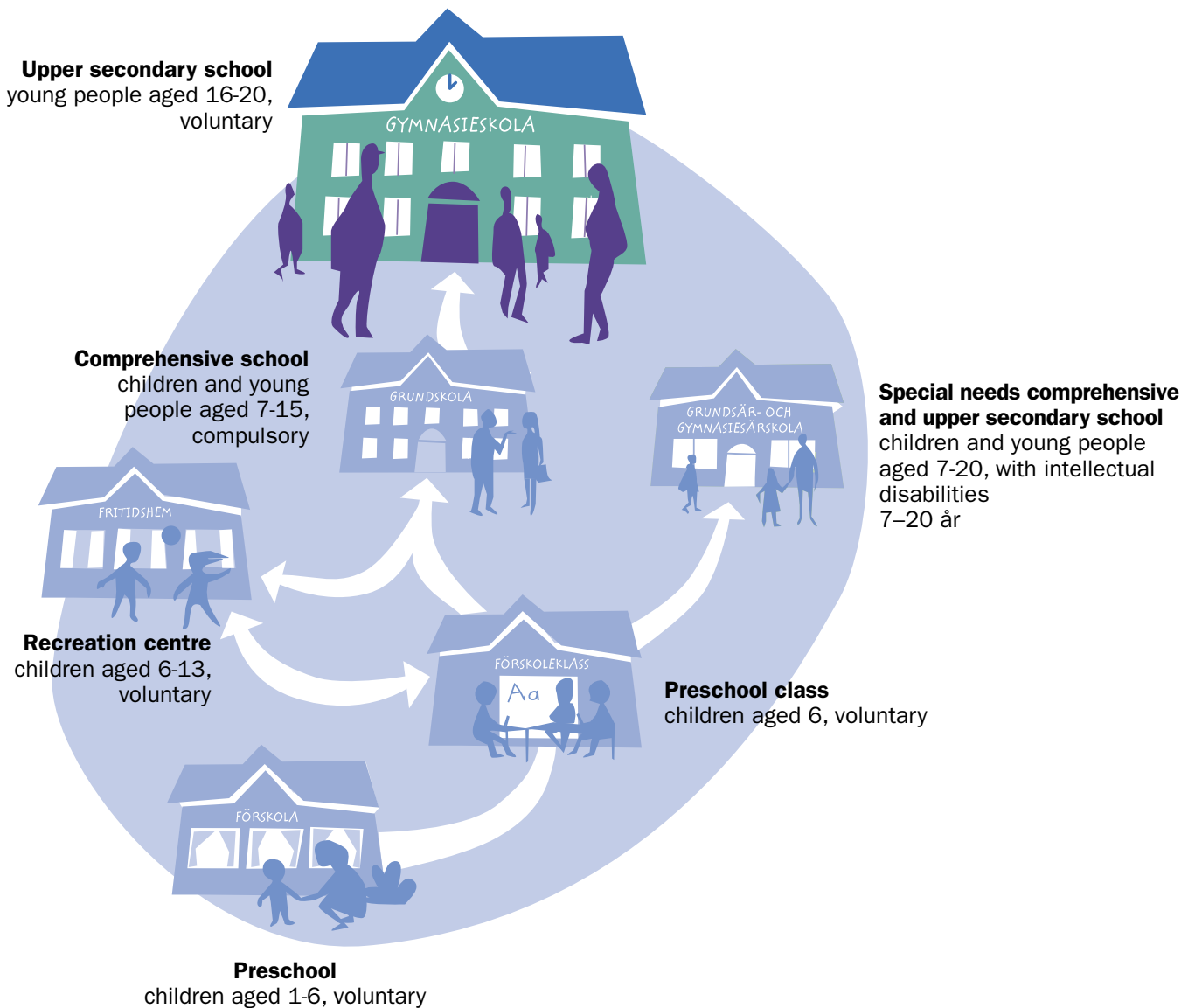
For young people aged 16-20

# Upper secondary school



*Skolverket*

# This is the Swedish education system



Children may attend preschool from the time they are 1 year old. Play is an important element of preschool. When they turn 6, children may attend preschool class. Both preschool and preschool class are voluntary.

All children attend comprehensive school from about the age of 7. Comprehensive school is compulsory, and compulsory schooling applies for years 1-9.

Most young people then attend upper secondary school for three years. New arrivals who have

received a permanent residence permit are entitled to begin their upper secondary education before the end of the spring term in the year they turn 20; for asylum seekers this limit is the year they turn 18. However, there are also certain requirements for recognised grades from earlier education.

Upper secondary school prepares pupils for university or university college, or for going on to employment without further education.

# Upper secondary school Prepares students for work or further studies

**Upper secondary school in Sweden** is voluntary, but even so almost all students go on to upper secondary school after comprehensive school. This is how young people prepare for university studies or for getting a job after finishing school.

Upper secondary programmes are three years in most cases. Many students begin immediately after comprehensive school, when they are 16. The limit for beginning upper secondary school is the year you turn 20. If you are older than that, you may attend upper secondary adult education.

Young people with intellectual disabilities that make them unable to attend ordinary upper secondary school can attend special needs upper secondary school instead. Read more about special needs upper secondary education in a separate brochure.

Upper secondary school is free. That means that students do not have to pay anything for tuition, textbooks or other school material. Schools may, however, charge for school lunches. All students attending upper secondary school are entitled to study grants.



# 18 upper secondary programmes to choose from

**Upper secondary school has eighteen** national programmes to choose from. Twelve of these are vocational programmes, which provide students with full professional training in specific areas, so that they can go straight into employment after graduating. The other six programmes prepare students for further studies at universities or university colleges.

If you graduate from one of the preparatory programmes, you are automatically qualified to apply to higher education programmes. However, some of these programmes require that you earn certain grades in specific subjects, also known as special entry requirements. If you have opted for a vocational upper secondary programme, courses in Swedish and English must be included to fulfil the basic entry requirements for higher education.

## The 18 upper secondary programmes

### Vocational programmes

- Children and Recreation
- Building and Construction
- Electricity and Energy
- Vehicle and Transport
- Business and Administration
- Handicrafts
- Hotel and Tourism
- Industrial Technology
- Natural Resource Use
- Restaurant Management and Food
- HVAC and Property Maintenance
- Health and Social Care

### Higher education preparatory programmes

- Business Management and Economics
- Arts
- Humanities
- Natural Science
- Social Science
- Technology

There are also other programmes, e.g. sports programmes, as well as five introductory programmes for pupils who are not eligible for a national programme.

# Admission requirements for upper secondary school

**In order to gain a place** in upper secondary education, Pass grades are necessary in a number of comprehensive school subjects.

All upper secondary school programmes require Pass grades in Swedish or Swedish as a Second Language, English and Mathematics.

Vocational programmes require Pass grades in at least another five subjects, while higher education preparatory programmes require at least another nine Pass grades.

# How education is organised

## Upper secondary education is made up of different parts:

- Some subjects are the same for all upper secondary programmes. These subjects are: English, History, Physical Education and Health, Mathematics, Science studies, Religion, Social studies and Swedish or Swedish as a Second Language.
- Students also study a number of subjects related to the specific programme they have chosen. They also choose an orientation within the framework of the programme selected.

- Finally, the student makes individual choices. For example, they may choose subjects that will allow them to go on to higher education after upper secondary school.

Students attending a vocational programme may carry out up to half of their programme at a workplace. An alternative is to do an upper secondary apprenticeship programme, which means most of the programme is spent at a workplace.



## Grades and diplomas

**The grading scale has six points:** A, B, C, D, E and F. A is the highest grade and E is the lowest grade for a Pass grade. F is a fail. Students are graded on each completed course.

Schools state minimum knowledge requirements that specify what a student must have learned. These are the same for all the schools in Sweden. Grades are not awarded in relation to the achievements of the other students in the class, but in relation to how well the student has fulfilled the requirements for the course.

Teachers must tell students about the requirements for different grades at the beginning of each new course. Students can speak to the teacher about how they are doing during the course. Once a grade has been awarded, the decision cannot be appealed.

The programme ends with a diploma project in which students demonstrate what they have learned by carrying out a larger-scale independent project. The diploma project must be awarded at least a Pass grade in order for students to receive their diplomas.

# Important rules in upper secondary school

**Students are entitled to** support from the school to help them through their education. In return, the school expects students to do their best.

Attending upper secondary school is voluntary, but once there students must participate in activities. Attendance is not voluntary, in other words. If students become ill, they must notify the school.

Students who are absent for longer periods risk losing both their school places and their study grants.

Schools have rules in order to ensure that teaching works well. All students are entitled to feel safe and enjoy calm study conditions. Among other things, the teacher may tell students who repeatedly disrupt the lesson to leave the classroom. In serious cases, students may be given a warning in writing.

## Choosing a school

**If you need help** in choosing an upper secondary programme and school, speak to a study counsellor. There are study counsellors at all schools, both comprehensive and upper secondary. They will help plan both your education and your profession.

You may choose which school you wish to attend, in your municipality or elsewhere. Bear in mind that there may be a lot of competition for places at some schools, meaning that grades determine who gets a place. The municipality has its own schools, but there are also independent schools, which may be run as businesses, foundations or associations. All schools are free and apply the same knowledge

requirements. Students are also entitled to study grants no matter what upper secondary school is chosen. If you wish to attend a school in another municipality, or an independent school, apply for this in your home municipality.

Applications for upper secondary school are made during the autumn term of compulsory school, year 9. Preliminary admissions occur during the spring, but final admissions only takes place in the summer. The final grade from the spring term of year 9 determines if and where you get a place. It is therefore a good idea to apply to several schools and programmes.



# Students have obligations as well as rights

**All upper secondary school students** must be able to influence decisions, take part and undertake responsibilities in school. Just like the rest of society, school is based on democratic values and principles. It is also important that schools function democratically in their internal operations.

At least once a term, students meet their teacher to talk about their schoolwork. This is known as a personal development dialogue. It is an added value if parents also attend these meetings.

Students are also entitled to discuss how things are going at school and if they are happy there. This gives them the opportunity to influence and take responsibility for their schoolwork. Each student has an individual study plan.

If students have not yet turned 18, parents are entitled to participate in the personal development dialogue. Students who have turned 18 decide for themselves whether they want their parents to participate.




## Native language teaching and special support

**If your native language** is not Swedish and you speak that language at home, you are entitled to native language teaching. Conditions for providing native language teaching are that you speak the language, and that a group of at least five students can be assembled and a suitable teacher found. Study guidance in your native language is also provided if necessary.

A student who does not have enough Pass grades to apply to upper secondary school may attend an introductory programme. For example, there are

programmes that provide a language introduction for students who have arrived recently in Sweden and need to improve their Swedish.

A student attending an upper secondary programme who runs the risk of not passing is entitled to special support. The student, the teacher, the school Principal and possibly also the parents will then meet to agree on a programme of measures. This programme must specify how the school will support the student and what the student needs to do.



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