



INTERREGIONAL DIALOGUE
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN
AMERICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND AFRICA

Buenos Aires, Argentina
28 TO 31 MARCH

OVERVIEW OF THE
**ARGENTINE UNIVERSITY
HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Host universities



organised by



INTRODUCTION

The University Higher Education System in Argentina is comprised of 133 institutions, from both the public sector and the private sector, with coverage across the Argentine territory.

	Public	Private	State Provincial	International
University	57	50	1	
University Institute	4	15	5	1
TOTAL	61	65	6	1
	133			

Source: Department of University Data. 2020-2021 statistical summary

Territorial coverage of university institutions according to management sector



Note: The academic units of the university institutions are shown by province in Argentina.

Source: Department of University Data. 2020-2021 statistical summary.

Some of the features that have characterized the Argentine university system are the university autonomy, free of charge of the degree studies, the collegiate driving mechanism of the cloisters, and academic and scientific promotion through valid merits through public competitions and meritocratic income and promotion mechanisms to the race teaching and research.

The Secretariat of University Policies is the department at national government level that is in charge of the design and implementation of the policies and strategies regarding the development of the national university system. Among its main objectives are to coordinate the actions of the entire national higher education system, to design programs that improve the quality of the higher education, research, teaching and university extension; to efficiently allocate the national financial resources in the university system; and to regulate in matters of degree recognition, and other related issues. There are also bodies for coordination and consultation of the university system: The Council of Universities (CU); the National Interuniversity Council (CIN), the Council of Rectors of Private Universities (CRUP) and the Regional Planning Councils of the Higher Education (CPRES).

The Council of Universities is chaired by the Minister of Education or by whom he designates with a category not inferior to Secretary (generally chaired by the Secretary of University Policies) and is composed by the Executive Committee of the National Interuniversity Council, by the Directive Board of Rectors of the Council of Private Universities and by a representative of each Regional Planning Council of Higher Education. Some of its basic functions are to propose policies and strategies for university development, promote the cooperation and articulation between university institutions; and to pronounce on matters on which its intervention is required in accordance with the Higher Education Law; such as the definition of the quality accreditation standards.

STRUCTURE OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES IN ARGENTINA

Argentine university-level institutions issue graduate and postgraduate degrees, according to the following chart:

POSTGRADUATE LEVEL	No minimum number of hours. Determined by each University + individual thesis.	PhD
	Minimum number of hours: 700 clock hours (540 hours of in-person courses + 160 hours for the final project / activities)	Master's courses
	Minimum number of hours: 360 clock hours + final project or practical training hours	Specialization
GRADUATE LEVEL	Minimum number of hours: 2600 in-person hours (minimum duration: 4 years) Entitles to professional practice Access to post-graduate level	Bachelor's degrees and equivalent professional degrees

UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL	Minimum number of hours: 1600 clock hours (minimum duration: 2 years) It may or may not be followed up by a graduate course	Technicians Assistants Interpreters
	Duration: up to one year Levelling courses	Entrance course
	End of secondary studies -> access to higher education	

LEVEL	DEGREE	CHARACTERISTICS	OTHER REQUIREMENTS
UNDERGRADUATE	UNIVERSITY-LEVEL TECHNICIAN, ANALYST, ASSISTANT, AMONG OTHER TITLES	Their minimum duration is 2 and a half years with at least 1600 clock hours.	
GRADUATE	BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT	A minimum of 2600 in-person hours taken over at least 4 (four) academic years. Issuance by officially accredited	In accordance with the provisions of Article 43 of the Higher Education Act (Law
	PROFESSIONAL DEGREES (ENGINEERING, MEDICINE, ARCHITECTURE, LAW, AMONG OTHERS)	Higher Education University Institutions. These degrees enable professional practice and direct access to postgraduate courses (specialization, academic or professional master's courses, or PhD courses).	No. 24,521), quality accreditation is required for graduate courses that may involve the public interest, as a consequence of their direct impact on the health, safety, rights, property or training of inhabitants of Argentina.
	SPECIALIZATION	The purpose is to deepen the knowledge of a topic or subject-matter within a given field. In order to graduate, candidates must submit a final integrating individual project, which must be passed in order to earn the degree of "Specialist", specifying the profession or field of application. The minimum course load is 360 clock hours, without taking into account the hours dedicated to the draft of the final project, including hours of practical training.	All postgraduate courses will go through a process of accreditation with the Argentine Commission for University Assessment and Accreditation. The postgraduate course database is available at www.coneau.edu.ar .

POSTGRADUATE	MASTER'S COURSES (ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL)	<p>Their purpose is to provide academic and/or professional training. They deepen theoretical, methodological, technological, management or artistic knowledge, based on the status of development of a discipline, interdisciplinary subject-matter or professional field. In order to graduate, candidates must submit a final written individual project, which must be passed in order to earn the "Master's" degree. There are two types of Master's courses: Academic Master's courses and Professional Master's courses. The minimum course load is 700 clock hours, of which 540 hours must be in-person courses, while the remainder will be used for the final project or other supplementary activities.</p>	<p>In order to access a postgraduate course, in accordance with Article 39 bis of the Higher Education Act (Law No. 24,521), candidates must have a graduate university degree or higher non-university degree of at least four (4) years and meet any requirements as may be determined by the Academic Committee or equivalent authority, in order to verify that the candidate's qualifications are compatible with the characteristics of the relevant postgraduate course. In exceptional cases where candidates do not meet said requirements, they may be admitted provided that they prove, through the evaluations and requirements that may be established by the relevant university, that they are adequately trained and experienced for the postgraduate courses they intend to undertake, as well as sufficient skills and knowledge to satisfactorily undertake such courses. In all cases, admission to postgraduate courses and the subsequent grant of postgraduate degrees shall in no way serve as proof of a prior graduate degree.</p>
	PHD COURSES	<p>The purpose of these courses is to provide training to postgraduate candidates who can make original contributions in a field of expertise, in a context of academic excellence, through training essentially focused on research. PhD courses end with an individual thesis, prepared under supervision by a Director. Successful candidates are granted a PhD degree, specifying the discipline or interdisciplinary field. There are no minimum course loads: they are determined by each university institution.</p>	

DEGREE SYSTEM

According to the Higher Education Act, university institutions have exclusive authority to issue bachelor's degrees and equivalent professional degrees, as well as postgraduate degrees.

Degrees granted by university-level institutions are officially recognized by the Argentine Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Officially recognized degrees certify the academic training received and entitle the holder to carry out their professional practice throughout Argentine territory, without prejudice to police power held by provinces over certain professions. The knowledge and skills certified by such degrees, as well as the activities their holders are authorized to perform, are determined and publicized by university-level institutions. Curricular programmes must comply with the minimum number of hours required by the Ministry of Education and the Universities Council.

In the case of degrees for professions subject to government regulation, the exercise of which could concern the public interest because of its direct impact on the health, security, rights, property or training of inhabitants of Argentina, it is set forth in Article 43 of the Higher Education Act that the following requirements apply in addition to minimum course loads:

- a) Curricular programmes will take into account the basic curricular contents and criteria on intensity of practical training established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology with the agreement of the Universities Council;
- b) Relevant courses of studies will be periodically accredited by the Argentine Commission for University Assessment and Accreditation or by duly recognized private entities created to such end.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has the power to determine, with restrictive criteria and with the agreement of the Universities Council, the list of authorized degrees, as well as the professional activities exclusively reserved to such professionals.

Postgraduate education is offered exclusively in university-level institutions. Postgraduate education may also be offered at research centres and higher professional education institutions of recognized prestige and hierarchy which have entered into agreements with universities to such end.

Postgraduate courses (whether specializations, master's courses or PhD courses) must be accredited by the Argentine Commission for University Assessment and Accreditation.

In order to access a postgraduate course, candidates must have a graduate university degree or higher non-university degree of at least four (4) years and meet any requirements as may be determined by the Academic Committee or equivalent authority, in order to verify that the candidate's qualifications are compatible with the characteristics of the relevant postgraduate course. In exceptional cases where candidates do not meet said requirements, they may be admitted provided that they prove, through the evaluations and requirements that may be established by the relevant university, that they are adequately trained and experienced for the postgraduate courses they intend to undertake, as well as sufficient skills and knowledge to satisfactorily undertake such courses. In all cases, admission to postgraduate courses and the subsequent grant of postgraduate degrees shall in no way serve as proof of a prior graduate degree.

ACADEMIC OFFER 2021

Total offers: 11,298

Undergraduate level: 2,235

Graduate level: 5,146

Postgraduate level: 3,817

PhD courses: 576

Masters' courses: 1,349

Specialization courses: 1,892

(Source: Department of University Data – DNPeIU-SPU. Secretariat of University Policies. Ministry of Education. Office of the President).

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Argentine Commission for University Assessment and Accreditation (CONEAU) is a decentralized entity within the scope of the Argentine Ministry of Education. It was created for the purpose of contributing to the improvement of university education. Its institutional mission is to assure and improve the quality of university courses and institutions operating within the Argentine university system through the evaluation and accreditation of the quality of university education.

Since 1996, CONEAU evaluates institutional projects; since 1997, it evaluates annual reports by university institutions with provisional authorization, performs external assessments and accredits postgraduate courses; and since 1999, it evaluates requests for final recognition.

According to Law No. 24,521 on Higher Education, CONEAU is charged with:

- Coordinating and performing external assessment of university institutions.
- Accrediting graduate courses for degrees involving state-regulated professions, the exercise of which could concern the public interest because of its direct impact on the health, security, rights, property or training of inhabitants of Argentina.
- Accrediting postgraduate courses, regardless of the context in which they take place, in accordance with the standards established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in consultation with the Universities Council.
- Issuing opinions on the consistency and feasibility of institutional projects required for the Ministry of Education to authorize the operation of new national university institutions, following their creation, or the recognition of provincial university institutions.
- Drafting the reports required to grant provisional authorization and final recognition of private university institutions.
- Drafting the reports based on which the period of provisional operation of private university institutions is to be evaluated.

Standards for accreditation of courses of study included in the system provided for in Article 43 of the Higher Education Act (Law No. 24,521) are available on the official website of CONEAU.

Finally, it is worth to mention that in terms of international accreditation of quality, Argentina participates of ARCUSUR System, which is the regional mechanism of MERCOSUR.

RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN DEGREES IN THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

Foreign university degrees in the ARGENTINE REPUBLIC are recognized through two mechanisms:

RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN DEGREES IN THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

VALIDATION (REVÁLIDA)

Countries with no bilateral agreement

Through a National University

Autonomous procedure

RECOGNITION (CONVALIDACIÓN)

Countries with a bilateral agreement

Through this Ministry

VALIDATION (REVÁLIDA): In the case of qualifications issued in countries with which the ARGENTINE REPUBLIC has not entered into multilateral or bilateral mutual recognition agreements for certifications, degrees undergo a validation process through a National University that offers a course of studies that grants equivalent or similar qualifications as those of the foreign citizen.

Under Article 29 (k) of the Higher Education Act (Law No. 24,521), only state (not private) National Universities have the authority to validate foreign degrees.

The interested party must begin the process with a National University. Because universities have academic and institutional autonomy, each of them can establish their specific procedure to process validation requests. In general, the university-level institutions compare the foreign degree programme with the degree programme they offer through commissions comprised of academic specialists in the relevant discipline, in order to determine whether the programmes are fully equivalent or whether the foreign citizen must comply with certain additional academic requirements to have their degree validated. It requires prior validation of mid-level qualifications.

The ARGENTINE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION has no involvement in the validation process.

RECOGNITION (CONVALIDACIÓN): In the case of qualifications issued in countries with which the ARGENTINE REPUBLIC has entered into mutual recognition agreements for certifications, degrees undergo a recognition process through the NATIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT (DNGU), within the scope of the SECRETARIAT OF UNIVERSITY POLICIES of the ARGENTINE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

TYPES OF VALIDATION

For professional practice	To continue postgraduate studies in the field of health
Depends on the agreement	Provisional validation RM351/13
Direct or indirect validation based on	
accreditation of the course or programme	

Validation for professional practice

Based on the bilateral agreement with each country

DIRECT VALIDATION

For accredited courses and institutions

INDIRECT VALIDATION

The applicant chooses a national university that evaluates the programme and validates the degree or establishes additional requirements

Where applicable, academic requirements must be complied with and the procedure must be forwarded to the Ministry

Validation

Indirect Recognition - University Commission of Experts

A university commission of experts performs an evaluation to determine the reasonable equivalence of the foreign degree programme. These commissions are put together under academic cooperation agreements between university-level institutions and the Ministry of Education. The university commission of experts can determine that the interested person's degree programme is reasonably equivalent to the closest Argentine degree programme, or that they need to comply with academic requirements (curricular contents) at the same institution without delay. The university institution cannot require that foreign professionals sit for examinations or take courses with regular students because of their status. Said foreign professionals will be required to take a general examination or a levelling course with a final examination including the curricular contents established by the university commissions of experts. The university-level institution will draft a report and record the recognition according to its regulations, which must be communicated to DNGU.

Automatic recognition procedure based on quality certification

In recent years, the Argentine Republic has implemented a policy for degree recognition whereby it is established that—with countries that have domestic mechanisms to certify the quality of their courses of study—agreements can be signed to implement an automatic recognition procedure (or through swifter procedures than usual) for foreign graduate degrees that entitle their holder to professional practice, based on the result of domestic certification procedures.

The qualification recognition scheme based on national or regional accreditation systems involves a swift, automatic qualification recognition mechanism, including authorization for professional practice, for university-level degrees currently accredited by the relevant certification agencies. It should be taken into account that this mechanism is established without prejudice to the application of regulations established by each country for its own nationals, in accordance with legal provisions in force for each profession.

Academic recognition

In order to continue postgraduate studies in the ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, neither validation nor recognition of the candidate's graduate degree from a foreign university are required. The university of destination can admit the candidate by simply analyzing the curricular content of their degree programme.

The only exception to this rule is postgraduate programmes and specializations in the field of health sciences. In those cases, where the postgraduate programme or specialization involves professional practice as part of the training, validation or recognition will be required.

Validation to continue postgraduate studies in the field of health

Based on the bilateral agreement with each country

DIRECT VALIDATION

For courses and institutions accredited for professional practice, applying reasonable equivalence criteria between a foreign degree and an Argentine degree

PROVISIONAL VALIDATION

Only for the purposes of hospital or clinic medical practices, not for professional practices

Scope of validation and recognition

Validation and recognition are different procedures of identical scope. They render the same results, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Act, Article 42: "Officially recognized degrees certify the academic training received and entitle the holder to carry out their professional practice throughout Argentine territory, without prejudice to police power held by provinces over certain professions."

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Provinces are charged with supervising professional practice, and they generally delegate this power to professional associations. In the case of professions subject to regulation by the relevant association, it is mandatory to register with said association in order to practice them.

For professionals holding foreign degrees to register, recognition of the degree by the Argentine Ministry of Education or validation through a national university is required. In the case of holders of foreign degrees who have carried out the validation procedure, performance of the professional activities relevant to the pertinent Argentine degree programme is authorized under said procedure.

Issues specific to the field of Health: Half of the provinces delegate authorization powers to provincial Ministries of Health and the other half delegates them to legally-recognized Associations. The professions that require authorization are usually those that involve direct contact with patients.

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Program of Internationalization of Higher Education and International Cooperation, that acts under the scope of the Secretariat of University Policies, has the specific mission to contribute to the international integration of the Argentinean higher education system, facilitating its linking to academic, scientific and technological international cooperation opportunities; and to design and implement international cooperation strategies with other countries and regions through higher education, that can contribute to the development of the country. The government intervenes mainly with an encouragement approach by funding programs and initiatives that creates incentives for the institutions, always respecting their autonomy. Among these instruments can be cited programs of academic mobility – at graduate and postgraduate level-, the promotion of university partnerships with foreign institutions, grants to facilitate the participation at international higher education conferences, the organization of missions of universities to and from strategic destinations, the implementation of programs to encourage joint degrees agreements at university level, and the organization of training workshops aiming to improve the management of internationalization practices.

In terms of multilateral cooperation, the Program also applies policies to foster Latin America integration in the field of higher education, especially through regional forums such as MERCOSUR, UNASUR, CELAC, UNESCO and OAS, among others. Regarding bilateral cooperation, there is an extensive involvement with countries such as Brazil, France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

LINKS

- ✓ Argentine Ministry of Education: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/educacion>
- ✓ Argentine Commission for University Assessment and Accreditation (CONEAU): <http://www.coneau.gob.ar/CONEAU>
- ✓ Official degrees database: <http://titulosoficiales.siu.edu.ar>
- ✓ Foreign degree recognition: <http://convalidaciones.siu.edu.ar/>
- ✓ ARCUSUR: <http://edu.mercosur.int/arcusur/>
- ✓ Program for the internationalization of higher education and international cooperation (PIESCI): <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/educacion/universidades/programa-de-internacionalizacion-de-la-educacion-superior-y-cooperacion-internacional-piesci>
- ✓ CIN: <https://www.cin.edu.ar/>
- ✓ CRUP: <http://www.crup.org.ar/>