Higher education is integrated by:

- university education
- advanced vocational training
- specialised education: advanced artistic education, plastic arts and design professional studies and advanced sports education.

Advanced vocational training: post-compulsory non-university education with a clear professional orientation.

University education: with an academic orientation and longer than non-university higher education.

**2019**

**New Bachelor, Master and PhD degrees**

The Council of Ministers has approved a total of 40 degrees, 71 master's degrees and 7 new doctoral programmes at different universities in the country.


**Remuneration regime of the civil servant research staff of the scientific bodies and creation of the Evaluation Commission for the Performance of the Scientific-Technological Activity**

The Council of Ministers has approved a Royal Decree (RD) regulating the remuneration regime for the civil servant research staff of the scientific bodies of the Public Research Agencies (Research Professors of Public Research Agencies, Scientific Researchers of Public Research Agencies and Senior Scientists Public Research Agencies).

The RD regulates an evaluation system that will be guided by criteria of transparency, objectivity, impartiality and non-discrimination. The regulations aim to stimulate and recognize excellence, quality and continuous improvement in the professional activities of the research staff at the service of Public Research Agencies (PIAs).

The Evaluation Commission for the Performance of the Scientific-Technological Activity has been set up. It will be responsible for the assessment of the merits of the research staff affected by this provision. The assessment process will be developed throughout 2019 and will be resolved during the first half of 2020.

More information on [Remuneration regime of official research staff](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice).
Urgent measures in the field of Science, Technology, Innovation and University education

Scientific and technological research makes it possible to create an economic, social, cultural and institutional environment favourable to knowledge, innovation and the development of competitiveness. For this reason, the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities has taken urgent measures so that the bodies and entities that form part of the Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation System can more effectively meet their goal.

The measures adopted have three objectives:

- more effective public and private investment
- encouraging the incorporation of talent into the entities that form part of the Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation System, halting the trend of recent years in which many researchers had to migrate or leave their scientific careers
- progressively streamlining the management of the Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation System, providing it with the best procedural instruments so that researchers’ careers can be fully dedicated to their own work, reducing excessive administrative burdens that can sometimes be counterproductive.

And its most relevant aspects are, among others, the following:

- establishment of measures relating to the internal control of the management of the public research bodies of the General State Administration, with the aim of assisting in their purpose of contributing to the generation, dissemination and transfer of knowledge to solve the essential problems of society
- adoption of financial support measures for actions in science and technology parks that have a viability plan and can prove that they are in a financial situation that prevents them from meeting the corresponding payment obligations
- adoption of measures to enable the best possible reimbursement of the so-called "income-university loans", granted to help finance university master's and doctoral studies
- enabling public administrations, public bodies, public universities and other public sector entities considered agents of execution of the Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation System to enter into contracts for the execution of public plans and programmes for scientific and technical research or innovation, financed through annual budgetary allocations resulting from finalist external revenues.

New statute for predoctoral research staff in training

As proposed by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, the working conditions of predoctoral researchers have been regulated. A specific contractual modality is foreseen with a maximum duration of four years that will suppose a fundamental change in the conception of the research personnel in training.

With the approval of the new statute:

- any period of scholarship is eliminated and the researchers in training are hired from the beginning of their participation in research work or projects leading to the preparation and defense of their doctoral thesis
- the condition of predoctoral research staff in training is defined as well as the object of this contract, which will be the simultaneous performance of research tasks in a specific and novel project and of activities forming part of the doctoral programme leading to the acquisition of
skills and abilities necessary to obtain the official university doctoral degree.

2018

New specific criteria approved for the evaluation of any scientific activity

The evaluation of scientific activity is a regulated process with a series of quality criteria, which guarantees its validity and reliability. The application of these criteria is carried out by specialist advisory committees and experts, who interpret and adjust them on a case-by-case basis, according to their technical capacity.

The National Commission for the Evaluation of Research Activity (Comisión Nacional Evaluadora de la Actividad Investigadora - CNEAI) is the competent body in charge of carrying out evaluations of scientific activity, in addition to specifying and qualifying for each call the application of the aforementioned criteria, seeking greater clarity in the formulation of said criteria and greater objectivity in the references and indications of quality.

In November 2018, the CNEAI published the specific criteria for each of the fields of evaluation, gathering the experience of recent years.


Reform of the system of grants and financial assistance

The Minister of Education and Vocational Training and the Minister of Science, Innovation and Universities have signed an agreement to initiate the reform of the system of grants and financial assistance. The aim is to ensure equal opportunities to access education, regardless of the economic and personal circumstances of each student.

The first step of the reform has been the reactivation of the Observatory for Grants, Financial Assistance and Academic Performance, whose function is to inform and advise on grants and academic performance. So far, the focus had been on university education, but, with time, it will be extended to pre-university education with the participation of the State School Council.

Representatives of social partners, students, the Autonomous Communities and universities participate in the Observartory, which will be co-chaired by both Ministers.

For more information, see Observatory for Grants, Financial Assistance and Academic Performance [6].

Expenditure on education policy in 2018

The State Budget for 2018 has been approved in July 2018.

The expenditure on education policy in 2018 amounts to EUR 2 582 million, a 2.3% more as compared to 2017.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities, concentrate available financial resources on programmes which are strategic for the education system:

1. grants and financial support budget programme (EUR 1 575 million). This programme finances, among other actions, general grants and financial support (EUR 1 450 million),
including those for university levels, different compensations for universities and the development of the Erasmus+ programme. The programme of excellence grants (EUR 20 million), whose aim is to cover the needs and tuition of students with excellent academic performance, should be emphasised within this programme.

2. university education budget programme (EUR 129 million). It includes the financing of the National University of Distance Education (UNED) and the Menéndez Pelayo International University (UIMP), the financing of the university institutions and schools in Ceuta and Melilla and the functioning of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA).

Final evaluation of Bachillerato in order to have access to university education

The following decisions have been made for their implementation during the 2017/18 academic year, bearing in mind that it will be solely aimed at those students who wish to gain access to official university studies:

- subjects evaluated:
  - compulsory:
    - general subjects from the set of core subjects
    - general subjects from the set of core subjects according to the branch chosen.
  - optional, for those who want to improve their grade:
    - at least 2 options from the set of core subjects of the 2nd year. In addition, in their admission procedures, universities may take into account the grade obtained in the tests evaluating one/some of the general subjects from the set of core subjects according to branch
    - Second Foreign Language, different from the one from the set of core subjects. In their admission procedures, universities may take into account the grade obtained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General subjects from the set of core subjects</th>
<th>Compulsory subjects</th>
<th>Optional subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish History, Spanish Language and Literature II, First Foreign Language II, Co-Official Language and Literature (in those Autonomous Communities with a co-official language)</td>
<td>Sciences Mathematics II</td>
<td>Sciences Biology, Technical Drawing II, Physics, Geology, Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities Latin II</td>
<td>Humanities and Social Sciences Mathematics Applied to Social Sciences II</td>
<td>Second Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Arts Foundations of Art II</td>
<td>Arts Performing Arts, Audiovisual Culture II, Design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Drawn up by Eurydice Spain-Spanish Network for Information on Education (National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport) on the basis of current regulations.

- length of tests:
  - one test for each subject. Each test has between 2 and 15 questions
  - each test lasts 90 minutes. There is a break between consecutive tests of, at least, 30 minutes, which is not part of the extension of the time granted to students with special educational needs who may have been prescribed such measure
  - the whole evaluation has a maximum duration of 4 days. The education authorities with a
co-official language may establish a maximum duration of 5 days.

- tests and typology of questions:
  - tests are contextualised within environments close to students’ life: personal, family, school and social situations, apart from scientific and humanistic environments
  - each test must include open and semi-structured questions. multiple choice questions might be used, provided that the weight of open and semi-structured questions in each test is at least 50%.

- content of the tests:
  - at least 70% of the grade for each test must be obtained from the evaluation of learning standards. The education authorities may complete the remaining 30% with the standards established in the rest of the curriculum of the stage
  - at least one learning standard for each block of content must be used when developing the test.

- dates for ordinary examination session (in June) and extraordinary examination sessions (in July and September)

- grade for access to university education:
  - 40% of the grade for the evaluation of Bachillerato
  - 60% of the final grade for the stage
  - the final grade must be 5 points or above in order to have access to university education.

- grade for the evaluation of Bachillerato: arithmetic mean of the grades obtained in each test evaluating the general subjects from the set of core subjects and, where appropriate, the subject of Co-Official Language and Literature. It is expressed on a scale from 0 to 10 to three decimal places and rounded to the nearest one-thousandth. It must be 4 points or above to be taken into account.

- general characteristics:
  - it is valid for an unlimited period
  - the marks for the tests taken in order to improve the grade for admission are valid during the following two academic years. Both validity periods apply to tests taken in the 2016/17 academic year
  - students may sit successive examination sessions in order to improve the grade obtained in any of the tests. The grade obtained in the new examination session is taken into account if it is higher than the previous one
  - students may request a review of the grades obtained
  - the organisation of tests is the responsibility of the education authorities in collaboration with universities. Each authority limits the scope of the collaboration of their universities in the carrying out of the tests
  - the education authorities may administer context questionnaires, which are anonymous.

2017

Public employment offer for university teachers

Since April, a new replacement rate of up to 100% has been fixed for the bodies of Senior Professors, Senior Lecturers and Contract Lecturers (holding a PhD).

The final replacement rate for each body is set by the relevant public administration, which has to prove that the number of places offered does not affect compliance with the objectives of budgetary stability established for such administration.
Lower fees for Master's degrees which do not entitle to perform a professional activity

The Draft State Budget for 2017 foresees a lowering of the price range students pay for Master's degrees which do not entitle to perform a professional activity, and those price ranges may match the ones of both Master's degrees which do entitle to perform a professional activity and Bachelor degrees. So far, students of Master’s degrees which do not entitle to perform a professional activity pay fees of between 40-50%.

With this measure, the Autonomous Communities are going to be able to reduce this price range and place it between 15-50%, so that the price of Master’s degrees which do not entitle to perform a professional activity could match that of Master’s degrees which do entitle to perform a professional activity and Bachelor degrees (both having a price range of between 15-25%).

Replacement rate of Contract Lecturers (holding a PhD)

At the Council of Universities meeting of May, the Minister announced to the rectors his intention to submit a partial amendment to the State Budget for 2017 so that the positions of Contract Lecturers (holding a PhD) that remain vacant in civil service examinations for the body of Senior Lecturers can be offered and are not considered in the replacement rate.

Organisation of official Bachelor degrees

With the new organisation, universities may complement the number of Bachelor credits with the number of Master’s credits provided that the Bachelor degree has less than 240 credits.

The agreement concluded enables to know the teaching load of Bachelor degrees. Those related to education are grouped into:

1. degrees with study programmes that are regulated by the corresponding sectoral legislation, including:
   - official Bachelor degrees which entitle to pursue the profession of Pre-Primary Education School Teacher
   - degrees in Primary Education School Teacher.

2. degrees whose study programmes have a teaching load of 240 ECTS credits:
   - official Bachelor degrees in Pedagogy, Psychology and Educational Psychology.

In the case of the study programmes that are not included in the new organisation, universities are responsible for establishing their teaching load in ECTS credits. In any case, university studies that contain the term ‘engineering’ must have a teaching load of 240 ECTS credits.
Expenditure on education policy in 2017

The State Budget for 2017 has been approved in June 2017.

The expenditure on education policy in 2017 amounts to EUR 2 524 million, a 1.6% more as compared to 2016.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities, concentrates available financial resources on programmes which are strategic for the education system:

1. **grants and financial support** budget programme *(EUR 1 523 million)*: this programme finances, among other actions, general grants and financial support for university levels, calls for the development of the Erasmus+ Programme and different compensations for universities

2. **university education** budget programme *(EUR 124 million)*.

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**Source URL:** https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/national-reforms-higher-education-70_en

**Links**