



WNF Education and Credentials

August 2018

Correlation between Education and Credentials

The naturopathic profession includes practitioners with the credentials of a traditional naturopath, licensed naturopath, a diploma or degree in naturopathy, naturopathic doctor, and a master's degree in research of naturopathy. There are different types of naturopathic research at the master's degree level, such as studies on the effectiveness or mode of action of specific naturopathic modalities or how naturopathy/naturopathic medicine is used in a clinical setting as distinct from other healthcare traditions, professions and health services or public health research, where naturopathy/naturopathic medicine can be applied in a public healthcare setting.

The variation in credentials is based on the degree of regulation, the educational standards permitted and the educational programs available in different world regions. Educational levels have been mapped to the 2011 UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels¹ to aid understanding of the different programs.

Although many naturopathic practitioners have acquired education above the credential that they are permitted to use in their country, the following chart is a guide showing the link between credentials and **minimum** educational standards recommended by the World Naturopathic Federation (WNF). The minimum standards also encompass those recommended by the World Health Organization.²

Note: The exact terminology may vary by country and world region. For further clarification please review the WNF documents on naturopathic nomenclature and global naturopathic regulation.³

¹ ISCED Mappings (PDF [link](#))

² WHO Benchmarks in Naturopathy (PDF [link](#))

³ Global naturopathic regulation (PDF [link](#))

Credentials⁴	Diploma in Naturopathy	Professional Diploma in Naturopathy	Three-year professional degree in Naturopathy	Four-year professional degree in Naturopathic Medicine	Two-year Naturopathic Bridge Program
Recommended Title(s)⁵	Traditional Naturopath	Naturopath / Licensed Naturopath	Naturopath	Naturopathic Doctor ⁶	Naturopathic Doctor (for medical professionals)
Educational Level	ISCED level 4	ISCED level 5	ISCED level 5 or 6	ISCED level 6	ISCED level 6
Program examples	ENU (Uruguay)	CENATHO (France) ISNAT asbl (Belgium)	Wellpark (NZ) Philippus Thuban (Spain)	Bastyr University (USA) BNYS (India)	Bridge program at CCNM (Canada)
Total number of minimum hours recommended⁷	1,500 hours	2,500 hours (includes previous level)	3,500+ hours, minimum three-year program (includes previous level)	4,000+ hours, minimum four-year program (includes previous level)	2,200 hours

⁴ Credentials correlate to the level; not a philosophical approach to naturopathic practice. All naturopathic practitioners embrace the traditional roots of the naturopathic profession.

⁵ Titles vary by jurisdiction and are based on the level or regulation and/or recognition of the naturopathic profession.

⁶ In some jurisdictions, Doctor title is not permitted, but the educational requirements are considered at the Doctor level and are commensurate with Primary Care provider level education. In other jurisdictions, both the doctor title and the physician title is part of regulation especially for those with training as a Naturopathic Doctor, Doctor of Naturopathy, Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine or Naturopathic Physician, often referred to as an ND or NMD.

⁷ In most world regions study hours include primarily supervised classroom hours. The regulations may differ in some regions and non-contact hours may also be included.

Pre-requisites	Highschool equivalency (ISCED level 3)	Highschool equivalency (ISCED level 3)	Highschool equivalency (ISCED level 3)	May require a first professional degree (minimum ISCED level 4), plus pre-requisites such as biomedical sciences and humanities	Professional degree – i.e., Doctor of Chiropractic, Medical Doctors, Osteopathic Doctor
Biomedical sciences (basic and clinical sciences)⁸	Recommendation: 400+	Recommendation: 500+	Recommendation: 1,000+	Recommendation: 1,200+	Not required, if covered in their prerequisite program
Social Sciences⁹	Recommendation: 50+	Recommendation: 100+	Recommendation: 200+	Recommendation: 200+	Recommendation: 100+
Naturopathic History, Philosophies, Principles & Theories¹⁰	Mandatory – 150 hours	Mandatory – 150 hours	Mandatory: 150 hours	Mandatory – 180 hours	Mandatory – 180 hours

⁸ **Biomedical Sciences** refers to courses such as microbiology, biochemistry, anatomy, physiology and pathology. It also includes a range of studies including gastroenterology, cardiology, psychology, dermatology, endocrinology, rheumatology and urology. It also includes laboratory studies and topics such as environmental medicine, pediatrics, women’s/men’s health and gerontology and palliative care.

⁹ **Social Sciences** refers to systems-based practices, professional ethics, practice management and other related topics.

¹⁰ For further clarification on **Naturopathic History, Philosophies, Principles and Theories** check out: *WNF White Paper of Naturopathic History, Philosophies, Principles and Theories* (PDF [link](#))

Naturopathic Assessment and Diagnosis¹¹	Recommendation: 150+ hours	Recommendation: 150+	Recommendation: 200+	Recommendation: 300+	Recommendation: 300+
Modalities¹²	Recommendation: 400+	Recommendation: 800+	Recommendation: 800+	Recommendation: 800+	Recommendation: 800+
Clinical Practice¹³	Recommendation: 400+ hours	Recommendation: 400+ hours	Recommendation: 600+ hours	Recommendation: 1200+ hours	Recommendation: 1200+ hours

¹¹ **Naturopathic Assessment** is patient-centered and involves investigation into various factors including lifestyle, social, environmental, external, genetic and medical interventions with goal of determining the factors contributing to a patient’s state of health. **Naturopathic Diagnosis** is the summation of the findings from the naturopathic assessment. There are two primary and interrelated purposes to a naturopathic diagnosis. The first is to accurately categorize the disease using conventional terminology and/or traditional diagnostic patterns and the second is to determine the true causes of disease. **Note:** In some naturopathic educational programs the art of assessment and diagnosis is incorporated and reflected in the hours spent in the biomedical sciences. In some world regions Diagnosis is not permitted by naturopathic practitioners.

¹² The following seven **naturopathic modalities** are common to naturopathic practice: Clinical Nutrition, Applied Nutrition, Herbal Medicine, Homeopathy, Hydrotherapy, Lifestyle Counselling and physical therapies such exercise therapy, and acupuncture. Modalities, such as yoga, naturopathic manipulation, tissue salts and complex homeopathy are used in some world regions. Treatments such as Intravenous Therapies, Mesotherapy, Minor Surgery and having prescribing rights are part of naturopathic practice in some world regions, especially in those areas where there is regulation and where the level of training is that of a naturopathic doctor. Reference: Defining the Global Naturopathic Profession (PDF [link](#))

¹³ **Clinical Practice** hours refers to the time that naturopathic students spend with patients in a student clinic, supervised by the naturopaths / naturopathic doctors.

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Advanced Study Recommendations:

Honours in Naturopathy

- Pre-requisites: Bachelor's degree in Naturopathy.
- Honours by research in naturopathy generally involves single aspects of health services or public health research, systematic assessments of the evidence base for naturopathy, biochemistry and constituents of naturopathic interventions, clinical investigations of naturopathic safety and efficacy.
- The standard of education is equivalent to ISCED level 6.03.

Master's in Naturopathy:

- Pre-requisites: Naturopathic Doctor (ND) or Bachelor's degree in Naturopathy (available in some regions). A Medical Doctor with a dual designation as a licensed naturopath or who has achieved a Diploma in Naturopathy would also qualify.
- Master's in Naturopathy programs generally involve an aspect of safety and efficacy of complex naturopathic interventions, the application of naturopathy in chronic disease prevention and management, comparisons with conventional treatments, in-depth study of a naturopathic modality or molecular biology of naturopathic interventions and or encompass naturopathic philosophy, principles and practice.
- The standard of education is equivalent to ISCED level 7.02.
- In some world regions, a Master's in Naturopathy is a pre-requisite for a PhD.

Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy)

Pre-requisites: Doctor of Naturopathy (ND); Bachelor degree with high level Research Honors or Research Master's in Naturopathy.

Most Ph.D. programs:

- Investigate complex health care questions including naturopathic interventions, incidence and prevalence of chronic diseases, primary health care and health care policy.

- Generally involves detailed aspects of naturopathic treatment, in-depth study into the public health and community use of naturopathy, and encompass naturopathic practice outcomes of safety and efficacy.
- Are conducted in an aspect of naturopathy treatment or in an naturopathic modality. Some naturopaths have completed Ph.D.s in education, public health and other specialties.
- Many of the Naturopathic Doctors that have completed Ph.D.s have done so to support their teaching career or as part of their focus in naturopathic research and practice.
- The standard of education is ISCED level 8.

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