Recognition of institutions of higher education

In Flanders, only institutions recognised by the Flemish government may award the degrees of Bachelor and Master. They consist of:

- officially registered institutions
- private registered institutions.

Registered institutions for higher education

The officially registered institutions are institutions for higher education which were recognised by the authorities prior to 2004 and which can rely on government funding for their education and research activities. These institutions are listed in the Higher Education Register (http://www.highereducation.be/home [1]).

It concerns the following institutions:

- university colleges
- research universities
- institutions for post-initial education, scientific research and scientific services:
  - Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School
  - Antwerp Management School
  - Institute for Tropical Medicine
- other officially registered institutions
  - Faculty for Protestant Theology in Brussels
  - Evangelical Theological Faculty in Heverlee

One special institution is the Transnational University Limburg (tUL). This university was founded under a treaty between the Netherlands and Flanders and is therefore a bi-national institution. In Flanders, it is an officially registered institution.

Private registered institutions for higher education

The private registered institutions for higher education are all the private institutions which have successfully completed a registration process and have been officially registered by the Flemish Government. The programme(s) offered by these institutions must pass the programmes test of the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) before the institutions can register.

Applicant institutions must also demonstrate their financial solvability and enter into a cooperation agreement with a university college or university, among other things to guarantee
that students can complete their studies at the university college or research university in question should the newly registered institution cease to operate.

Upon a successful registration the accredited Bachelor and Master programmes of the newly registered institutions are included in the Higher Education Register.

Private registered institutions in Flanders include:

- Continental Theological Seminary
- College of Europe Bruges
- Flanders Business School
- Vesalius College
- Inno.com
- University of Kent
- von KarmenInstitut for Hydrodynamics

**University Colleges and Research Universities**

**University colleges** organise the professional bachelor programmes, advanced bachelor programmes and associate degree programmes

**Research universities** organise the academic bachelor programmes, master programmes, advanced Master programmes and doctoral programmes.

**School of arts**

The decree of 13 July 2012 regulates the establishment of schools of arts at the university colleges, starting in academic year 2013-2014. These schools are responsible for organising professionally and academic arts programmes.

Within the context of a school of arts, arts-related programmes can be organised (i.e. professional bachelor programmes in interior design, landscape and garden design, landscape development, and audiovisual techniques: film, television, video and photography). They may represent up to 20% of the number of bachelor and master programmes organised within the School of Arts.

A school of arts assumes the following roles:

- organising and providing higher vocational education, higher professional and academic education in the field of study of media and visual arts or music and performing arts;
- developing and practising the arts within these fields of study;
- engaging in practice-oriented scientific research in relation to higher professional education in these fields of study;
- engaging in research in the arts, in collaboration with a university;
- providing social and scientific services, and transferring knowledge in order to boost the innovative power of the societal and economic sectors.

**Higher Maritime Institute**

The Higher Maritime Institute in Antwerp offers within the field of study of nautical sciences associate degree programmes, professional bachelor programmes, academic bachelor programmes and master
programmes.

**Associations**

An association is an official cooperation between one research university and one or more university colleges. The organisation assumes at least the following assignments:

- organising a collaboration between professional bachelor programmes and academic programmes with inclusion of the transfer options and the development of learning pathways;
- promoting the coordination of research, and more specifically of the bidirectional links between fundamental and applied research and of innovation;
- logistical coordination in general;
- preparing as a forum for the evolution towards an integrated higher education area.

In order to fulfil these roles, the institutions transfer at least the following competences to the association:

- organising an educational offer on a rational basis;
- structuring the learning pathways and improving possibilities for progression;
- organising guidance on learning pathway for students;
- harmonising internal rules with regard to personnel policy;
- drawing up a multiannual plan for educational innovation and improvement, for research and the provision of social and scientific services, for the mutual harmonisation of investments, infrastructure, and library and documentation facilities;
- issuing an advice on the provision of new bachelor or master programmes in an institution;
- issuing an advice on rationalisation plans.

There are five associations in Flanders. The Catholic University of Brussels is not affiliated with an association but does however work in close collaboration with the K. U. Leuven Association. The Transnational University Limburg (tUL) is a collaboration between Maastricht University and Hasselt University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Research University</th>
<th>Number of university colleges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association KU Leuven</td>
<td>Catholic University of Leuven</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association University and University College Antwerp</td>
<td>Antwerp University</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Ghent University</td>
<td>Ghent University</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association University – University Colleges Limburg</td>
<td>Hasselt University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels University Association</td>
<td>Free University Brussels</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cooperation agreements for associate degree programmes

In order to offer associate degree programmes, university colleges must enter in a cooperation agreement with a secondary school (for the associate degree programme for nursing) or an Adult Education Centre (for the remaining associate degree programmes).

In addition, these cooperation agreements for the organisation of associate degree programmes may include:

- one or more education institutions
- one or more public providers of professional programmes for adults
- one or more sector of the profession for which the programme prepares
- companies or organisations

The current system of associate degree programmes is subject of a reform (see chapter 14).

Source URL: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/types-higher-education-institutions-3_en

Links