

# Ghana

## Demographics for Ghana

Population:	21,029,853
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$48.27 billion
Currency (inc code):	cedi (GHC)
Language(s):	English (official), African languages (including Akan, Moshi-Dagomba, Ewe, and Ga)
Internet country code:	.gh

## Elementary and secondary education

Ghana, at independence in 1957, inherited an educational system whereby students spent between 15 and 17 years in primary and secondary schools before proceeding to the tertiary level. Since 1987 a new system has been introduced whereby students spend six years in primary school, three years in junior secondary school (JSS) and a further three years in senior secondary school (SSS). Primary school may be preceded by one or two years in nursery school or kindergarten. Thus currently, students usually complete elementary and secondary school education by the age of 18 years. Under a new educational reform system to be implemented in 2007 the SSS is expected to be extended by one year to four years in addition to a two-year nursery programme. Students take the basic education examination (BECE) to graduate from JSS. Passing the BECE is a requirement to proceed to SSS level or technical/vocational schools. Owing to limited space at the SSS level, less than 25 percent of students go beyond the JSS level. Even at the primary level, an estimated 36.7 percent of pupils do not attend school. Government policy is to achieve universal free elementary education by 2007.

The central government, through the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, determines curricula policies for both public and private schools. Students generally have little choice of subjects at the basic level until the SSS level where, in addition to four basic core subjects, namely, core mathematics, English language, integrated science and social studies, a student may choose three or four elective subjects in the arts, humanities and science streams on the advice of parents or teachers. Formal counseling is limited.

### **Higher education**

Higher education is a privilege in Ghana. Less than 5 percent of students enroll in tertiary school. Graduates of SSS may further their education in one of these institutions: teacher training colleges, polytechnic and vocational institutions, institute of professional studies, institute of languages or in public and private universities in the country. The private universities constitute a recent phenomenon with the oldest, accredited being less than ten years old. The intake of all the private universities together is still less than one of the bigger four public universities.

Since independence, various categories of trained teachers have been produced by teacher training colleges in the country to help meet the demand for teachers in specific areas of our development. There is a polytechnic college in each of the ten administrative regions of the country to train the middle level manpower in vocational and academic courses. These institutions offer one, two and three programmes with the highest qualification students may attain being the High National Diploma certificate which is a little higher than the associate degree and lower than the bachelor's degree in the USA. It is government policy to turn these institutions into degree awarding colleges and already a couple of them have started bachelor's degree programmes. The Institute of Professional Studies (IPS) runs professional courses in accounting, marketing and secretarial studies. The country has one specialized post-secondary college, dedicated to the study of languages and which offers professional and degree courses in English, French and German.

There are seven public universities and 24 private colleges in the country as of August 2005. The increase in the number of private universities in the country was as a result of an educational reforms programme in 1987 after an exhaustive re-appraisal of the problems facing the higher education sub-sector and its future evolution within the context of national development. Hitherto, only public universities existed in the country. In order to ensure coordination of the tertiary education system and effective implementation of government policies, tertiary institutions were brought under the general supervision and direction of the Ministry of Education with a National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) established in 1993 to advise the Minister of Education on all matters related to the development of tertiary education, including the assessment of the financial needs and budgetary allocations to public tertiary

institutions. The country has a National Accreditation Board (NAB) and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABTEX) responsible for accrediting institutions offering degree level programmes as well as professional and technician examinations, respectively.

Degree programmes in Ghana take place only in accredited public universities and private university colleges. The National Accreditation Board Law 1993 (Act 454) requires that a new degree awarding institution should be affiliated to an older one for a period of not less than four years. First degree (undergraduate) programmes require four years' training in all the colleges except the one public university – The Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) – which offers a three-year mature students program.

Graduate education programs of study lead to master's and doctoral degrees. Only three of the public universities offer a few doctoral programmes and none of them offers business education. The University of Ghana Business School and GIMPA plan to introduce doctoral programmes within the next two years. Master's degrees usually last for two years with 15-18 months being an exception and include at least one year of course work beyond the bachelor's degree. A good first degree (at least second class lower) is required to enter a master's programme. Standardized tests such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and, for business and management, the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) are not required.

Professional degrees – dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, law, engineering are offered at present in only four public universities and last between four years for pharmacy/engineering, and six years for medicine. Three private universities have started engineering programmes.

Most higher education institutions in Ghana operate a two-semester system with a semester averaging 16 weeks. A few follow a three-term system but on average they add up to 32 weeks in a year. The academic year is generally a period of time from August/September to June/July that equates to two or three semesters.

In view of the limited opportunities for higher education in the country, the Government policy is to encourage distance education. A distance education unit has been established in the Ministry of Education to coordinate distance learning. However, the impact is limited at present with only two public universities – the University of Cape Coast, and the University of Education, Winneba – offering such programmes mainly for teacher education.

Most universities run three credit-hour courses with the exception of the GIMPA, which runs four credit-hour courses per week.

### **Management education**

At levels below the bachelor's degree, management education in Ghana is provided mainly in the polytechnics and private tertiary schools. However, all degree level programmes are provided in public universities, namely the

University of Ghana, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, University of Cape Coast, University of Education, Winneba and six affiliated private colleges. Only the first three of the public universities offer master's programmes in business management. However, there are a handful of off-shore institutions that offer distance learning MBAs in Ghana. Only the University of Ghana has advertised to start a PhD programme in business/management, which is yet to take off.

Business programmes within colleges and universities are usually managed and delivered by an academic unit often referred to as the business department. Only three public universities that offer master's programmes have established business schools with deans along the US business schools pattern. Very little formal business and management education take place outside the universities besides short (few days to a couple of weeks) development programs run by consulting firms and in-house corporate departments.

Bachelor's degrees in business and management are provided by colleges and universities lasting four years with the exception of GIMPA's three-year mature students programme. Degree titles are pretty standard with little variation. The majority have adopted Bachelor in Business Administration though increasingly, where the degree has a concentration say in accounting, banking or finance the degree titles correspond to the concentration, for example Bachelor in Accounting.

At the master's level three types of degree are issued. A more recent one but increasingly popular is the Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) which the universities offer in sandwich, modular or evening/weekend modes. The second type is a traditional general MBA by course work or partly by course work and partly by dissertation. Third, there are MBAs with concentration in areas such as accounting, marketing, information technology, banking, finance and human resources management.

Most of the institutions in Ghana do not as yet have the faculty or the library facilities to offer doctoral programmes.

### *Faculty*

Most business faculty are academics with few coming directly from the business world. About 60 percent of faculty do not have terminal degrees and only GIMPA has two full professors. Faculty are increasingly hired with business and management degrees though those from related disciplines such as economics, communication, psychology and sociology are also engaged. New doctorates and master's degree holders with two years' experience are usually hired into the position of lecturer. Unlike the USA a four-level faculty position operates in Ghana, namely, lecturer, senior lecturer (both falling within the assistant professor category), associate professor and professor. Faculty

positions are tenured after a probationary period subject to the period of three-year review in the case of GIMPA.

Faculty are generally expected to conduct research, teach and provide service to the school. However, in view of the shortage of faculty in most of the schools, very little research is done. In the larger cities the business schools draw on academically qualified practicing managers and retired executives to assist in teaching to a limited extent. The use of part-time and adjunct faculty to teach one course is common in the three business schools.

To overcome the faculty constraint locally, GIMPA runs a modular MBA whereby the actual teaching of a course of 40 hours is concentrated into three weeks followed by five months of self-study. As a result it is able to draw on faculty from overseas who come in to deliver one course in the three weeks.

### *Library*

The library constraint arises from the increasing cost of business and management books *vis-à-vis* the limited resources of the colleges and programme participants. The sum total of all the library books in the business departments in Ghana will be equivalent to that of a medium-sized university in the USA. That constraint is being overcome through subscription to electronic libraries and databases. The biggest challenge where such facilities are available in the institutions with business schools is reorienting the faculty and students away from traditional libraries to ICT mediated learning and provision of adequate access by students to electronic media.

### *Students*

In the 2004-2005 academic year there were 2,353 undergraduate students in business and management programs in the three public universities that offer bachelor's degrees with a corresponding 508 graduate students. Combined they represent less than 6 percent of registered students in those colleges. It is estimated that a further 1,000 students are registered in the other colleges at the bachelor's level. The proportion of women registered at either level is less than 30 percent. At the MBA level, offshore providers provide services to about 100 students although accurate statistics are hard to come by.

### *Accreditation*

By law, the NAB is expected to approve all degrees since 2002. However, since the six older universities pre-date the NAB, formal accreditation is yet to be applied to them. However, GIMPA and other private universities and colleges that started their programmes more recently are fully accredited by the NAB. None of the national programmes has applied for international accreditation. Only GIMPA has initiated international accreditation:

- Estimated number of institutions with business undergraduate degree programmes: 10.
- Estimated number of institutions with master's degree programmes: 4.
- Estimated number of institutions with doctoral degree programmes: nil.

### **Issues facing business schools**

The major issues facing business schools in Ghana are quality of faculty, inadequate library resources, funding, high student-faculty ratio, limited access to information communication technology and weak links between business houses and schools.

Business schools in Ghana are faced with an acute shortage of academically qualified and experienced faculty. Only GIMPA has a faculty of 64 with eight professors. The University of Ghana Business School, which accounts for about 50 percent of the undergraduate students in 2004/2005 with enrolment of 1,669 students and two-thirds of master's students, had only one full professor, the dean, who does not teach, no other at the associate professor level and few faculty with terminal degrees. In a few cases private colleges had only two or three full-time faculty of recent master's degree graduates. Low remuneration and the fact that none of the schools produce PhDs locally account for this phenomenon.

Library resources as mentioned above remain a major constraint. While ICT mediated learning would ease the situation another constraint has been funding. Most of the colleges with the exception of the larger public universities run on shoestring budgets. Fees are paid in all the private colleges but levels are low – scarcely up to US\$2,000 equivalent per annum. The master's programmes are better endowed as they charge fees up to US\$4,000 per annum.

Of increasing concern are the high levels of student-teacher ratios especially with regard to undergraduate programmes with implications for quality. High demand for access and limited library and faculty has implications for quality and the majority of the schools will not be considered for international accreditation.

With the exception of the University of Ghana Business School, business and management education is a recent phenomenon. It is the fastest growing segment of tertiary education in the country at the moment. It is expected that within the next five years, the large unmet demand at the MBA level will be reduced and candidates will discriminate among the schools with concomitant pressure to improve business and management education. The drive towards a continent-wide accreditation system pioneered by GIMPA and supported by the International Financial Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group and the former's effort to pursue international accreditation in the 2005/2006 academic year will introduce new standards in business education in Ghana.

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