

GUIDE TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF SPAIN AND ASPECTS TO CONSIDER FOR THE RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TITLES IN COLOMBIA

INTRODUCTION

The Colombian Ministry of National Education (***Ministerio de Educación Nacional - MEN***) has been working on the construction of guides of the educational systems from different countries. These instruments may make the where and what to study decision-making process easier, as well as illustrate the process and requirements for the recognition of higher education degrees in Colombia.

The Office of Higher Education Quality at MEN (***Dirección de Calidad de la Educación Superior del MEN***) examined the guides of foreign educational systems which are already published on this website. In the exercise, the need of bringing the technical language of education closer to the citizen was highlighted, as well as to generating an interactive instrument. In this order of ideas, MEN, in agreement with the Colombian Association of Universities (***Asociación Colombiana de Universidades – ASCUN***), updated and redesigned these guides.

For the construction of this guide, information from various official sources was consolidated, originating a practical and relevant instrument for the citizen. Pertinent information on four central aspects is therefore included: (1) a description the higher education system; (2) the quality assurance of institutions and higher education programs; (3) the legality of higher education programs and institutions; and, 4) steps for the recognition of higher education degrees obtained abroad.

All the information here presented includes the different accessibility requirements of tools and web products, facilitating the access for people in a condition of disability. This work was made possible by the invaluable teamwork with the National Institute for the Blind (***Instituto Nacional para Ciegos – INCI***).

1. HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF SPAIN

Spain is divided into autonomous communities, supported by the second article of the Spanish Constitution, whose right of autonomy is recognized with regard to their territorial, administrative and legislative divisions.

Autonomous communities, together with the government, are entitled, in their territories, to create, operate and monitor educational institutions. For detailed information about each of these communities, please click on the following link: https://www.senado.es/web/conocersenado/biblioteca/dossieresareastematicas/detalledossier/index.html?id=DOSSIER_CCAA1&parte=CCAA1_NET_AUTONOMICA

The Spanish education system has undergone several legislative changes in recent years, the latest based on the Organic Education Law (***Ley Orgánica de Educación - LOE***) of 2006. In accordance with the 2013 Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (***Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa - LOMCE, 2013***), the educational system in Spain comprises all educational administrations, education professionals and other public and private agents that carry out regulatory functions, financing or provision of services for the exercise of the right to education in Spain, including the holders of this right, as well as all the relationships, structures, measures and actions implemented to guarantee it. The educational administrations are the organs of the General Administration of the State and of the Autonomous Communities, competent in educational matters. For more information on the Spanish education system, please visit the following link: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2013/BOE-A-2013-12886-consolidado.pdf>

The organization of the Spanish Education System is structured in stages, cycles, degrees, courses and levels of education, in accordance with article 3 of the LOE:

Those cycles can be:

- **Educational cycle or professional cycle:** temporary units that make up the educational process.
- **Degree:** the teaching cycles corresponding to one or more disciplines that lead to professional activities.
- **Course:** set of lessons or didactic units organized by objectives, in a defined program.
- **Stage:** each of the major sections in which the Spanish Education System is structured.
- **Level:** generic descriptor of the classification of qualifications. The levels arrange a scale from the lower to the upper level.

In Spain, ministries related to education are organized as follows:

- Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.
- Ministry of Science and Innovation.
- Ministry of Universities.
- Ministry of Culture and Sport.

For further information on the ministries and their functions, please visit the following link: https://boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2020-1246

On the other hand, the Organic Law of Education, which was updated by the 2013 Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (***Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de La Calidad Educativa - LOMCE***), is expected to be updated in 2021 by the Organic Law of Modification of the LOE - LOMLOE, structuring the Spanish Education System into two main groups: General Education and Special Education.

GENERAL EDUCATION

General education includes, in the first place, pre-school education, which goes between zero and six years of age, followed by primary education, provided to children between six and twelve years of age, carried out in a three-year period of education.

Secondary education is the next stage, regulated by the Organic Law for the Improvement of the Quality of Education (LOMCE), consisting of:

1. Compulsory Secondary Education (***Educación Secundaria Obligatoria - ESO***), which takes place between the ages of 12 and 16, in a four-year period, at secondary schools (***institutos de educación secundaria - IES***). The baccalaureate, which lasts two years, is taught at the IES. Basic vocational training is provided in the IES, the integrated vocational training centers, national reference centers and public or private educational institutions, authorized by the corresponding educative administration.

Primary and secondary education comprise basic education.

Higher education

According to the Organic Law on Education, the Higher Education System in Spain comprises:

1. Vocational training of the higher degree.
 - Higher-level sports education (Special Regime Education - ***Enseñanza de Régimen Especial***).
 - Vocational education in the plastic arts and higher degree design (Special Regime Education - ***Enseñanza de Régimen Especial***).
 - Higher Arts Education (Special Regime Education - ***Enseñanza de Régimen Especial***).
 - University education:
 - Grade level**
 - I. Bachelor's degree.
 2. Postgraduate level.
 - II. Official Master's Degree.
 - III. Doctorate.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

University education in Spain, at the levels of gradual training, master's and doctoral degrees, which make up university education, is taught in university schools, faculties, research institutes and other higher education centers (BOE-A-2001-

24515). Admission processes and test assessments are jointly agreed and established by the universities.

- Official degree

The university degree, or official degree, provides a general training in a discipline for the performance of professional activities. Students wishing to enter higher education for the first-degree level must have a bachelor's degree or equivalent. The Council of Universities regulates the procedures for enrolling the University.

Most university degrees have a teaching load between 180 and 240 ECTS credits, and their duration ranges from 3 to 4 years. There are some titles that have a greater burden of credits, such as the case of medicine or veterinary medicine.

The syllabuses of a bachelor's degree end with a dissertation. For more information related to grade levels, areas of knowledge and institutions, please click on the following link: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2007/BOE-A-2007-18770-consolidado.pdf>

- Master Level

The master's degree level comprises the first cycle of postgraduate studies, with the aim of attaining advanced specialized or multidisciplinary training aimed at academic or professional specialization and research. In order to obtain this degree, it is necessary to have studied, in the curriculum, between 60 and 120 ECTS credits. Likewise, it is required to have already obtained the official degree.

These degrees are regulated, entitling the University Master or Official Master, which are in the Registry of Universities, Centers and Degrees (**Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos - RUCT**), so they are official, issued in the name of the King and by the rector of the university where the degree is obtained. Master's degrees accredit competence at level three of the Spanish Framework of Qualifications for Higher Education (**Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior - MECES**). These degrees must be accompanied by the words MASTER'S DEGREE or OFFICIAL MASTER'S DEGREE, followed by the name of the programme. An example of this is the following degree: Master in Business

Administration (MBA) from the Autonomous University of Madrid (***Máster Universitario en Administración de Empresas (MBA) por la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid***).

These degrees usually culminate with a thesis paper, and their degree allows the development of doctoral education studies.

- Doctoral Degree

Doctor's degrees correspond to the third cycle of the educational level. They are official and valid throughout the Spanish territory. This level of study accredits a research training and scientific knowledge of technical, humanistic or artistic quality. Doctoral studies are preceded by an official undergraduate and official master's degree. To carry out doctoral studies, it is necessary to have passed at least 300 ECTS credits in the set of official university studies, of which, at least 60, must be of master's level (State Agency Official State Gazette - ***Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, BOE-A-2011-2541***).

The doctoral study ends with the defense and approval of a thesis that has a high component of originality and research. The period of doctoral training is usually between 3 and 5 years.

For more information on the regulation of official doctoral education, please visit the following link: https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2011-2541

SPECIAL REGIME OF EDUCATION

The Organic Law on Education makes a special mention of language, artistic and sports education. To learn more about the Special Regime Education, please visit the following link: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2006-7899&tn=1&p=20200930>

- Language teaching

The special regime includes language training, which is based on the basic (A1, A2), middle (B1 and B2) and advanced (C1 and C2) levels of the Common European

Framework. Language teaching is offered in official language schools where, for each level of education approved, a certificate is issued.

- **Arts education**

Artistic education is supervised by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (***Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional de España***), whose function is to provide quality artistic training and guarantee the qualifications of future professionals in music, dance, plastic arts, design and conservation of cultural property.

In Spain, artistic education is divided into Elementary Education, which comprises the branches of music and dance, Professional Artistic Education, where a professional condition of music and dance is established, as in the middle and upper grades of plastic arts and design. Finally, there is the Higher Artistic Education, which provides higher education in music and dance, dramatic art, conservation and restoration of cultural property, design studies, and higher studies in the plastic arts (including higher studies in ceramics and higher studies in glass).

Higher education in the arts requires a bachelor's degree, while the middle level requires a bachelor's degree in compulsory secondary education. Arts education is supervised by the Higher Council for Arts Education.

Los planteles educativos donde se ofertan los programas de educación artística se denominan Escuelas de Artes, donde se imparte la enseñanza de artes plásticas y diseño. En los conservatorios, se oferta la enseñanza profesional de música y danzas. La información correspondiente a la enseñanza artística se puede encontrar en el siguiente enlace: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/estudiantes/enseñanzas-artisticas.html>

Sports education

Sports education prepares students for the development of a professional activity related to the sports field, and its recognition is granted by the Higher Sports Council of the Ministry of Culture and Sport (***Consejo Superior de Deportes del Ministerio***

de Cultura y Deporte). Its structure is made up of two degrees: middle and upper degree.

For more information on requirements, modalities and qualifications, please visit the following link: <https://www.csd.gob.es/es>

SPANISH QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (MARCO ESPAÑOL DE CUALIFICACIONES PARA LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR - MECES)

MECES allows the classification of higher education qualification levels in the Spanish Education System. This instrument, which is internationally recognized, facilitates the mobility of people in the European area in the framework of higher education and in the international labor market.

The Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education defines the term qualification as any qualification, diploma or certificate issued by an educational institution, proving the acquisition of a set of learning outcomes after successfully completing a training programme in a legally recognized institution in the field of higher education.

Structure of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (**MECES**)

LEVEL OF THE SPANISH QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK	LEVEL OF THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK
Level 4: Doctor	Corresponds to Level 8
Level 3: Master	Corresponds to Level 7
Level 2: Degree	Corresponds to Level 6
Level 1: Higher technician	Corresponds to Level 5

Source: based on the Official Website of the European Union, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/>

Once the university education has been completed and, in order to prove the professional qualification, it is possible to apply for the European Diploma Supplement, which serves to demonstrate the knowledge acquired through the studies.

European Diploma Supplement

The European Diploma Supplement allows the holder to have a framework for interpreting his academic and vocational training, which increases the transparency of European accreditation and facilitates recognition by other institutions.

For more details of the content of the supplement to the title, you can enter the following link: [Guia expedicion set grado.pdf \(ciencia.gob.es\)](http://ciencia.gob.es/Guia_expedicion_set_grado.pdf)

Higher Education Institutions

Currently, the Organic Law of Universities (***Ley Orgánica de Universidades - LOU***) states the autonomy of universities and guarantees the freedom of teaching, study and research.

Higher education institutions are universities, which may be public or private. The creation of public universities or the recognition of private universities is carried out through the Law of the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Community or the Law of General Courts (***Ley de la Asamblea Legislativa de la Comunidad Autónoma o la Ley de Cortes Generales***). However, the operation of a higher education institution in Spain is supervised by the General Conference on University Policy (***Conferencia General de Política Universitaria***). On the other hand, public universities in Spain are organized in schools and faculties, departments, university research institutes, integrated higher education environments, doctoral schools, and affiliated centers of public or private ownership.

Private universities, in accordance with article 27.6 of the Constitution, may be established, provided that they are governed by constitutional principles and state and autonomous regulations.

Higher education institutions, both private and public, are regulated by the general legislative framework of the 1985 Organic Law on the Right to Education (***Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación - LODE***), the 2006 Organic Law on Education (***Ley Orgánica de Educación - LOE***), and the 2013 Organic Law for the

Improvement of Educational Quality (***Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa - LOMCE***).

For more information on the legal framework of universities, please click on the following link: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2001-24515>

In addition, public and private universities must be registered in the Register of Universities, Centers and Degrees (***Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos – RUCT***) of the Ministry of Science and Innovation.

Useful Links:

- Register of Universities and Degrees RUCT: <https://www.educacion.gob.es/ruct/home>
- Ministry of Science and Innovation: <https://www.ciencia.gob.es/>

Official and Private Titles in Spain

Formal qualifications are approved by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The holder can request to be included in the National Register of Official University Graduates of the Ministry of Science and Innovation (***Registro Nacional de Titulados Universitarios Oficiales del Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación***).

These certificates are valid throughout the national territory, issued in the name of the King by the rector of the university where the degree is obtained. Bachelor's degrees are accompanied by the expression GRADUATED IN, which precedes the name of the official degree. In the case of the Official Master, it comes together with the title of UNIVERSITY MASTER IN or OFFICIAL MASTER IN and, at doctoral level, they will read DOCTOR or DOCTOR IN.

Official degrees are accompanied by a guarantee on the level and curriculum, and their achievement in the Official Degree titles allows the development of master's and doctoral studies. In the meantime, private degrees are endorsed by the universities or institutions that offer them. There are differences between the two degrees in relation to the processes of homologation, budget, access to scholarships

and the approach of the curricula, as well as in the aspiration to positions in the public service.

Before undertaking higher education studies in Spain, please visit the official website that explains the legally official degrees offered. To this end, please visit the following link: <https://www.educacion.gob.es/ruct/home>

Supplementary Certificate of Title

The Supplementary Title Certificate is a temporary document that proves the authenticity of a title. It is issued and signed by the rector of the educational institution where the academic program was carried out, certifying that the studies have been completed. It is valid for one year from the date of issue and has the same value for the purpose of exercising the rights of an official title, in compliance with the 2015 Royal Decree 22 (Real Decreto 22/2015).

Specialties in Health Sciences

The 2008 Royal Decree 183 (***Real Decreto 183/2008***) determines and classifies specialties in the health sciences (BOE No. 45 of 21st February 2008). The same decree regulates the specific characteristics of the diplomas of specialties, the professionals who can undertake these studies, the collegiate bodies and organization of the training periods, and exercises the quality control over programmes and the residence education system.

The titles of specialists in health sciences are official. Therefore, degrees are issued by the Ministry of Science and Innovation and the Ministry of Universities, in accordance with the 2003 Law 44 (***Ley 44/2003***). Similarly, these ministries, together with the autonomous communities, ensure the quality of specialized training.

In Spain, to obtain a medical specialty, it is necessary undergo a national examination that allows the graduate, according to the position achieved, to choose



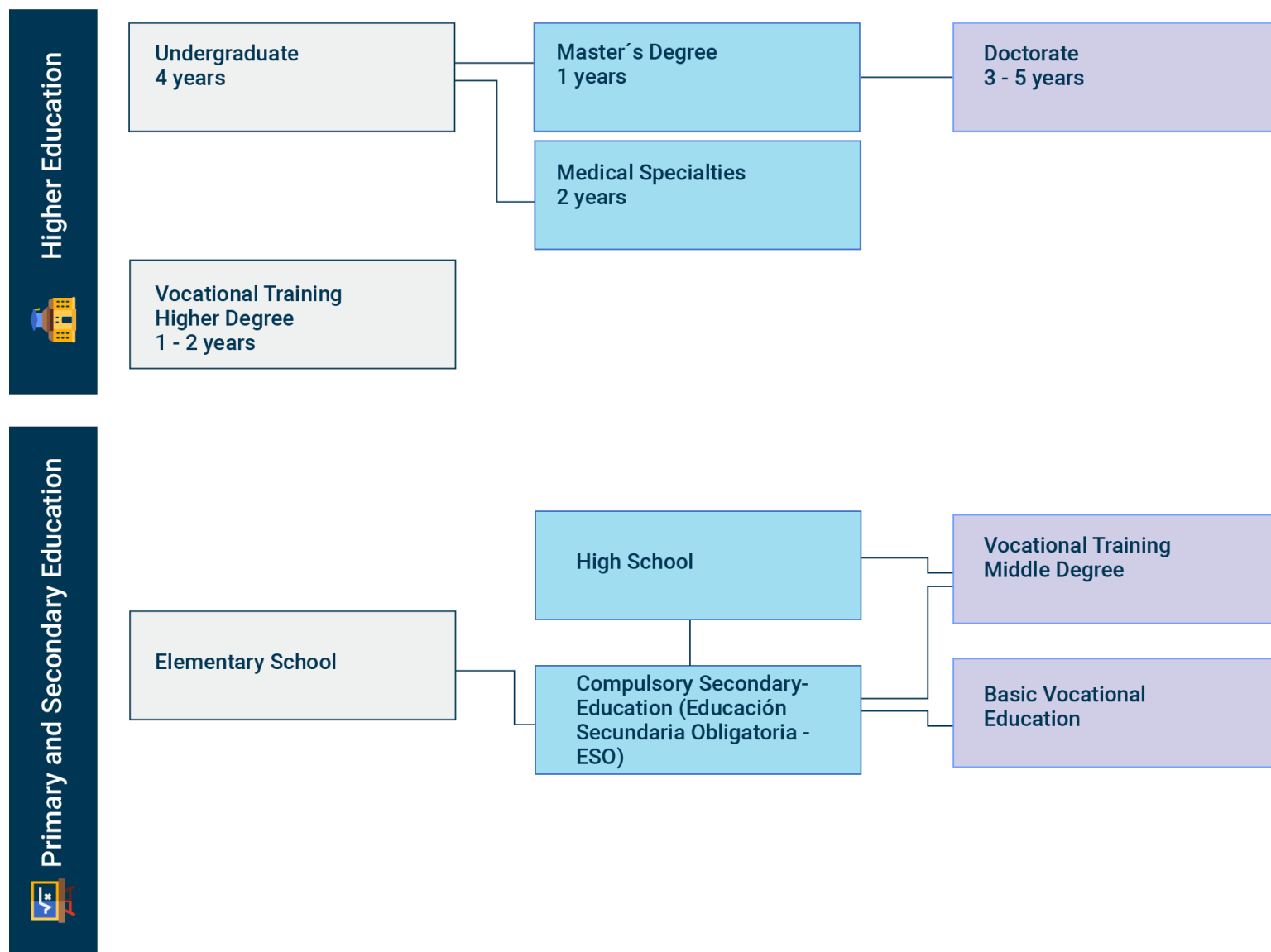
the specialty to study. After the election, the graduate enrolls a training program called Médicos Internos Residentes M.I.R. (Resident Internal Physicians) which, depending on the chosen specialty, lasts between 3 and 5 years.

For Colombian physicians seeking to undertake their studies of medical specialties in Spain, it is advisable to carry out, as a first step, the homologation of their degree and, subsequently, present the MIR test. Conditions of the MIR examination are published in the BOE ([BOE-A-2013-12886](#)).

The 2006 Royal Decree 1146 (***Real Decreto 1146/2006***), updated on July 29th 2020, regulates the special working relationship of residence for students in health sciences specialties. Information related to residencies in health specialties can be obtained at: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2006-17498&tn=1&p=20200729>

General information on health sciences specialties can be found at the following link: <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2008/02/08/183>

Structure of the Spanish Education System



Source: based on the 2013 Organic Law N° 8 (*Ley Orgánica 8/2013 del 9 de diciembre*) [BOE-A-2013-12886](#)

1.1 Table comparing the levels of Spain and Colombia

It is important to know the particularities of each of the educational levels, both in Spain and in Colombia. Therefore, the following table presents a comparative analysis of both systems. In such a comparison, higher education levels are taken into account:

- Level 8: Doctoral level or equivalent.
- Level 7: Master's level, specialization or equivalent.
- Level 6: Tertiary education degree or equivalent.
- Level 5: Short-cycle tertiary education.

Comparative table: educational levels in Spain and Colombia

CINE- UNESCO LEVELS	NAMING OF LEVELS IN SPAIN	YEARS	NAMING OF LEVELS IN COLOMBIA	YEARS
8	Doctorate 3-5	3-5	Doctorate	4 - 5
7	N/A		Surgical medical specialization	1 - 5
7	Specialty in health sciences	2	Medical specialization	2
7	Official or University Master's degree	1	Master's degree	2
6	N/A		University specialization	1
6	University degree	4	University professional degree	4 - 5
5	N/A		Technological specialization	< 1
5	N/A		Technical specialization	1
5	Vocational training higher degree	1-2	Technologist	3
5	Vocational training middle degree	1-2	Professional technician	2

Source: based on the 2020 BOE from September 30th University Code (**BOE del Código de Universidades del 30 septiembre de 2020**) - Spain and the Ministry of Education in Colombia.

It is important to highlight the measurement of time corresponding to educational levels and its comparison with international standards:

- a) **Academic credits:** in both Colombia and Spain, the estimated time of academic activity by the student, depending on the skills that the program is expected to develop, is expressed in units called academic credits.
- b) **Academic credit in Spain:** the Spanish education system is based on the ECTS credit (European Credit Transfer System) as a unit of measurement of the work to be performed on a subject, which reflects the number of hours the student spends on the academic activity. This activity comprises between 25 and 30 hours per credit, including time spent on classroom activities, study hours, tutorials, seminars, papers, internships or projects and other actions required for academic testing.

The unification of ECTS credits facilitates the comparison of the teaching burden of degrees and allows student mobility and promptness in the recognition of degrees in the European Union.

In the ECTS system, in general, 60 credits represent the workload of one academic year, 30 are equivalent to one semester and 20 credits to one quarter (twelve weeks) of studies. Diplomas take between 180 and 240 credits, subject to the specific training content of each degree and the special conditions of some programmes.

This information lies in Annexes I and II to the Agreement of the Council of Universities (***Acuerdo del Consejo de Universidades***), which can be found at the following link:
https://boe.es/biblioteca_juridica/codigos/codigo.php?id=133_Codigo_de_Universidades&modo=1

- **Academic credit in Colombia:** it is a unit of measurement of the student's academic work, indicating the necessary effort to achieve learning results. It is equivalent to 48 hours for an academic period. Institutions determine the ratio between the direct relationship with the teacher and the independent practice of the student, justified according to the learning process and learning outcomes expected for the programme. Institutions express in academic credits all training activities that are part of the curriculum (Decree 1330 of 2019, article 2.5.3.2.4.1).

a) **CINE-UNESCO:** The International Standard Classification of Education (Clasificación Internacional Normalizada de la Educación - CINE), proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO, is a reference framework for collecting, compiling and analyzing internationally comparable statistics in the field of education.

1. **LEGALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND INSTITUTIONS**

The Official State Gazette (***Boletín Oficial del Estado - BOE***), number 144, 17th June 2015, regulates the nature, creation, recognition and legal status of public and private universities in Spain. Title II of the Organic Law establishes the rules relating to the structure of universities.

The universities are governed by the law and rules issued by the State and the Autonomous Communities, as well as their statutes which will take effect upon publication in the Official Gazette of the Autonomous Community (***Boletín Oficial de la Comunidad Autónoma***) and in the BOE. All approved programs must be published at the BOE, a necessary legal tool to determine the legality of programs offered in Spain. The body that shapes the relationship of the University with society is the Social Council, which is responsible for the supervision of the economic activity

of the University, as well as the monitoring of the performance of services and budgets.

Similarly, there is the University Coordination Council (***Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria***), which coordinates the debate between the state and regional universities. However, it is important to clarify that the law recognizes the economic and financial autonomy of universities so they can establish their economic regime, respecting the principles of the law.

Private universities have their own legal status, which is recognized on the basis of the Law at the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Community (***Ley de la Asamblea Legislativa de la Comunidad Autónoma***), and the Law on the General Courts (***Ley de las Cortes Generales***) in the territory where established.

Register of Universities, Centers and Degrees

The Registry of Universities, Centers and Degrees (***Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos - RUCT***) can be found at the Ministry of Science and Innovation where universities and centers are published. Official degrees, valid throughout the national territory, as well as the updated information related to the Spanish University System can be found there.

The RUCT of the programmes or higher education institutions can be found at the following link: [Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos \(RUCT\) - Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte \(educacion.gob.es\)](https://educacion.gob.es/registro-de-universidades-centros-y-titulos)

1 QUALITY ASSURANCE

The entity responsible for the evaluation, certification and accreditation of the Spanish University System is the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (***Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación -***

ANECA), which is attached to the Ministry of Education. Quality guidelines that seek a continuous improvement and adaptation to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) converge there. Further information on ANECA can be found at the following link: <http://www.aneca.es/>

ANECA, as a control body, ensures the quality of official qualifications in curricular terms. Similarly, it evaluates teaching, research and management of services and university programs, assisting the decision-making process of students and teachers.

It is important to clarify that accreditation processes are granted to both academic programmes and higher education institutions, in accordance with the officially stipulated quality criteria.

To find out about the assessment for the renewal of accreditation of official degrees in Spain, please visit the following link: <http://www.aneca.es/Programas-de-evaluacion/Evaluacion-de-titulos/ACREDITA>

Information on the implementation and results of the monitoring of official titles can be found at the following link: <http://www.aneca.es/Programas-de-evaluacion/Evaluacion-de-titulos/MONITOR>

2 ASPECTS TO CONSIDER FOR THE PROCESS OF RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMAS ISSUED IN SPAIN

2019 Resolution 10687 of the Ministry of National Education (***Resolución 10687 de 2019, del Ministerio de Educación Nacional***) regulates the validation of higher education diplomas awarded abroad, recognizing the quality assurance systems from the countries where the diplomas were issued.

The recognition of higher education diplomas in Colombia is part of the Quality Assurance System for Higher Education (***Sistema de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior***), which guarantees that, as well as what happens with our national offer, that from other countries has been officially recognized by the states where such certificates were issued.

IMPORTANT: If the undergraduate degree is in law, accounting, education or the health sciences area, additional requirements must be verified. They are stipulated in chapters one and two of 2019 Resolution 10687 of the Ministry of National Education (***Resolución 10687 de 2019 del Ministerio de Educación Nacional***), available at the following link: https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/articles-401316_archivo_pdf.pdf

Aspects to take into account for the process of title recognition

The title recognition of higher education diplomas issued abroad is not mandatory, except in the following cases:

1. For regulated professions where recognition is required by professional bodies.
2. For persons wishing to work in the public sector as contractors or civil officers.
3. For participating in public tenders where specifications indicate it as necessary.
4. For teachers in public education institutions to be properly graded.

To study in Spain and subsequently recognize the title in Colombia, the following must be taken into account:

1. Studies must have undergone in a higher education institution recognized by the Spanish State.
2. Ensure the respective apostille or legalization chain in the documents.

As indicated in the 2011 Royal Decree 1497 (***Real Decreto 1497/2011, de 24 de octubre***), which appoints the officials and competent authorities to grant the legalization or apostille in concordance with the 1961 Convention XII of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (***Convenio XII de la Conferencia de La***

Haya de Derecho Internacional Privado, de 5 de octubre de 1961), an administrative document may be sent for apostille to the following places (with prior recognition of signature, if any) or to the following places:

- Secretariats of the Government of the High Courts of Justice (***Secretarías de Gobierno de los Tribunales Superiores de Justicia***) and of the cities of Ceuta and Melilla.
- Central Office for Assistance to the Citizen at the Ministry of Justice (***Oficina Central de Atención al Ciudadano del Ministerio de Justicia***). With a previous appointment at the following link:
<https://www.mjusticia.gob.es/cs/Satellite/Portal/es/atencion-ciudadano>
- Territorial Offices of the Ministry of Justice and Delegate Offices of Ceuta and Melilla (***Gerencias Territoriales del Ministerio de Justicia y Oficinas Delegadas de Ceuta y Melilla***).

The different recognition criteria must be taken into account, according to the programme and the higher education institution that grants it.

If having a degree issued by a higher education institution in Spain, and needed its recognition in Colombia, the following questions and answers can help understand the process:

- When is it necessary to recognize a foreign higher education degree? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineduacion.gov.co/portal/convalidations/Convalidations-Education-Superior/350670:Know-the-process>
- What is the difference between homologation and recognition? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineduacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>
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- In case of doubt, who can help? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>
- What are the steps for the recognition of higher education diplomas? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.gov.co/ficha-tramites-y-servicios/T366>
- What are the costs of the process of validation of higher education diplomas? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidations/Convalidations-Education-Superior/350995:Cost-and-duration>

In case of more questions regarding the process, the following link might help:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>

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