**university and post-university**

**Education in the Republic of Belarus**

National system of education includes Preschool education, Secondary Education, Higher Education and Postgraduate Education.

Secondary Education involves primary, basic and secondary school. Most children start going to school at 6. At primary school they learn to write, read, count. Basic and secondary school provides general subjects, physical training and labour education.

After final examinations, school-leavers get certificates of basic and secondary education. Our higher educational establishments include universities, academies, institutes and higher colleges. Altogether there are about 60 higher educational establishments: most of them are state institutions (academies, universities, institutes, higher colleges, and 1 higher school), some of them are **private** and several institutions are governed by religious organizations. **Both** state **and** private establishments are governed by the Ministry of Education.

Higher educational institutions offer full-time and part-time programs. At the end of the university course, Belarusian graduates receive a Certificate of a Specialist. To become a Certified Specialist, it usually requires four or five years of training, **success** in state examinations, and **defense** of a diploma-work. The second stage of higher education is needed to receive a Master’s degree.

**Further** education and research is needed if you want to get an **advanced** scholarly degree. The advanced **scholarly** degrees include 1) Candidate of Science after three years of post-graduate study, success in **qualification examinations**, and defense of a dissertation, and 2) Doctor’s degree after many years of teaching and independent research, defense of a second dissertation of high theoretical and **practical** **value**.

A higher educational institution **is headed by** the Rector. The institution is divided into faculties (departments), headed by Deans, and faculties (departments) are divided into chairs.

**Admission** **to** Belarusian universities is based on entrance examination results. Most entrance exams are held in the form of centralized testing. For the applicants, who score high, the study is free and they are paid a small monthly scholarship (study allowance). Today, many students pay for education.

Students study in groups of 25 to 30 people. The **schedule** is made for the whole group. The academic year is divided into terms. The course of study **culminates** in **a state exam** and defense of a diploma-paper. Students who graduate **with honours** are awarded **the so-called** “red certificate”.