**Académie**

An administrative district under the Department of National Education, in which State policy on education is implemented at the local level. Each académie is directed by a recteur d'académie appointed by the French President during a Ministers’ Council session. Each service départemental (at the département level) is led by an academic director of the Department of National Education's services. There are thirty académies in France, their catchment areas corresponding to regional divisions with the exception of the Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regions, which are each divided into two académies, and the Ile de France region, which is divided into three. The four overseas départements (DOM) - Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana and Reunion Island – each correspond to a single académie.

**Alliance Nationale pour les Sciences de la Vie et de la Santé - Aviesan**

The Alliance Nationale pour les Sciences de la Vie et de la Santé (Aviesan - National Alliance for life and health sciences) was created in 2009 by founding members such as the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS - National Centre for Scientific Research), the Commissariat à l’Énergie Atomique (C.E.A - Atomic Energy Comission), the Institut Pasteur, and other major French research institutions. This alliance is part of the French research system policy reform, and aims for a better coordination between actors as well as strengthening the French research position in this field through a joint programming.

**Apprenti(s) - Apprentice(s)**

A young person / young people between 16 and 25 years of age preparing for a technological or vocational educational qualification or certification under a special type of work contract that combines in-company training (under the responsibility of an apprenticeship supervisor [MA - maître d'apprentissage]) with classes dispensed at an apprentice training centre (CFA - centre de formation d'apprentis).

**Apprentissage - Apprenticeship**

Company / Apprentice Training Centre (centre de formation d’apprentis) alternance training dispensed to young people between 16 and 25 years of age with a view to obtaining a vocational qualification at secondary level (CAP, BEP, baccalauréat professionnel, etc.) or at higher educational level (BTS, DUT, diplomas in engineering, etc.), or a certification registered at the National Repository of Professional Certifications (RNCP – répertoire national des certifications professionnelles). Apprenticeship training requires close coordination between the two places in which the apprentice acquires his/her professional skills: the company on the one hand and the Apprentice Training Centre on the other. For further information on apprenticeship, please consult the Organisation of Vocation Upper Secondary Education page.
Auxiliaire de vie scolaire - Special needs assistant (AVS)

The job of special needs assistants (AVS in French) is to help disabled children with their schooling. A distinction is made between:

- individual AVSs (AVS-i), who provide one-to-one school-inclusion support for a single pupil;
- AVS offering pooled assistance (AVS-m), who work with pupils not in need of constant, sustained attention. They provide flexible, immediately available assistance based on pupils’ needs;
- group AVSs (AVS-co), who help a team of several disabled children: CLIS (class for school inclusion) or ULIS (localised unit for school inclusion).

Special needs assistants fulfil a range of tasks, such as:

- helping in the classroom: movements, installing or handling equipment, during certain lessons, facilitation and stimulation of communication between the disabled pupil and his/her entourage, or any help defined with the teacher;
- attending occasional or regular school outings;
- carrying out routine tasks that do not require specific medical or allied health qualifications (assistance with hygiene practices for example);
- helping to implement and monitor personalised schooling plans as members of the disabled pupil's schooling follow-up team.

Special needs assistants are not there to take the place of teaching or care staff. They are in charge of providing "general" support, solely in the school and extracurricular context, and their duties do not extend to helping the pupil in his/her home environment.

Baccalauréat - Baccalaureate

National certificate marking successful conclusion of the upper secondary level (ISCED 3) and giving right of access to higher education (ISCED 5). The certificate is awarded to candidates who have passed a series of standardised written and oral tests drawn up at national level. Three types of baccalaureate exist: general, technological and vocational. The certificate confers the title “bachelier” on successful candidates.

Brevet de technicien supérieur (BTS) - Higher Technical Certificate

A national qualification at postsecondary educational level, created in 1959 and marking the successful conclusion of two years of specialised technical studies (equivalent to 120 ECTS credits) carried out in a Higher Technical Section (STS – section de technicien supérieur). The BTS is mainly orientated towards students’ professional integration, attesting that its holders are sufficiently well qualified to fill posts as higher technicians in industrial and commercial sectors, or in the services or applied arts sectors. However, the BTS also has a place in the organisation of the BMD (Bachelor’s - Master’s - Doctorate) system, as a course of studies leading to a Bachelor’s degree, so providing students with an opportunity to continue their higher education, essentially in preparation of a vocational Bachelor’s Degree (licence professionnelle). Such continuation of higher studies is subject to selection (study of application, exam and interview). The BTS certificate may be prepared at state or private upper secondary schools (lycées), as well as at apprentice training centres (CFA – centres de formation d'apprentis), continuing vocational training centres (CFPC – centres de formation professionnelle continue) and distance learning institutions.
Caisse des allocations familiales (CAF) - Family Allowance Fund

A private-law body with local competence, responsible for payment to individuals of the various financial aids provided for by the French Social Security system under the conditions fixed by law. Among the financial aids paid out by the CAF are the back-to-school allowance (ARS – allocation de rentrée scolaire – for low-income families with at least one child undergoing compulsory education, to help them finance purchase of school supplies at the start of the school year) and the personalised housing allowance (APL – aide personnalisée au logement – to help individuals with low incomes, including students, to pay their rents).

Centres d'information et d'orientation (CIO) - Information and Guidance Centres

CIOs depend on the Department for Education and are located throughout France. Their role is to supply the public at large, young people at school and their parents in particular, with all the information that might be of use to them with regard to courses of study, vocational training, qualifications and careers; and to provide them with individual advice; to keep a close watch on and analyse any local changes in the educational system and developments in the job market, and draw up summary documents for educational teams and pupils; and to facilitate discussion and deliberation between educational system partners, parents, young people, local decision-makers and economic managers. Each CIO possesses a documentary collection on educational courses and careers, along with a self-documentation service enabling anybody to consult documents according to his/her interests and scholastic level. Each CIO has a director, psychologist/guidance counsellor, and administrative staff.

Centres de formation d’apprentis (CFA) - Apprentice Training Centres

Educational institutions providing apprentices with general, technological and practical courses complementing the training they receive in-company under an apprenticeship contract. Most CFAs are created following conclusion of agreements between régions and various bodies within them (municipalities, chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of trades, private bodies, or state educational institutions), for a renewable five-year period. The Department for Education is responsible for pedagogical monitoring of all training courses dispensed to apprentices. For further information on CFAs, please consult the Organisation of upper secondary vocational education page.

Centre national des œuvres universitaires et scolaires (CNOUS) - National Centre for University and School Affairs

A national public administrative body invested with a legal and financial personality, overseen by the Department for Higher Education and Research. The CNOUS was created by the law of 16 April 1955, its mission being to help bring about improvements in students’ living and working conditions. In order to do so, it runs a network of 28 regional centres (CROUS), 16 local centres (CLOUS) and over 40 branches providing students with local services direct. The CNOUS is responsible for the coherence and management of the network, expert assessment of projects, pooling of experience, organisation of social dialogue with staff and student representatives, allocation and optimisation of resources, and recapitulation of the results of State-financed policies across France. The CNOUS also manages foreign students with grants from the Department for Foreign Affairs, seeing to their initial intake and ensuring that regional centres take them in hand as a priority concern.
Centres régionaux des œuvres universitaires et scolaires (CROUS) - Regional Centres for University and School Affairs

National public administrative bodies under the supervision of the Department for Higher Education and Research, the centres form part of the network managed by the CNOUS, and are responsible for management of services connected with “student life”: scholarships, student accommodation, grants for foreign students, university restaurants, etc. There is a CROUS in each of France’s académies except for the three académies of Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guiana, which are served by a single centre.

Classe de sixième (6ème) - “6th-year” class

The first year of the lower secondary level (ISCED 2), i.e. first year of studies at collège. Theoretical age of pupils: 11 - 12 years old.

Classe de cinquième (5ème) - “5th-year” class

The second year of the lower secondary level (ISCED 2), i.e. second year of studies at collège. Theoretical age of pupils: 12 - 13 years old.

Classe de quatrième (4ème) - “4th-year” class

The third year of the lower secondary level (ISCED 2), i.e. third year of studies at collège. Theoretical age of pupils: 13 - 14 years old.

Classe de troisième (3ème) - “3rd-year” class

In fact, the fourth and final year of the lower secondary level (ISCED 2), i.e. final year of studies at collège. Theoretical age of pupils: 14 - 15 years old.

Classe de seconde (2nde) - “2nd-year” class

The first year of the upper secondary level (ISCED 3), i.e. first year of studies at a lycée. Theoretical age of pupils: 15 – 16 years old.

Classe de première (1ère) - “1st-year” class

The second year of the upper secondary level (ISCED 3), i.e. second year of studies at a lycée. Theoretical age of pupils: 16 – 17 years old.

Classe terminale (T) - "final year"

The third and final year of the upper secondary level (ISCED 3) – i.e. third and final year of studies at a lycée. Theoretical age of pupils: 17 – 18 years old.

Classe préparatoire aux grandes écoles (CPGE) - Class preparing for admission to the Grandes Ecoles

A one- or two-year course following the baccalauréat, usually dispensed at a lycée and preparing students for the competitive entrance examination to the Grandes Ecoles. CPGEs are highly selective, both with regard to student intake (selection upon application) and during the courses themselves, and are overseen by the Department for Education. Bridgeways exist between CPGEs and Bachelor’s
degree courses: students who do not go on to study at one of the Grandes Ecoles can enter the second or third year of a university degree course direct, after having validated one or two years respectively of CPGE studies.

Collectivité(s) territoriale(s) - Local Authority(ies)

An administrative body distinct from State administration and exercising the competences attributed to it by law over a specific area, “decentralised organisation” of the French Republic having been written into the Constitution in 2003. Three levels exist: régions, départements and communes. Each local authority is administrated by a council elected by universal suffrage: the Regional Council in régions, the General Council in départements and the Municipal Council in communes, all of which have regulatory powers in the local authority’s spheres of competence. This latter is invested with a legal personality, has the benefit of the “free administration” principle, and exercises specific competences. Its legal personality enables a local authority to take legal action and to conclude contracts. By virtue of the “free administration” principle, local authorities are financially autonomous and consequently have their own budgets, which they divide up among their various spheres of competence, such spheres being defined by law. Local authority revenues come partly from State subsidies and partly from locally levied taxes. For further information on the competences attributed to French local authorities in the sphere of education, please consult the Administration and governance of the educational system at local and/or institutional level page.

Collège

Lower secondary school (ISCED 2). The “collège unique” (single lower secondary school) to which all pupils go after leaving primary school was instituted by law in 1975. Lower secondary studies last four years (classes de 6ème, 5ème, 4ème and 3ème) and are for children between 11 and 15 years of age, following five years of education at elementary level (ISCED 1). Pupils start collège at the age of 12 at the latest, those with major learning difficulties being orientated to adapted general and vocational education programmes (SEGPA – sections d’enseignement général et professionnel adapté) organised within collèges. The education provided at collège level complies with national programmes fixed by the State, revised in 2008 in order to take account of the “Common Base of Knowledge and Skills” that all pupils should have mastered by the end of their compulsory education. In addition, a range of special programmes seek to enable “in-depth discovery of careers and training courses along with initial vocational training”.

Commune(s) - municipality(ies)

The commune (municipality) is the smallest French administrative subdivision. Along with départements and régions, communes are collectivités territoriales, and there are over 36,000 of them in France. Each municipality is administrated by a deliberating body (the Municipal Council) and an executive body (the Mayor). The Municipal Council is elected for six years by universal suffrage, by the citizens residing in the municipality. The Mayor is elected by absolute majority by the Municipal Council, for a period of six years, and exercises the specific competences attributed to municipalities by the decentralisation laws (management of primary schools, town-planning, social action, school transport, household refuse collection, etc.). For further information on the specific competences attributed to municipalities in the sphere of education, please consult the Administration and governance of the educational system at local and/or institutional level page.

Commission des droits et de l'autonomie des personnes handicapées
(CDAPH) - Commission for the Rights and Autonomy of Disabled People

Commissions created by law no.2005-102 of 11 February 2005 on “equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of people with disabilities”, and located at Departmental Disabled Persons Offices (MDPH – Maisons départementales des personnes handicapées). They take decisions bearing on all the rights of the disabled, on the basis of assessments carried out by a multidisciplinary team and the compensation plan on offer. Each commission’s spheres of competence include assessing a disabled person’s rate of incapacity, allocation of compensation, recognition of the quality of disabled workers, and decision-making on measures facilitating integration into the school system. Its members include representatives of the département, State services and public institutions, social protection bodies, union organisations, parents’ associations, with at least a third of all members being made up of representatives of disabled people and their families designated by representative associations, and a member of the Départemental Disability Advisory Council (CDCPH - Conseil départemental consultatif des personnes handicapées).

Conseiller principal d'éducation - Chief education advisor

The chief education advisor works in a collège (lower secondary schools) or lycée (upper secondary schools). S/he is responsible for ensuring school life runs smoothly and helping to place pupils in the very best conditions for learning. These responsibilities mainly cover the following three areas:

- running of the school: organisation of day-to-day communal life outside of class time, in connection with everything pertaining to lessons and learning at the school;
- collaboration with the teaching staff: working closely with teachers to ensure pupil follow-up and participation in class councils;
- educational facilitation: organisation of the way the various stakeholders liaise and take part in school life within the school.

Contrat aidé - subsidised contract

A "contrat aidé" (subsidised contract) is a work contract exempt from ordinary law, for which the employer receives aid in the form of grants upon hiring, exemption from social contributions or training grants for example. Access to these aid-based jobs is generally given to "target groups", such as people "struggling on the labour market" or young people. They can be in the market or non-market sectors (e.g. the "Single integration contract in the non-market sector" (CUI-CAE) or "Emplois d’avenir" for young people struggling to find a job). The latter contracts are usually signed with associations, local authorities or public companies.

Contrat de professionnalisation (Vocational training contract)

Contract stipulated by a company and intended for young people 16 to 25 – year – old or unemployed people over 26. It gives access to work-study training leading to vocational certification or a diploma. It is funded by the company and exonerated by the State from paying national insurance contributions. Persons with a vocational training contract enjoy the status of a salaried employee and are paid during their work-study time. Remuneration is calculated according to the person’s age and the training course level. It may be a fixed-term contract for a period between 6 and 12 months. This period may be directly extended to 24 months for unqualified persons or those receiving the revenu de solidarité active (RSA, active solidarity income), an allocation de solidarité spécifique (ASS, specific solidarity allowance) or an allocation aux adultes handicapés (AAH, disabled adult allowance).
**Contrat de sécurisation professionnelle (CSP - job-security contract)**

Established by law no. 2011-893 of 28 July 2011, it is intended for employees whose economic redundancy is planned in a company not subject to the obligation to offer redeployment leave. Lasting a maximum of 12 months, the purpose of this contract is to organise and develop a pathway back to employment, if need be through retraining or by creating or buying out a company. For the duration of this contract and excluding periods when workers are employed in a paid activity, holders of a CSP receive an allocation de sécurisation professional (ASP – job-security allowance) that is equal to 80% of the previous gross salary for employees able to justify at least one year's employment by a company.

**Département**

French administrative subdivision, a collectivité territoriale. There were 101 in all in 2011, including 5 overseas. Each of France’s régions is made up of several départements, except for the overseas régions, each of which is composed of a single département. Each département is administered by a deliberating assembly, the General Council, elected by universal suffrage for six years, by the citizens residing in the département. In its turn, the General Council elects a President, the département’s executive officer, who prepares for and implements the General Council’s decisions, manages the budget and directs the staff. Départements have wide spheres of competence, attributed to them in the 1980s by the decentralisation laws and including social action, construction and maintenance of collèges and organisation of school transport. For further information on the specific competences attributed to départements in the sphere of education, please consult the Administration and governance of the educational system at local and/or institutional level page.

**Dépense Intérieure d'Éducation (Domestic expenditure on education)**

Domestic expenditure on education includes all expenses made, on the national territory, by all economic agents, central and local government, companies and households, for educational activities: academic and extra-curricular teaching activities at all levels, activities aiming to organise the educational system (general administration, orientation, teaching documentation and education research), activities intended to encourage attendance at school (cafeterias and boarding schools, school medicine, transport) and expenses requested by schools (supplies, books, clothing). Unlike the international definition, which is used by the OECD in particular, the DIE takes adult education and training into account, and does not take Research and Development into account.

**Directeur académique des services de l’Éducation nationale - Academic Director of National Education Services**

A civil servant who represents the recteur d’académie at départemental level, implementing educational policy in compliance with national policy and académie guidelines. He/she is appointed by decree of the President of the Republic upon proposal by the Minister for Education. The Directeur Académique has general competence for organisation of state and private primary schools: management of pupils, primary-school teachers and National Education Inspectors, pedagogy and allocation of human and financial resources, operating budgets, and management of technical staff and workers. With regard to collèges, the Directeur Académique des services de l’Éducation nationale has competence for the guidance, affectation and monitoring of pupils, as well as for overall pedagogy (apart from subjects depending directly on the rectorat). He/she is not responsible for individual and collective management of staff, even though he/she represents the direct supervisory level for management personnel. As for lycées, the Directeur Académique has general competence with regard to day-to-day management of pupils (their affectation and monitoring of their schooling).
He/she may put forward proposals on the range of training opportunities available in the département. He/she represents the direct supervisory level for management personnel.

**Diplôme universitaire de technologie (DUT) - University Technical Diploma**

National higher education certificate created in 1966 and marking the successful conclusion of two years of higher education in a University Institute of Technology (IUT – institut universitaire de technologie). The DUT is orientated towards students’ professional integration, but also provides theoretical training enabling continuation of studies for obtainment of a (general or vocational) Bachelor’s degree. Teaching covers a total of 24 specialities: 15 from the production sector (including the science and engineering of materials, and mechanical engineering and production automation) and 9 from the services sector (including information – communication, and management of companies and administrations).

**DREES - Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics**

The Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation, and Statistics (Direction de la recherche, des études, de l’évaluation, et des statistiques - DREES) is a directorate of the central administration of the Departments for Health and for Social Affairs. It acts under the supervision of: The Department for the Economy and Finance; the Department for Social Affairs and Health; and the Department for Labour, Employment, Vocational Training, and Social Dialogue. Set up by the decree of 30 November 1998, the DREES has a priority mission: provide its supervisory departments, out-sourced departments, as well as establishments, bodies, and agencies that operate around them, with a better ability to observe, expertly appraise and evaluate their action and their environment. The DREES is part of the public statistics service: its aim is to provide public decision makers, the general public, and people in positions of economic and social responsibility with reliable information on, and with analyses of, populations as well as health and social policies.

**École(s) de commerce - Business school(s)**

Private higher education institution(s) specialising in business and management. Admission to such schools is by highly selective competitive examination, which candidates usually take one or two years preparing for in classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles. There are also a number of business schools for which entrance exams may be taken directly after the baccalauréat. For further information on écoles de commerce, please consult the Types of higher education institutions page.

**Écoles Supérieures du Professeurat et de l'Éducation (ESPE - Higher school for teaching and education)**

ESPEs are university components affiliated to one or several Scientific, Cultural and Professional Public Institutions (EPSCP), to a Research and Higher Education Hub (PRES) or to a future university community (COMUE). ESPEs train students that intend to go into teaching and education professions and provide training for the recruitment competitive examination. ESPEs are open to undergraduate students as well, particularly “teaching as a future career” participants and to students that wish to work in other fields of education. Moreover, ESPEs organise continuous training for primary and secondary school teachers and educational staff. Finally, they participate in the initial and continuous training of teacher-researchers staff in higher education.

**EREA (Etablissements régionaux d'enseignement adapté) - Regional adapted**
teaching institutions

EREA - regional adapted education institutions - are local public-sector schools (secondary education) designed to take charge of pupils showing very serious academic and social difficulties or disability. EREA pupils are guided by: the commission des droits et de l'autonomie des personnes handicapées (CDA - commission for the rights and autonomy of disabled persons) for pupils with a motor or sensory disability; the commission départementale d'orientation vers les enseignements adaptés du second degré (CDO - département's guidance commission towards adapted secondary education) for pupils showing serious and long-term academic difficulties.

Etablissements publics locaux d'enseignement - EPLE - local public-sector schools

Collèges and lycées are Etablissements publics locaux d'enseignement (a category of public institution controlled by the Department of Education. They were created by the decentralisation laws of 1983 and 1985. Like all public institutions, EPLEs are artificial entities that have an administrative and financial autonomy granted to them by the Decree of 30 August 1985 bearing on local public-sector schools, which organises their operation. They also have teaching and educational autonomy which is expressed in the school project, adopted by the school's board of trustees.

France Université Numérique (FUN - France digital university)

France Université Numérique is a MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) platform for French Higher Education institutions and their worldwide academic partners. Launched by the French Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research in October 2013, this initiative aims to federate universities and higher education schools projects in order to give them international exposure, and to allow everyone to benefit from high-quality as well as diverse courses wherever they are across the globe. All FUN courses are conceived by French university and higher education institution professors and their worldwide academic partners. Students and web-users may follow these courses in an interactive and collaborative manner, at their own pace.

Grande École(s) - Elite school(s)

Public or private higher education institution that recruits students through competitive examination following two years of study in classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles. The first Grandes Ecoles were set up by the State in the mid-18th century, their purpose being to supply the State with high-level technical and military staff – officers, civil engineers, etc. Others were created under the Revolution, with the aim of promoting science and technology. Courses last for a total of four to five years and represent a higher education pathway of excellence providing an alternative to university studies. For further information on Grandes Ecoles, please consult the Types of higher education institutions page.

Greta(s) (GRETA)

National Education structure(s) organising training courses for adults in most professional fields. More specifically, a GRETA is a group of state schools (collèges and lycées) that pool their skills and resources in order to provide continuing education for adults. Each GRETA makes use of its schools’ resources in terms of personnel and materials to create an educational offer adapted to the local economy. For further information on GRETAs, please consult the Institutions providing education and training for adults section.
Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches (HDR - Research-supervision accreditation)

Research-supervision accreditation sanctions recognition of the high scientific level of the candidate, of the innovation of his approach in a scientific domain, of his aptitude to manage a research strategy in a scientific or a broad technological domain and of his capacity to manage young researchers. Particularly, it allows the candidate to apply for the University Professor status (except for the legal, political, economic or management disciplines, for which a competitive examination is held each year).

Institut universitaire de technologie (IUT) - University Institute of Technology

A higher education institute dispensing short technical courses (lasting two years following the baccalauréat). IUTs are attached to universities, created within them “by decree following an opinion rendered by the National Council for Higher Education and Research” (Article 25 of law 84-52 of 26 January 1984). The principal calling of an IUT is to provide two-year courses preparing students for the University Technical Diploma (DUT – diplôme universitaire de technologie). Such courses seek to help students acquire the knowledge and skills required in order to fill technical and professional supervisory posts in various production, applied research and service sectors. IUTs also prepare students for vocational Bachelor’s degrees (licences professionnelles). Admission to IUTs is decided on the basis of an application examined by a jury appointed by the President of the university, following proposal by the Director of the IUT. The jury’s decision is based on the contents of the candidacy file, possibly complemented by an interview and/or a test.

Licence professionnelle - Vocational Bachelor’s degree

“Bac + 3” level certificate (i.e. marking successful conclusion of three years of higher education following the baccalauréat), created in November 1999. Organised in partnership with companies and professional sectors, the certificate is designed to enable professional integration of young people. Preparation of a vocational degree takes one year (two semesters) and includes between 12 and 16 weeks of placement in a company. The degree course is open to any student with a “bac + 2” diploma such as the BTS or DUT, or showing proof of having obtained 120 ECTS credits in a field of study compatible with that envisaged for the licence professionnelle.

Lycée(s)

Higher secondary school(s) (ISCED 3). Lycée courses last a total of three years and are for pupils between 15 and 18 years of age. Two types of lycée exist (the general and technological lycée and the vocational lycée) along with three educational pathways (general, technological and vocational). Children transfer to lycées following four years of collège education. Enrolment of new pupils in whichever of the three pathways is subject to decisions reached at meetings held between teachers and parent and class representatives (conseils de classe). Lycée studies are validated by a national examination and obtainment of the baccalauréat, a certificate that gives right of access to higher education. For further information on lycées, please consult the Organisation of general upper secondary education and Organisation of vocational higher secondary education pages.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC)

Created in 2008, the term definition is flexible. Nevertheless, it follows 4 criteria:

- the course should be able to enrol an unlimited number of participants;
- the course is open to all web-users regardless of origin, school-level, or any other criteria;
• the whole course can be followed online: even if there may be physical materials (ex: books), they are not essential to follow the course;
• it is a course with pedagogical objectives with one or several educational pathways, and not only online- accessible resources.

Not to be mistaken with OER (Open Educational Resources): posting filmed classes, Powerpoints or PDFs does not make the course a MOOC.

**Mission générale d’insertion - General Office for Integration**

Within the National Education system, the Mission générale d’insertion is specifically responsible for prevention of school dropout and for helping to place early school-leavers in training courses. MGI staff make their expertise – with regard to course design in particular – available to schools by acting in an advisory capacity to educational teams that have expressed a need for their services. Joint action by the MGI and the information and guidance centre network focuses on analysis of educational pathways and the risks of school dropout with a view to encouraging the rapid taking-in-hand of young people in difficulty. In this respect, MGI staff take an active part in the implementation of vigilance and monitoring systems set up within schools. In order to meet the obligation of monitoring pupils who have left school without any qualifications – a requirement made incumbent upon them by the law of 24 November 2009 – heads of schools are responsible for directing such pupils to the MGI, either during the year following dropout or during their schooling (in the event of temporary dropout or failure in examinations without any possibility of retaking the year).

**Mission locale (missions locales) - Local Offices**

Local Offices for the Professional and Social Integration of Young People (*missions locales pour l'insertion professionnelle et sociale des jeunes*, generally referred to as “missions locales”), as part of their public service mission for employment, aim to help young people from 16 to 25 years old to solve all the problems posed by their professional and social integration by providing reception, information, orientation and support services for access to initial or continuous vocational training or employment. They contribute to the development and implementation, within their area of competence, of a concerted local policy of vocational and social integration of young people.

**Pôle emploi - Job Centre.**

Pôle emploi is a State employment service agency responsible for providing assistance to all jobseekers in their search for employment, paying out unemployment benefits to those entitled to them, help companies recruit staff, and collect contributions.

**Pôle Étudiant Pour l'Innovation, le Transfert et l'Entrepreneuriat (PEPITE - Student clusters for innovation, transfer and entrepreneurship)**

Every student or recent graduate that wishes to be trained in entrepreneurship and innovation is supported and helped by a PEPITE. Open to their socio-economic ecosystems, well-established domestically, PEPITEs bring together higher education institutions (universities, business schools, and engineering schools), economic partners and local non-profits organisations. PEPITEs work in a network to inspire each other and to allow insight to develop and circulate. PEPITEs offers teacher support, as well as support from an external PEPITE network referent (entrepreneur, support or funding networks). The training-support of a

PEPITE is based on learning by doing:
• “learning by doing” (start-up weekends, team-based fictional timed projects, etc.);
• access to digital resources;
• personalised support by teachers and external, PEPITE-partners coaches.

Préfet

The Prefect represent the State at local level. Appointed by the Council of Ministers and acting as government delegates, they are direct representatives of the Prime Minister and each of his Ministers. They are responsible for looking after national interests and for overseeing the management of State services in a département or région. Their spheres of competence include representing the State at local level, ensuring the safety of people and property, delivering legal documents (identity cards, residence permits for foreigners, vehicle registration documents, etc.); ensuring respect for law and the constitutional State, administration of the territory, and economic development. There is a préfet for each département, with the préfet of a région’s largest département also acting as the préfet of the région as a whole. Following decree no.2010-146 of 16 February 2010, départemental préfets are now under the authority of regional préfets, except with regard to immigration law, the administrative police and the monitoring of the legality of acts within local authorities.

Projet(s) éducatif(s) territorial(aux) - Territorial educational project(s) (PEDT)

The territorial educational project (PEDT), mentioned in article D. 521-12 of the Code de l’éducation (French Education Code), takes an official approach enabling those local authorities so wishing to organise the range of extracurricular activities. Initiated by one particular local authority, this project concerns a partnership approach with the State departments concerned (Department for Culture and Communication, Deputy Minister for the City and Deputy Minister for the Family) and all local educational stakeholders (schools, associations, etc.).

The objective of the territorial educational project is therefore to mobilise all of a region’s resources so as to guarantee educational continuity between, on the one hand, school plans and, on the other, the activities put on for children outside of school hours.

The arrangements for putting PEDTs into practice are described in Circular no. 2013-036 of 20-03-2013.

Recteur (recteur d’académie) - Chief Education Officer

A high-ranking civil servant appointed by decree of the President of the Republic, taken in a meeting of the Council of Ministers.

Recteurs are the Minister for Education’s representatives at académie level. As such, they manage National Education policy as implemented in their académies, transmitting the Minister’s directives, seeing that they are applied, and keeping the Minister informed thereupon. At the same time, they have their own spheres of competence, overseeing application of all legislative and regulatory provisions bearing on National Education, organising national examinations and competitive exams in their académies, setting the objectives of académie policy, and directing staff. In the sphere of secondary education, they are responsible for mapping of courses, administrative and financial supervision of lycées, and setting numbers of teaching hours. They collaborate with the régions in drafting regional vocational training plans.

Their already extensive powers were further widened by Decree no.2012-16 of 5 January 2012, which made them responsible for finalising (in compliance with Department for Education orientations) the
operational and territorial organisation of the académies they direct, as well as the spheres of competence of académie services and of the départemental National Education services under their authority. Consequently, it is their job to draw up plans for pooling resources between académie services and départemental National Education services, the directors of which, traditionally holders of major responsibilities with regard to primary levels and lower secondary levels (collèges), now act as signatories on behalf of the recteur.

Recteurs d’académie also exercise competences in the realm of higher education, first of all as representatives of the Minister of Higher Education and Research, and secondly as Chancellors of the universities in their académies. Their essential task here is to coordinate higher education. In the context of implementation of State-région plan contracts, they prepare the programming of investments financed by State funding. They are responsible for provision of aid to students.

Rectorat - Local Education Office

Directorate for National Education services at académie level, responsible for implementing national educational policy throughout the académie. It is directed by a recteur, who is assisted in his/her task by the Secretary General of the académie.

Région(s)

French administrative subdivision, a collectivité territoriale. France is divided into 26 régions, including four overseas. Each région is administered by a deliberating assembly, the Regional Council, which is elected by universal suffrage, by the citizens residing in the région. The Regional Council elects its President, who manages the budget, directs staff and guides implementation of local policy. Spheres of competence attributed to a région include territorial and economic development, vocational training programmes, construction and maintenance of lycées, and rail passenger transport.

SEGPA (sections d'enseignement général et professionnel adapté) - General and professional adapted education sections

SEGPA special classes located in collège (ISCED 2 schools) and designed to take charge of pupils showing very serious academic difficulties (art. D332-7 of the Education code). SEGPA special classes fall under the responsibility of the school head. Pupils admitted in SEGPA special classes by decision of the académie director after agreement of the parents or the legal representative and confirmation by the département's guidance committee (CDO). This committee is chaired by the académie director and consists of members of the inspection team, management personnel, teachers, parents' representatives the département's technical medical consultant, the département's technical social worker, a school psychologist, a child psychiatrist, etc. If the institution or family wishes to review guidance, an annual appraisal is transferred to the commission for its opinion. The académie director then takes his/her decision.

STS (section de technicien supérieur) - Higher Technical Section

Programmes, usually dispensed in lycées, providing short professionalising higher education courses lasting two years (120 ECTS credits), successful conclusion of which is marked by obtainment of a Higher Technical Certificate (BTS - brevet de technicien supérieur). Such programmes accept students holding the baccalauréat or an equivalent qualification.

Unité d'Enseignement (UE - Teaching unit)

Typical training courses are coherent blocks of teaching units, which organise adapted developmental
content. They work towards one or several national diplomas and are dispensed by higher education institutions. Each teaching unit has a defined ECTS value at the appropriate educational level. The number of credits per teaching unit is defined on the basis of the required total workload for the student to validate the unit. The total workload takes every required activity into account and, particularly, workloads and educational content required personal study, internships, theses, projects and other activities.

**VAE (validation des acquis de l’expérience) - Validation of Learning from Experience**

A system enabling obtainment of all or part of a certification (diploma, vocationally orientated qualification or certificate of professional qualification) on the basis of paid or unpaid professional experience (shopkeeper, shopkeeper’s assistant, self-employed, farmer, craftsperson, etc.) and/or voluntary (in a union or association) experience. Such experience must be in line with the certification sought for and is validated by a jury. Certifications registered at the National Repository of Professional Certifications (RNCP - Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles) are obtainable through the VAE system.

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