



DFJC - Département de la formation, de la jeunesse et de la culture  
DGEO - Direction générale de l'enseignement obligatoire

# Description of Cycle 2

## Information for parents

### Primary school

Years 5P to 8P

Compulsory schooling lasts for 11 years. It aims to help pupils acquire knowledge and skills, develop and exercise their intellectual, manual and physical faculties and develop their judgement and personality. School helps pupils to integrate into social, professional and civic life by gaining an understanding of themselves and the world around them and by respecting other people.

This leaflet describes the second cycle of primary schooling (cycle 2). It lasts for four years and is split into two parts: years 5 and 6, followed by years 7 and 8. During these four years, pupils build on the skills and knowledge they acquired during the first cycle. At the end of year 8, depending on their school results, pupils progress to secondary school and are oriented to one of two divisions and levels. The following pages describe the characteristics of the second cycle: the various subjects and periods allocated to them, assessment methods and the criteria for orienting pupils to a particular division at the end of this cycle.

[www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite)

Sources: Loi sur l'enseignement obligatoire (LEO)  
Règlement d'application de la LEO (RLEO)  
Cadre général de l'évaluation (CGE)

This information is for guidance only; the legal and regulatory framework and the General Assessment Framework (CGE), which deals with various scenarios in detail, should be taken as authoritative.

## Relationship between school and family

Schools are mainly concerned with children's formal instruction and acknowledge that their parents have primary responsibility for their broader education. These roles are not mutually exclusive, however: schools seek to cooperate with families with regard to instruction and support families on other aspects of education.

The class teacher and school management team are parents' primary point of contact for any issues around their child's schooling, since they are in close contact with the child and their situation.

Parents receive regular updates about what their child is learning at school and how they have performed in assessments. Their opinion is sought before any important decisions are taken concerning their child's schooling. Final decisions are made by the school board.

A joint information session for parents is held at least once a year, in principle at the start of the school year. Among other things, this explains what happens in school, the objectives of the curriculum and how pupils will be assessed.

School information is communicated regularly in the pupil's school diary, which parents are asked to sign at the end of each week. This is the main means by which parents and teachers can request a meeting. Meetings can take place at any time during the school year and ensure positive cooperation.

Additional educational support can be provided if necessary, to help the pupil make progress. Other services can be provided by psychologists, psychomotor specialists or speech and language therapists (PPLS) according to the procedures in place in the particular school.

Information about extracurricular provision or other services can be requested from the school management team.

## Subjects and timetable

In cycle 2, pupils continue their learning and develop their skills in all subjects included in the curriculum for French-speaking Switzerland (*Plan d'études romand*, PER). Foreign languages - German from year 5 and English from year 7 - are added to the timetable and contribute to the development of pupils' linguistic capabilities and cultural awareness.

Working methods, learning strategies and the ability to cooperate and communicate are developed in the teaching of all subjects in the curriculum. The timetable for years 5 and 6 consists of 28 periods, increasing to 32 periods in year 7.

### The curriculum for French-speaking Switzerland (PER)

[www.plandetudes.ch](http://www.plandetudes.ch)

The PER sets out what should be learned during the period of compulsory education in French-speaking Switzerland. It describes the subjects pupils should be studying during their 11 years of schooling.

In general terms, **borderline cases** relate to situations where the results of the pupil concerned are very slightly lower than those required to meet the conditions for moving up to the next class. The concept of a borderline case does not apply to orientation decisions. Borderline cases are decided by the school board.

At the parents' request, the school board will consider any **mitigating circumstances** (for example, if schooling has been seriously disrupted over a long period because of a prolonged absence, or if the child has recently arrived from another canton or from abroad). Success in the future must be considered likely for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account.

## Assessment

Assessments of the pupil's work are communicated via their diary in the form of marks from 1 to 6 (including half points) for core tasks (TS) and associated tasks (TA). A mark of 4 is deemed satisfactory. The highest mark is 6 and the lowest mark is 1.

The average marks achieved by the pupil are organised by subject group and decisions about their future pathway are based on the total number of points achieved in each group.

A report is issued halfway through and at the end of the school year. This records the pupil's marks and attendance, along with their averages for each subject to the nearest half-point.

The final report for each year shows their average marks and, at the end of years 6 and 8, a decision on the pupil's next step. This is added to their school report book.

**Core tasks (*travaux significatifs*, TS):** pupils' school work is assessed regularly throughout the year, based on their completion of core tasks. These are the key elements used for assessment. Each core task relates to at least one learning objective set out in the curriculum for French-speaking Switzerland (PER) with one or more components having been taught.

**Associated tasks (*travaux assimilés*, TA):** a series of tasks designed solely to check the acquisition of specific knowledge or skills. Together, these tasks are used to produce a grade for each subject. For each subject, the number of associated tasks cannot exceed a quarter of all the tasks selected.

## Years 5 and 6

At the end of year 6, the pupil takes baseline tests (*Epreuve cantonale de référence*, ECR) in French and mathematics. The score for each test is taken into account to calculate the annual average for the subject concerned, on the same basis as for a core task (TS).

## Promotion

Pupils are automatically moved up to year 6 at the end of year 5.

In order to move from year 6 up to year 7, pupils must achieve the following total points for groups I and II:

Group I	French + mathematics + German + CE <sup>1</sup>	16 points and over
Group II	visual arts + music + creative and manual activities	12 points and over
<i>Borderline cases</i>	<i>maximum 1.5 points below the threshold, both groups combined and maximum 1 point below the threshold in one group.</i>	

<sup>1</sup> "Connaissance de l'environnement", Understanding the environment: covers geography, citizenship, history, ethics and religious cultures, and natural sciences.

## Year 7

### Promotion

Pupils are automatically moved up to year 8 at the end of year 7.

**Decisions on promotion and the choice of division can be appealed** by writing to the Department: *Instruction des Recours, Département de la formation, de la jeunesse et de la culture, rue de la Barre 8, 1014 Lausanne*. Appeals must be submitted in writing, with reasons, within 10 days of notification, including a copy of the decision concerned.

## Year 8

At the end of year 8, pupils who fulfil the conditions for promotion are oriented to one of two divisions: the pre-matura division or the general division. Pupils who are oriented to the general division are then split into either level 1 (basic) or level 2 (advanced) for French, mathematics and German.

- A** At the end of the 1st semester, a review report is produced. This records their results and attendance, along with their averages for each subject.
- The class teacher meets with the parents to examine the pupil's situation, based on this report.
- B** In April or May, the pupil takes baseline tests (ECR) in French, mathematics and German.
- The marks from these tests are included in the calculation of the annual average for the subject concerned and account for 30% of the final mark (see example of calculation opposite).
- C** At the end of the 2nd semester, the pupil is promoted on the basis of their annual report. The child is then oriented towards a division and level by the school board, on the advice of the class council and based on the same annual report.

**In order to move from year 8 up to year 9**, pupils must achieve the following total points for groups I, II and III:

Group I	French <sup>2</sup> + mathematics <sup>2</sup> + German <sup>2</sup> + natural sciences	16 points and over
Group II	English + geography - citizenship + history - ethics and religious cultures	12 points and over
Group III	visual arts + music + creative and manual activities	12 points and over
<i>Borderline cases</i>	<i>maximum 1.5 points below the threshold across the three groups combined and maximum 1 point below the threshold in one group.</i>	

<sup>2</sup> Including ECR (see example of calculation on opposite page).

To access the **pre-matura division (voie pré-gymnasiale, VP)**, the pupil must achieve the total following points for groups I and II:

Group I	French <sup>3</sup> + mathematics <sup>3</sup> + German <sup>3</sup> + natural sciences	20 points and over
Group II	English + geography - citizenship + history - ethics and religious cultures	13.5 points and over

<sup>3</sup> Including ECR (see example of calculation on opposite page).

In the **general division (voie générale, VG)**, initial access to the levels in French, mathematics and German is calculated on the following basis by subject:

Level 1	annual average <sup>4</sup> for the subject	up to 4
Level 2	annual average <sup>4</sup> for the subject	4.5 and over

<sup>4</sup> Including ECR (see example of calculation on opposite page).

# Orientation procedure

## August

Entry to year 8

## September-October

(or another time in the school year, depending on each school's own organisation)

Information session for parents organised by the school

A

## January

Review of 1st semester

Joint examination (school and parents) of the pupil's situation

B

## April-May

Cantonal baseline tests (ECR) in French, mathematics and German

C

## June-July

Annual report

Decision on moving the pupil up to the next year and orienting them to the appropriate division and, in the VG level, by the school board, based on the pupil's results

## year 9 - secondary education I

### general division

French	level 1
	level 2
Mathematics	level 1
	level 2
German	level 1
	level 2

### pre-matura division

#### Annual average, example of calculation

Average of marks achieved in class	4.9
ECR mark	4.5
Calculation: $(4.9 \times 0.7) + (4.5 \times 0.3) =$	4.78
<b>Final annual average (rounded to the nearest half point)</b>	<b>5</b>

# Admission to secondary education I

Secondary education I is made up of two divisions: pre-matura (*voie prégymnasiale*, VP) and general (*voie générale*, VG).

## Pre-matura

The pre-matura division is aimed at pupils who will have direct access to high school if they obtain their school certificate at the end of year 9. Pupils choose a special option (OS) from one of the following subjects: economics and law, Italian, Latin, or mathematics and physics.

## General

The general division is aimed at pupils who are likely to move on to vocational training through an apprenticeship or embark on a general and commercial school, take a vocational qualification. The pupil takes classes in work-oriented subjects (OCOM): two periods for the general education group are taught to the whole class; for the other two periods, the pupil chooses an artisanal, artistic, commercial or technological subject. Depending on their future plans and under certain conditions, pupils may be entitled to replace their OCOM with a special option (OS) - economics and law, Italian, Latin, or mathematics and physics - and/or take a class from the pre-matura division in French, mathematics, German or English.

## Levels

In the general division, there are two levels for French, mathematics and German. Level 1 teaches basic knowledge, while learning requirements are higher in level 2. Pupils may find they are at different levels in these three subjects, and can be taught accordingly based on their aptitudes.

## Special support

Pupils who are taught at level 1 in all three subjects (French, mathematics and German) are entitled to special support. The school board decides what type of support should be offered.

## Reorientation

Pupils can be moved from one division to another at the end of the first semester of year 9, and at the end of years 9 and 10. Pupils can be moved from one level to another at the end of each semester, the end of the first semester of year 9 and the end of the first semester of year 11. Changes of division and level are decided on the basis of school results. Reorientation decisions are taken by the school board after consulting with the pupil and their parents.

### **Work-oriented options (OCOM, *options de compétences orientées métiers*) in the general division**

An explanatory leaflet about OCOM options is available on our website:

[www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite) > Parent information and translated documents - Documents traduits d'information aux parents.

Reorientation  
at the end of the  
1st semester  
in year 9

**In year 9 only, pupils can be reoriented from the general division to the pre-matura division** at the end of the first semester if they are taught three subjects divided into levels at level 2 and a special option, and if they achieve the following points totals for groups I and II:

Group I	French + mathematics + German + natural sciences + special option	24 points and over
Group II	English + geography + history - ethics and religious cultures	13.5 points and over
<i>Borderline cases</i>	<i>maximum 0.5 point below the threshold in one of the two groups</i>	

**To switch from one level to another** in a subject divided into levels at the end of the first semester of year 9:

- Switching from level 1 to level 2 is possible for pupils who achieve an average for the semester in a subject divided into levels of:
  - 5.5 and over;
  - 5, on the recommendation of the subject teacher.
- A pupil may switch from level 2 to level 1 at the parents' request or on the recommendation of the subject teacher concerned.

Remedial  
and access classes  
for pupils in the  
general division

A school certificate is taken at the end of secondary school I, marking the completion of compulsory education. Following an additional year of study and subject to certain conditions:

- remedial classes allow pupils who have not successfully completed the general division to obtain their school certificate;
- access classes 1 (Rac1) allow pupils who have obtained their school certificate to achieve results that will give them access to a general and commercial school or a vocational qualification;
- access classes 2 (Rac2) allow pupils who have obtained their school certificate in the general division to obtain a pre-matura certificate.

### **Description of Cycle 3**

An explanatory leaflet about cycle 3, and in particular years 9 and 10, is available on our website: [www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite) > Parent information and translated documents - Documents traduits d'information aux parents.

### **Certification at the end of year 11**

A leaflet explaining the certification criteria for pupils in year 11 and the conditions for admission to access and remedial classes, and post-compulsory education, is available on our website: [www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite) > Parent information and translated documents - Documents traduits d'information aux parents.

### **Access classes**

An explanatory leaflet about access classes is available on our website: [www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite) > Parent information and translated documents - Documents traduits d'information aux parents.

# Structure of compulsory schooling in Vaud canton

		Rac1 and Rac2 remedial classes		secondary school I
14-15 years	11S	third cycle general division	third cycle pre-matura division	
13-14 years	10S			
12-13 years	9S			
11-12 years	8P	second primary cycle		primary school
10-11 years	7P			
9-10 years	6P			
8-9 years	5P			
7-8 years	4P	first primary cycle (including kindergarten)		
6-7 years	3P			
5-6 years	2P			
4-5 years	1P			



[www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite)



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