

STUDYING AT THE UPVD

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE FRENCH HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

THE LICENCE-MASTERS-DOCTORATE STRUCTURE

Within the framework of the drive to standardise higher education throughout Europe, the French university system is now structured around three national qualifications: the Licence, the Masters and the Doctorate. This new "LMD" structure gives European students greater mobility – both between disciplines and between professional and general courses.

LEVELS OF STUDY

The licence

In France, students study for the national licence diploma over six semesters. It has replaced the former diplôme d'études universitaires générales (or general university studies diploma) which was obtained after two years, followed by one year studying for the licence (it is awarded after 3 years of post-baccalaureate study).

Master's

After the licence, students can study for a master's diploma which marks the successful completion of basic or continuing course pathways. Students study for it over four semesters (it is awarded after 5 years of post-baccalaureate study).

Doctorate

Once they have completed the Master's programme, students can register for a doctorate. All students who have obtained Master's degrees can register for a doctoral thesis – whether they have a Master's diploma, an engineering qualification or a diploma from an advanced business school that is equivalent to a Master's degree.

As a general rule, it takes three years to study for a doctorate (they are awarded after 8 years of post-baccalaureate study).

The semester as a unit

In France, the university year is divided into two semesters as follows:

- first semester: September to January
- second semester: February to June

Transferable credits which can be accumulated

Thirty credits are given for each semester of study. These are ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits which can be transferred within many European countries: at licence level, 180 credits are awarded for 6 duly completed semesters; at master's level, 120 credits are awarded for 4 duly completed semesters (a total of 300 credits including those awarded at licence level).

As provided for in their learning agreements, students can acquire credits in further education establishments outside France. Credits can also be transferred between pathways (subject to the authorisation of the teaching staff). Now that the university system is structured around credits, it is more flexible and easier to customise than it was before. It also enables students to discover different disciplines, the only proviso being that their pathways remain coherent.

REGISTRATION FEES

ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-2015:

Licence

The total cost is determined every year by the ministry: €189.10 to register for a licence. Students must also, when appropriate, **make social security** contributions (€215). Students who have been awarded grants are exempt from having to pay university fees. They are only required to pay €5.10 towards preventive medicine. University fees are reviewed every year.

Master's

The total cost is determined every year by the ministry: €261.10 to register for a licence. Students must also, when appropriate, **make social security** contributions (€215). Students who have been awarded grants are exempt from having to pay university fees. They are only required to pay €5.10 towards preventive medicine.

Doctorate

The total cost is determined every year by the ministry: €396.10 to register for a licence. Students must also, when appropriate, **make social security** contributions (€215).

REGISTRATION CRITERIA

To register, you must have a level of at least B2 (in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). If you meet these requirements, you may register [via the French language section of this website](#)

If you have a level of B1 or below in French for a humanities-based subject, you may register with the [University Centre for French studies](#) in order to take a language course.

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