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The [Law on Higher Education and Research](#) <sup>[1]</sup> states that the mission of higher education and research is to help ensure the country's public, cultural and economic prosperity, provide support and impetus for a full life of every citizen of Lithuania, and satisfy the natural thirst for knowledge.

The studies provided by Lithuanian higher education institutions are conducted on the basis of study programmes conferring degree and non-degree study programmes. There are two types of study programmes: university and college study programmes. Studies can be of continual or extended forms. On completion of either form of studies, graduates obtain an equivalent education.

Since 1 January 2019, higher education studies have been broken down into four cycles:

- 1) short cycle - the acquisition of Lithuania qualification framework Level V qualification;
- 2) the first cycle – Professional Bachelor's and Bachelor's level;
- 3) the second cycle – Master's level;
- 4) the third cycle – Doctoral level.

Colleges together with VET schools can provide short-cycle studies. The first cycle Professional Bachelor's study programmes may be delivered by colleges, whereas the first cycle Bachelor's programmes may be offered by universities. Study programmes conferring a second cycle degree may be conducted by universities. Doctoral studies may be delivered at universities or universities in conjunction with research institutes.

University degree conferring study programmes can be integrated, combining the first and second cycles of studies.

Study programmes aimed at retraining that do not award a degree, may be offered by universities and colleges in the manner prescribed by legal acts.

According to the Lithuanian Classification of Education, short-cycle studies belong to level 5. Bachelor studies (both university and non-university) belong to level 6, Master studies to level 7, and Doctoral studies to level 8 (according to ISCED 2011).

The activities of the Lithuanian higher education system are regulated by the Law on Higher Education and Research recast 1 January 2017.

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[1] [http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc\\_l?p\\_id=474734&p\\_tr2=2](http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=474734&p_tr2=2)