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Tertiary education comprises the following form:

- Higher (academic) Education - ISCED 5 (academic)
- Higher professional education and training - ISCED 5 (professional)

Chapters [7.1](#) ^[1]-3 deal with the courses at higher education level. Higher professional education and training (PET) is described in chapter [7.4](#) ^[2]. Liechtenstein has no higher professional training institutes of its own. Students from Liechtenstein pursue such courses at institutions in Switzerland and Austria.

Higher education

Since the entry into force of the law of 25 November 1992 (Higher Education Law) relating to higher education and research institutes, the Principality of Liechtenstein has possessed a formal higher education system. Liechtenstein's higher education landscape comprises currently two recognised institutions: the [University of Liechtenstein](#) ^[3] and the two private institutions and the [Private University in the Principality of Liechtenstein](#) ^[4] (UFL). In addition, there is the [Liechtenstein Institute](#) ^[5] - a research institution.

In association with a number of Swiss cantons, Liechtenstein is part of responsible body of the [OST - Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences](#) ^[6] and also of the [University of Applied Sciences for Special Needs Education](#) ^[7] in Zurich.

All higher education institutions have to be formally approved by the government, including those based in Liechtenstein which offer distance learning (cf. [Chapter 11.2](#) ^[8], quality assurance in the higher education sector). The state is responsible for supervising the higher education institutions. It sets the legislative parameters. The law and the Ordinance on Higher Education govern the responsibilities and the status of higher education institutions; their accreditation, operation and financing, as well as their inspection and supervision and cooperation in higher education.

Other aspects determined by law include the right of self-management (staff management, curriculum development, rules of procedure for examinations and studies etc.), plus the freedom of research and teaching within the framework of the law and of ethical accountability.

With its signing of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, Liechtenstein committed itself to the common process of creating a unitary European Higher Education Area and to adopting the decisions of all subsequent conferences. In the 2004 revised version of the Higher Education Law, the measures introduced within the framework of the Bologna reforms were incorporated in the "Law of 25 November 2004 on Higher Education" (HSG). This made the measures mandatory for all public and private higher education institutions. In Liechtenstein, not least due to its small size, it was possible to implement the Bologna instruments (ECTS, cycles, Diploma Supplement) quickly. In 2011 a Higher

Education Ordinance was issued which, as a supplement to the Higher Education Law, governs the NQF, the accreditation process and the associated quality standards for institutions and study programmes, the “sur dossier” admission process, the procedure for recognising foreign qualifications, and the protection of titles and degrees. The National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Liechtenstein (NQFL-HS) entered into force in 2013. The existing higher education institutions offer a very limited palette of courses and student places which is far from matching the demand. For this reason, there are agreements with Switzerland and Austria which guarantee access to Swiss and Austrian higher education institutions for students from Liechtenstein.

Higher professional education and training

Higher or advanced Professional Education and Training (PET) covers that sector of tertiary education (Tertiary 5B) which relates specifically to professional education and is not part of the Bologna system. It is basically governed by the relevant provisions of the Liechtenstein Law on Vocational Education and Training.

Within the higher professional education area qualifications are awarded which are needed for challenging employment positions requiring specific professional expertise or management skills. Higher professional education and training is acquired either by means of a professional, a higher professional examination or via a course of study at a College of Professional Education and Training (PET College). The occupational examinations and the higher professional examinations presume prior relevant professional experience and knowledge.

The colleges of higher professional education and training offer courses oriented towards practical skills. They are designed to develop methodical, joined-up thinking, the analysis of task-related challenges and the practical application of acquired skills.

The government - or the [Office for Vocational Education and Training](#) [9], which is the operative body - is responsible for accrediting and monitoring higher professional education and training. It governs the conditions for accreditation, the learning content, the qualification procedures, certification and titles, and the procedure for accreditation. A precondition for admission to a recognised course of training at a higher professional education and training institute is relevant for professional experience - unless this is included in the training course. Including periods of practical work experience, the full-time training lasts at least two years; in-service training lasts at least three years.

Liechtenstein has no institutions of higher professional education and training of its own. However, it ensures access to relevant institutions in neighbouring countries through inter-state agreements and financing arrangements. Students from Liechtenstein mainly carry out their studies in Switzerland and Austria.

Inter-state agreements guarantee access for Liechtenstein students to appropriate study courses in Switzerland.

Liechtenstein was a signatory to the Inter-Cantonal Higher Professional Education and Training Agreement of 27 August 1998, giving it the same rights and responsibilities as the other signatories (www.edk.ch [10]). The agreement covers the higher professional education and training sector, governing access, the status of the students and the payments made to the institutions by the cantons in which the students reside (www.edk.ch [10]).

Academic year

There are no laws governing the division of the academic year. In setting the dates of their semesters, the institutions of higher education follow the Swiss or Austrian guidelines. The academic year is divided into two semesters (autumn and spring).

References:

- [Higher Education Law of 25 November 2004 \(HSG\), LGBI. 2005 Nr. 2](#) ^[11]
- [Ordinance on Higher Education of 16 August 2011 \(HSV\), LGBI. 2011 Nr. 337](#) ^[12]
- [National Qualification Framework for the Higher Education sector of the Principality of Liechtenstein - NQFL-HS](#) ^[13]
- [Law on Vocational Training \(BBG\) of 13 March 2008](#) ^[14]
- [Swissuniversities](#) ^[15]

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[3] <https://www.uni.li/en>

[4] <https://www.ufl.li/en/university/about-us/>

[5] <https://www.liechtenstein-institut.li/en>

[6] <https://www.ost.ch/en/university-of-applied-sciences/buchs-campus/>

[7] <https://www.hfh.ch/en>

[8] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/quality-assurance-higher-education-36_en

[9] <https://www.llv.li/#/12554/amt-fur-berufsbildung-und-berufsberatung>

[10] <http://www.edk.ch/dyn/14346.php>

[11] <https://www.gesetze.li/konso/pdf/2005002000?version=3>

[12] <https://www.gesetze.li/konso/pdf/2011337000?version=2>

[13] http://www.llv.li/files/sa/pdf-llv-sa-qualifikationsrahmen_fuer_den_hochschulbereich_im_fl_nqfl_hs_2013.pdf

[14] <https://www.gesetze.li/konso/pdf/2008103000?version=3>

[15] <https://www.swissuniversities.ch/>