

Spain

Higher education is mainly provided by both public and private (some of them affiliated with the Catholic Church) universities. Universities are divided into *facultades universitarias*, *escuelas técnicas superiores*, *escuelas universitarias*, *institutos universitarios* and other centres. Responsibilities on higher education mostly rest with the Comunidades Autónomas or Regions (following the provisions of 1978 Spanish Constitution, Spain is made up of 17 Regions). However, the definition of the national basic legal framework for higher education corresponds to the State.

Spain has used a three-cycle structure since 1983, but since 2005 it is being amended to follow the new Bologna Process structure. The transition is expected to last until 2013. Long-cycle studies that combine the first and second level will continue to exist after that date for students of medicine, architecture, odontology, veterinary medicine and pharmacy.

The old three-cycle system is based on the official degrees of *Diplomado*, *Licenciado* and *Doctor*. Under the new official degree system, the Master's will become the second cycle (new Master programmes started to be implemented in 2006-07), while the first is called *Graduado* (implementation will start in 2008-09) and the third remains the *Doctor*.

Old system

University level first stage (S1): *Título de Diplomado*

The first cycle of university studies (short-term courses), lasts for three or four years and leads to the *Diplomado*, *Ingeniero Técnico* or *Arquitecto Técnico* degrees.

University level second stage (S2): *Título de Licenciado*

The courses of study leading to *Licenciado*, *Ingeniero* and *Arquitecto* degrees consist of combined first and second cycle studies (long term studies), awarded when both cycles have been successfully completed. The *Ingeniero* and *Arquitecto* degrees are awarded following an end-of-course project. They last for five or six years in most cases (there are some four year programmes).

Medical studies last for six years, odontology and veterinary studies last for five. There are also second cycle only studies that lead to the *Licenciado* or *Ingeniero* degrees.

University level third stage (S3): *Título de Doctor*

The third stage is open to holders of *Licenciado*, *Arquitecto* or *Ingeniero* degrees and leads to the Doctor's degree (*Título de Doctor*) awarded after at least three years' study and research and the submission of a thesis.

Other programmes

In addition to official degrees programmes, universities can establish other programmes leading to "titulos propios" (university diplomas or certificates).

New system

First cycle: *Título de Grado*

First cycle programmes will have 240 ECTS (equivalent to four years) and will lead to the Graduado degree. They include within this number end of course projects, external practical periods or other training activities.

Some programmes (notably medicine, veterinary medicine and odontology) may last longer, as determined by European Union regulations.

Second cycle: *Título de Máster*

Second cycle programmes will have between 60 to 120 ECTS (with an expected duration of between one to two years) and will lead to the degree of Master. They include a Master thesis.

Access to Master programmes is open to holders of Graduado degrees or equivalent diplomas of other European Area institutions, as well as graduates from other geographical areas which universities consider of a similar level.

In addition, universities may establish specific admission requirements to the different Master programmes.

Third cycle: *Título de Doctor*

The third cycle leads to the Doctor's degree awarded after at least three years' study and research and the submission of a thesis.

Admission to doctoral programmes is decided by the respective university.

Other programmes

As before and in addition to official degrees programmes, universities can establish other programmes leading to "titulos propios" (university diplomas or certificates). They can not use for these programmes the denominations of Grado/ Graduado, Máster or Doctor, reserved for official degree programmes described above.