

Education system

# Spain

described and compared with  
the Dutch system

This document provides information about the education system of Spain. We explain the Dutch equivalent of the most common qualifications from Spain for the purpose of admission to Dutch higher education.

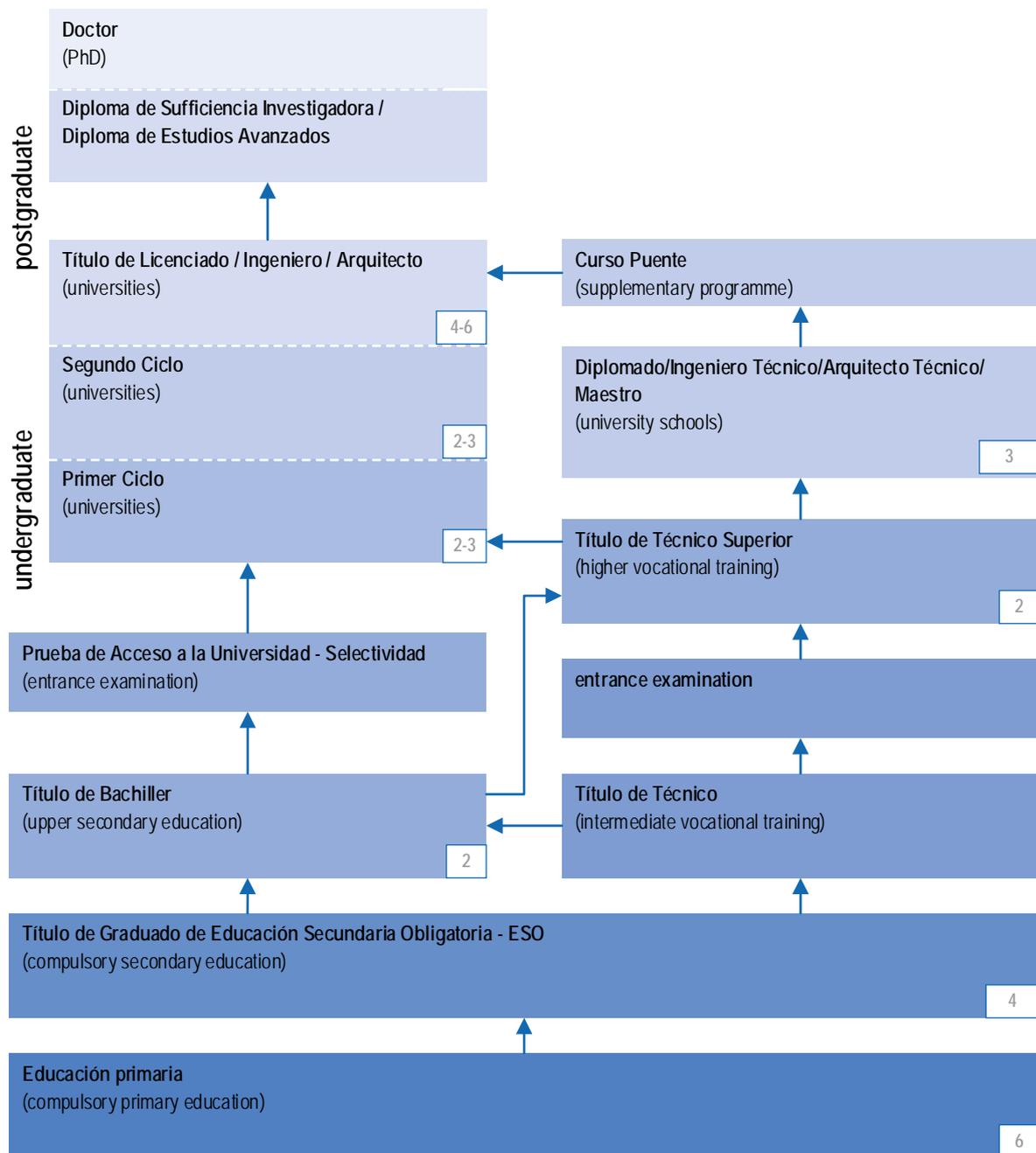
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We assemble the information for these descriptions of education systems with the greatest care. However, we cannot be held responsible for the consequences of errors or incomplete information in this document.



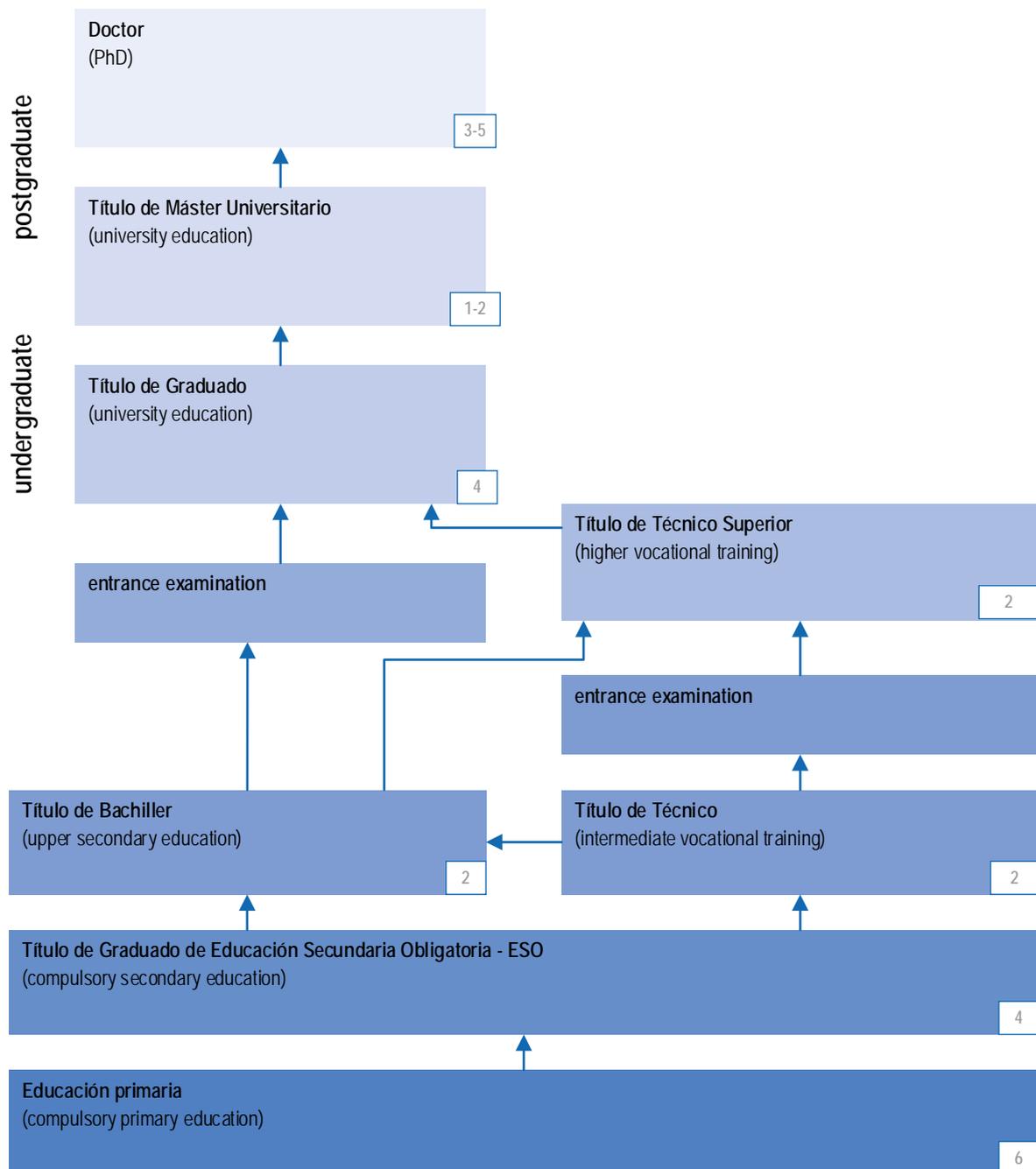
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## Education system Spain – before introduction bachelor-master structure



 Duration of education

■ Education system Spain – after introduction bachelor-master structure



0 Duration of education

## Evaluation chart

The left-hand column in the table below lists the most common foreign qualifications with corresponding levels in the national qualifications framework. The other columns show the Dutch equivalent along with the corresponding levels in the Dutch and European qualifications frameworks.

Degree or qualification and MECES level		EQF level	Dutch equivalent and NLQF level		EQF level
<i>Titulo de Técnico</i>			MBO diploma (qualification levels 1-4)	1-4	1-4
<i>Titulo de Técnico Superior</i>	1	5	at least an MBO diploma (qualification level 4)	4	4
<i>Titulo de Bachiller</i>			at least a HAVO diploma	4	4
<i>Diplomado/Arquitecto Técnico/Ingeniero Técnico/ Título de Maestro</i>			HBO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Titulo Superior de Música/ de Danza/en Arte Dramático</i>			HBO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Titulo de Graduado</i>	2	6	WO or HBO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Máster Universitario</i>	3	7	WO or HBO master's degree	7	7
<i>Licenciado/Ingeniero/ Arquitecto</i>			WO or HBO master's degree	7	7

NB

- The information provided in the table is a general recommendation from which no rights may be derived.
- MECES = Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. NLQF = Dutch Qualifications Framework. EQF = European Qualifications Framework.
- The EQF/[NLQF level](#) is not so much a reflection of study load or content; rather, it is an indication of a person's knowledge and skills after having completed a certain programme of study.
- Information about Dutch equivalent qualifications can be found on our website: [the Dutch education system](#).
- [The Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market \(SBB\)](#), evaluates statements on foreign qualifications and training at VMBO and MBO level. The evaluation may vary if SBB evaluates the diploma for admission to VET schools or the labour market in the Netherlands.

## ■ Introduction

**Spain is a parliamentary monarchy with a king as head of state. The country is divided into 17 autonomous regions (*comunidades autónomas*) including the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands and the 2 autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla (*ciudades autónomas*) on the African continent.**

In addition to Spanish, which is spoken throughout the country, co-official languages such as Catalan, Galician and Basque are also spoken in some autonomous regions.

### Education

The Spanish authority, the *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte* (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport) shares responsibility with the educational authorities of the autonomous regions, the *comunidades autónomas*.

The legal framework of the Spanish education system lies in the constitution of 1978 and a number of education acts. The basic principles of and rights to education are laid down in the education acts. The various amendments to those acts are embodied in Royal decrees and ministerial orders.

The 2006 act, *Ley Orgánica de la Educación* (LOE), regulates primary, secondary and post-secondary education (which is referred to in Spain as non-university higher education), as well as secondary and higher arts education, post-secondary language education, sports education and adult education.

The most important act regulating higher education is the *Ley Orgánica de Universidades* (LOU) of 2001. This act, which was amended by the LOU of 2007, completely reformed higher education offered at the universities. It introduced an [ECTS](#)-based study load, a competency-based organization of programmes, quality assurance by the ANECA accreditation body, a 1-year extension of the initial programmes and a new structure for the doctorate.

The *Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa* (LOMCE) of 2013 has led to changes in the curricula and evaluation of primary, secondary education, and initial, intermediate and advanced vocational programmes. The reforms are gradually being introduced.

Some general characteristics:

- Compulsory education: from age 6 to 16.
- Language of instruction: Spanish, Catalan, Galician or Basque, depending on the region or school.
- Academic year: from September to June.

## ■ Primary and secondary education

Spain distinguishes the following educational stages:

- *educación infantil* (pre-school education);
- *educación primaria* (primary education);
- *educación secundaria* (secondary education).

These educational levels are provided at 3 different types of education centres:

- *centros públicos*, i.e. regional authority maintained schools, which are free;
- *centros concertados*, i.e. private schools that are publicly funded by the regional administrations;
- *centros privados*, i.e. parents pay for their children's education.

### **Educación primaria**

Primary education (*educación primaria*) is intended for pupils aged 6 to 12. This type of education is compulsory and free.

### **Educación secundaria**

Secondary education (*educación secundaria*) is compulsory up to age 16 and is free. The reforms of the education system have resulted in new names for the various levels in general secondary education. Secondary education (*educación secundaria*) consists of:

- *educación secundaria obligatoria* (compulsory);
- *educación secundaria postobligatoria* (non-compulsory).

### **Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (ESO)**

Compulsory secondary education is intended for the age category 12 to 16 years. The duration is 4 years. The fourth year, attention is paid to both secondary education and entry into the labour market. At the end of the fourth year, the certificate *Título de Graduado de Educación Secundaria* or, as it is now called, *Título de Graduado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* (ESO) is awarded.

Another learning track is available for pupils who complete the ESO without a certificate: *Programas de Cualificación Profesional Inicial* – PCPI (initial vocational training). Completion of these programmes results in the award of a *Cualificación Profesional*, which grants holders access to intermediate vocational training following an entrance examination that assesses the student's level of general education.

### **Educación Secundaria Postobligatoria**

After the ESO certificate has been obtained, students have a number of options for further education:

- the *Bachillerato*, in preparation of university education;
- the *formación profesional de grado medio*, intermediate vocational training;

- *las enseñanzas de artes plásticas y diseño de grado medio*, intermediate vocational art education;
- *las enseñanzas deportivas de grado medio*, intermediate vocational sports education.

The *Bachillerato*<sup>1</sup> lasts 2 years, after which the *Título de Bachiller* is awarded. Previously, the study programme consisted of 4 subject clusters: *ciencias de la naturaleza y la salud*, *tecnología*, *humanidades y ciencias sociales* and *artes*. In 2008, the number of subject clusters (*modalidades*) was reduced to 3:

- exact sciences and technology (*ciencias y tecnología*);
- humanities and social sciences (*humanidades y ciencias sociales*);
- art (*artes*).

The curriculum comprises a number of general subjects:

- science for the contemporary world;
- physical education;
- philosophy and citizenship;
- history of philosophy;
- history of Spain;
- Spanish language and literature;
- the co-official language and literature of the autonomous region;
- a foreign language;
- a number of optional subjects, depending on the subject cluster.

Starting 2018-2019, pupils can choose from 3 subject clusters:

- exact sciences (*ciencias*);
- humanities and social sciences (*humanidades y ciencias sociales*);
- art (*artes*).

Within the subject cluster humanities and social sciences, pupils have to choose for the track humanities or social sciences.

In terms of level, the *Título de Bachiller* is comparable to at least a HAVO diploma.

Unlike in the Netherlands, general secondary education in Spain is not streamed according to duration and level of difficulty. The level required to pass the university entrance examination (PAU *Selectividad*/EVAU or EBAU) can be compared to the level of the Dutch VWO diploma.

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<sup>1</sup> The former certificate awarded on the completion of 3 years of general secondary education (*Bachillerato Unificado y Polivalente*, BUP) was the *Título de Bachiller*. This should not be confused with the present *Título de Bachiller*, which is now awarded after 2-year non-compulsory general secondary education.

### **Formación profesional**

Vocational training programmes (*formación profesional*) in Spain are offered at 2 levels:

- *Ciclos formativos de grado medio* (intermediate vocational training programmes);
- *Ciclos formativos de grado superior* (advanced vocational training programmes), referred to as non-university higher education.

### **Formación profesional de grado medio**

Intermediate vocational training (*formación profesional de grado medio*) varies in duration. Admission to this type of education is granted on the basis of:

- the ESO certificate;
- an entrance examination of vocational and general subjects;
- the university entrance exam for students aged 25 or older.

These intermediate vocational training programmes are concluded with the *Título de Técnico*.

In terms of level, the *Título de Técnico* is comparable to an MBO diploma at qualification levels 1-4, depending on the duration and the specialization of the study programme.

The *Título de Técnico* allows admission to the *Ciclo formativos de grado superior* (on the basis of a test), or to the *Bachillerato* without the need of examination. More information on these programmes, also known as *formacion profesional de grado superior*, is available in the chapter [Non-university higher education](#).

### **Art education**

Within art education, a distinction is made between intermediate, advanced and higher education. Intermediate and advanced art education lead for example to:

- *the Técnico de Artes Plásticas y Diseño*
- *the Técnico Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño*.

More information about the advanced arts studies is available in the chapter [Non-university higher education](#).

### **Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas (EOI) – Official Language Schools**

The *Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas* offer higher language training programmes, including Dutch and Spanish as a foreign language. There are 3 levels:

- *nivel básico* which generally comprises 2 courses leading to level A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR);
- *nivel intermedio* consisting of 1 or 2 courses, leading to level B1 of the CEFR;

- *nivel avanzado*, which consists of 2 courses that correspond to level B2 of the CEFR.

Level C of the CEFR is also being implemented in some autonomous regions.

These programmes are not regarded as regular education in the Netherlands and therefore cannot be evaluated.

## ■ Admission to higher education

### Admission to university higher education

Since 1990, the access route to higher education has been changed several times.

#### ***Prueba de Aptitud para el Acceso a la Universidad – Selectividad***

The access route before the introduction of the *Sistema Educativo LOGSE* in 1990 was the diploma on completing the *Bachillerato Unificado y Polivalente* (BUP) followed by completion of the 1-year *Curso de Orientación Universitaria* (COU) and finally the *Pruebas de Aptitud para el Acceso a la Universidad* (entrance examination).

The Técnico Especialista certificate granted access to escuelas universitarias for the same study programmes.

#### ***Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad (PAU) – Selectividad***

In the period from 1990 until 2009, there were 3 routes for gaining admission to Spanish universities. First, the *Título de Bachiller* allowed students to take the entrance examination (*Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad*) for university higher education. A second route for gaining admission to university higher education was via non-university higher education (*educación superior no universitaria*) that concluded with the *Título de Técnico Superior*, which provided direct access to the first phase (usually the *diplomatura*) of university higher education in the same study programmes. A third route was open to people over 25 years of age who lacked general secondary education diplomas. An entrance examination applied to this category.

#### ***New Prueba de Acceso a la Universidad (PAU) – Selectividad***

The new act (Royal Decree 1892/2008) has changed the substance of the entrance examination for higher education as of the 2009/2010 academic year. This entrance examination consists of two parts. The first part is an examination that assesses the subjects taken during the *Bachillerato*. The second part consists of a specific examination of the knowledge required for the programme in question. The act clearly distinguishes between access and admission to higher education. The universities themselves determine the admission requirements.

Starting 2010, the *Título de Técnico Superior*, *Técnico Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño* or *Título Deportivo Superior* offer access to university higher education. People over 25 of age may be admitted to the university on the basis of an entrance examination. This act also regulates admission on the basis of competencies acquired elsewhere, i.e. through work experience for people over 40 years of age.

### **Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad (EBAU)/Evaluación para el Acceso a la Universidad (EVAU)**

Since the academic year 2018-2019 the *Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad* (EBAU) is required for admission to university education. This entrance examination, also known as *Evaluación para el Acceso a la Universidad* (EVAU), consists of 2 parts:

- a compulsory part (*fase obligatoria*) that is compulsory in order to pass the entrance examination;
- an non-compulsory part (*fase voluntaria*).

The compulsory part consists of an examination in four subjects (or 5 in the autonomous regions: co-official language) of the last year of the *Bachillerato*:

1. *Historia de España* (history of Spain);
2. *Lengua castellana y literatura* (Spanish language and literature);
3. *Primera lengua extranjera: inglés, francés, italiano o portugués* (first foreign language: English, French, Italian or Portuguese);
4. *Matemáticas II* (mathematics II), *Latin II* (Latin II), *matemáticas aplicadas a las ciencias sociales II* (applied mathematics) or *fundamentos de arte II* (fundamental art II), depending on the chosen subject area.

The non-compulsory part of the exam is intended for students who want to improve their admission grade. The calculation of this grade is based on the final average final mark of the *Bachillerato* (60%) and the average result of the entrance examinations (40%).

Foreign students can also be admitted to Spanish university studies by means of an entrance examination or directly when there an agreement has been concluded with the authorities in the country of origin, namely the EU Member States, and Andorra, China, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Students with a European or International Baccalaureate diploma must be qualified in their own country for admission to the university. More information is available on the [website](#) of the *Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia* (UNED).

### **Admission to art education**

To access advanced studies in music, dance and dramatic art, students must fulfil the following requirements:

- hold the *Título de Bachiller* or pass the university entrance test for people aged over 25.
- pass the special entrance test regulated by the Education Administrations demonstrating the necessary knowledge and professional skills required to follow the corresponding training. The professional qualification will be taken into account in the final mark of the test. To access dramatic art studies, it is required to pass the special test regulated by the *Education Administrations*, which will assess the maturity, knowledge and abilities required to follow the course successfully.

## ■ Higher education

These are the types of higher education (*educación superior*) in Spain:

- university education (*enseñanza universitaria*);
- non-university higher education (*enseñanza no universitaria*), such as:
  - *formación profesional de grado superior*, advanced professional training;
  - *enseñanzas de artes plásticas y diseño de grado superior*, advanced art education;
  - *enseñanzas deportivas de grado superior*, advanced sports education.

Unlike the Netherlands, Spain does not have a binary system. University education usually consists of both higher professional and academic education.

## ■ University education

Spain has 76 universities (*universidades*) of which 52 are state institutions and 24 private.

### **Before the introduction of the bachelor's-master's degree structure**

University education comprises 4 areas of science: humanities, experimental and healthcare sciences, social and legal sciences, and technological sciences.

There are 3 levels that are completed with different degrees. After completion of the first level, students are awarded the *Diplomado*, *Arquitecto Técnico*, *Ingeniero Técnico* or the *Título de Maestro*. The second level leads to the *Licenciado*, *Arquitecto* and the *Ingeniero*, while the third level culminates in the degree of *Doctor*.

The Spanish Ministry of Education draws up the *Catálogo de Títulos Universitarios Oficiales* (list of programmes according to level and specialization), i.e. those official titles offered before the introduction of the bachelor's-master's degree structure.

The universities are also allowed to award their own degrees at various levels (including a master's degree). These *títulos propios* do not count as official degrees in Spain, however.

Every level within the *Catálogo de Títulos Universitarios Oficiales* is divided into separate phases, each with its own targets and independent academic values. This structure serves as the basis for the 3 levels of the Spanish university education.

### **Ciclo corto/Primer ciclo**

This level mainly involves programmes with a professional focus offered by the *escuelas universitarias* with a duration of 3 years that culminate in one of the following degrees: *Diplomado*, *Arquitecto Técnico*, *Ingeniero Técnico* or *Título de Maestro*, which is awarded to students of teacher training in pre-primary education, primary education, foreign languages, music or physical education in primary education, and special education.

Students can continue their studies and move on to the next level (if available) in the same discipline or in a related area of study. Sometimes direct admission to the *segundo ciclo* is granted; other students first attend a supplementary programme (*curso puente*).

In terms of level, the *Diplomado*, *Arquitecto Técnico*, *Ingeniero Técnico* and *Título de Maestro* are comparable to an HBO bachelor's degree.

### **Ciclo largo/Primer y segundo ciclo**

These programmes normally comprise two phases. Upon completion of the first phase, no degree is awarded because this phase does not constitute a programme in its own right. The nominal duration of these programmes is 4 to 6 years and they culminate in the degree of *Licenciado*, *Ingeniero* or *Arquitecto*. These programmes are usually not completed with a final paper.

### **Solo segundo ciclo**

These programmes, with a duration of 2 years, culminate in the degree of *Licenciado*, or *Ingeniero* (only some specialities). Students who have completed the first of a two-phase programme (*ciclo corto*) are sometimes admitted directly to these programmes, while others first complete a supplementary programme. These programmes are offered exclusively at universities. Programmes are sometimes completed with a final paper.

In addition to the official degrees, the universities also award their own degrees (*títulos propios*), such as the *Master* degree for students who have completed unofficial advanced university programmes. Note that this is not the same as the *Máster Universitario* degree used within the new degree structure established after the Bologna process.

In terms of level, the *Licenciado*, *Ingeniero* and *Arquitecto* are comparable to a WO or HBO master's degree, depending on the specialization and the type of study programme.

### ***Tercer ciclo***

The *tercer ciclo* comprises a programme with a duration of 2 years which is organized in seminars and aims to help students further specialize and master research techniques. This educational phase is completed with the *Diploma de Suficiencia Investigadora/Diploma de Estudios Avanzados*. The subsequent research phase culminates in a doctoral thesis, conferring upon the student the title of *Doctor*.

Graduates with the degree of *Licenciado*, *Ingeniero* or *Arquitecto* may also be admitted to the *tercer ciclo*.

### **After the introduction of the bachelor's-master's degree structure**

The first master's degree courses were introduced in Spain in 2006, and since 2008 the country has been gradually replacing the former programmes leading to the titles of *Diplomado*, *Arquitecto Técnico*, *Ingeniero Técnico*, *Maestro*, *Licenciado*, *Ingeniero* and *Arquitecto* by the present programmes leading to the *Título de Graduado*. The academic year 2009-2010 was the last one in which students could start programmes with the old degree system.

### ***Estudios de Grado***

These programmes usually have a duration of 4 years (240 ECTS) and are concluded with a *Trabajo de Fin de Grado* (TFG, a graduation paper). These studies are formally grouped around the following areas of knowledge: art and humanities, science, healthcare sciences, social sciences and law, and engineering and architecture. After completion of the programme students are awarded the *Título de Graduado*.

In terms of level, the *Título de Graduado* ([MECES level 2](#)/EQF level 6) is comparable to a WO or an HBO bachelor's degree, depending on the specialization and the type of study programme.

Programmes in medicine, veterinary science, odontology, pharmacy and architecture usually have a length of 5 years (300 ECTS). In Spain, a master's level is being awarded to these programmes under certain conditions.

### **Máster Universitario**

The *Título de Graduado* grants access to the advanced university programmes, the *Máster Universitario*. They have a duration of 1 to 2 years (60/120 ECTS) and are concluded with a graduation paper (*trabajo de fin de master*). In general, admission to these programmes is open to students who hold the degree of *Licenciado/Arquitecto* and *Ingeniero, Diplomado, Arquitecto Técnico, Ingeniero Técnico* and to students holding the new *Título de Graduado*. Like any other official University diploma in Spain, the *Máster Universitario* certificate is granted on behalf of the king of Spain (*Rey de España*) and registered in a central system. The *Máster* as part of the *títulos propios* (own degrees) is awarded by the rector of the university concerned and does not form part of Spain's official degree system.

Spain has both professional (*máster profesional*) and academic master's degree programmes. The academic programmes focus on training students to conduct scientific research, and have replaced part of the former doctorate programme that led to the *Diploma de Suficiencia Investigadora*.

In terms of level, the *Máster Universitario* ([MECES level 3](#)/EQF level 7) is comparable to a WO or an HBO master's degree, depending on the specialization and the type of study programme.

### **Doctorado**

The current doctorate exclusively comprises independent research in preparation for the writing of a doctoral thesis. The admission requirement is at least 300 ECTS university education, of which 60 ECTS must have been taken at master's level. During the transitional period, however, holders of a *Licenciado, Ingeniero or Arquitecto* degree may also be admitted, but they will first have to complete a research techniques and supervised research programme, i.e. the *Máster Universitario*. The *Diploma de Estudios Avanzados/Diploma de Suficiencia Investigadora* will continue to offer direct admission to doctorate programmes.

## **■ Non-university higher education**

### ***Formación profesional de grado superior***

*Formación profesional de grado superior* are post-secondary advanced vocational programmes. In Spain, these programmes are part of non-university higher education (*educación superior no universitaria*).

There are 5 ways to gain admission to these study programmes:

- direct admission with the *Título de Bachiller*;

- after an entrance examination in both general education and vocational training, if the student is 19 years or older (or 18 years if the student holds a *Título de Técnico*);
- holding a *Título de Técnico Superior* (formerly known as *Técnico Especialista*) achieved in another field of study;
- having a University degree or equivalent qualification;
- having passed the university entrance exams for students aged 25 or older.

The duration of the study programmes is 2 years (120 ECTS). Following completion of the programmes, the *Título de Técnico Superior* is awarded.

In terms of level, the *Título de Técnico Superior* ([MECES level 1](#)/EQF level 5) is comparable to at least an MBO diploma at qualification level 4.

Starting 2010, the *Título de Técnico Superior* grants direct admission to university education.

### **Art education before the Bologna process**

This type of higher education comes under a separate regulation, known as the *Enseñanza de Régimen Especial* which runs parallel to general higher education. Within art education, a distinction is made between intermediate, advanced and higher education.

Music, dance and drama are taught at the *Conservatorios de Música*, *Conservatorios de Danza*, *Escuelas de Arte* and so-called *Centros Autorizados*. The advanced music and dance programmes (*enseñanzas musicales y danza*) have a duration of 4 to 5 years, depending on the specialization chosen, and lead to a *Título Superior*, which grants the same rights as the *Licenciado* degree.

In terms of level, the *Título Superior de Música/de Danza* is comparable to an HBO bachelor's degree.

Dramatic art studies (*arte dramático*) offered in higher education have a duration of 4 years and lead to a *Título Superior*, which grants the same rights as the *Licenciado* degree.

In terms of level, the *Título Superior en Arte Dramático* is comparable to an HBO bachelor's degree.

**Art education after the Bologna process**

Higher Arts education is regulated by the Royal Decree 1614/2009 (*Real Decreto 1614/2009*), which develops and adapts the structure and basic aspects of the different study programmes to the European space for higher education. This Decree establishes a three-cycle structure for Higher Arts education, corresponding to the studies of *Grado*, *Máster Universitario* en *Doctorado*, in the case of *Doctorado* studies in agreement with universities.

## ■ Assessment systems

Secondary schools use a number system ranging from 1-5 (unsatisfactory) to 10 (outstanding), with a 5 as a minimum passing grade.

### ESO

Numerical grade	Description
9-10	<i>Sobresaliente</i>
7-8	<i>Notable</i>
6	<i>Bien</i>
5	<i>Suficiente</i>
1- 5	<i>Suspenso</i>

### Bachillerato

Numerical grade	Description
10	<i>Matrícula de honor*</i>
9	<i>Sobresaliente</i>
7-8	<i>Notable</i>
5-6	<i>Aprobado</i>
< 5	<i>Suspenso</i>

Higher education institutions use a scale from 1-10, with a passing grade of 5 and higher.

### University studies

Numerical grade	Description
10	<i>Matrícula de honor.*</i>
9 -10	<i>Sobresaliente (SB)</i>
7 – 8.9	<i>Notable (NT)</i>
5– 6.9	<i>Aprobado (AP)</i>
< 5	<i>Suspenso (SS)</i>

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\* awarded to the top 5 percent of students.

Higher education institutions also use the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). In this system, 60 credits represent 1 year of study and 1 credit represents 25/30 hours of study. More information on ECTS is available in the [ECTS User's Guide](#) issued by the European Commission.

More information about the value of foreign grades can be found on our [website](#) (Dutch only).

## ■ Bologna process

The transitional period of integration of Spanish higher education into the European Higher Education Area was completed in 2010. Accordingly, the academic year of 2009-2010 was the last in which students could commence studies under the old degree system. Information on the current situation can be found on the [website](#) of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

## ■ Qualification frameworks

Spain is in the process of establishing a national qualifications framework for lifelong learning (*Marco Español de Cualificaciones para el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida* – MECU). MECU is based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and will apply to all types of education (formal and non-formal qualifications). MECU will consist of 8 qualification levels.

MECU exists alongside the Spanish qualifications framework for higher education (*Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior* – MECES), which is regulated by Royal Decree 1027/2011, and was published in August 2011 in the *Boletín Oficial del Estado* (BOE), the Official Spanish Gazette. The Spanish [qualifications framework](#) for higher education distinguishes 4 levels: *Técnico Superior*, *Grado*, *Máster* and *Doctor*, with corresponding levels in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF):

Qualifications	MECES level	EQF level
<i>Técnico Superior</i>	1	5
<i>Grado</i>	2	6
<i>Máster</i>	3	7
<i>Doctor</i>	4	8

More information on the qualification frameworks and the 8 [qualification levels](#) is available on the MECU [website](#) of the Ministry of Education.

## ■ Quality assurance and accreditation

*La Agencia Nacional de evaluación de la calidad y Acreditación (ANECA)* is the legally (LOU 2007) designated quality assurance and accreditation body for university programmes. Due to the new learning scenario of the European Higher Education Area and its requirements in terms of quality, each university has established its own internal quality assurance systems as a tool for improving its practice. These quality assurance systems are supervised by the regional educational authorities and by the ANECA agency.

A list of official degrees is available on the [website](#) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.

## ■ International treaties

Spain has entered into bilateral diploma recognition treaties with various countries, such as Germany, France, Italy and China. Spain signed and ratified the Lisbon Convention in 2009.

## ■ Diploma Supplement

Spain is in the process of implementing the Diploma Supplement. Its format complies with the UNESCO and Council of Europe recommendations. More information on the Diploma Supplement is available on the [website](#) of the European Commission.

## ■ Composition of file

Obtaining the official diploma is usually a lengthy procedure. Universities themselves are the ones that issue their own official diplomas once graduates have passed all the subjects of their study programme and paid the diploma issuance fees. These universities submit a list of the new graduates to the Ministry of Education so that they are assigned an individual identification number, which will become part of Spain's central diploma register. In order to prevent fraud, official diplomas awarded by Spanish universities are printed on security paper.

## ■ Overview of higher education institutions

[Website](#) of the Ministry of Education, officially *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte* (MECD), which offers an overview of institutions and programmes that award official degrees). It is possible to search by degree (*sección títulos*) and by institution (*sección universidades*).

## ■ Useful links

- [Website](#) of the *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte* (MECD), the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.
- [Website](#) of the *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte* (MECD), the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, also the Spanish NARIC.
- [Website](#) of the *Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia* (UNED) with information on the access procedure to Spanish university studies.
- [Website](#) of the *Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación* (ANECA).
- More information about the Spanish qualifications frameworks and the [education levels](#) is available on the MECU [website](#) of the Ministry of Education.