

REPORT

Naric study visit to the Polish Naric – Bureau for Academic Recognition and International Exchange

Date: 5-7 May 2004

Participants:

Nina Kowalewska – Swedish Naric, Hogskoleverket, National Agency for Higher Education;

Tuula Kuosmanen - Swedish Naric, Hogskoleverket, National Agency for Higher Education;

Anna – Karin Malla - Swedish Naric, Hogskoleverket, National Agency for Higher Education;

Rikke Bartholdy – Danish Naric, Danish Centre for Assessment of Foreign Qualifications.

Programme:

5th May

14.00- Secondary education and maturity exams in Poland, Central Examination Commission, ul. Łucka 11, meeting with Ms Maria Mazur, Head of the Section for Maturity Exams and Ms Barbara Czarnecka-Cicha

6th May

9.00-10.30 – Recognition of teacher qualifications under EU directives - Ministry of National Education and Sport, Department of Teacher Training and In-service Teacher Training, Al. Szucha 25, meeting with Mr Bartek Krasnowski

13.00-14.30 – Introduction of two-level studies, ECTS and Diploma Supplement, Warsaw University of Technology, Pl. Politechniki 1

7th May

9.30-11.00- Introduction of two-level studies, ECTS and Diploma Supplement, Warsaw School of Economics, Al. Niepodległości 162

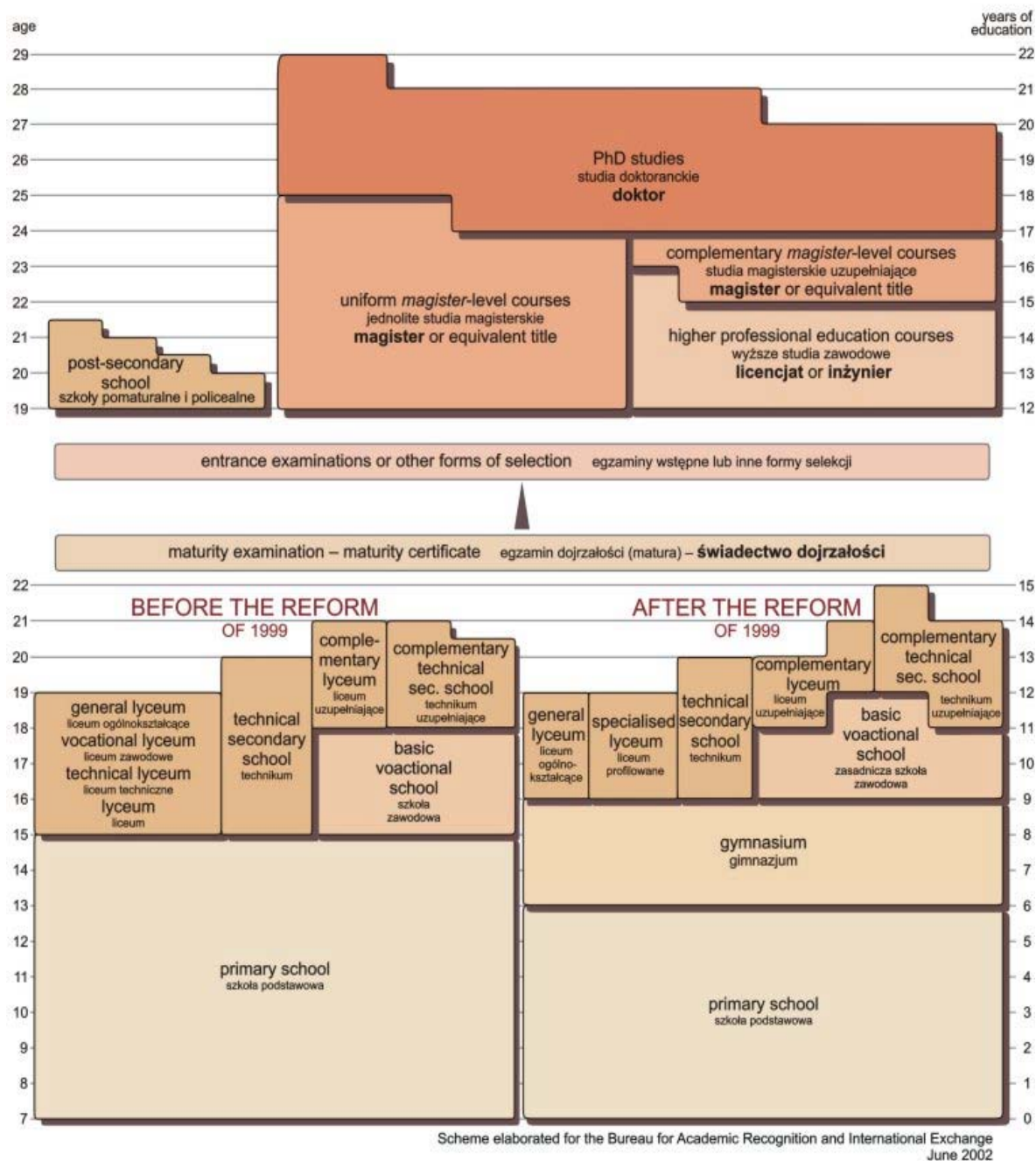
11.30 – Teacher training, introduction of two-level studies, ECTS and Diploma Supplement, Warsaw University, Faculty of Pedagogy, ul. Mokotowska 16/20

13.00- Working lunch with Ms Ewa Majdowska, Head of the Polish Naric

14.30-15.30 – Accreditation and quality assurance in Poland – State Accreditation Committee, Świętokrzyska 12. Meeting with Andrzej Jamiołkowski, president.

We would like to express our thanks to the Polish Naric for perfect organisation of our visit, especially to Ms Magda Piotrowska for her assistance.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN POLAND



Accreditation of higher education

<http://www.men.waw.pl/pka/>

The Polish State Accreditation Committee (*Państwowa Komisja Akredytacyjna-PAKA*) was created in July 2001. The Committee's activities started in January 2002. There are 70 members who are appointed by the Ministry. The Committee is divided into ten sections according to the fields of evaluation. There is also a list of about 500 external experts that can be invited for any specific evaluation.

The total number of institutions of higher education is currently 380. The Polish system of higher education has undergone rapid expansion, from 400,000 students in 1990 to more than 1.8 million today. The objective is to evaluate all existing programmes at all institutions of higher education within the five-year period. The Committee also gives an opinion on proposals for starting new programs, new institutions or new branches at existing institutions.

The Committee's opinions on new programs are submitted to the Ministry, who takes the final decisions.

Evaluation of existing programs can result in a positive, conditional or negative decision. The Committee meets for plenary sessions twice a month. All decisions are published on the Committee's web site.

- If the opinion is positive the programme is accredited for the five year period.
- In the event of a conditional decision the institution has to make up for deficiencies that the evaluation group has found. The program is re-evaluated after one year.
- A negative decision compels the Ministry to take action. The Ministry can either suspend admission to the relevant programme or, in the most drastic cases, stop educational activities and move students to other schools.

Half of the total number of programmes offered by higher education institutions have been evaluated. The number of negative decisions is approx. 5% and approx. 30% of decisions are conditional. The main reason for negative decisions is that institutions have an insufficient number of qualified teachers. The number of qualified academic teachers in Poland has not kept pace with the expansion of higher education. It will take up to 20 years to meet the needs. Another frequent reason for a negative decision has been a poor curriculum.

Evaluation procedures follows internationally accepted standards, including self-evaluation and on-site visits.

The Polish State Accreditation Committee has applied for membership of ENQA.

Upper secondary education

In 1999 a new system of primary and lower secondary education was introduced in Poland. In the new system, compulsory primary and lower secondary education has been extended from 8 to 9 years and divided into primary school - 6 years, and lower secondary, called *gimnazjum* - 3 years. At the end of lower secondary school a national, standardised examination was introduced in 2002. The results of this examination are used for the selection of students applying to upper secondary schools.

Reforms of the upper secondary school system have been implemented since 2002 and will be completed by September 2005. Existing schools at upper secondary level will be phased out in the school year 2004/2005.

The new system of upper-secondary schools comprises:

- 2-3 years basic vocational schools (*zasadnicze szkoły zawodowe*)
- 3-years general secondary schools (*licea ogólnokształcące*)
- 3-years specialised secondary schools (*licea profilowane*)
- 4-years technical secondary schools (*technika*).

The shorter duration of programmes at upper secondary level is the result of the prolonged duration of compulsory education from 8 to 9 years.

A reform of post-secondary vocational schools for graduates of general secondary school will be fully implemented from September 2005. These are:

- Post-secondary school (*Szkoły policealne*) providing vocational qualifications at secondary or basic vocational level for holders of a certificate of completion of secondary education (duration maximum 2,5 years)
- Post-secondary school (*Szkoły pomaturalne*) providing vocational qualifications for holders of a maturity certificate.

Curricula

The core curriculum for upper secondary education was approved in 2002. General secondary schools (*licea ogólnokształcące*) prepare students for admission to higher education. Their core curriculum covers a broad range of subjects from the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. About 15% of the teaching hours can be used for specialisation within the curriculum. The study of two languages is part of the core curriculum, but no specific languages are compulsory. The majority of students choose English as their first second language.

Students can choose between basic and advanced level at their final national examination. The basic level is considered to be less demanding than subjects previously taught at only one level, whereas the advanced level is more advanced than the previous level.

Both specialised secondary schools (*licea profilowane*) and technical secondary schools (*technika*) cover the same core curriculum as general secondary school. The core curriculum for specialised secondary schools offers a somewhat extended number of free-choice hours that can be used for preparation for further vocational studies or other individual studies. At the 4-year technical secondary schools about 40% of teaching hours are devoted to vocational subjects. Schools of this type may also offer advanced level in some subjects, but do not usually offer as many advanced subjects as general secondary schools (*licea ogólnokształcące*).

The New Maturity examination (*Egzamin maturalny*)

The maturity examination (*egzamin maturalny*) is an examination taken after completion of upper secondary education. The maturity examination is a general requirement for access to higher education, although secondary education can be completed without a final examination.

Those who have successfully completed upper secondary education, are awarded a certificate of completion (*świadectwo ukończenia liceum/technikum*). Students from general secondary schools (*licea ogólnokształcące*), specialised secondary schools (*licea profilowane*) and technical secondary schools (*technika*) may choose to take the maturity examination in addition to the certificate of completion. Students who have completed basic vocational schools (*zasadnicze szkoły zawodowe*) must complete either a 2-year supplementary general secondary school or a 3-year supplementary technical secondary school in order to qualify for the maturity examination.

Until now significant differences in the content of tests and the level of competence of maturity certificate holders have been recorded due to factors such as differences in the content of examinations, assessment of results, teachers' qualifications and student populations.

As a means of improving and securing a unified level of maturity examinations, a new examination will be introduced in the school year 2004/2005. National authorities will prepare written exams whereas previously these were set up by the regional authorities. Furthermore, regional examination committees under the National Examination Committee will be in charge of assessing written assignments whereas these were previously assessed by teachers at local schools.

The number of subjects in the maturity examination will be changed as from the school year 2004/2005. Until 2004/2005 the maturity examination consisted of:

- Written examinations in Polish and an optional subject
- Oral examination in Polish, a modern foreign language and an optional subject.

From 2004/2005 the maturity examination will comprise the following compulsory subjects:

- Written examinations at basic or advanced level in 3 subjects: Polish, a modern foreign language and one optional subject
- Oral examination in 2 subjects: Polish and a modern foreign language (same as the written examination).

Mathematics was originally defined as an obligatory subject in the new written maturity examination. However, after a test period, the written examination in mathematics was made optional following students' and teachers' objections that the level of difficulty was too high. Mathematics may be reintroduced as an obligatory examination subject at a later stage.

The level of difficulty in the new examination has increased in mathematics and history which are optional. The basic level English examination is also at a more advanced level. In other subjects the basic level is approximately the same as in the previous maturity examination.

Students may choose to take all maturity examinations at a basic level. However, since most institutions of higher education are expected to require an advanced level in relevant subjects for admission to their programs, it is foreseen that most students will take some subject examinations at advanced level.

A person must pass all compulsory subjects at the basic level in the maturity examination in order to obtain a maturity certificate. The results are expressed in percentage terms. In order to pass an examination a student must obtain 30% in each compulsory subject. If a person fails in one or several subjects, he or she can resit these subjects the following year. It is also possible to resit an examination within five years to improve a grade on payment of a fee. Examinations are offered twice a year.

Finally, it is possible to take 1-3 additional maturity examinations in chosen subjects, but there is no obligation to pass these subjects. However students may be compelled to take additional subjects to meet the requirements for admission to higher education.

Maturity certificate (*Świadectwo dojrzałości*)

The certificate (*Świadectwo dojrzałości*) shows the final annual grades for each subject as well as the results of the maturity examinations. On certificates from technical secondary schools (*technika*) professional titles are also mentioned, but in separate documents. The diploma will distinguish between examinations taken at basic and advanced level.

It is not possible to see from the maturity certificate, whether a person has resat re-examination, since the person in this case receives a new maturity certificate listing all examination results. The only way of identifying whether a person has resat examinations would be to check the year of issue of the maturity certificate.

Admission to higher education

Selection for admission to higher education in Poland will be based on the results of the maturity examination (*egzamin maturalny*). About 70-80 % of

the student population from general and specialised secondary schools (*licea*) proceed to higher education. It is estimated that about 10-20 % from technical secondary schools (*technika*) and 2-5% from vocational schools (*zasadnicze szkoły zawodowe*) proceed to higher education.

A new law including new regulations on the access requirements is in preparation. One of the decisions to be made is whether maturity examinations should be the only basis for access to higher education in future or whether institutions may continue to combine maturity examination results with specific admission requirements, such as entrance examinations and interviews. So far, it has been decided that, as from 2005, institutions of higher education are not allowed to require entry examinations in subjects which are covered in the maturity examination. Furthermore access requirements must now be made public, i.e. specific requirements such as a specific subject or advanced level in a specific subject for a particular study programme.

The Ministry supports the idea that, under the coming law, persons with the old maturity examinations will be obliged to take specific entrance examinations based on the new maturity examination, but this has yet to be decided.

Teacher training

Teacher training in Poland has undergone several changes and there are several options how to become a teacher. The options can be summarised by saying that teacher training is currently provided by higher education institutions (universities, academies and *wyższa szkoła*) as well as teacher training colleges (*kolegium*) and foreign language teacher training colleges (*nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych*). Teacher training colleges are not part of higher education system and cannot award degrees. All teacher training colleges have *de facto* agreements with universities on academic supervision. Before the early 1990s, teacher training was also given at post-secondary level at teacher training institutes (*studium*) and upper secondary school level (*liceum*), but has since been phased out. Teacher training institutes has been transformed into colleges or higher professional schools (*wyższa szkoła zawodowa*).

The competent authority and curricula

The **competent authority** for the teaching profession in Poland is the Ministry of National Education and Sport, Department of Teacher Training. The Ministry determines the qualifications required by teachers such as the minimum number of hours of pedagogical preparation (*przygotowanie pedagogiczne*).

The curricula for teacher training programmes in the higher education sector are regulated by the Ministry of National Education and Sport. The

minimum number of contact hours for the 5-year *Magister* course is 3,000 hours and for the 3-year *licencjat* course 2,200 hours.

Regarding the teacher training programmes outside the higher education sector, such as teacher training colleges (*kolegium*), the colleges are required to follow framework syllabuses issued by the Minister of National Education and Sport, where the compulsory subjects, or blocks of compulsory subjects and practical placement are defined. Contact hours at colleges vary between 2,300 and 2,500, depending on the specialisation.

At higher education institutions, i.e. universities and *wyższa szkoła* as well as at post-secondary *kolegium*, studies for teachers are provided as **full-time day, evening and extramural studies**. Regardless of the type of study, the same degree requirements are applied.

Regarding the **number of teaching subjects**, teacher training has traditionally prepared the teachers in only one subject. However, universities and *wyższa szkoła* have recently started to introduce studies covering two subjects, mainly combining a related specialisation such as pre-school education with early school learning, mathematics with computer science or physics, chemistry with biology or physics, etc. Another option to prepare students to teach a second subject is by post-graduate study (see below, *studium poddyplomowe*).

Students studying at *kolegium* for the degree of *licencjat* specialise in two teaching subjects whereas students at foreign language teacher training colleges specialise in only one foreign language.

Authorisation to teach

The Teachers' Charter¹ as well as a recent Ordinance,² specifies the requirements in order to be recognised as a qualified teacher. There are two options in order to be qualified to hold a teaching post:

- 1) A higher education degree³ which has included pedagogical training (*przygotowanie pedagogiczne*), or
- 2) Graduation in a specific teaching subject, which has been followed by pedagogical training.

It should be noted that the teacher training given at teacher training establishments outside the higher education sector, e.g. teacher training colleges (*kolegium*) and the previous teacher training institute (*studium nauczycielskie*) also confers recognition as qualified teacher.

¹ Act of 26 January 1982 on the Teachers' Charter.

² Ordinance by the Minister of National Education and Sport dated 10 September 2002 on specific qualifications required of teachers, as well as on determining schools and cases in which teachers can be employed who have not completed higher education courses or have not graduated from a teacher training institution. The English version is not authorised.

³ In one of the 14 subjects approved by the Ministry of Higher Education and Sport.

Training , whether integrated in the academic programme or separate is specified as a minimum number of hours. The minimum of 420 hours of pedagogical training should include not less than 270 hours of pedagogical theory, psychology and didactics relevant to the subject to be taught and at least 150 hours of practical teacher training in a school. The university or the teacher training institution responsible for the pedagogical training course should issue a diploma or another document.

Appointment as a teacher

Although teacher training itself confers the status of qualified teacher according to the above models, there is a system of promotion for teachers based on internship (*staż*) when the teacher takes up his/her first teaching job. The first *staż* lasts for one year after which the teacher is promoted as a 'contract teacher'. After the second *staż* of 2 years and 9 months, the teacher is promoted as an 'appointed teacher'. Finally, there can be promotion to 'certified teacher' after another 2 years and 9 months.

Different types of teacher education degrees/diplomas

- A **Magister** degree requires 4, 4.5 or 5 years of study at a university or *wyższa szkoła*. The degree can also be awarded after 2 years of supplementary study to holders of a *licencjat*. A *Magister* degree with teaching specialisation includes the pedagogical training (*przygotowanie pedagogiczne*) of 420 hours and gives direct access to the profession whereas a general *Magister* degree has to be followed by a pedagogical training (*przygotowanie pedagogiczne*). A degree at *Magister* level qualifies a person to teach throughout the school system (teacher training colleges, upper and lower secondary school, primary and pre-primary school) in the subject related to the academic studies. There are special programmes at institutions of higher education preparing students for teaching at pre-primary level and grades 1-3 (*nauczanie początkowe*). The earlier *magister pedagogiki* degree includes pedagogical training whereas a general *magister* degree had to be followed by a pedagogical training. In order to be authorised to teach, since 1991 the pedagogical training has been defined as at least 420 hours. Teachers with a *Magister* degree awarded before 1991 are still considered as authorised teachers provided that they have been employed as teachers. Since pedagogical training has been expanded holders of the older qualification now entering the profession have to take either supplementary studies or a period of probation before they being given full professional rights. The degree in special education (*Magister* or previous *magister pedagogiki specjalnej*) can only confer authorisation to teach in the public special schools for children with disabilities, provided that the degree holder has also completed studies in teaching subjects.
- A **Licencjat** requires 3 years of study at a university or *wyższa szkoła*. Studies can also be carried out at a post-secondary teacher training college (*kolegium nauczycielskie*) or a foreign language teacher training college (*nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych*). Students

can be awarded the degree of *licencjat* after their final examination by the supervising university. Besides the relevant field of study, pedagogical training of at least 420 hours has to be completed. This degree qualifies to teach in grades 7 – 9 in lower secondary school (*gimnazjum*) in the subjects corresponding to the relevant field of study and in grades 1 – 6 in primary school as well as in pre-primary school if they have completed relevant programmes. Teacher education in a foreign language qualifies a person to teach, not only in primary and lower secondary school, but also in upper secondary school, grades 10 – 12.

- **Dyplom ukończenia kolegium nauczycielskiego** requires 3 years of studies at teacher training college (*kolegium nauczycielskie*) or foreign language teacher training college (*nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych*). Holders of the diploma without a *licencjat* degree are authorised to teach in grades 1 – 6 at primary school. However the majority of diploma holders take their final examination and receive the higher education degree *licencjat* at the supervising university. There are special regulations regarding teachers in foreign languages. Authorisation to teach throughout the school system is granted on the basis of the diploma (*dyplom ukończenia kolegium nauczycielskiego*) issued by the foreign language teacher training college (*kolegium języków obcych*), regardless of whether a *licencjat* has been issued by the university or not. There is a tendency that holders of a *licencjat* take up supplementary courses on a part-time basis and are awarded the degree of *Magister*.
- **Dyplom ukończenia studium nauczycielskiego** and **Dyplom ukończenia studium wychowania przedszkolnego** required 2 years (or 3 year extramural) studies following *liceum* at a *kolegium* or *studium nauczycielskie/ studium wychowania przedszkolnego*. By 1993, teacher training for pre-primary and primary school at *studium* has been phased out and is only given at *kolegium* and higher education institutions. The diploma still qualifies a graduate to teach in pre-primary or in primary schools, i.e. specialisation either in grades 1 – 3 (*początkowe*) or in grades 4 – 6 in one specific subject. Specialisation can also be in music, fine art, arts and crafts and technology, and physical education at primary level. In the old school system teachers were authorised to teach up to grade 8.
- **Świadectwo dojrzałości liceum pedagogicznego usually** required 5 years of study after grade 8 (initially after grade 7) at a specialised secondary school (*liceum pedagogiczne*). The course prepared teachers for nursery schools and primary schools. Holders of the qualification had to upgrade their education in order to stay authorised to teach according to the legislation of 1991. This applied also to teachers already employed in teaching posts.
- **Studium podyplomowe** (post-graduate studies) for teachers was introduced 10 years ago. So far only teachers holding a *Magister* degree have completed studies in order to obtain the right to teach a

second subject. Courses are conducted part-time for 1.5 years and include 330 hours of theory and 150 hours of teaching practice. The qualification awarded after the course is *dypłom ukończenia studium podyplomowego*. This confers the right to teach in grades 4-12 in the relevant subject. *Studia podyplomowe* are offered at both university and private institutions of higher education which have the right to conduct post-graduate studies.

All relevant legislation is published in Polish at the website:

<http://www.aic.lv/matrapublic/db/profdat.php?isn=15&type=1>

Recognition of qualifications from other Member States

According to the Ministry Directives 89/48/EEC and 92/51/EEC have already been implemented concerning teacher qualifications.

Implementation of the Bologna process

Warsaw University of Technology (*Politechnika Warszawska*)

<http://www.pw.edu.pl/>

The university has introduced a Flexible Study System (*Elastyczny System Studiów - ESS*). Almost all faculties now offer a three-stage system of degrees. The awarded degrees are a Bachelor's (*inżynier*), a Master's (*magister inżynier*) and a PhD (*doktor*). One of the exceptions is the faculty of architecture, which does not award a bachelor's degree only a Master's (*magister inżynier architekt*) which requires 5 years of study after secondary education.

According to the ESS all programmes have the same structure. After six or seven common semesters students have to choose between:

- The Bachelor route of one to two semesters leading to the Bachelor's degree which requires a total of seven to eight semesters of study (level I). In the last semester students have to complete a diploma thesis corresponding to a half semester of studies.
- A Master's route of three to four semesters leading to a Master's degree after a total of ten semesters (level II). The last semester is devoted to a master's thesis.
- A combination of both – it is possible to do the bachelor's diploma work and study courses for the Master's degree.

The third level of studies is the four-year PhD programme.

The Warsaw University of Technology has fully introduced the ECTS credit system. All degrees awarded in 2004 will include ECTS credits. Students of Chemical Engineering can receive Diploma Supplement on request this year, other faculties have well advanced plans for a Diploma Supplement.

The Warsaw School of Economics

<http://www.sgh.waw.pl/>

The Warsaw School of Economics (*Szkoła Główna Handlowa w Warszawie (SGH)*) is the oldest school of economics and management in Poland, established in 1906, and one of the leading universities in Central and Eastern Europe. At present, over 1000 graduates leave the school every year. Over 15,000 students are studying at SGH this year.

The old faculty structure understood as a “federation of schools”, has been replaced by a matrix concept. Chairs and research institutes are associated into units referred to as schools (*Kolegia*), headed by a dean.. The following schools operate within SGH: the School of Socio-Economics, the School of Economic Analysis, the School of World Economy, the School of Business Administration and the School of Management and Finance. The programmes are organised as full-time, extramural, postgraduate and doctoral studies. The school introduced as early as 1991 new study programmes based on a market economy. The first degrees in the new system were awarded in 1994.

- For adaptation to the **Bologna process**, SGH has introduced 3-year Bachelor (*Licencjat*) and 2-year Master (*Magister*) programmes followed by 2, 3 or 4-year doctoral programmes. The Polish labour market does not yet accept the level of Bachelor. With the new proposed higher education law the 3- year Bachelor's course will be hopefully more easily accepted.
- The SGH has created its own **credit system**, based mostly on the number of contact hours. The ECTS system is used for visiting students. One credit point is the equivalent of 15 contact hours. For lectures and seminars given in foreign languages at SGH, students receive 50% more credit points. To obtain a Bachelor's diploma students should collect 161 credit points, and to obtain a Master's diploma 226 credit points. If there is no formal examination, evaluation is based mostly on classroom activity, presentations, projects and tests.
- SGH is prepared to issue **Diploma Supplement**.

Education at SGH:

SGH offers four types of studies:

Full-time studies which are tuition-free. The entrance examination to the full-time studies is in Mathematics, Geography or History, and two foreign languages at basic and advanced level. The number of applicants is 35 per place.

Full-time studies start with the Basic Study Programme that lasts three semesters. The student gets 56 credit points (80 points including foreign languages) for completing them successfully. Several faculty members teach each subject and students may choose among them. The first-level subjects are Economics, Econometrics, Introduction to Law, Philosophy, Economic Geography, Economic History, Computer Science, Logics, Mathematics, Political Science, Civil Law, Accounting, Sociology and Statistics. Having obtained credits for the Basic Study Programme, students go on to the second stage, the Diploma Study Programme, where they choose their specialisations. Students are free to select their own major subjects leading to a specific degree and may plan their curricula and programme of studies. The requirement for a Bachelor's degree is 161 credits. The total length of the Master's programmes is five years or 226 credits. Normally course levels are set from 1 to 4 with 4 as the most advanced level. Specialised, e courses can be at level 5.

The Bachelor's thesis is about 50 pages and Master's thesis 60-80 pages. Credits are given for subjects and internships. Courses taught in foreign language yield more credits because of the extended workload. The thesis work goes on for three semesters in parallel with other subjects. The last semester is mainly devoted to finishing thesis work. It is possible to study more than one specialisation leading to different diplomas – *Magister* specialisation. Approximately 2-3 % of the students are awarded double diplomas.

The following regulations apply to the number of credits that students must take every semester.

Semester	Number of credits	
I	26	
II	29	
III	25	
IV	22	
V	22	
VI	22	
VII	22	
VIII	22	
IX	22	
X	14	
Total	226	

- **Part-time studies** are organised as a fee-paying, two-level programme which includes: six semester of undergraduate study ending with a Bachelor's degree, and a four semesters of a supplementary graduate programme ending with a Master's degree. Part-time students may obtain a degree in the same fields as full-time students, except for economics.
- **Post-graduate studies** are intended for graduate students who wish to develop and update their professional qualifications. Students of the postgraduate programmes include both SGH graduates and graduates of other universities.
- **Doctoral studies** at SGH are organised on a full-time and part-time basis. Students may obtain a doctoral degree in economics, management and marketing. Full-time doctoral courses are free of charge, whereas part-time students pay tuition. Doctoral courses last two, three or four years.