



GUIDE TO THE MEXICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED 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 creation of guides of educational systems from different countries. These instruments may make the where and what to study decision-making process easier, as well as illustrate the procedure 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 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 creation 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 of 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 from 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*).

HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM FROM MEXICO

Mexico is a representative, democratic and federal republic, composed of thirty-two (32) free and sovereign federative entities, united in federation. Its capital is Mexico City, where the Powers of the Union (Executive, Legislative and Judicial) are seated. For further information, please visit the link on the website of the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI): <https://www.inegi.org.mx/>.

In Mexico, education is defined as a public service supervised by the State, which is present through federal and state agencies, policies and different institutions, in the cities and municipalities of the 32 federal entities of the country (Ministry of Public Education, 2019).

Education system

Article 35 of the General Education Act (*Ley General de Educación*) defines the national education system in terms of types, levels, forms and educational options:

Types: these refer to basic, upper secondary and higher education.

II. Levels: indicate each type of education.

III. Modalities: schooling, out-of-school and mixed.

IV. Educational options: they are determined for each educational level, among which is open and distance education (Ministry of Public Education, 2019).

Basic and upper secondary education



Basic Education in Mexico covers the initial, pre-school, primary and secondary levels. For more information, please visit the following link:
<https://educacionbasica.sep.gob.mx/>

Upper secondary education comprises the level of baccalaureate, its equivalents and vocational education that does not require a baccalaureate. This level is offered to students who have completed basic education. Upon completion of programs and curricula in upper secondary, students can obtain the following degrees: General Baccalaureate, Technological Baccalaureate, Intercultural Baccalaureate, Artistic Baccalaureate, Technical Professional Baccalaureate, Tele-Community Baccalaureate, Distance Higher Secondary Education, and Technologist (Ministry of Public Education, 2019). To learn more about it, you can enter the following link:
<http://educacionmediasuperior.sep.gob.mx/>.

They are considered part of the Upper-Middle Level, training for work, adult education, physical education and technological education (Secretariat of Public Education, 2019). For more information, it is recommended to read the General Education Law, available at the following link:
<https://www.gob.mx/sep/articles/decreto-por-el-que-se-expide-la-ley-general-de-educacion-y-se-abroga-la-ley-general-dela-infraestructur-fisica-educativa>.

Students who wish to start Higher Education in Mexico do not need to have a degree from those awarded in the upper middle class. For this purpose, universities require them only to have a certificate of completed studies.

Higher education

Higher education in Mexico is defined as the level of education that is imparted upon completion of the baccalaureate or its equivalents. It is composed of the undergraduate, specialty, master's and doctoral levels. It also has terminal options



prior to the conclusion of the Bachelor's Degree, such as the studies of Superior University Technician, and Associate Professional. It also includes Normal Education in all its levels and specialties (Secretariat of Public Education, 2019). For further information, please visit the following link: <https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/>.

Higher education institutions

In Mexico, the institutions that make up the Higher Education System are diverse because they exist of different types, with different regimes and forms of financing, for example: autonomous and non-self-governing, public and private, state, federal, intercultural, technological and normal (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2017). To learn more about this, you can watch an institutional information video at the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/videos/2020/educacion_superior.mp4.

The different institutions that are part of the Higher Education System in Mexico are:

- **Federal Public Universities:** these are institutions that exercise teaching functions and have a wide variety of research programs and processes. To know the Federal Public Universities of Mexico, you can check the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/publicas_federales.html.
- **State Public Universities:** these are institutions created by decree in local congresses, operating under the legal figure of decentralized public agencies. To know the State Public Universities of Mexico, you can check the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/publicas_estatales.html.
- **Public State Universities with Solidarity Support:** these are institutions created by decree of the local congresses, which operate under the legal



figure of decentralized public agencies. To find out about the Public State Universities of Mexico with solidarity support, please visit the following link:

https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/apoyo_solidario.html.

- **Technological Institutes:** Mexico's National Technological Institute (TecNM) is a decentralized body of the Ministry of Public Education, which coordinates higher technological education subsystem in Mexico. To know more about Technological Institutes of Mexico, check the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/institutos_tecnologicos.html.
- **Technological Institutes:** Mexico's National Technological Institute (TecNM) is a decentralized body of the Ministry of Public Education, which coordinates the higher technological education subsystem in Mexico. To know the Technological Institutes of Mexico, check the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/institutos_tecnologicos.html.
- **Technological universities (UTs):** they offer intensive training that allows students to join labor or the productive field in a short time. These institutions award the title of Superior University Technician, Technical Engineer or Graduate. To know more about Technological Universities of Mexico, enter the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/u_tecnologicas.html.
- **Polytechnic Universities (UPs):** they offer training in engineering careers, undergraduate and postgraduate studies (specialty, master's and doctorate). Similarly, these institutions offer the option of awarding the Associate Professional Certificate to students who do not complete their undergraduate studies. To find out about polytechnic universities, please visit to the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/u_politecnicas.html.



- **National Pedagogical University (UPN):** it is responsible for training of education professionals in undergraduate and postgraduate education. To learn more about the National Pedagogical University (UPN), please visit the following link <https://www.upn.mx/>.
- **Open and Distance University of Mexico (UnADM):** it is a decentralized administrative body of the Ministry of Public Education, which offers educational services at a higher level in the non-formal, open and distance mode. To learn more about the Open and Distance University of Mexico (UnADM), check the following link: <https://www.unadmexico.mx/>.
- **Intercultural Universities:** they offer training programs at levels of associate professional, bachelor's degree, specialization, master's and doctorate, levels relevant for regional, national and state development, aimed at training professionals committed to community development and, in particular, to indigenous cultures. To learn more about intercultural universities, please visit the following link: <https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/interculturales.html>.
- **Public research centers:** they are made up of public research centers such as those that make up the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT), the research centers of the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN), the centers of the states of Tamaulipas, Jalisco, Chihuahua and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). To find out about public research centers in Mexico, please visit the following link: https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/c_investigacion.html.
- **Public teacher training schools:** they offer bachelor's degree programs in pre-school, primary, bilingual intercultural primary, secondary, special, initial, physical and artistic. On 15th September 2020, when the Official Gazette of the Federation (Diario Oficial de la Federación) published the Internal



Regulations of the Ministry of Public Education, modifying the organizational structure and accordingly, the Directorate-General for Higher Education for Education Professionals changed its name to Directorate-General for Higher Education for Education (Dirección General de Educación Superior para el Magisterio). The Under-Secretariat for Higher Education is updating the relevant information at the institutional web site. To know these regulations, you can check the following link:

https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5600454&fecha=15/09/2020.

- **Private institutions:** they are established from private proposals and offer the service of higher education in all types and levels. These institutions must have the official authorization or recognition granted by the Mexican state. To know the particular institutions in Mexico that have an Official Recognition of Validity of Studies (RVOE), please visit the following link:
<https://www.sirvoes.sep.gob.mx/sirvoes/mvc/consultas>.

To learn about other higher education institutions that are also part of the system, such as the Benito Juárez Universities for Welfare (Universidades para el Bienestar Benito Juárez), military education institutions, institutions for artistic education and institutions for medical training, please visit the following link:
https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/otras_ies.html.

Access to higher education

In Mexico, the Political Constitution establishes the autonomy of universities and other institutions of higher education, since they have the power and responsibility to govern themselves (Chamber of Deputies of the H. Congress of the Union, 1917). In this sense, institutions that make up the Higher Education System establish their own regulations and admission processes for different types and levels. Some institutions determine admission conditions such as average baccalaureate grades,



diagnostic tests, or entrance exams. To learn more about access to undergraduate programs, please visit the following link:
<https://rejectazocero.sep.gob.mx/orientacion-vocacional/>.

To find out about the admission processes for specialization, master's and doctoral programs, please refer directly to the links of the educational institutions of interest:
<https://www.educacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/instituciones.html>.

Academic degrees and titles

Institutions that belong to the Higher Education System in Mexico grant certificates, diplomas, degrees or academic titles according to the types and levels of studies undertaken. These will be valid throughout the Republic through their registration in the Educational Information and Management System (Sistema de Información y Gestión Educativa). The Ministry of Education will be responsible for promoting that degrees and titles with validity or official recognition in the country are recognized abroad (Ministry of Public Education, 2019). Degrees and titles of the higher level are:

- **Technical Superior University or Professional Associate:** it is an educational option available after high school. This training takes 1440 hours, an approximate of two (2) to three (3) years and a minimum of 180 credits. With this training, the title of Superior Technician or Associate Professional can be obtained.
- **Normal Education:** it includes undergraduate and postgraduate careers for the training of teachers for basic and secondary education. This training takes 4800 hours, an approximate of four (4) to five (5) years with a minimum of 300 credits. With this training, the corresponding professional title in education is obtained.



- **Bachelor's degree:** it is the post-baccalaureate educational option, which covers vocational training in various fields of knowledge. This training takes 4800 hours, an approximate of four (4) to five (5) years with a minimum of 300 credits. With this training, the corresponding professional title is obtained.

The purpose of postgraduate training is to deepen knowledge in specific fields. It is composed of levels of specialty, master's and doctorate. This training requires the previous title or the bachelor's degree.

- **Specialties:** these are theoretical and in-depth educational programs that require, as a background, a bachelor's degree. They take 720 hours, approximately one (1) year and a minimum of 45 credits. With this training, the specialty diploma can be obtained.
- **Master's degree:** it is defined as training to deepen the analysis and research of a specific area, profession or field. It takes 1200 hours, approximately two (2) years, with a minimum of 75 credits after the bachelor's degree or 30 after the specialty. With this training, the master's degree is obtained.
- **Doctorate:** it is aimed at teaching training at a higher level and research with mastery in particular subjects. Graduates of doctoral programs must have the capacity to generate and apply new knowledge. In order to obtain a doctorate, it is necessary to previously have a bachelor's degree and, in most institutions, a master's degree. This training takes 2400 hours, approximately four (4) years, with a minimum of 150 credits after the bachelor's degree, 105 after the specialty or 75 after the master's degree (Official Journal 13-09-2017). With this training, the doctorate degree is obtained.



For more information on this program, it is recommended to read the "Agreement number 17/11/17", available at the following link:

https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5504348&fecha=13/11/2017.

* **Medical specialties**

In Mexico, the Ministry of Health, through the Under-Secretariat for Integration and Development of the Health Sector (Subsecretaría de Integración y Desarrollo del Sector Salud), is responsible for coordinating between the health and education sectors for the training and updating of medical professionals.

The training of doctors and specialists is provided by the Inter-Institutional Commission for the Training of Human Resources for Health (Comisión Interinstitucional para la Formación de Recursos Humanos para la Salud - CIFRHS) and, in particular, by the Committee for Postgraduate Education and Continuing Education. For information on the Inter-Agency Commission for Training in Human Resources for Health (CIFRHS), please visit the following link: <http://www.cifrhs.salud.gob.mx/index.html>.

Medical residences

The Medical Residence is defined as a set of academic, assistance and research activities carried out by the resident physician in receiving medical units, with training programs. The resident physician is a medical professional who undertakes a full-time medical deepening program. The "Norma Oficial Mexicana NOM-001-SSA3-2012" (Diario Oficial de la Federación, 2013) defines and establishes the conditions for the medical residences. To know the standard, you can enter the following link: <https://www.sep.gob.mx/work/models/sep1/Resource/42b00ee7-33da-4bff-85e3-ef45b0f75255/a279.pdf>.

Mexico establishes a National System of Medical Residences made up of a group of health units and institutions responsible for organizing and developing residences



for the training of medical specialists. The institutions that are part of the Medical Residency System are coordinated with higher education institutions. To know about the institutions and medical residences offered in Mexico, please visit the following link: http://www.cifrhs.salud.gob.mx/site1/residencias/docs/RSNRM_181114.pdf.

- **Admission to medical residences**

To be admitted for medical residences, general practitioners must take the National Examination for Applicants for Medical Residencies (Examen Nacional para Aspirantes a Residencias Médicas - ENARM), an instrument that seeks to measure the knowledge of professionals in the field of general medicine, and constitutes the first stage of the process to enter the National System of Medical Residences (Government of Mexico; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Public Education; CIFRHS, 2020). For the registration process and presentation of the National Examination for Applicants for Medical Residencies (ENARM), please visit the following link: http://www.cifrhs.salud.gob.mx/site1/enarm/docs/2020/E44_convocatoria_2020_v2.pdf.

After submitting and approving the ENARM, doctors must meet the entry requirements set by health institutions and higher education institutions. Medical residences take three (3) to (5) years of training, awarding the diploma of medical specialty (Official Journal of the Federation, 2013). For more information on this aspects, it is recommended to read the Official Mexican Standard NOM-001-SSA3-2012, available at the following link: http://www.cifrhs.salud.gob.mx/site1/residencias/docs/rm_NOM_001_SSA3_2012.

- **Postgraduate Courses in Medicine (CPAEM)**

In Mexico, there are Graduate Courses of High Specialty in Medicine (Cursos de Posgrado de Alta Especialidad en Medicina - CPAEM), academic proposals to



deepen the knowledge and skills obtained in a medical specialty. These courses take one (1) year and are endorsed by the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM). CPAEM offers two approaches: disciplinary and methodological. The disciplinary seeks to develop cognitive and psychomotor skills and abilities in a specific field of medicine and, the methodological, seeks to strengthen research skills. To gain the university diploma that accredits the training of High Specialty in Medicine, students must carry out a research work and support it during research sessions (Autonomous National University of Mexico, 2020).

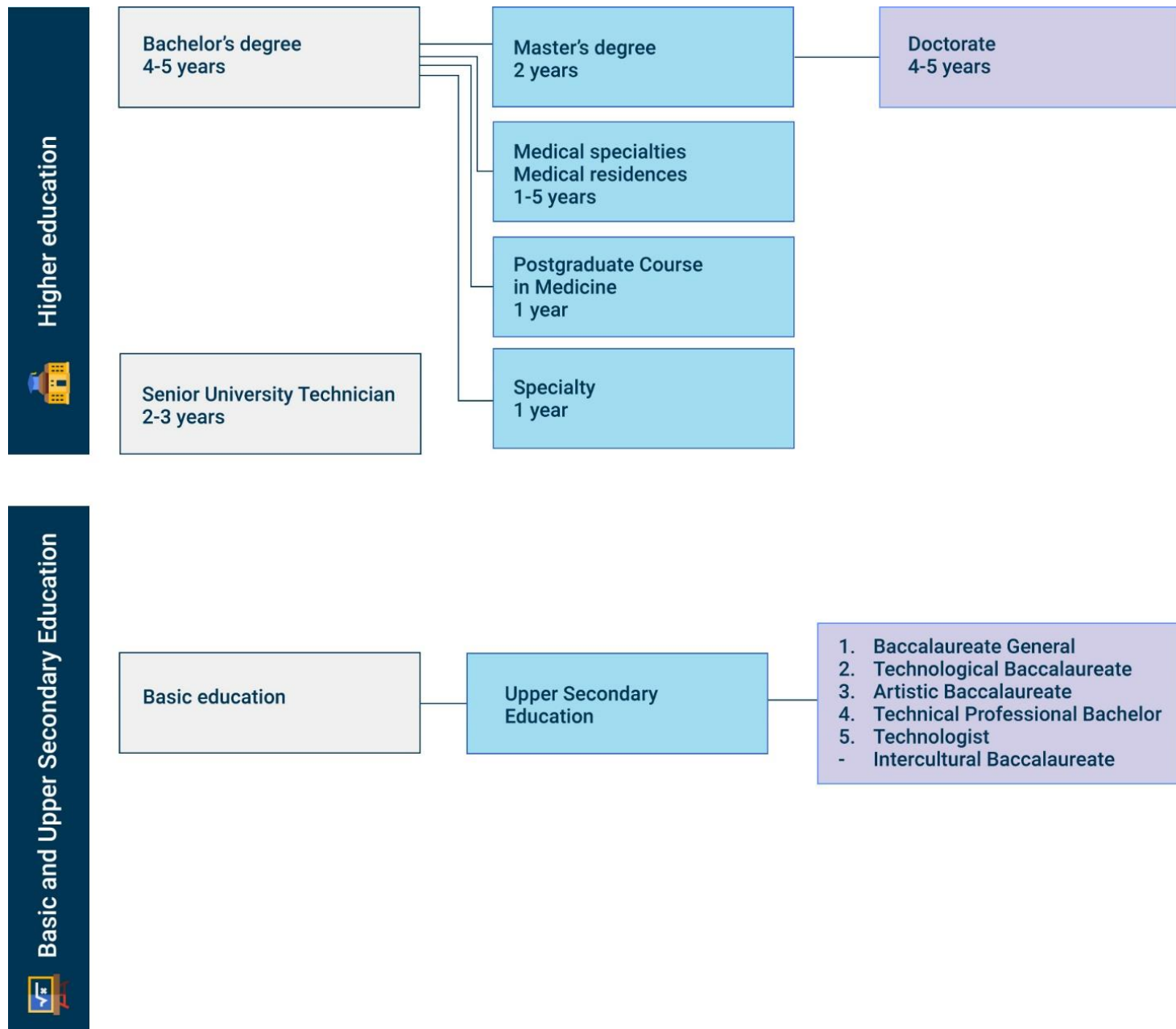
In the Mexican education system, the high-specialty level is not among the levels established in the General Education Act (Ley General de Educación - articles 35 and 47). These studies are not subject to a diploma. No professional licenses are granted for the exercise of this level nor are they subject to revalidation with respect to studies carried out in educational systems in other countries. However, in Colombia, some postgraduate courses in high specialty can be recognized.

For more information on Postgraduate Courses in Medicine (CPAEM), please visit the following link: <https://escolares.facmed.unam.mx/alumnos/postgradradorado>.

To know about the offer of CPAEM, please visit the following link: <http://www.sidep.fmposgrado.unam.mx:8080/fmposgrado/Cursos.jsp?medicallevel=CPAEM>.



Structure of the Mexican Education System



* Based on the General Law of Education and the institutional page of the Secretariat of Public Education, link to Higher Secondary Education: http://educacionmediasuperior.sep.gob.mx/es_mx/sems/ems_sistema_educativo_nacional#.



1.1 Comparative table of educational levels in Mexico and Colombia

It is important to know the particularities of each of the educational levels, both in Mexico and in Colombia. Therefore, the following chart presents a comparative analysis of both systems. This comparison refers to the highest levels of tertiary education:

- 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 chart: educational levels in Mexico and Colombia

CINE – UNESCO LEVELS	LEVELS IN MEXICO	NUMBER OF YEARS	LEVELS IN COLOMBIA	NUMBER OF YEARS
8	Doctorate	4-5	Doctorate	4-5
7	Medical specialty	1-5	Medical surgical specialization	1-5
	Medical residence	1	Medical specialization	2
7	Postgraduate Courses in Medicine (CPAEM)	2	Master's degree	2
6	Master's degree	1	University specialization	1
6	Specialty	4-5	University degree	4-5
5			Technological specialization	<1
5	Bachelor's degree		Technical specialization	1
5	N/A	2-4	Technologist	3
5	N/A		Professional technician	2

* Based on the Institute for Statistics of UNESCO (2013) and López Andrade (2014).

Note: in Mexico, both the specialty and the master's degree are graduate levels. Therefore, the classification in the Mexican Qualifications Framework in relation to CINE UNESCO levels is: 7A Specialty, and 7B Master.



It is important to highlight the measure of time spent on educational levels and its comparison with international standards:

a) Academic credits: in both Colombia and Mexico, the estimated time of academic activity of the student according to the academic skills that the program is expected to develop, is expressed in units called academic credits.

- Academic credit in Mexico:

The Ministry of Public Education, in accordance with the "Agreement number 17/11/17", article 11, establishes that, for each effective hour of learning activity, 0.0625 credits will be allocated.

Any action taken by the student to acquire the knowledge or skills stipulated in the curriculum is defined as a learning activity.

The activities are as follows:

- I. From the tutoring of an academic professional, in institutional spaces such as classrooms, centers, workshops or laboratories, or in external spaces.
- II. Autonomously, in internal or external spaces, outside the established class schedules, but as an activity, part of the learning processes (Official Journal, 2000).

For more information on this, it is recommended to read the "Agreement number 17/11/17", available at the following link:

https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5504348&fecha=13/11/2017

- Academic credit in Colombia: it is a unit of measurement of the student's academic work, indicating the effort to be made to achieve the results of previous learning. It is equivalent to forty-eight (48) hours for an academic



period. Institutions should determine the ratio between the direct relationship with the teacher and the independent practice of the student, justified according to the learning process and the learning outcomes expected for the programme.

Institutions must 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 LEVELS:** the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is a reference framework for collecting, compiling and internationally analyzing comparable statistics in the field of education.

LEGALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND INSTITUTIONS

The General Education Law (by Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2019) stipulates that private institutions may provide education in all types, levels and modalities, provided that they have the authorization or Official Recognition of Validity of Studies (Reconocimiento de Validez Oficial de Estudios - RVOE) granted by the State.

The Official Recognition of Validity of Studies (RVOE) is the act of the authority by which it is determined to incorporate a plan and programs of study that a private person offers, or intends to offer, in the national educational system. To learn more about this, please visit the following link: <https://www.gob.mx/sep/acciones-y-programas/reconocimiento-de-validez-oficial-de-estudios-rvoe>.

The Directorate-General of Accreditation, Incorporation and Revalidation (Dirección General de Acreditación, Incorporación y Revalidación - DGAIR) publishes information on private institutions and their educational programs, which have Official Recognition of Validity of Higher Studies (Reconocimientos de Validez Oficial de Estudios de tipo Superior - RVOES), in Mexico. To know more about private institutions that have RVOES, please visit the following link: <https://www.sirvoes.sep.gob.mx/sirvoes/mvc/consultas>.



For more information on the Directorate-General for Accreditation, Incorporation and Revalidation (DGAIR), please visit the following link:
https://www.sep.gob.mx/es/sep1/sep1_Direccion_General_de_Acreditacion.

Quality assurance

In Mexico, there are specialized agencies that guarantee and accredit the quality of educational institutions and academic programmes of higher education. Among these agencies are: the Inter-Agency Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (Comités Interinstitucionales para la Evaluación de la Educación Superior - CIEES), the Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education (Consejo para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior - COPAES). For the Bachelor's level, the Federation of Mexican Private Institutions of Higher Education (Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior - FIMPES), supports and accompanies the accreditation processes of private institutions, and the National Council of Science and Technology (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología - CONACyT), for postgraduate studies under the National Quality Postgraduate Program (Programa Nacional de Posgrados de Calidad - PNPC) (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2017).

- **The Interinstitutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CIEES):** they constitute a non-profit agency dedicated to quality assurance of higher education institutions (HEIs) and educational programmes at all levels. In the following link, it is possible to know the higher education programs that are accredited and recognized by the Interinstitutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CIEES):
https://www.ciees.edu.mx/instituciones_acreditadas/.



- **The Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education (COPAES):** it is a non-profit organization, authorized by the Federal Government and, in particular, by the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP), to grant recognition and accreditation to academic programmes of higher education. Similarly, the Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education (COPAES) supervises and recognizes other organizations that accredit academic programs in the country. In the following link, the Accreditation Bodies (OA) recognized by (COPAES) are presented:
<https://www.copaes.org/consulta.php>.
- **The Federation of Mexican Private Institutions of Higher Education (FIMPES):** it is a non-profit organization, made up of one hundred and twelve (112) private institutions of higher education. Through its work, accompaniment and support, the Federation of Mexican Private Institutions of Higher Education (FIMPES) seeks to guarantee that the affiliated institutions comply with the necessary quality conditions to offer education at a higher level. In the following link, the educational institutions that make up the Federation of Mexican Private Institutions of Higher Education (Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior - FIMPES) can be known:
<https://www.fimpes.org.mx/index.php/instituciones>.
- **The National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT)** and the Undersecretary of Higher Education of the Secretariat of Public Education (Subsecretaría de Educación Superior de la Secretaría de Educación Pública), recognize through the National Quality Postgraduate Program (PNPC), the quality of postgraduate courses offered by higher education institutions and research centers in Mexico. The programmes included in the National



Quality Postgraduate Programme Register are classified into four levels: 1) International competence programmes; 2) Consolidated programmes; 3) Developing programmes and 4) Newly created programmes. To learn about the postgraduate courses that are part of the National Quality Postgraduate Program Register, please visit the following link:
<http://svrtmp.main.conacyt.mx/ConsultsPNPC/padron-pnpc.php>.

It is important to note that, regardless of whether academic institutions or academic documents are accredited by an agency for the purpose of accrediting the quality of academic institutions, curricula and programmes. Institutions of the National Education System shall issue certificates, diplomas, degrees or academic titles to students who have completed studies, in accordance with the requirements established in the corresponding curricula and programmes. Such certificates, diplomas, degrees and titles must be registered in the Educational Information and Management System, and shall be valid throughout the Republic. The secretariat shall promote that studies with official validity in the Republic are recognized abroad (article 14 of the General Education Act) (Ministry of Public Education, 2019).

ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED TO INITIATE THE PROCESS OF RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES OBTAINED IN MEXICO

Resolution 10687 of 2019 of the Ministry of National Education regulates the validation of higher education diplomas awarded abroad, recognizing the quality assurance systems of the countries where the diplomas were obtained.

The process of validation of higher education diplomas in Colombia is part of the Quality Assurance System for Higher Education, which allows society to guarantee that, as well as the national offer, from other countries is officially recognized by the States where the certificates were issued.



IMPORTANT: if an undergraduate degree is in law, accounting, education, or part of the health sciences, additional requirements must be verified, stipulated in chapters one and two of Resolution 10687 of 2019 of the Ministry of National Education, available at the following link: https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/articles-401316_archivo_pdf.pdf.

It is worth recalling that it is not obligatory to advance the process of validation of higher education diplomas obtained in other countries. Recognition is required 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 Mexico and subsequently validate the degree in Colombia, the following must be considered:

1. Studies must be advanced in a higher education institution recognized by the State of Mexico.
2. Have the respective chain of apostille or legalization in the documents.

The apostille, in Mexico, certifies the signatures of public officials who validate and legitimize documents issued in the country for recognition abroad. When the documents requiring to be apostilled are issued by a federal institution or authority, they must be taken to the Directorate of Registration of Appointments, Legalization, Apostille and Administration of the Insular Territory in Mexico City (Dirección de Registro de Nombramientos, Legalización, Apostilla y Administración del Territorio Insular en la Ciudad de México). For more information on this aspect, please visit the following links:



<https://www.gob.mx/tramites/ficha/apostilla-de-documentos/SEGOB3000>.

<https://www.gob.mx/segob/acciones-y-programas/apostilla-de-documentos-80714>.

In case the document that is required to be apostilled has been issued by a state authority, the apostille procedure must be carried out in the corresponding federal entity. To know the federal entities where the apostille formalities can be carried out, please visit the following link:

https://dicoppu.segob.gob.mx/work/models/DICOPPU/Resource/329/2/imagenes/DIRECTORIO_ENTIDADES_FEDERATIVAS.pdf.

Different validation criteria must be considered, in accordance with the programme and the higher education institution awarding the degree.

If a degree has been issued by a higher education institution in Mexico, and recognition is needed 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.mineducacion.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.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>
- 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/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-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>

Consulted sources

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