**INTRODUCTION**

Education in Mauritius is compulsory from age 5 up to the age of 16 years. The present education system allows a pupil to study for a period of two years at the pre-primary level. At the end of the primary cycle, of six years duration, the Standard VI pupils sit for the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) examination. The CPE examination qualifies these pupils to a five-year secondary education leading to the Cambridge School Certificate (SC) or the General Certificate of Education (GCE-O Level). An additional two years of schooling prepares students for Higher School Certificate (HSC) or General Certificate of Education (GCE-A Level).

Pupils who are under the age of twelve and are unsuccessful at the CPE examination are permitted to repeat Standard VI. Unsuccessful students who have attained the age of twelve are enrolled in the pre-vocational stream. After three years of pre-vocational education, these students can follow the National Trade Certificate Foundation course at Industrial & Vocational Training Board (IVTB) Centres, which prepare them for technical and vocational training.

On passing the HSC, students are eligible for university studies.