

### 8.1 Types of institutions

UNIVERSITIES (*sveučilišta*) are institutions of higher education which offer university study programmes in at least two research areas and/or art areas covering a number of disciplines. Exceptionally, universities may also offer vocational study programmes. Universities may be comprised of constituent units which are legal entities and which are called FACULTIES (*fakulteti*) or ART ACADEMIES (*umjetničke akademije*). Universities and their constituent units offer study programmes, and engage in research and other professional and art-related work.

POLYTECHNICS (*veleučilišta*) and SCHOOLS OF VOCATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION (*visoke škole*) are higher education institutions which offer vocational study programmes. The two types of institution differ in the range of programmes they offer: polytechnics are institutions of vocational higher education which offer vocational study programmes in three or more disciplines. Their mission is to offer career-oriented programmes, which often include practical work experience.

Public universities are established by law; public polytechnics and schools of vocational higher education are established by a decree of the Croatian Government; private higher education institutions are established by the founder.

### 8.2 Types of programmes

UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMMES prepare students for work in research and higher education institutions, as well as in private and public sectors. Students in these programmes receive an education that enables them to develop and use scholarly and professional knowledge at the appropriate level.

VOCATIONAL STUDY PROGRAMMES provide students with a career-ready level of knowledge, skills and competences required for work in specific vocations.

### 8.3 Accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes

Higher education institutions (HEIs) and their study programmes are subject to an evaluation process in order to get accreditation. The request for accreditation is submitted to the Ministry in charge of higher education, which then requests an evaluation from the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). The NCHE appoints an expert committee which, in cooperation with the Agency for Science and Higher Education, performs the evaluation and submits a report. A draft report is then sent to the HEI for feedback and clarifications. The National Council makes a final evaluation of the proposed study programme or of the higher education institution and recommends to the minister issuance or denial of accreditation.

### 8.4 Organisation of university study programmes

Since 2005, all study programmes in Croatia measure student work load in ECTS credits. A student is typically required to earn 60 ECTS credits in one academic year.

UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES – FIRST CYCLE (*prediplomski sveučilišni studij*) normally take three years in which students are required to earn 180 ECTS credits. A minority of undergraduate university programmes in Croatia are offered as four-year programmes in which students are required to earn 240 ECTS credits. Upon completion students are awarded a diploma and the academic degree of University Bachelor (*sveučilišni prvostupnik*) with an indication of the field of study. Students graduating in technical sciences receive the academic degree of University Bachelor in Engineering (*sveučilišni prvostupnik inženjer*) with an indication of the field of study.

Students holding a first cycle university degree can apply for admission to university graduate programmes or vocational specialist graduate programmes, or enter the workforce.

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAMMES – SECOND CYCLE (*diplomski sveučilišni studij*) normally take two years in which students are required to earn 120 ECTS credits. A minority of graduate programmes in Croatia are offered as one-year programmes in which students are required to earn 60 ECTS credits. The total number of credits earned in the first and second cycle programmes must be at least 300. Upon completion students are awarded a diploma and the academic degree of Master of (magistar struke) with an indication of the field of study. Students graduating in technical sciences receive the academic degree of Master in Engineering (*magistar inženjer*) with an indication of the field of study.

Students holding a second cycle university degree can continue their studies in university postgraduate programmes or enter the workforce.

INTEGRATED UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE UNIVERSITY PROGRAMMES – FIRST AND SECOND CYCLES (*integrirani prediplomski i diplomski sveučilišni studij*) normally take five or six years in which students are required to earn 300 or 360 ECTS credits respectively. Upon completion students are awarded a diploma and the academic degree of Master of (magistar struke) with an indication of the field of study. Upon completion of integrated first and second cycle programmes in medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine students receive the academic degree of Doctor (doktor struke) with an indication of the field of study (e.g. Doctor of Medicine, etc.).

Students with this degree can continue their studies in university postgraduate programmes or enter the workforce.

UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES – THIRD CYCLE (*poslijediplomski sveučilišni studij*) normally take three years. Upon completion students are awarded a diploma and the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (or Doctor scientarum), or Doctor of Fine Art (doktor znanosti or doktor umjetnosti), with an indication of the academic field or art form.

UNIVERSITY SPECIALIST POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES (*poslijediplomski sveučilišni specijalistički studij*) normally take one to two years. Upon completion students receive a diploma and the academic degree of University Specialist (*sveučilišni specijalist*) with an indication of the field of study.

### Organisation of vocational study programmes

SHORT CYCLE VOCATIONAL STUDY PROGRAMMES (*stručni studij*) normally take two or two-and-a-half years, in which students are required to earn between 120 and 150 ECTS credits respectively. Upon completion students receive a diploma (*svjedodžba*) and a Short-Cycle Vocational Degree (*stručni pristupnik*) with an indication of the field of study.

Students holding a short-cycle vocational degree can apply for admission to higher levels of vocational study programmes, or enter the workforce.

VOCATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES – FIRST CYCLE (*stručni prediplomski studij*) normally take three years in which students are required to earn 180 ECTS credits. A minority of vocational programmes in Croatia are offered as four-year programmes in which students are required to earn 240 ECTS credits. Upon completion students are awarded a diploma and the vocational degree of Vocational Bachelor (*stručni prvostupnik*) with an indication of the field of study. Students graduating in technical sciences receive the vocational degree of Vocational Bachelor in Engineering (*stručni prvostupnik inženjer*) with an indication of the field of study.

Students holding a first cycle vocational degree can apply for admission to vocational specialist graduate programmes, or to second cycle university graduate programmes under conditions determined by the university, or to enter the workforce.

VOCATIONAL SPECIALIST GRADUATE PROGRAMMES – SECOND CYCLE (*stručni diplomski specijalistički studij*) normally take two years in which students are required to earn 120 ECTS credits. A minority of vocational specialist graduate programmes in Croatia are offered as one-year programmes in which students are required to earn 60 ECTS credits. The total number of credits earned in first and second cycle programmes must be at least 300. Upon completion of vocational specialist graduate programmes students are awarded a diploma and the vocational degree of Vocational Specialist (*stručni specijalist*) with an indication of the field of study. Students graduating in technical sciences receive the vocational degree of Vocational Specialist in Engineering (*stručni specijalist inženjer*) with an indication of the field of study, and students graduating in the fields of medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine receive a diploma vocational degree (*diplomirani*) with an indication of the field of study. Students holding a second cycle vocational degree can enter the workforce, or they can also apply, under conditions determined by universities, for transfer to a university diploma study programme (with the proviso of taking differential exams) and admission to a university postgraduate programme.

### Educational requirements for admission into study programmes

Higher education institutions independently set the minimum educational requirements for admission to university undergraduate programmes and first cycle vocational programmes. Normally, the minimum requirement for admission to university undergraduate programmes is completion of a four-year secondary school; the minimum requirement for enrolment into first cycle vocational programmes is completion of a three- or four-year secondary school.

The admissions process to first cycle study programmes at Croatian universities is normally based on secondary school grades and an entrance examination. Each constituent unit of a university usually carries out its own entrance examination. The admissions process to first cycle programmes at polytechnics and schools of vocational higher education is also based on secondary school grades and sometimes an entrance examination, but the use of the latter is less common than in the case of universities.

The minimum educational requirement for enrolment in university graduate programmes is completion of a university undergraduate programme. Universities can allow students with a higher education vocational degree to enrol in university graduate programmes under specially defined requirements.

The minimum educational requirement for enrolment in vocational specialist graduate programmes is completion of a university undergraduate programme or a vocational programme (first cycle). The minimum educational requirement for enrolment in university postgraduate programmes is completion of a specific graduate programme. Normally, the requirement for enrolment in a university postgraduate programme is completion of a university graduate programme. Students who have completed pre-Bologna undergraduate programmes lasting at least four academic years (*sveučilišni dodiplomski studij*) can apply for admission to Bologna postgraduate programmes as well.

### Grading scale

The Croatian national grading scale consists of five grades with numerical equivalents: izvrstan – 5 (excellent); vrlo dobar – 4 (very good); dobar – 3 (good); dovoljan – 2 (sufficient); nedovoljan – 1 (fail). The minimum passing grade is 2 (sufficient).

