**White Rose University Consortium: College of Arts and Humanities**

**Arts and Humanities Research Culture in France**

**Universities**

* [Higher Education](#RCSUHE)
* [University Departments](#RCSUUD)
* [Studies](#RCSUS)
* [Glossary](#RCSUG)
* [Web Links](#RCSUW)

***Higher Education***

*Universities*

In 1970, the historic University of Paris was divided into 13 autonomous universities; the following is a list of some of the most important ones for research and study in the humanities in Paris.

[Paris-I Panthéon-Sorbonne](http://www.univ-paris1.fr/) - specialises in economics & management, the arts and social sciences, law and political sciences.

[Paris-IV Sorbonne-Paris](http://www.paris-sorbonne.fr/) - the principal centre in Paris for research in the arts, languages and humanities.

[Paris-V Université Paris-Descartes](http://www.parisdescartes.fr/) - focuses on the medical and biological sciences, mathematics, law and social sciences (Sociology, Anthropology, Linguistics, Demographics, and Science of Education)

[Paris-VII Université Denis Diderot](http://www.univ-paris-diderot.fr/) - 8 UFR in Anglophone studies, intercultural studies, applied languages, ‘geography, history, and social sciences’, the languages and civilisation of East Asia, ‘letters, arts and cinema’, linguistics, clinical ‘human sciences’, and social sciences.

*Pôle de recherche et d’enseignement supérieur* (PRES) is the recent grouping of universities in order to pool resources and better advance their joint activities, and may also include other research institutes. In a number of cases, the PRES have been established in order to bring about the fusion of a number of different universities in their respective cities. The most important ones for research and study in the humanities are:

[Aix-Marseille Université](http://www.univ-amu.fr)

[Université Montpellier III Paul-Valéry](http://www.univ-montp3.fr/)

[Université de Lille III](http://www.univ-lille3.fr/)

*Les Grandes Écoles*

[École Normale Supérieure](http://www.ens.fr) - Les Grandes *Écoles* is an elite higher education institution (graduate school) for advanced undergraduate and graduate studies and a prestigious research centre. It encompasses fourteen teaching and research departments, spanning the main humanities, sciences and disciplines. Unique among France’s *grandes écoles* for its training in the humanities and sciences, the ENS prepares its students for their role as future leaders in every imaginable professional field: in research, media, public service and private industry.

[École des hautes études en sciences sociales](http://www.ehess.fr) - Centre for higher education and advanced research in the social sciences.

[ENS de Lyon](http://www.ens-lyon.eu) - École normale supérieure for languages and the humanities.

[École pratique des hautes études](http://www.ephe.sorbonne.fr/) (EHSP) - The EHSP is organized into three sections, one for Life and Earth Sciences (SVT), another for History and Philology (SHP), and the third for Religious Studies (SR).

[Sciences Po](http://www.sciencespo.fr/) (Officially called IEPs, institut d’études politiques or Institutes for Political Studies) - The IEPs are a nationwide network of 9 institutes, of which the most prominent is the one in Paris. All are nicknamed ‘Sciences Po’, but that term when utilized without further qualification always refers to the Parisian institute, which enjoys the status of a *Grande École*. The IEPs are not limited to the study of politics but also look at a broad range of subjects touching on international issues, economics, and society.

*Francophone Universities*

Belgium

[Université de Namur](http://www.unamur.be/universite) (UNamur, anciennement Facultés universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix – FUNDP) - Institution *universitaire catholique jésuite* (which is impossible in France, where it is prohibited by law for any private institution to be designated as a ‘university’).

Download: France Universities Higher Education

*[Back to top](#RCSU)*

***University Departments***

The approximate equivalent to an academic department or faculty in the UK is known as a *UFR* in French universities, short for *Unité de Formation et Recherche*, or ‘Association for Training and Research. Following the reforms instituted by the “loi Faure”of 1968 and the splitting of many major universities, faculties as such were abolished and replaced by *UER*s (*Unité d’Enseignement et Recherche*, Association for Teaching and Research), which were relabelled *UFR* in 1984. Universities are composed of UFRs, departments, laboratories, schools and research centres, created by the administrative council of the university in consultation with a scientific council.

According to the [law regulating UFRs](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071191&idArticle=LEGIARTI000006525362&dateTexte=20130623), they associate departments for training and teaching together with laboratories or research centres. They may be structured with constituent departments of a sub-discipline (for instance a department of applied mathematics in a UFR for mathematics) or according to a *cycle d’études*/*cycle universitaire* or term of studies (a department for the first three years of the *licence*). They constitute the alliance of a pedagogical project with a research programme instituted by an *enseignant-chercheur*, lecturers, and researchers in one or several fundamental disciplines. UFRs can thus be single-discipline or multidisciplinary bodies.

UFRs are administered by an elected council and a director chosen by that council for a term of five years, with the possibility of re-election for one term. The director is required to continue carrying out teaching duties at the UFR and is sometimes still known by the traditional title of “doyen”, or dean. The council, which cannot number more than 40 members, includes a proportion of external members averaging between 20-50% of its composition. The teaching personnel must be at least equal in number to that of the other personnel.

Though the term “faculty” as such has been officially abrogated, some university departments retain that appellation for historic reasons, and students not uncommonly refer to their departments colloquially as “la fac” (this colloquial form applies to both universities and lycées). In this form it is used to describe various aspects of life in higher education, i.e. “être à la fac” to be at uni, “s’inscrire en fac” to enrol at uni, “entrer en fac” to start uni, or to describe the programme being undertaken by the student, i.e. “être en fac de medicine” to study medicine at uni.

[*Back to top*](#RCSU)

***Studies***

Classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles (CPGE/Prépas) are courses that prepare students for admission to the grandes écoles. The courses last two or three years, after which the students can apply to a grande école, or receive an ECTS and continue studying at a university. The CPGE chooses students based on performance during the last two years of the lycée and are admitted after taking the *baccalauréat* (Bac), the high-school/secondary school leaving exam.

The *baccalauréat* also serves as the first university level in France, generally being the sole requisite for admission, and is the basis on which the length of higher degrees in terms of years is set.

Cycles universitaires**,** also referred to as Filières universitaires generals is the categorisation of levels for higher education. After the legal reforms LMD of 2002 and LRU of 2007, the first cycle is now comprises the Licence/CPGE, the second cycle the new master’s degree, and the third cycle the doctorate.

From 1966 to 2006 the *Maîtrise* was a national university diploma corresponding to the second cycle granted after four years of study and validated by examinations and a *mémoire de recherche,* permitting access to the third cycle. Since 2006, it can be delivered to students having completed the first year of the master, but is no longer a stand-alone diploma.

The *Master* degree, created in 2002, now corresponds to the second cycle of higher education. It is usually 2 years long and can also be referred to as Bac+5.

*Licence* (first cycle) - Bachelor’s degree, usually takes 3 years (Bac+3)

*Master* (second cycle) – Master’s degree, usually takes 2 years (Bac+5)

*Doctorat* (third cycle) – a PhD, usually takes 3 years (Bac+8)

A *Magistère* is a professional degree created in 1986 lasting three years (third year of licence and two years of master’s) emphasizing in-depth research alongside practical experience and placements, principally in the fields of economics, law, science, computing science, maths, and social science.

*[Back to top](#RCSU)*

**Glossary**

**Amphi –** amphitheatre, big lecture hall

**Bac -** (baccalauréat), high-school/secondary school leaving exam

**CA -** (Conseil d’Administration), administrative council [assembles the representatives, staff members, and students in each (*UFR*) University Research Unit and votes through the different regulations and changes to be implemented]

**CAF -** (Caisse d'allocations familiales), child benefit office

**CC -** (Contrôle continu), continuous assessment

**Cafet’ -** (cafétéria), student dining-hall

**CHU** (Centre hospitalier universitaire), University hospital

**Cours magistral -** lecture/class addressed to a large number of students (usually held in a lecture hall)

**CPGE/Prépas -** (classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles), Courses preparing students for admission to the grandes écoles

**Cycles universitaires -** (also referred to as Filières universitaires generals), Categorisation of levels for higher education

**Délégués étudiants -** student representatives

**Diplôme universitaire -** University degree

**Dispense d’assiduité -** exemption from attendance, exemption from attending classes and from the submission of continuous assessment (the student exempt from the course may still be required to take the end of term exam)

**DOM -**(Département d'outre-mer), French overseas departments (Guadeloupe, Guyane, Martinique, La Réunion)

**DUT -** (diplôme universitaire de technologie),University diplomas in technology offered usually by [University Institutes of Technology](http://www.iut-fr.net/) (IUT)

**EAD -** (Enseignement A Distance), distance learning

**Emploi du temps -** timetable/schedule

**ENA -**(École nationale d'administration) National School of Administration, a type of *grandes écoles* entrusted with the selection and initial training of French officials and civil servants

**ENS -** (École normale supérieure) a category of the *grandes écoles* dedicated to research and to the training of future instructors and researchers in the literary, scientific, and technological domains

**Étudiant -** A student at a university or *grande école*, as distinct from the term ‘élève’, which designates students at the preparatory level and below

**Examen -** end of term exam (can also be referred to as *examen partiel* or *partiel*)

**Filière -** Stream or track, in education referring to the general subject matter chosen by students preparing for their ‘bac’ or ‘CPGE’, usually Science, Humanities, and Economy

**FLE -** (Français langue étrangère), French as a Foreign Language

**Guide de l’étudiant** - student handbook

**Grande école/École supérieure/Grand établissement** - Higher education establishments outside the main framework of the French university system

**Généraliste -** Non-specialized, and by inference, interdisciplinary (used primarily of certain Grandes écoles)

**LMD -** (Licence-Master-Doctorate), Bachelor-Master- PhD, European wide structure of higher education

**Licence -** Bachelor’s degree, usually takes 3 years or 6 terms

**Magistère -** a professional degree created in 1986 lasting three years

**Maîtrise -** from 1966 to 2006 it was a national university diploma corresponding to the second cycle granted after four years of study and validated by examinations and a *mémoire de recherche*

**Master -** Master’s degree, created in 2002, corresponding to the second cycle of higher education, usually 2 years long (can also be referred to as Bac+5)

**Mineure -** minor

**MCC -** (Modalités de Contrôle Continu), written or oral continuous assessment

**NF - (**Niveaux de formation), levels of education

**Partiel -** other name given to the end of term exam

**QCM - (**Questionnaire à choix multiple), multiple choice questions

**RU -** (Restaurant universitaire), university canteen

**Sciences Po -** Political sciences (usually an extremely selective degree)

**Session -** (session d’examen), exam session

**Semestre –** term, usually each academic year consists of two terms (can be referred to as S1 and S2)

**TD -** (Travaux Dirigés), directed studies, obligatory classes addressed to a smaller group of students, comparable to the UK tutorials or labs

**TOM -** (Territoire d'outre-mer), French overseas territories

**U3M - (**Université du 3e millénaire), The University of the Third Age

**UE -** (Unités d’Enseignement), modules

**UFR -** (Unité de formation et de recherche), teaching and research unit, comparable to Schools or Faculties which consist of numerous departments

[*Back to top*](#RCSU)

**Web Links**

[Ministère de l’Enseignement Supérieure et de la Recherche](http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/pid24573/enseignement-superieur.html) (MESR) - An official government website providing a wide array of practical information for prospective and current students related to French academia.

[Campus France](http://www.campusfrance.org/en) – Is the French national agency for the promotion of higher education, international student services, and international mobility. You can also download a pdf of the [Structure of Higher Education in France](http://ressources.campusfrance.org/visuels_medias/campusfrance/diplomes/en/diplomes_en.pdf).

[Studyrama](http://www.studyrama.com) – Provides resources, information, and links on all aspects of French education and student life.

[Agence d’Évaluation de la Recherche et de l’Enseignement Supérieur](http://www.studyrama.com/formations/filieres/universite/classement/) (AERES) – An assessment of French universities throughout the country, grouped by city.

*[Back to top](#RCSU)*

Copyright © 2013 University of Leeds. Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>.