

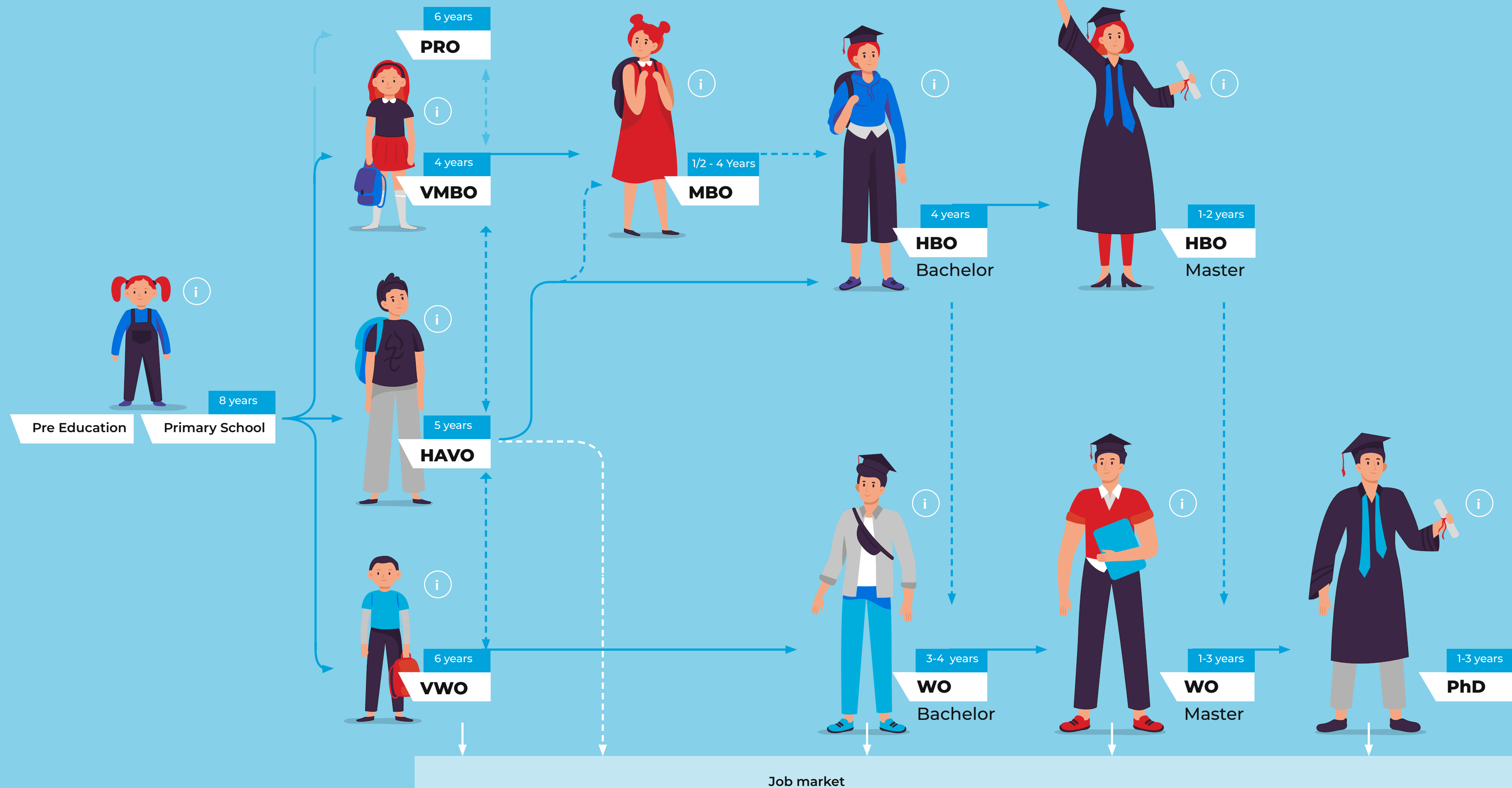
Dutch Education System

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start →

Job market





Pre Education

2 years

Primary School

8 years

VVE | Voorschoolse of vroegschoolse educatie**Preschool education**

Preschool education (or early childhood education) is for toddlers aged 2.5 to 4 years who benefit from extra support in their development. This contributes to a good start in primary school. In preschool education, your child attends childcare for 16 hours per week and follows a special program to stimulate their development.

Learning through play at childcare

Childcare offers a program for preschool education. Pedagogical staff members implement this program with the toddlers. Preschool education stimulates the development of:

- language;
- preparatory mathematics;
- motor skills;
- social-emotional skills.

PO | Basis school / Primair onderwijs**Primary education**

Primary education lasts 8 years, starting at age 4 in Group 1 and finishing in Group 8. Most children start when they turn 4. At the age of 5, according to Dutch law, children are obliged to attend school (“leerplicht”).

In many schools, there is a special class known as “kleuterklas” (kindergarten), where children from Group 1 and Group 2 are brought together. In primary school, kids are in one class from Group 1 to Group 8, with a different teacher handling most subjects every year.

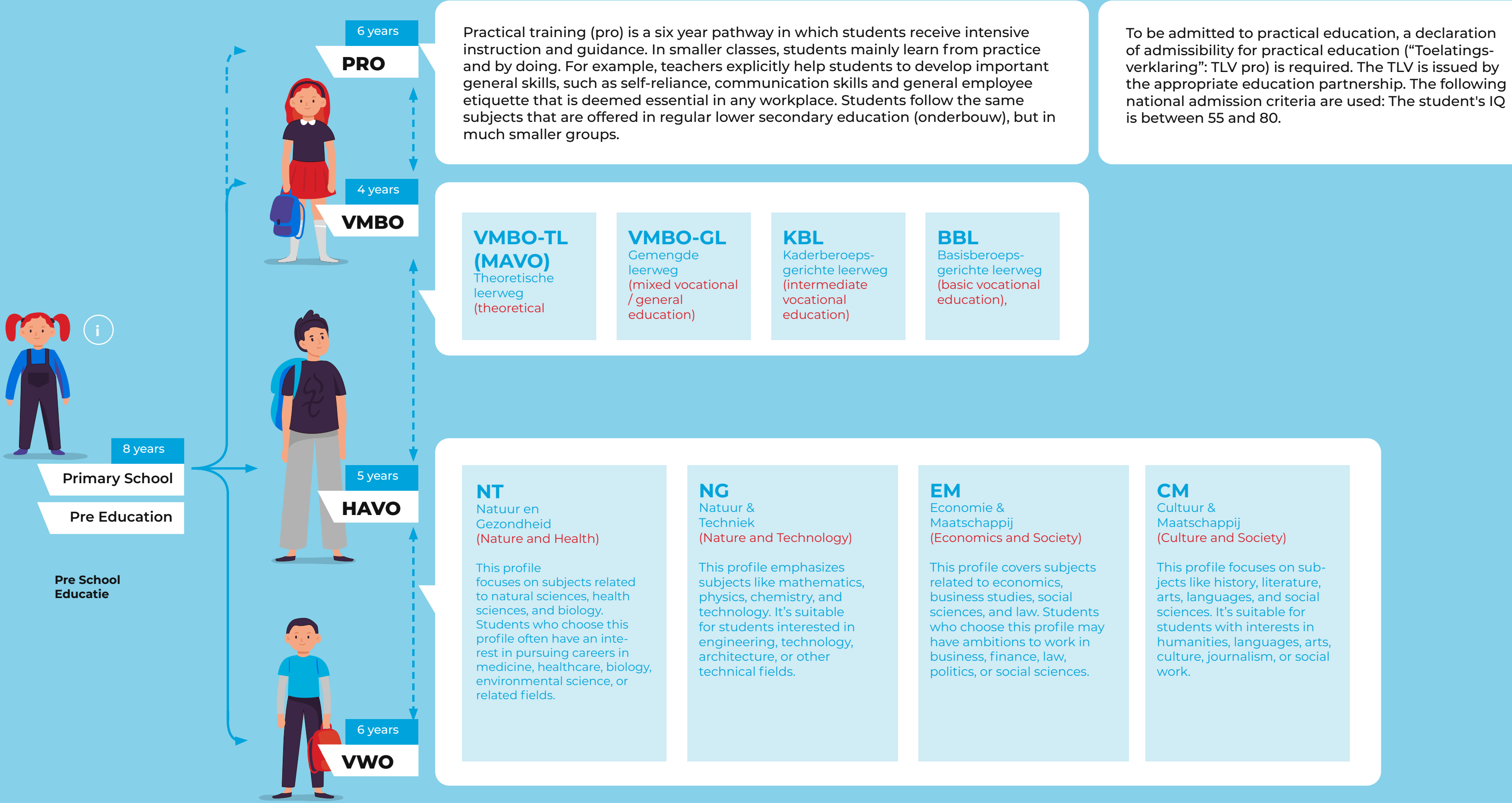
Here, the focus is on imaginative themes, playful learning, social interaction, expanding vocabulary, developing fine and gross motor skills, expressing oneself, and gradually introducing the fundamentals of reading and writing. The more formal academic curriculum begins in Group 3, around the age of six.

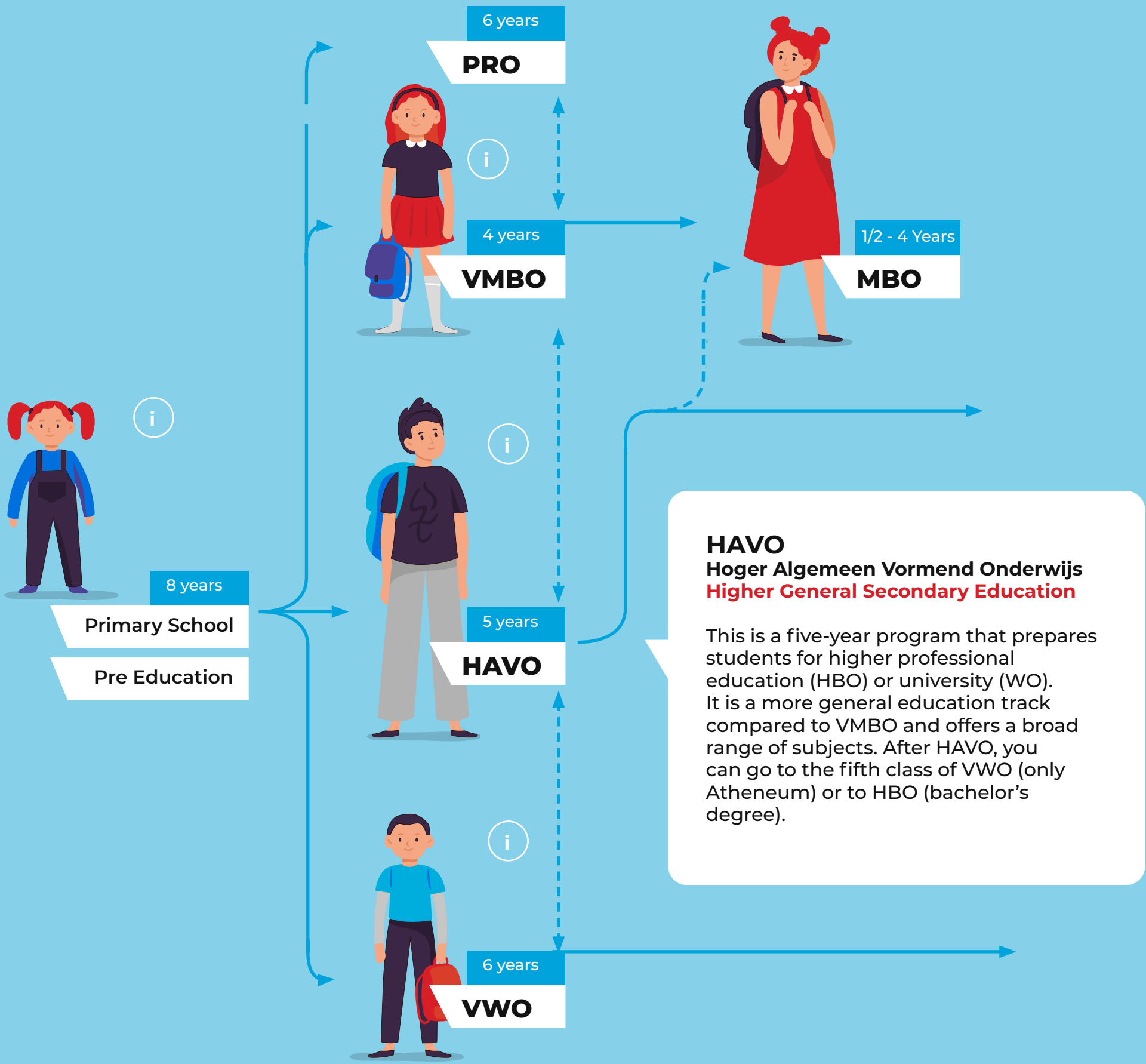
The subjects include Dutch, Mathematics, World orientation (geography, history, and natural sciences), Physical education, Arts (drawing, painting, music, drama, etc.), and citizenship.

School usually runs from 8:30 to 15:00 with a break. During the mid-day break, children bring their own lunch. It's common for schools to have Wednesday afternoons off. This may differ per school. So to be sure it's wis to check this with the school of your choice. Traditionally, Dutch primary schools don't give a lot of homework to young kids. They focus more on in-class activities, group projects, and creating a positive learning environment. However, this can vary between schools and teachers.

In Group 8, students take a test, and based on this test and teacher recommendations, they get advice on which level of secondary education to choose.

VO | Voortgezet Onderwijs Secondary education





MBO | Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
Secondary vocational education

LEVEL 1

Entree-
opleiding

Assistant
training

for basic
executive work

LEVEL 2

basisberoeps-
opleiding

Basic vocational
training

for executive
practical work

LEVEL 3

Vakopleiding

Professional
training

to become an
independent
practitioner

LEVEL 4

Middel kader
opleiding

Middle-
management
and specialized
training

After which
a person can
practice a
profession fully
independently,
with a wide ran-
ge of applications
and/or specializa-
tion

Secondary vocational education takes up to four years, depending on the level of training. Those who complete their training can start work or go on to another form of education. More than 700 vocational courses are provided in the Netherlands.

Levels of training

Secondary vocational education (MBO) prepares students for a wide range of occupations, from franchise manager to mechanic or nursing assistant. In the future, demand for skilled workers is expected to increase sharply in the Dutch job market.

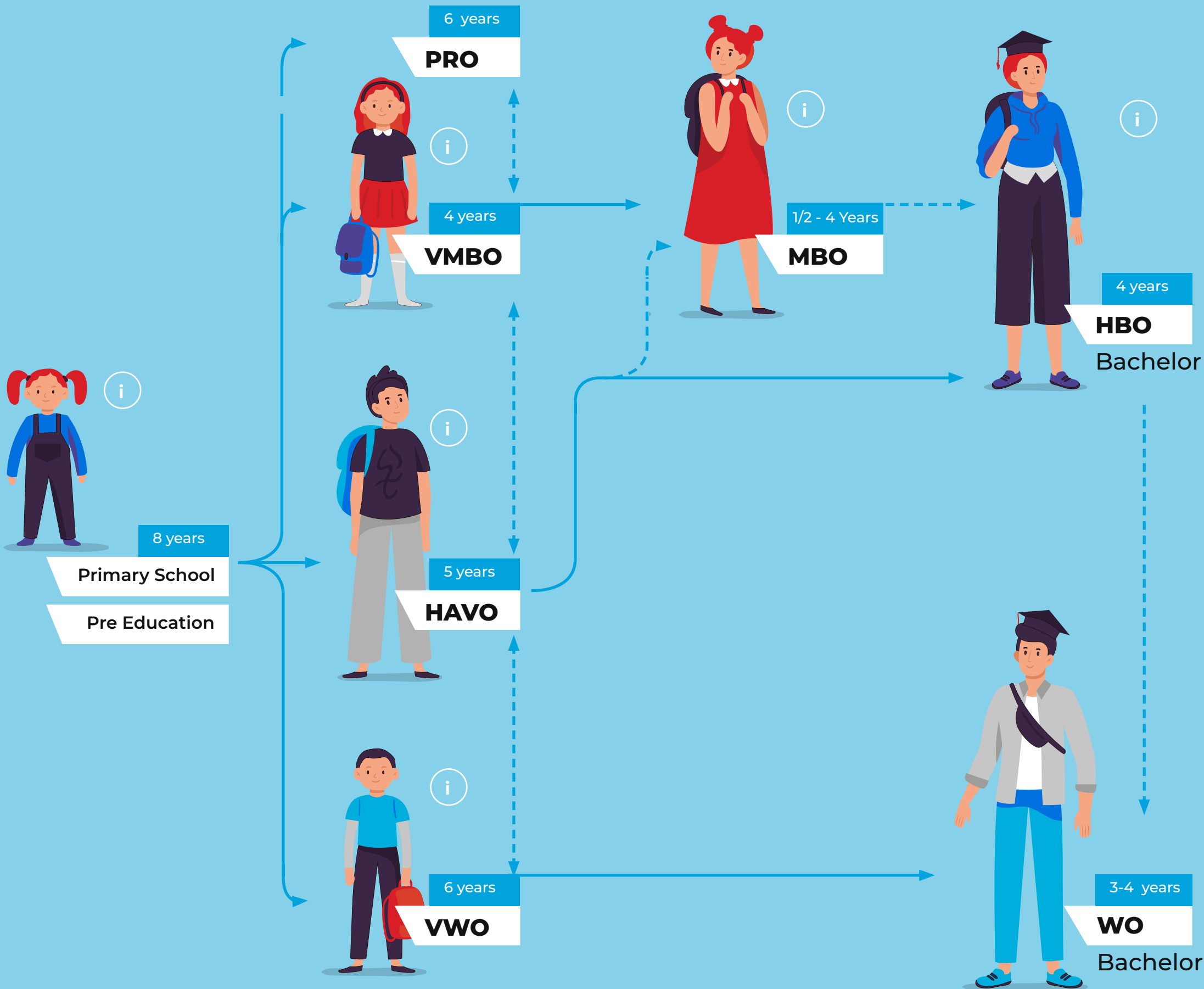
Pupils who have successfully completed the theoretical, combined, or middle-management vocational program at the VMBO level can enroll in professional and middle-management training (MBO levels 3 and 4). Holders of a level 4 MBO certificate may go on to higher professional education (HBO).

Practical training and classroom learning.

There are two learning pathways for each MBO course: vocational training (BOL), where practical training takes up between 20% and 60% of the course, and block or day release (BBL), where practical training takes up more than 60% of the course.

International accreditation

Secondary and pre-vocational education certificates are recognized abroad. The website of SBB, the Foundation for Cooperation on Vocational Education, Training and Labour Market, provides more information on accreditation and certificates.



Higher vocational education (Bachelor)
Higher vocational education (HBO) generally leads to a bachelor's degree. There are also shorter programmes that lead to an associate degree. Higher vocational schools (universities of applied sciences) can also offer a master's programme.

BSc Bachelor of Science 4 years	BA Bachelor of Arts 4 Years	LLB Bachelor of Laws 4 Years	AD Associate Degree 2 Years
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BSc Bachelor of Science 3years	BA Bachelor of Arts 3 Years	LLB Bachelor of Laws 3 Years
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University education (Bachelor)
Universities (WO) offer programmes leading to a bachelor's or master's degree.

