



GUIDE TO THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF CHILE AND ASPECTS TO CONSIDER FOR THE RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TITLES AND DEGREES IN COLOMBIA

INTRODUCTION

The *Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia (MEN*), Ministry of National Education of Colombia, has been working, in recent years, in the construction of guides for the educational systems of different countries. These guides have the objective of assisting the decision-making process on where and what to study abroad, as well as providing guidance on the process and requirements for the recognition of higher education titles and degrees in Colombia.

The *Dirección de Calidad de la Educación Superior del MEN*, Quality Office of Higher Education of the MEN, made a diagnosis on the Educational Systems Guides that are already published on the website. The need to bring the technical language of education closer to the citizen, as well as to generate an interactive instrument, were highlighted. Therefore, the MEN partnered with the *Asociación Colombiana de Universidades (ASCUN)*, Colombian Association of Universities, to update and redesign the Educational Systems Guides.

We have gathered information from different official sources in order to offer a practical and relevant instrument for the citizen. Relevant information is framed on four central aspects: 1) the higher education system; 2) the legality of higher education programs and institutions; 3) quality assurance of higher education institutions and programs; and 4) the elements to start the process of recognition of higher education titles and degrees obtained abroad.





All the information enclosed herein includes the different accessibility requirements in WEB tools and products that ease the access for people with disabilities. This work was possible thanks to the invaluable collaboration of the *Instituto Nacional para Ciegos (INCI)*, National Institute for the Blind.

1. HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF CHILE

The education system of Chile offers four educational levels: Kindergarten, Basic, Middle, and Higher, according to Law-Ranking Decree - DFL N° 2 of 2009 of Education. For Middle Education, it offers a common general teaching and differentiated teaching, which are: humanistic-scientific, technical and artistic.

The officially recognized elementary and middle schools certify the annual qualifications of the students and guide them in the completion of their studies. The *Ministerio de Educación de Chile*, Ministry of Education of Chile, grants the title of *Licencia de Educación Media*, a major requirement to access higher education studies. In the case of middle-artistic education, the Ministry of Education issues a certificate that supports the completion of studies in this field.

Students who have opted for technical vocational education can be awarded with the title of *Técnico de Nivel Medio*, granted by the Ministry of Education once the requirements established in the curricular structure have been met. (Ministry of Education, 2010).

For information in more detail about this law, please visit the following link: https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=1014974

- Institutions of Higher Education



The main goal of Higher Education is to guide and educate the students at an advanced level of sciences, arts, humanities and technologies in the professional and technical field. This definition was established in article 21 of Law N° 21,091 of 2018, which rules Higher Education. As a result, Chile settles an integrated system of agencies, public services in higher education and institutions of higher education.

The Higher Education System in Chile is mixed and has two subsystems: 1) Post-secondary education, and 2) university education. Besides, it is structured in two levels: undergraduate (professional learning) and postgraduate (professional development).

Higher Education institutions in Chile have four types: 1) *Institutos Profesionales* (*IP*), Professional Institutes, 2) *Centros de Formación Técnica (CFT*), Technical Training Centers, 3) *Instituciones de Educación de las Fuerzas Armadas, de Orden y Seguridad*, Educational institutions of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement and Security, and 4) Universities.

Post-secondary education is offered by *Institutos Profesionales (IP*), Professional Institutes and the *Centros de Formación Técnica (CFT*), Technical Training Centers; the CFT may be public or private.

- <u>1.)Institutos Profesionales (IP):</u> Professional Institutes are institutions of higher education that offer professional careers and higher technical education but do not award academic degrees.
- <u>2.) Centros de Formación Técnica (CFT):</u> Technical Training Centers are higher education institutions that offer only higher technical careers.
- 3.) Instituciones de educación superior de las Fuerzas Armadas y de Orden: the institutions of higher education of the Armed Forces and Law Enforcement are:
 - Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos, National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies.
 - Academias de Guerra y Politécnicas, War and Polytechnic Academies.



- Escuelas de Armas y Especialidades de las Fuerzas Armadas, Schools of Weapons and Specialties of the Armed Forces.
- Escuela Técnica Aeronáutica de la Dirección General de Aeronáutica Civil,
 Aeronautical Technical School of the Main Office of Civil Aeronautics.
- Academia de Ciencias Policiales de Carabineros de Chile, Academy of Police
 Sciences of Carabineers of Chile.
- Escuelas Matrices de Oficiales de las Fuerzas Armadas, Main Schools of Officers of the Armed Forces.
- Escuela de Carabineros y Escuela de Suboficiales de Carabineros de Chile,
 School of Carabineers and School on Non-commissioned officers of Carabineers of Chile.
- Escuela de Gendarmería de Chile, School of Gendarmerie of Chile.
- Escuela de Investigaciones Policiales, School of Police Investigations.
- Instituto Superior de la Policía de Investigaciones de Chile, Higher Institute of Police Investigations of Chile.

The following institutions can grant professional titles of all kinds and different academic degrees, especially in the intrinsic areas to their own professional tasks (Ministry of Education, 2018):

- Academias de Guerra de las Fuerzas Armadas, War Academies of Armed Forces.
- Academias Politécnicas Militar, Naval y Aeronáutica, Military, Naval and Aeronautical Polytechnic Academies.
- Escuela Técnica de la Dirección General de Aeronáutica Civil, Technical
 School of General Office of Civil Aeronautics.
- Academia de Ciencias Policiales de Carabineros de Chile, Academy of Police
 Sciences of the Carabineers of Chile.
- Instituto Superior de la Policía de Investigaciones de Chile, Higher Institute of the Investigative Police of Chile.

For information in more detail, please visit the following link: https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=1118991



4.) *Universities:* are institutions that offer technical and professional programs, and they have the exclusive right to award all kinds of degrees and academic titles. The subsystem is integrated by private and public universities affiliated to the *Consejo de Rectores de Universidades Chilenas (CRUCH*), Council of Rectors of Chilean Universities, and private universities recognized by the state.

The Consejo de Rectores de Universidades Chilenas (CRUCH) is a coordinating body of university work integrated by thirty rectors from public and private, federal and non-federal universities. Its functions include: advise and develop proposals to the Ministry of Education in public policies on higher education, coordinate institutions that belong to it and promote collaboration between universities.

For information in more detail about the CRUCH and its affiliated universities, please visit the following link: https://www.consejoderectores.cl/

- Access to Higher Education

The Subsecretaría de Educación is in charge of the electronic platform, which serves as a centralized system to manage the access to the technical-professional subsystem. It provides updated information about the access to higher education institutions, academic offerings and vacancies, admission process, elements and mechanisms of selection, special access programs and application deadlines. This subsystem differs from the university one because those students must apply directly to the institutions (Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas, 2020).

Additionally, Chile has built a centralized access system for those students interested in higher education programs of the university subsystem. That platform is coordinated by the *Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas (CRUCH)* and a group of private universities affiliated to the system. Nevertheless, each university makes the admission criteria for its applicants and has the autonomy to decide the requirements and the selection elements to allow the access to its professional careers and academic programs.



Until 2020, the admission process was based on the *Notas de Enseñanza Media* (*NEM*), the ranking of grades and The *Pruebas de Selección Universitaria* (*PSU*). The *Pruebas de Selección Universitaria* (*PSU*) have been defined as a mandatory and standardized test that controlled the access of applicants to the variety of university academic programs. (*Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas*, 2020).

The university admission process for 2021 and 2022 will apply the *Pruebas de Acceso Transitorias*, Transitional Access Test, instead of the PSU; as per the agreement established in March 2020 by the *Comité Técnico de Acceso a la Educación Universitaria*, Technical Committee for Access to University Education. The new method contemplates a mandatory reading competence test and mathematical competence test. Also includes an elective exam of science, history, and social sciences. For information in more detail about the platform to access higher education, please visit the following link: https://acceso.mineduc.cl/

The Departamento de Evaluación, Medición y Registro Educacional (DEMRE) has the responsibility of designing the set of evaluation elements for the admission process to Chilean universities. The DEMRE is also in charge of applying the tests, analyzing, and publishing their results.

This entity belongs to *the Vicerrectoría de Asuntos Académicos de la Universidad de Chile*, Vice Presidency of Academic Affairs of the University of Chile.

For more information, you can visit the following official links:

https://demre.cl/

https://www.uchile.cl/DEMRE

Degrees and Titles

Undergraduate is defined as the level of learning that allows the title achievement of *Técnico de Nivel Superior*, a professional degree, an academic degree, or a Bachelor's Degree. Also, it considers the following types of careers and programs:



baccalaureate and common plans, higher level technical careers, professional careers and degrees (*Jordán, M. Isabel; Reyes Brito, Javiera, 2012*).

Postgraduate education seeks to develop a level of depth and complexity at the professional level, and is aimed to award a postgraduate Academic Degree, Medical Specialty, Master's Degree or Doctorate Degree. Higher education titles are:

- Técnico de Nivel Superior, Higher Technician: is the title awarded to a graduate from a Centro de Formación Técnica (CFT), an Instituto Profesional (IP) or a University having approved a study program lasting four (4) semesters, meaning two (2) years.
- Bachillerato, Associate 's Degree: is considered an early cycle of study and
 is awarded upon completion of two years of education. High school
 emphasizes on a specific science field, for instance, humanities or social
 sciences. This title gives the opportunity to continue with professional studies.
- **Título Profesional,** Professional Title: is the title awarded to a graduate from an *Instituto Profesional (IP)* or a university whose syllabus has been approved, and it gives the student a general and scientific education suitable for professional performance. This learning has a length between four (4) and five (5) years of study.
- Título de Licenciatura, Bachelor's Degree: after having completed the academic program in an area of knowledge or a specific discipline, university students are awarded with this title. This learning has a length between four (4) and five (5) years of study. The Bachelor's Degree is a requirement for further postgraduate studies.
- Postítulos, Post titles: upon completion of the specific professional development program, students will receive this title. Applicants who want to access this kind of education must hold a title of Técnico de Nivel Superior or a Professional Degree from a university. Among the postgraduate education, different professional learning is considered, as well as medical specialties.



Most of them have an average duration of one and a half years (Ministry of Education, 2018).

For information in more detail, please visit the following link:

https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=1118991

- **Especialidades Médicas,** Medical Specialties: are programs that aim to train high-level experts in the field of medicine. Chile offers two alternatives:
 - a) Especialidades Médicas Primarias, Primary Medical Specialties: are programs whose duration is two (2) or four (4) years where the professional acquires the required skills to perform as an autonomous specialist.
 - **b)** Especialidades Derivadas (Subespecialidades), Secondary Medical Specialties (sub-specialties): are programs that seek to strengthen the relevant skills to perform the most complex challenges in the field of medicine. This learning lasts two (2) years.

Doctors graduated in Chile and in foreign universities must take and pass the *Examen Único Nacional de Conocimientos de Medicina (EUNACOM*). This requirement was established in Law 20,261 of 2009 of the *Ministerio de Salud y la Subsecretaría de Salud Pública*. The EUNACOM is a mandatory requirement to access programs of improvement, specialization, postgraduate, or subspecialties in the field of health. (Ministerio de Salud; Subsecretaría de Salud Pública 2008).

For information in more detail, please visit the following links:

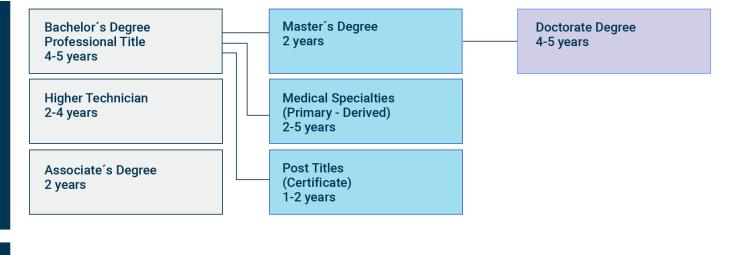
http://www.eunacom.cl/

http://www.medicina.uchile.cl/postgrado/programas-de-formacion-de-especialistas/informacion-para-medicos-extranjeros

Grado de Maestría, Master's Degree: academic programs of advanced study and research in different disciplines offered by universities. Applicants who want to access this kind of education must hold a Bachelor's Degree or a



- Professional Degree. These programs have a length of two (2) years and require the approval of a thesis work or its equivalent.
- Poctorado, Doctorate Degree: is the highest degree that a university can grant. Students with a Bachelor's Degree, Professional or Master's Degree in different disciplines, and under completion of the advanced study and research program can be awarded with this title. Additionally, the construction, defense and approval of a dissertation are mandatory, which is defined as an original research developed autonomously and represents a contribution to the field of knowledge. (CRUCH, 2009) (Jordán, M. Isabel; Reyes Brito, Javiera, 2012). This academic program has duration of four (4) to five (5) years (Ministry of Education, 2018).







* Note. Own elaboration adapted from DFL N°2 of 2009 of Education and the Official websites of the Subsecretaría de Educación Superior.



1.1 Comparative table of educational levels in Chile and Colombia

It is essential to understand the characteristics of the educational levels in both countries: Chile and Colombia. Therefore, herein you can find a comparative table of the two educational systems. This comparison is done based on the higher education levels:

- Level 8: Doctorate Degree or equivalent level
- Level 7: Master's Degree or equivalent level
- Level 6: Bachelor's Degree or equivalent level
- Level 5: Short-cycle tertiary education

Comparative table of educational levels in Chile and Colombia:

ISCED LEVEL	LEVEL NAMES IN CHILE	YEARS	LEVEL NAMES IN COLOMBIA	YEARS
8	Doctorate Degree	4-5	Doctorate Degree	4-5
7	Derived Medical Specialties	2-3	Surgical Medical Specialty	1-5
7	Primary Medical Specialties	2-5	Medical Specialty	2
7	Master's Degree	2	Master's Degree	2
6	Post Title	1-2	Bachelor's Specialty	1
6	Bachelor's Degree	4-5	Bachelor's Degree	4-5
5			Technical Specialty	<1
5	Certification after a Higher Technical Title	1	Technical Specialty	1
5	N/A	N/A	Technologist	3
5	Higher Technician	2-4	Professional Technologist	2

^{*}Note. Own elaboration adapted from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2013) and the following website: http://marcodecualificacionestp.mineduc.cl/credenciales-del-mctp/



It is relevant to mention the measure of time corresponding to the educational level and its comparison with international standards:

- a) Academic Credits: in both Colombia and Chile, the estimated time of the student's academic activity, based on the academic competencies that the program is expected to develop, is measured in units called Academic Credits.
 - Academic Credit in Chile: is the unit of estimation of the quantity of academic work that students must dedicate to achieve the learning results or competencies, in which the hours of classroom and home learning are integrated. In an academic year with a full-time syllabus is equal to 60 credits; a 4-year syllabus will have 240 credits; a 5-year syllabus will have 300 credits, and so on.

This range is established between 1,440 to 1,900 hours, in other words, a credit represents between 24 and 31 hours of academic work.

A full-time student dedicates on average 45 to 50 weekly hours divided in classroom and autonomous home study. Therefore, students may dedicate around 600 hours of academic work in one semester. (Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas, 2013).

- Academic Credit in Colombia: is the unit of measure of the student's academic work that suggests the effort to be made to achieve the results of previous learning. It is equivalent to forty-eight (48) hours for an academic period. The institutions must decide the proportion between the classroom and home learning based on the syllabus and the learning results expected from the program.
 - Institutions must express in academic credits all learning activities included in the syllabus.

(Decree 1330 of 2019, article 2.5.3.2.4.1)



b) ISCED Levels: the International Standard Classification of Education-ISCED led by The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is the global reference classification for assembling, compiling and analyzing cross-nationally comparable data on the education systems of countries worldwide.

2. LEGALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND INSTITUTIONS

Universities and higher education institutions that have not been created by law in Chile must be established under public deed or private instrument, including the articles of incorporation and its bylaws. Articles 56 to 66 of the *DFL N°2* of 2009 of education create the conditions of official recognition of universities in Chile, a requirement that empowers the institutions to perform teaching activities after obtaining the clearance of the *Consejo Nacional de Educación*.

In the following link you can find the institutions of higher education in Chile that hold official endorsement by the Ministry of Education:

https://educacionsuperior.mineduc.cl/directorio-instituciones-ed-superior/

For information in more detail about the academic programs in Chile, you can visit the official website of the *Subsecretaría de Educación Superior del Ministerio de Educación:* www.mifuturo.cl

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Sistema Nacional de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior is integrated by the Ministry of Education through the Subsecretaría de Educación Superior, the Consejo Nacional de Educación, the Comisión Nacional de Acreditación, the Superintendencia de Educación Superior and the different



institutions of higher education. The above entities seek to promote quality, relevance, inclusion and equity in the education sector through public policies in Chile.

The Consejo Nacional de Educación (CNED) is an autonomous entity of the state with legal independence and its own assets, which is related to the President of Chile through the Ministry of Education. Among its goals are to promote the quality of basic, middle and higher education through evaluating public bodies and educational institutions under the framework of the quality assurance systems of middle and higher education. In the following link, you can find the official website of the Consejo Nacional de Educación (CNED):

https://www.cned.cl/educacion-superior

The Comisión Nacional de Acreditación (CNA) was created through Law N° 20,129 of 2006, as an autonomous entity with legal independence and its own assets, responsible for evaluating, approving and promoting the quality of the different higher education institutions: Centros de Formación Técnica (CFT), Institutos Profesionales (IP) and universities.

Institutional accreditation evaluates specific activities of higher education institutions based on previously defined criteria and quality standards, considering the mission and the respective institutional projects. The *Comisión Nacional de Acreditación (CNA)* determines the criteria and quality standards for the institutions of the two subsystems: university and higher level professional-technician.

Higher education institutions must obtain accreditation in education and results of the teaching process, also in strategic management, institutional resources, internal quality assurance, and social responsibility. Moreover, higher education institutions may achieve accreditation in research, development and innovation fields.



The rules of the *Sistema Nacional de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior* included in Law N° 21,091 and Law N° 20,129 were transformed through Law N° 21,186 of 2019, defining the Institutional accreditation as a mandatory evaluation process for autonomous higher education institutions, thus seeking that accreditation promotes and guarantees the quality of higher education institutions and undergraduate and graduate programs, too.

Based on the Education System of Chile, there are proper accredited institutions and academic programs classified as per the following: institutions or programs of excellence (6 or 7 years), programs or institutions with advanced accreditation (4 or 5 years) and basic accreditation (3 years).

You can visit the official website of the *Comisión Nacional de Acreditación (CNA)* to identify the accredited undergraduate and graduate programs: www.cnachile.cl

4. ELEMENTS TO START THE PROCESS OF DEGREES AND TITLES RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION OBTAINED IN CHILE

The *Ministerio de Educación Nacional*, Ministry of National Education of Colombia, through Resolution 10687 of 2019, rules the recognition of higher education degrees and titles obtained abroad. Also, it acknowledges the quality assurance systems of the international issuing countries.

The process of recognition of higher education degrees and titles in Colombia is part of the *Sistema de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior*, which guarantees that the titles and degrees obtained abroad has the recognition of the official quality of the countries where the titles were issued. Same as the quality criteria are also met at the academic offer in Colombia.



IMPORTANT REMARK: if your undergraduate title is in Law, Accounting, Education or the Health field, additional requirement must be verified. Those are mentioned in chapters one and two of Resolution 10687 of 2019 of the *Ministerio de Educación Nacional*, available at the following link:

https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/articles-401316_archivo_pdf.pdf

Essential Elements for recognition process

The recognition of titles and degrees obtained abroad is not a mandatory process. Nevertheless, it is required in the following scenarios:

- For regulated professions in which professional associations require official recognition.
- For professionals who wish to work in the public sector as a contractor or public official.
- 3. In the case of public tenders, in which the tender specifications suggest it as needed.
- 4. In the case of teachers of public education institutions, to be placed in the official ranks (*Escalafón*).

The recognition process of titles and degrees obtained in Chile considers the following:

- 1. Tittles and Degrees must be granted by an institution of higher education legally recognized in Chile.
- 2. Titles and degrees must have apostille or legalization chain.

Apostille is a free of charge service in Chile, also is electronic, cross-checked online and does not have an expiration date. For higher education documents, is mandatory to do the process in person at the *Oficina de Atención*



Ciudadana: AyudaMineduc, located in the following address: Fray Camilo Henríquez N° 262, comuna de Santiago; in the rest of the country, at the Secretarías Regionales Ministeriales (SEREMIS).

For information in more detail about the apostille process in Chile, you can visit the following links:

www.apostilla.gob.cl

www.ayudamineduc.cl/ficha/apostilla-mineduc

http://apostilla.gob.cl/apostilla-fuera-de-chile/

https://www.mineduc.cl/ministerio/seremi/

According to the field of study and the institution of higher education that grants the title, please consider there are different criteria for the process of degrees and title recognition.

In the case of having a degree issued by an institution of higher education in Chile, and the recognition is required, the following questions and answers can help to understand the process in Colombia:

- ¿When do I have to get the title recognition for a foreign higher education degree? you will find the answer in the following link:
- <a href="https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidacio
- ¿What is the difference between homologate and title recognition? you will find the answer in the following link:
- <a href="https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Convalidacio
- If I need assistance ¿who can guide me in the title recognition process? you will find the answer in the following link:
- https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes



- ¿What are the steps for title recognition of higher education degrees? you will find the answer in the following link: https://www.gov.co/ficha-tramites-y-servicios/T366
- ¿What are the costs of the title recognition process of higher education degrees? you will find the answer in the following link:
 https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/350995:Costo-y-duracion

For further information about the recognition process, please visit the following link: https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-
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 Higher Education, Law N° 21091.
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Law N° 20261 creates the Single National Medicine Knowledge Test, incorporates positions that indicate the High Public Management System and modifies Law N° 19.664.

https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=270584

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