



## Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Chittagong

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**RUSSIA / Education**

### Degree structure and Hierarchy in Russian Science

According to the Law on Education of 1992 and the State Educational Standard of Higher Professional Education of 1994 there is a new degree structure in Russia, which follows a three-tier pattern, three levels, and uses U.S./British nomenclature.

Degrees now may be obtained at three levels instead of at only one level, as it used to be in the former Soviet Union. In addition to the traditional Specialist Diploma, an Intermediate Diploma, a Bakalavr Diploma, and a Magistr Diploma were introduced after the changes in 1992 and are modeled on the Anglo-Saxon system of Bachelor's and Master's Degrees.

It should be noted that Russia has signed Bologna Declaration and by the year 2010 transition to a two-tier degree structure should be completed; the objective is specified as one of the ultimate goals of the country's educational reforms.

Below you can find a more detailed description of the current program organization:

#### Level I

**The Intermediate Diploma.** Programs at this level are organized in two stages:

*Stage 1* consists of two years of course work, upon completion of which students are awarded a "certificate of incomplete higher education".

*Stage 2* is devoted entirely to one to two years of intensive professional training. Upon completion, students are awarded a "diploma of incomplete higher education".

These are not distinct programs but rather credentials awarded upon partial completion of study leading to a diploma of higher education, such as "bachelor" or "specialist". Students with a Level I certificate or diploma have not completed their higher education. However, they can seek employment in jobs that require some higher education, but not a degree.

#### Level II

**The Bakalavr (Bachelor) Degree:** Awarded upon completion of four-year programs in the humanities, economics and natural sciences, as well as some practical professional training. It represents the completion of "basic academic education" and is a prerequisite for admission to Magistr studies.

#### Level III

There are two options after the second level – Magistr and Specialist. Both degrees allow access to doctoral study.

**Magistr (Master) Degree:** This is a degree designed for students who wish to pursue a career in academia and research. It takes 2 years after obtaining the bachelor degree. The field of study must be the same as for the bachelor. (As most students continue their education after getting the Bachelor degree at the same institution, they may not receive the actual Bachelor diploma).

**Specialist Diploma:** This is a professional training program designed for students who choose to pursue the practical applications of their specialization. The degree can be earned in one of two ways:

- upon completion of at least 1.5 years of study after obtaining the Bachelor's Degree. (Students who get the diploma of specialist in this way, often do not get their actual Bachelor diploma.)

- upon completion of four to six years of study after getting their Certificate of Secondary Complete General Education in school (this is the unchanged Soviet diploma of specialist). The

degree grants professional qualification in engineering, teaching, economics, etc.

Bachelor, Master and Specialist diplomas are awarded by the State Attestation Commission.

Currently there are only two types of diploma (degrees) which are officially recognized as ones of completed higher education - these are diploma of a Specialist and diploma of a Magistr (Master) level.

The Bakalavr (Bachelor) diploma and the certificate of "incomplete higher education" are not regarded as higher education degrees. In some cases a Bakalavr Degree suffices to start a career. Anyway bachelors (or undergraduates) are not allowed to take positions where higher education is necessary by labour law or by custom, they can't get the research degree of Candidate of Sciences, etc.

Specialist and Magistr Diplomas entitle their holders, as it was mentioned above, to be admitted to doctoral study programs.

As the Law on Education 1992 does not address any changes to the Soviet model of academic degrees they are the following:

the first doctoral degree in Russia is called "**Candidate of Sciences**" (Kandidat Nauk). It is gained after 3 to 5 years in a post-graduate school. The qualification requirements are noticeably higher than at any US state university, with mandatory publications in peer reviewed journals and approval on the Federal government level. This degree may be compared to American PhD in the Assistant Professor position.

the second academic degree in Russia is "**Doctor of Sciences**" (Doktor Nauk). This degree can be obtained only by the holders of "Candidate of Science" degree and may be earned by those, who made a substantial contribution to the Science; an American Full Professor may qualify for this degree.

The top of the pyramid is "**Academician**". Academicians are of two classes. "**Corresponding Members**" approximately have the same standing as the members of the American Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, etc. "**Full Members**" have the same recognition in Russia as the Nobel Prize winners in the West.

