

Higher Education Qualification Levels

The structure of higher education of Ukraine **before the adoption and implementation of the new version of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" of 2014** included educational levels (incomplete higher education, basic higher education, complete higher education) and qualification levels (Junior Specialist, Bachelor, Specialist, and Master), and scientific degrees:

Junior Specialist (incomplete higher education). The standard schooling time under the junior specialist's program on the basis of a complete general secondary education is 2–3 years, and on the basis of a basic general secondary education while at the same time obtaining a complete general secondary education it is 3–4 years. Graduates who successfully pass state examinations receive a *junior specialist's diploma* that gives them the right to engage in professional activities and apply for enrollment in the bachelor's degree program. *The last admission to the junior specialist's programs was in 2019.*

Bachelor (basic higher education). Bachelors are prepared on the basis of a complete general secondary education. The standard schooling time is usually 3–4 years or two-three years less if the study proceeds from the qualification level of a junior specialist in the same specialization area. Graduates who successfully pass state examinations receive a *bachelor's diploma* that gives them the right to engage in professional activities and apply for enrollment in a specialist's or master's degree program.

Specialist (complete higher education). The standard schooling time under the specialist's degree program on the basis of a bachelor's qualification is 1–1.5 years; and schooling time for a medical or veterinary specialist's degree ranges from 5 to 6 years on the basis of a complete general secondary education. Graduates who successfully pass state examinations and publicly defend their thesis receive a *specialist's diploma* that gives them the right to engage in professional activities and apply for enrollment in a master's degree program or in a post-graduate department. *The last admission to the specialist's programs was in 2016.*

Master (complete higher education). The master's qualification can be obtained after the bachelor's or specialist's qualification. To obtain a master's degree, the student normally needs to study for 1-2 years. Graduates need to pass state examinations, which includes public defense of their master's thesis. Those who successfully pass state examinations receive a *master's diploma* that gives them the right to engage in professional activities and apply for enrollment in the post-graduate department.

Scientific Degrees:

Candidate of Sciences is an academic degree that can be earned by the holder of a master's or specialist's qualification and, usually, studies at the post-graduate department of an institution of higher learning or a research establishment. An alternative way of obtaining this degree is bypassing the post-graduate department and studying under the guidance of a thesis supervisor who works at the educational institution. This approach was practiced in the Soviet Union for those who were not able to study at the post-graduate department. Earning the degree of Candidate of Sciences means the successful public defense of a relevant dissertation. The standard time of study in the post-graduate department is 3 years (daytime) or 4 years (extramural). *The last admission to the candidate of sciences' programs was in 2015.*

Doctor of Sciences is the highest academic degree available for holders of the degree of Candidate of Sciences who study under a doctoral program (or use an alternative way in their pursuit of this degree) at a higher educational institution or a research establishment. Earning the degree of Doctor of Sciences means conducting original research, obtaining significant innovative scientific results that promise practical application, publishing them in the scientific press and publicly and successfully defending a relevant dissertation. The time of study under the doctoral program on general terms does not exceed 3 years. Після 30.03.2021 ступінь Доктора наук не входить в систему вищої освіти України.

After 30.03.2021 Doctor of Sciences' degree is not included in the system of higher education of Ukraine. The awarding of the Doctor of Sciences' degree is regulated by the [Law on Scientific and Scientific-technical Activities](#)