Colleges

Colleges of social work operate in accordance with the legislation on school education and are part of the school education system. First colleges of social work were established in 2005. Colleges provide training for the occupation of social worker. They provide full-time and part-time 3-year (6-semester) programmes which lead to a diploma. In the academic year 2017/2018, there were 4 colleges of social work, with 234 students enrolled.

Public colleges are established and administered by the local government body at the province (województwo) level. The establishment of a public college requires a positive opinion to be given by the Minister of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

Each college is supervised academically by a higher education institution (HEI) which offers programmes leading to a Master's degree (magister) in the areas of study and specialism areas corresponding to the specialism area in a given college. Detailed arrangements for such academic supervision should be laid down in an agreement concluded between the body administering a college and an HEI. Moreover, pedagogical supervision is exercised by the Head of the Regional Education Authorities (kurator oświaty) in a given province (województwo).

Higher education institutions

There are two main types of HEIs in Poland: university-type HEIs (uczelnia akademicka) and non-university HEIs (uczelnia zawodowa).

A university-type HEI is an institution which conducts research activity and has the A+, A or B+ research rating in at least 1 discipline of science or arts. (Ratings are awarded based on an external evaluation of the quality of research.) It may provide first-cycle programmes leading to a Bachelor's degree (licencjat or inżynier) (ISCED 6), second-cycle or long-cycle programmes leading to a Master's degree (magister) (ISCED 7), and third-cycle (doctoral) programmes (ISCED 8).

A non-university HEI is an institution which offers programmes responding to the needs of the socio-economic environment and does not fulfil the criteria for a university-type HEI. It provides first-cycle programmes and may also provide second- and long-cycle programmes. This type of institutions also includes HEIs earlier classified as schools of higher professional education (wyższa szkoła zawodowa) which are authorised to provide only first-cycle programmes. Non-university HEIs offer only practically oriented programmes.

Additionally, the Law on Higher Education and Science lays down requirements concerning names of HEIs. The term ‘academy’ is reserved for university-type HEIs; the term ‘technical university’ / ‘university of technology’ for university-type HEIs which have the A+, A or B+ research rating in at
least 2 disciplines of engineering and technology sciences; and the term ‘university’ for university-
type HEIs which have the A+, A or B+ research rating in at least 6 or disciplines of sciences or arts
(hereafter referred to as disciplines) included in at least 3 fields of science or arts (hereafter referred
to as fields).

In order to be authorised to provide first-, second- and/or long-cycle programmes, both university-
type and non-university HEIs are required to comply with identical requirements set out in the
Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 27 September 2018 on degree
programmes.

The Regulation lays down:

1. requirements to be fulfilled by a curriculum;
2. the range of information to be provided in an application for a permit to establish a programme;
3. areas of study in which long-cycle programmes are offered;
4. requirements for courses / classes delivered using distance learning methods and techniques,
   and the maximum number of ECTS credits to be awarded for such courses / classes;
5. requirements for documentation on student progression, identity cards and diplomas.

Pursuant to the Regulation, a curriculum specifies, among other things, the form or mode of study;
number of semesters and ECTS credits necessary to complete each semester, and the degree to be
awarded to graduates. Additionally, it identifies classes / courses (groups of classes or courses),
regardless of the form or mode in which they are conducted, together with the related learning
outcomes (LOs) and curricular contents for achieving the LOs; the total number of class hours;
methods for verification and assessment of the LOs achieved by students during the entire
programme; and the total number of ECTS credits which students should earn as part of classes /
activities directly involving teachers. Furthermore, a curriculum specifies the length and
arrangements for practical placements and the number of ECTS credits that students are required to
earn for such placements. As a rule, a curriculum should enable students to choose classes (courses)
which are allocated at least 30% of the total number of ECTS credits.

Curricula should be developed in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher
Education of 14 November 2018 on the second-level descriptors of learning outcomes for
qualifications at Levels 6 to 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework. The Regulation provides second-
level descriptors of learning outcomes, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and social competences,
for qualifications acquired within the higher education and science system, after gaining a full
qualification at Level 4.

First-, second- and long-cycle programmes are divided into practically and academically oriented
programmes (referred to as practical and general academic orientations / profiles), and this is
reflected in curriculum design. A curriculum for a practically oriented programme includes classes /
courses developing practical skills which represent more than 50% of the total number of ECTS
credits. In a curriculum for an academically oriented programme, more than 50% of the total number
of ECTS credits are allocated to classes / courses related to an HEI’s research activities in (a)
discipline(s) to which a given area of study is assigned.

The Law on Higher Education and Science identifies the following specific types of HEIs:

- a military HEI: a public HEI supervised by the Minister of National Defence;
- a government service HEI: a public HEI supervised by the minister responsible for internal
  affairs;
- an HEI of art studies: a public HEI supervised by the minister responsible for culture and
A university-type HEI which has the A+ or A research rating in at least 4 disciplines which are part of at least 2 fields may provide **individualised inter-field programmes** which lead to a diploma / degree in more than one area of study.

An HEI may provide a joint programme together with another HEI, an **institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences**, a research institute, an international institute or a foreign HEI or research institution. Collaboration arrangements are laid down in a written agreement. A joint
programme graduate may receive a joint diploma / degree.

An HEI may offer a **dual programme**, which is a practically oriented degree programme delivered jointly with an employer. Organisational arrangements for such a programme are laid down in a written agreement.

Classes / courses can be delivered using **distance learning methods and techniques** if their ECTS credit value is not higher than 50% of the total ECTS value of the entire programme. Additionally, HEIs should meet all of the following requirements:

- teaching staff are trained to deliver distance learning classes / courses, and delivery is monitored by the HEI on an ongoing basis;
- access to ICT facilities and software enables synchronous and asynchronous interaction between students and teachers;
- teaching and learning materials in an electronic format are provided;
- students have access to face-to-face tutorials / guidance sessions with academic staff and other staff conducting classes in the main campus or a branch campus of the HEI;
- learning outcomes achieved by students are verified through ongoing monitoring of the progress made in learning, while exams and other forms of assessment at the end of a course / group of classes are conducted in the main campus or a branch campus of the HEI;
- students have been trained to participate in such classes / courses.

For classes / activities developing practical skills, distance learning methods and techniques can be used only as additional or supporting ones.

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