

The Italian Higher Education System

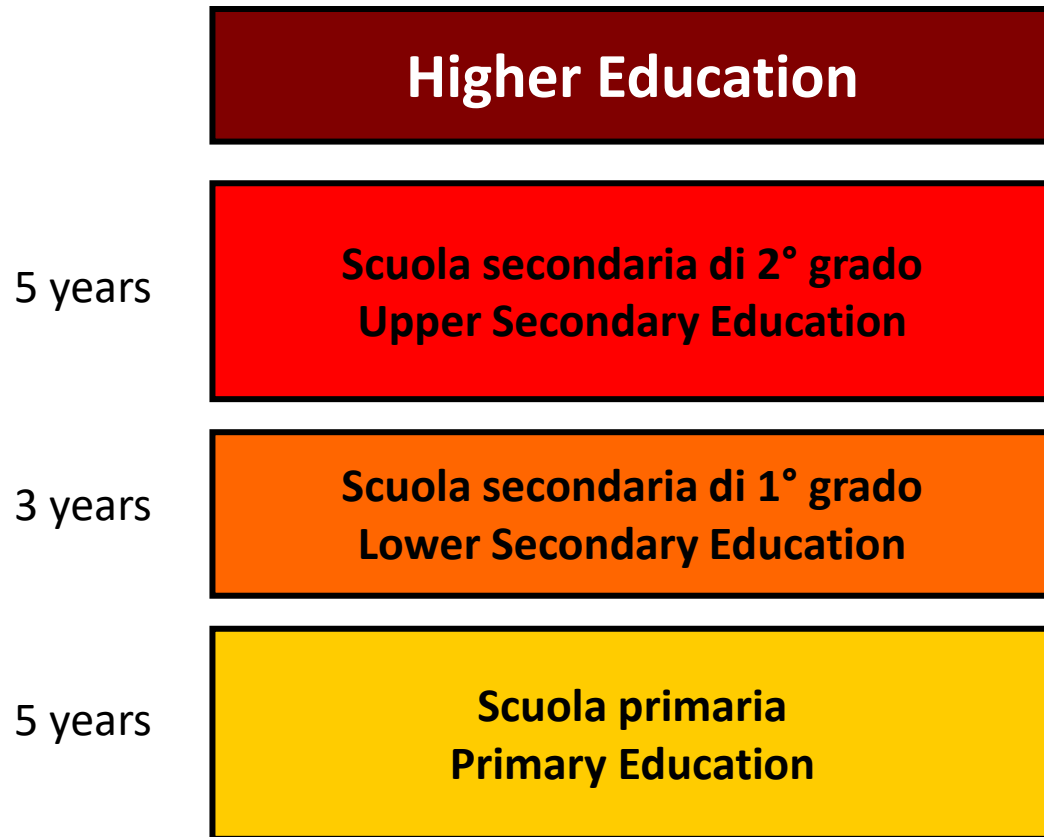
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2osJzh5UJs>

TAICEP Conference 2017 - Rome

CIMEA

LUCA LANTERO

Italian pre-HE system



Admission to Higher Education

- a) Diploma di superamento dell'esame di Stato conclusivo dei corsi di Istruzione Secondaria Superiore usually called Diploma di Maturità or Maturità = 13 years of global schooling;
- b) foreign school leaving qualification that:
 - ✓ satisfies the requirements for access to university education in the awarding country;
 - ✓ was conferred on completion of **minimum 12 years of global schooling**
 - ✓ minimum two years of studies abroad
 - ✓ special cases (i.e. HSD, A levels, etc.)

Diploma di Maturità

Obtained after passing the relevant **State Exam** (called Maturità) which is accessed with a decision taken by the class council in the final scrutiny in the last class of a study course followed in **Liceo** (lyceum), **Istituto tecnico** (technical Institute) or **Istituto professionale** (professional Institute) and after a total of **13 years of schooling**.

The State Exam is structured in **3 written tests** (in few cases 4) and **an oral component**. The first 2 written tests are on a national level: one common to all the study majors, while the second is specific to the major attended. The third written test depends on each exam commission. The oral test is based on the specific learning outcomes of the course and according to subjects studied during the last year.

The **final grade** of the Exam is **expressed in hundredths** (from 60/100 to 100/100).

The Diploma **gives access to all Italian HE institutions and courses**. Specific admission may be requested by single institutions or in the case of courses with limited access on the basis of national legislation.

Italian HE: a binary system

University sector

- State Universities – *Università statali*
- Non-State Universities – *Università non statali, legalmente riconosciute*
- Technical Universities – *Politecnici*
- Universities for foreigners – *Università per stranieri*
- Higher Schools – *Scuole Superiori*
- Online Universities – *Università telematiche*

AFAM institutions

Arts and Music sector

- Academies of Fine Arts – *Accademie di Belle Arti*
- Higher School of Design – *Istituti Superiori per le Industrie Artistiche – ISIA*
- National Dance Academy – *Accademia Nazionale di Danza*
- National Academy of Drama – *Accademia Nazionale di Arte Drammatica*
- State Music Conservatories and Recognised Music Institutions – *Conservatori di Musica e Istituti Musicali Pareggiati*

please see: www.university.it

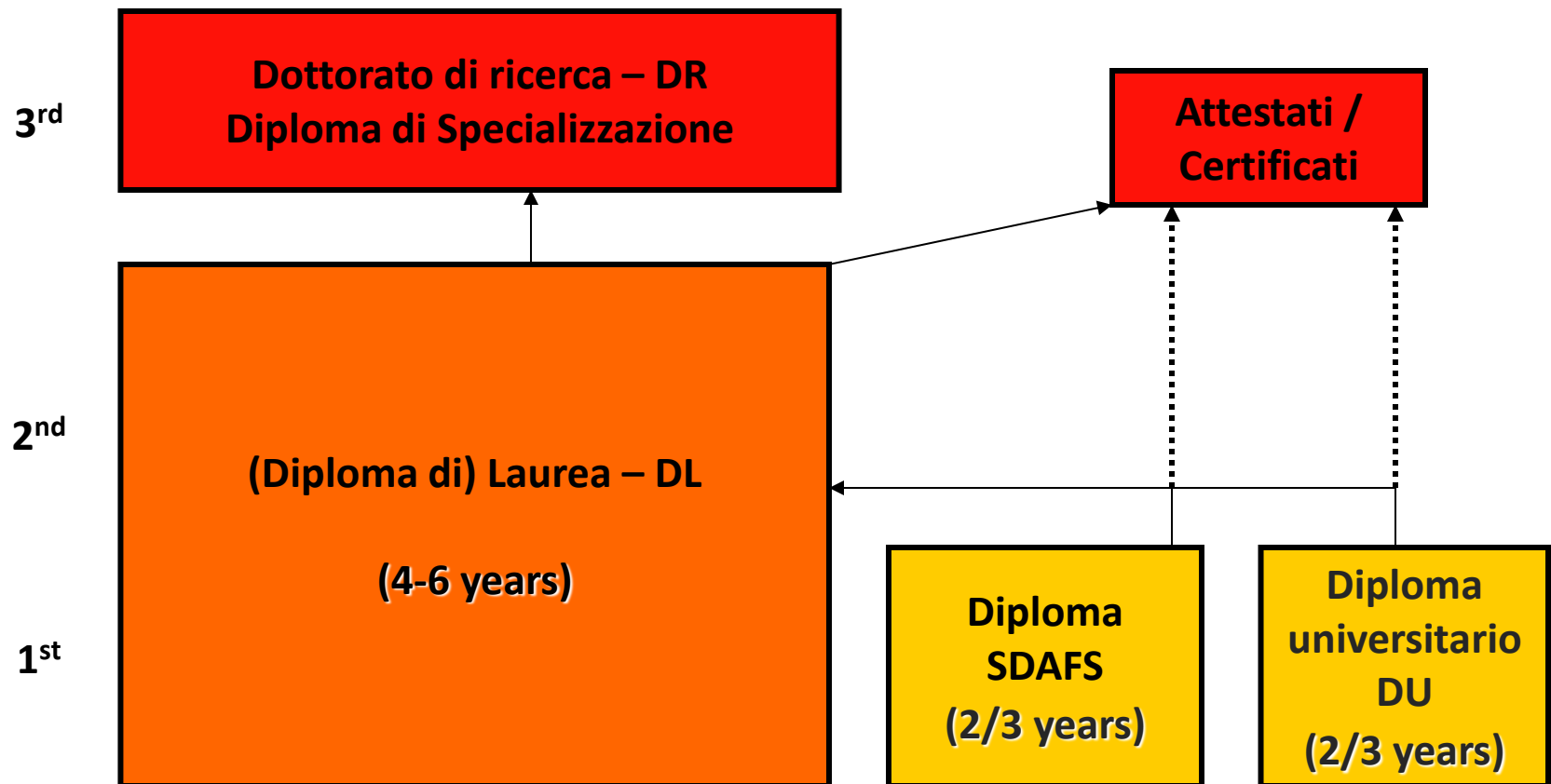
Recognised institutions & accredited courses

The list of all the **official institutions** (universities and AFAM institutions) is available on the **UNIVERSITALY website** (www.universitaly.it). The terms “official” institutions means the recognised institutions in Italy officially belonging to the HE system and which are authorised to award academic titles that hold legal value and are part of the Italian system.

Interactive map: <http://www.universitaly.it/index.php/maps/>

The **educational offer** and the **relevant accredited courses** are available on the UNIVERSITALY as well.

Pre-Bologna University system



Pre-Bologna University degrees

Degree

Length of Degree Course

1st level

Diploma universitario

3-2 years

Diploma SDAFS

2-3 years

2nd level

Diploma di Laurea

4-6 years

3rd level

Diploma di Specializzazione

2-6 years

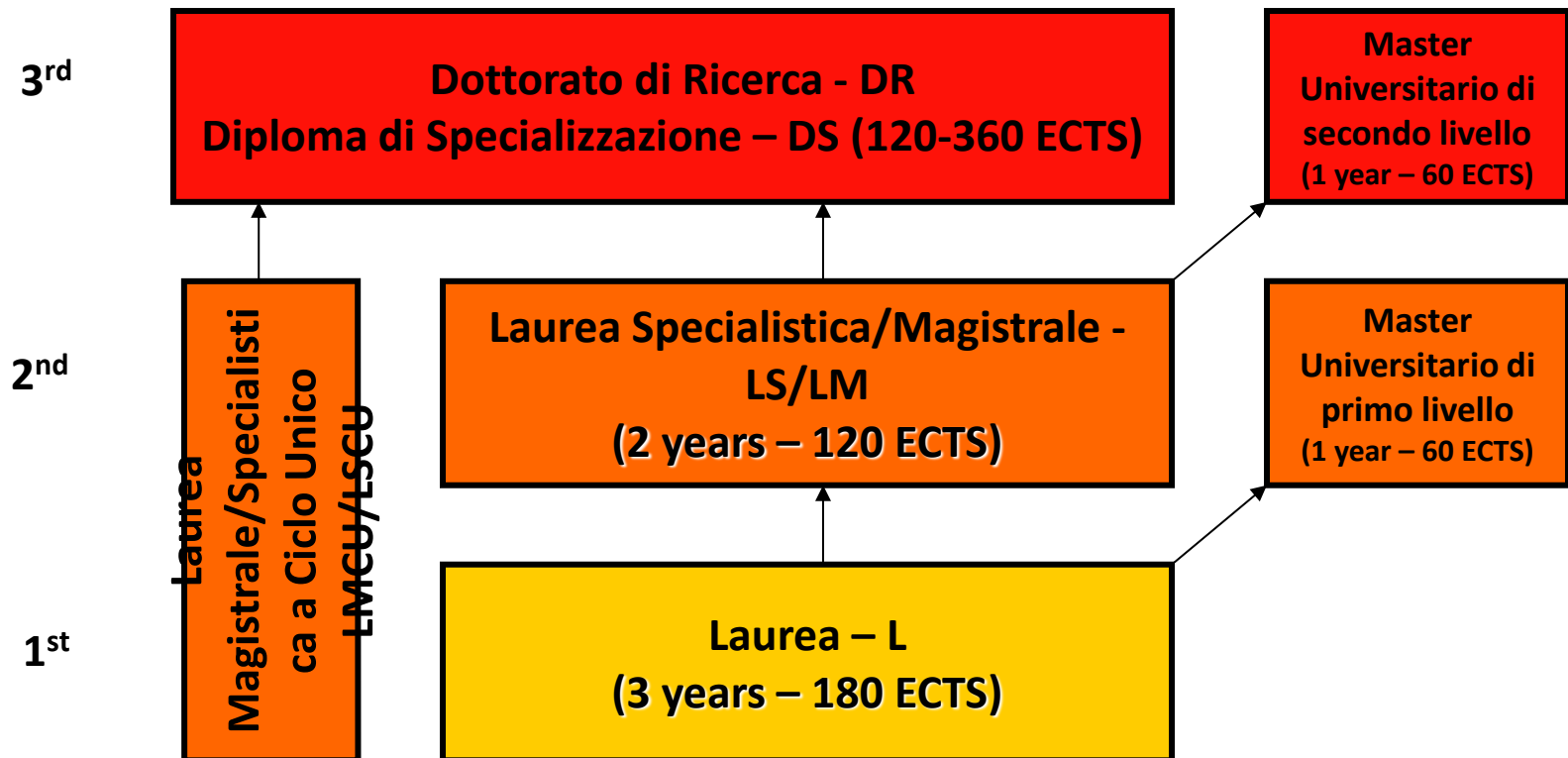
Dottorato di ricerca

Minimum 3 years

Attestati and Diplomi di formazione permanente e ricorrente

from a few months to max. 1 year

Bologna University system (since 1999)



Bologna University degrees

Degree	ECTS credits	Length of Degree Course
1st cycle <i>Laurea</i>	180	3 years
2nd cycle <i>Laurea specialistica / Laurea magistrale</i>	120	2 years
<i>Master universitario di primo livello</i>	60	Minimum 1 year
3rd cycle <i>Dottorato di ricerca</i>		Minimum 3 years
<i>Diploma di specializzazione</i>	120-360	2-6 years
<i>Master universitario di secondo livello</i>	60	Minimum 1 year

Pre-Bologna vs Bologna system

3-year Diploma universitario/Diploma SDAFS equivalent by law to Laurea

Diploma di Laurea equivalent by law to Laurea Magistrale/Specialistica

Dottorato di Ricerca equal to Dottorato di Ricerca (no changes)

Diploma di Specializzazione equal to Diploma di Specializzazione (no changes)

“Master universitario di primo” and “di secondo livello” = new qualifications

Please consider the concept of “legal duration” of the previous system and “normal duration” for the actual one.

Some international comparisons

Laurea = Bachelor of Arts / of Sciences

Laurea Magistrale and Laurea Specialistica = Master of Arts / of Sciences

Laurea Magistrale a ciclo unico = Integrated Master of Arts / of Sciences

Dottorato di Ricerca = PhD

Diploma di Specializzazione = Professional Doctorate

Master universitario di primo and “di secondo livello = post-graduate Diplomas / Professional Master

Some tips

“Master” does not mean a 2nd cycle degree that gives access to PhD courses.

The name “Master” or any other translations in English of academic degrees are not protected by law: it means that private not accredited institutions can award qualifications named “Master” (not Master universitario).

“Dottore” is not an holder of a PhD but of a 1st cycle degree.

In the previous system Dottore was the holder of a 2nd cycle qualification (Diploma di Laurea).

Even if the official name of the previous 2nd cycle university degree was Diploma di Laurea, on diplomas it is typically written “Laurea di Dottore in [+ subject]”

To determine if a qualification was awarded according to the Bologna or to the pre-Bologna system, check on the diploma/transcript the “classe di laurea” or “classe di laurea magistrale” (typically indicated like L + a number [L3] or LM + a number [LM12]): on those cases qualifications are awarded according to the Bologna reform.

<http://www.universitaly.it/index.php/cercacorsi/universita>

Classification: Bologna process first cycle qualification/EQF level 6

Access: by the upper secondary school leaving qualification, or a comparable foreign one

Workload: 180 ECTS

Duration: 3 years

Academic title: Dottore

Further studies: admission to "Laurea Magistrale" and to "Master universitario di primo livello"

Laurea Magistrale (Specialistica)

Classification: Bologna process second cycle qualification/EQF level 7

Access: by a Laurea, or a comparable foreign degree

Workload: 120 ECTS

Duration: 2 years

Academic title: Dottore Magistrale

Further studies: admission to Dottorato di ricerca, Diploma di Specializzazione and Master universitario di secondo livello

NB: final dissertation (thesis) compulsory

Laurea Magistrale (Specialistica) a ciclo unico

Classification: Bologna process second cycle qualification/EQF level 7

Access: by the upper secondary school leaving qualification, or a comparable foreign one

Workload: 300 to 360 ECTS

Duration: 5 or 6 years

Academic title: Dottore Magistrale

Further studies: admission to Dottorato di ricerca, Diploma di Specializzazione and Master universitario di secondo livello

NB: final dissertation (thesis) compulsory

Dottorato di Ricerca

Classification: Bologna process third cycle qualification/EQF level 8

Access: by Laurea magistrale, or a comparable foreign qualification; admission is dependent upon passing a public competition

Workload: n.a.

Duration: minimum 3 years

Academic title: Dottore di ricerca; PhD

Diploma di Specializzazione

Classification: Bologna process third cycle qualification/EQF level 8

Access: by Laurea magistrale, or a comparable foreign qualification; admission is dependent upon passing an entrance exam

Workload: from 120 to 360 ECTS

Duration: from 2 to 6 years

Academic title: Specialista in ...

Master universitario di primo livello

Classification: Bologna process second cycle qualification/EQF level 7

Access: by a Laurea, or a comparable foreign degree

Workload: minimum 60 ECTS

Duration: minimum 1 year

Further studies: the qualification does not allow access to PhD and to 3rd cycle programmes, since this type of course does not belong to the general requirements established at national level, but it is offered under the autonomous responsibility of each university

Master universitario di secondo livello

Classification: Bologna process third cycle qualification/EQF level 8

Access: by Laurea magistrale, or a comparable foreign qualification

Workload: minimum 60 ECTS

Duration: minimum 1 year

Further studies: the qualification does not allow access to PhD and to 3rd cycle programmes, since this type of course does not belong to the general requirements established at national level, but it is offered under the autonomous responsibility of each university

Elements of the system

Classes of degree courses: all degree courses sharing the same educational objectives and fundamental types of teaching-learning activities are organized in groups called *classi di appartenenza*

Diploma Supplement (*Supplemento al diploma*): established by law

Academic titles:

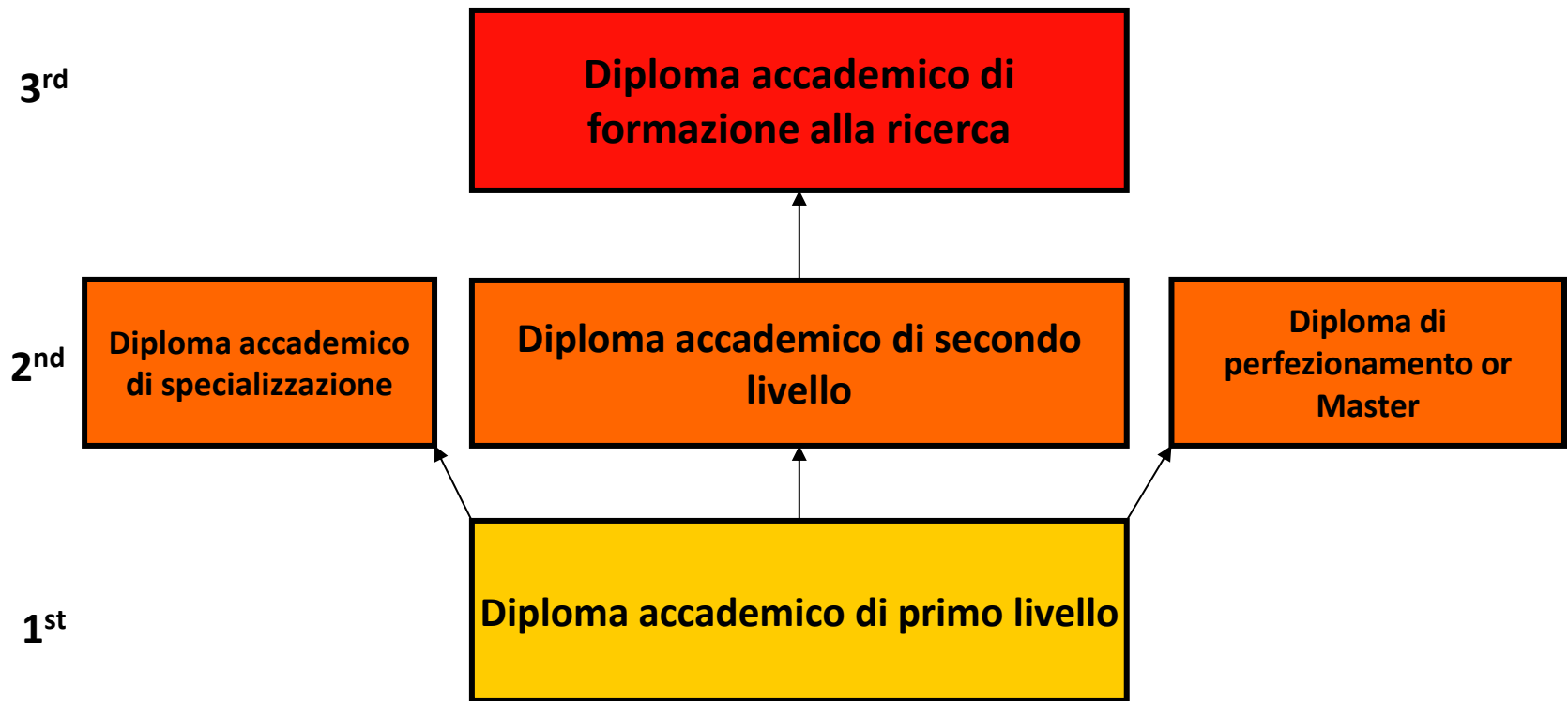
Laurea – *Dottore* (*dottore/dottoressa = dott./dott.ssa*)

Laurea Specialistica/Magistrale (Diploma di Laurea – DL; Laurea di Dottore in ...) – *Dottore Magistrale*

Dottorato di Ricerca – *Dottore di Ricerca* (*dott. ric./PhD*)

AFAM sector

Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale



please see: www.quadrodeititoli.it

Italian grading scale system

single exams: 18 – 30 (con lode)

final degree: 66 – 110 (con lode)

Scale: 0-10 (6 minimum)

Historically 3 professors for each exams (3 marks from 0 to 10) and 11 for the final dissertation (11 marks from 0 to 10)

Failure to pass an exam is not indicated in the exam transcript, therefore the student must retake the exam in order to achieve a positive result. Each university can choose autonomously how many times a student may repeat an exam within the period reserved for subjects exams.

Italian credit system

The “credit” system in Italian courses was introduced because of the need to implement the policies deriving from the Bologna Process. Indeed, such a system was non-existent in preceding legislation.

Italy has two different credit systems referring to the two sectors of Italian higher education: **university credits (CFU)** for universities and **academic credits (CFA)** for Education for Art, Music and Dance (AFAM) institutions. Both systems are based on the concept of “workload” and **are equivalent to the ECTS credit system.**

The **university credit (CFU)** and **academic credit (CFA)** normally correspond to 25 hours of student work, including individual study. The average quantity of academic work performed by a full-time student in one year is by convention measured as 60 credits.

Italian QF of the EHEA

Quadro dei titoli italiani - QTI

Italian qualifications framework for the Higher Education

Website: www.quadrodeititoli.it



Non-official HE institutions awarding official qualifications

HIGHER SCHOOLS FOR LANGUAGE MEDIATORS (SCUOLE SUPERIORI PER MEDIATORI LINGUISTICI)

These higher schools are the former higher schools for interpreters and translators (SSIT) as transformed in conformity to the Ministerial Decree No. 38 of 10 January 2002. They award qualifications equivalent to all legal effects to 1st university degrees in class 3 (Class of Laurea degrees in Sciences of language mediation). Study programmes last 3 years, i.e. 180 university credits.

SPECIALISATION INSTITUTES/SCHOOLS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY (ISTITUTI DI SPECIALIZZAZIONE IN PSICOTERAPIA)

Those non-state institutes/schools offer postgraduate programmes in applied psychology and in psychotherapy which have been recognised by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research - MIUR. The main purpose of those postgraduate programmes is to provide advanced education and training to professional psychologists wishing to specialise as psychotherapists. The successful passing of the final examination, which includes the defence of a dissertation, results in the awarding of a professional qualification (e.g. Diploma in Psicoterapia Cognitiva) with the same legal validity of the postgraduate specialisation degrees (Diploma di specializzazione) in psychological fields conferred by Italian universities.

Diploma di mediatore linguistico

Higher Schools for Language Mediators - Diploma di mediatore linguistico

AIM: to provide intensive training at academic level in at least two languages other than Italian and the related cultures. Furthermore, they aim to develop specific technical and linguistic skills – both written and oral – to train students to practice the profession of language mediators

CLASSIFICATION: 1st cycle degree

ACCESS: by the Italian school leaving qualification and adequate linguistic knowledge

WORKLOAD: 180 ECTS credits

DURATION: 3 years full time

FURTHER STUDIES: this qualification allows access to Laurea Magistrale programmes in the same field of study

<http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/universita/elenco-delle-scuole>

Diploma di specializzazione in psicoterapia

Specialisation Institutes/Schools in Psychotherapy - Diploma di specializzazione in psicoterapia

AIM: to provide professional training for the profession of psychotherapist, both for individual and group therapy, following methods, theoretical and cultural approaches recognised at international level

CLASSIFICATION: 3rd cycle degree

ACCESS: by Laurea Magistrale in Psychology or in Medicine and Surgery and registration in the corresponding professional councils

DURATION: min. 4 years

<http://www.miur.it/ElencoSSPWeb/>

Lisbon Recognition Convention

The Italian context

Law 148/2002: Ratification and execution of the Convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications in the Europe Region signed in Lisbon on 11 April 1997, and provisions for the adjustment of the internal regulations

Italian ratification of the Lisbon Convention

Decree 214/2004: Regulations regarding recognition criteria and procedures for qualifications issued by foreign higher education institutions operating in Italy

Legal provisions on the accreditation of foreign universities (Article VI.5)

Presidential Decree N. 189 of 30 July 2009: Regulation on the recognition of academic qualifications, as provided by art. 5 of Law n. 148 of 11 July 2002

Recognition of academic qualifications for different purposes

Article 26 comma 3a of the Legislative Decree 251/2007, as modified by the content of Legislative decree n. 18 of 21 February, 2014

Refugee qualification recognition (Article VII)

Role of HEIs

The responsibility for foreign qualification recognition for academic purposes in Italy has been passed on to the Higher Education Institutions, who must reach a decision within 90 days, as established by Article 3 of Law n.148 of 11 July 2002.

On the subject of timelines relating to recognition procedures, Article 48 comma 2 of the Presidential Decree n.394 of 31 August, 1999 is also relevant.

It is possible to appeal a decision that withholds academic recognition as established by Article 48 comma 3 of the Presidential Decree n.394 of 31 August, 1999: “Regulation containing rules of implementation of the consolidated law of the dispositions concerning the control over immigration and rules on the condition of foreigners, as regulated by Article 1, comma 6, of the legislative decree n. 286 of 25 July, 1998”.

As established by Articles 39 and 43, comma 2, paragraph c) of the Legislative decree n. 286 of 25 July, 1998, equal treatment for Italian citizens and foreigners for access to higher education is guaranteed, as well as the prohibition of any form of discrimination for any reason.

Recognition of foreign qualifications issued in Italy

By applying **Article VI.5 of the Lisbon Recognition Convention**, Italy regulates recognition of academic qualifications issued by foreign universities operating in Italian territory, subordinating the possibility of access to recognition procedures to a procedure of accreditation specific to the foreign institution, as established by **Decree n. 214 of 26 April, 2004: “Regulation containing criteria and procedures for foreign institutes of higher education operating in Italy with a view to recognition of the qualification issued by them (implementation of Article 4 of Law n.148 of 11 July, 2002)”**.

Article VI.5

Each Party may make the recognition of higher education qualifications issued by foreign educational institutions operating in its territory contingent upon specific requirements of national legislation or specific agreements concluded with the Party of origin of such institutions.

Document adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee:
Revised Code of Good Practice in the provision of Transnational Education
June 2007 (first version in 2001)

Decree 214/2004: How does it work? (1/2)

A degree issued by a foreign HEI operating in Italy (i.e. a Branch campus) can be recognised if the above awarding foreign HEI is accredited according to the procedure established by Decree 214/2004.

Example:

An official institution X in country A has opened a Branch campus X^{IT} in Rome. Italian authorities can evaluate a degree awarded in country A by X (official foreign qualification), but in order to have the possibility to evaluate the same official foreign degree awarded by X^{IT} in Rome, X^{IT} has to be accredited in Italy by our Ministry according to Decree 214/2004.

Consequence:

The official foreign qualification (i.e. a Bachelor degrees) awarded abroad can gain access to Italian recognition procedures; the same qualification (i.e. a Bachelor degrees) awarded in Italy by the same official institution or following a study programme in Italy, cannot gain access to recognition procedures.

Decree 214/2004: How does it work? (2/2)

The accreditation procedure is made by our Ministry of Education, University and Research.

After this accreditation procedure, the foreign institution operating in Italy (i.e. a Branch campus) does not become an official Italian institution and it cannot automatically award recognised degrees in Italy: the procedure of the Decree 214/2004 is related only to the possibility to gain the access to recognition procedures: if the institution operating in Italy is not accredited, it is not possible to recognise their degrees.

NB: Each foreign institution has the possibility to open a Branch campus or to operate in Italy thanks to the Art. 2 of Law No. 4 of 14 January 1999 (and to our Constitution as well).

WHY THIS PROCEDURE???

Decree 214/2004: RATIO

We want to be sure that the quality elements and aspects of the institution operating in Italy and of each study programme taken abroad (in Italy) - usually checked by the competent quality assurance agency in the home country - are respected also in our country.

Not all quality assurance agencies use to check the quality of a HEI operating abroad or of a study programme organised in another country.

The **lack of quality aspects** is the reason why we do not proceed with any evaluation procedures for those qualifications awarded in Italy by foreign institutions not accredited according to the Decree 214/2004.

LRC concept of substantial differences

Suggestion to QA agencies: be clear on this issue on your website!!!

TNE examples (1/2)

Branch campuses

A campus established in Italy by a foreign higher education institution. It offers its own educational programmes/qualifications, irrespective of the students' provenience.

Off-shore institutions

They are autonomous institutions established in Italy but belonging, in terms of their organisation and contents, to the educational systems of other countries; some are accredited by regional or national accrediting commissions in the US, some may have articulation agreements with other educational institutions in the country to which they belong.

TNE examples (2/2)

Franchised institution/programmes

Institution A of country X entitles B (the franchised institution / organisation representative) in country Y the right to offer their own programmes and degrees to students from X, Y and / or Z (third country): A can consent B to allow the activation of full courses of study, with the consequent issue of the corresponding final degrees, validated by A always under the conditions specified in the particular franchise agreement. For what concerns the assessment by the host country Y, institution B is often not recognised in country Y, even if institution A with its degrees (issued in X) can find recognition.

International HE institutions

Official “international” HE institutions are very few and are not officially belongin to any national HE systems. Usually they are established by international organisations or they are the results of an international, bilateral or multilateral treaty.

- European University Institute – Fiesole (EU Commission)
- United Nations University – Tokyo (UN)
- Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Mediterraneennes / Istituto agronomico mediterraneo - Bari (OECD + Mediterranean countries)

CIMEA - Centro di informazione sulla mobilità e le equivalenze accademiche

Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence

Established in 1984

Staff: 10 people – **Status:** private and independent Association (acting as a public body)

Information service: more than 12.000 contacts per year

Websites: www.cimea.it / www.erasmusmundus.it / www.quadrodeititoli.it /
www.study-in-italy.it / www.rivistauniversitas.it / www.eurostudent-italia.it /
www.enic-naric.net

Evaluation service: more than 10.000 qualifications per year

Publications: BRIDGE Handbook: Joint programmes and recognition of joint degrees

CIMEA againts the mills: How to spot and counter diploma mills

Study and work in Italy: How to recognise foreign qualifications in Italy

Higher Education systems of Brazil, China, India and Russia etc.

Recent projects: RecoLatin, MEETWEB, SCAN-D, BRIDGE, INTER-HED, RecoNow, ShaloMUNDUS, Magna cum laude, ENIC-NARIC WEB etc.

National and International databases on: 50 university systems, grading scale systems, joint programmes in Italy etc.

Credential Information Service (CIS): qualification reports, statements of qualification level, certified translations



Grazie!

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