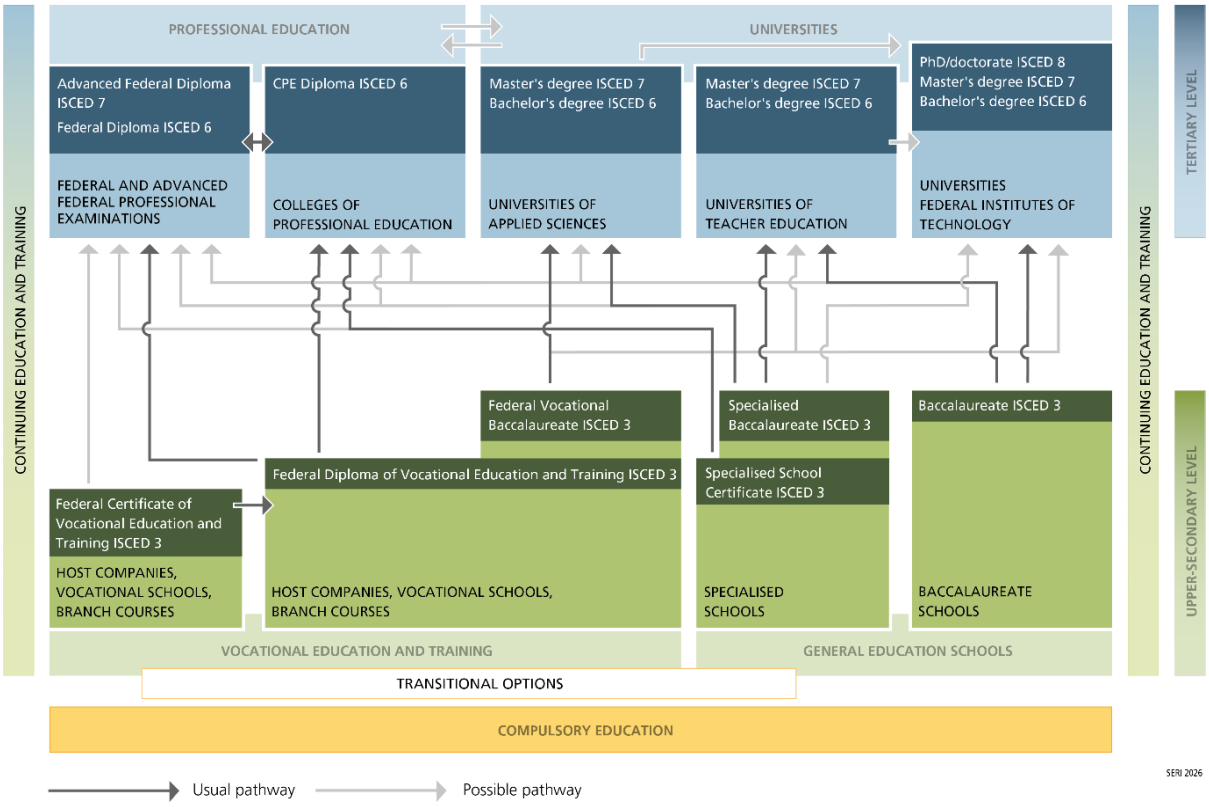
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER

State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI

Information on the Swiss Education System – Professional Education



Tertiary-level professional education

In Switzerland, tertiary-level education is divided into two sectors: the professional education sector and the university sector. The former offers two main pathways to professional qualifications: preparation for federal and advanced federal professional examinations (for the Federal Diploma or Advanced Federal Diploma); study programmes at a college of professional education (for the CPE Diploma). Holders of a Federal Diploma or a CPE Diploma are entitled to use the add-on title «Professional Bachelor»; holders of an Advanced Federal Diploma are entitled to use the add-on title «Professional Master».[1]

Access to the professional education sector is open to holders of upper-secondary level vocational education and training (VET) qualifications and who have gained several years of work experience. Professional education is highly practical in nature and consistently geared to the needs of the labour market. Professional organisations establish training content and ensure the quality of training programmes and examinations. Applied learning is encouraged as it enables new expertise to be quickly implemented and ensures a rapid rate of innovation. Holders of professional qualifications are highly skilled professionals who can handle challenging tasks and take on a high level of responsibility.

Further information: www.sbfi.admin.ch/en/professional-education

International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) was developed by UNESCO and is mainly used to facilitate comparisons in education statistics. ISCED comprises 8 levels. The Federal Diploma and the CPE Diploma are situated at ISCED level 6 and the Advanced Federal Diploma at ISCED level 7.

[1] The add-on titles may only be used with the protected title in a official language of the Swiss Confederation or as part of the English translation, as specified in the examination regulations or the core syllabus (see SERI List of Vocational and Professional Qualifications www.bvz.admin.ch).