



GUIDE TO THE ITALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND ASPECTS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR THE RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES IN COLOMBIA

INTRODUCTION

The Colombian Ministry of National Education (***Ministerio de Educación Nacional - MEN***) has been working on the creation of guides of educational systems from different countries. These instruments may make the where and what to study decision-making process easier, as well as illustrate the process and requirements for the recognition of higher education degrees in Colombia.

The Office of Higher Education Quality at MEN (***Dirección de Calidad de la Educación Superior del MEN***) examined the guides of foreign educational systems which are already published on this website. In the exercise, the need of bringing the technical language of education closer to the citizen was highlighted, as well as to generating an interactive instrument. In this order of ideas, MEN, in agreement with the Colombian Association of Universities (***Asociación Colombiana de Universidades – ASCUN***), updated and redesigned these guides.

For the creation of this guide, information from various official sources was consolidated, originating a practical and relevant instrument for the citizen. Pertinent information on four central aspects is therefore included: (1) a description the higher education system; (2) the quality assurance of institutions and higher education programs; (3) the legality of higher education programs and institutions; and, 4) steps for the recognition of higher education degrees obtained abroad.

All the information here presented includes the different accessibility requirements of tools and web products, facilitating the access for people in a condition of



disability. This work was made possible by the invaluable teamwork with the National Institute for the Blind (*Instituto Nacional para Ciegos – INCI*).

1. HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ITALY

In Italy, the education system is divided as follows:

- Zero-sei anni integrative system - Zero-six-year integrated system (not mandatory).
- Servizi educativi per l'infanzia - Educational services for children (3 to 36 months old). Scuola dell'infanzia - Kindergarten (3 to 6 years old).
- Primo ciclo di istruzione - First cycle of education (compulsory), lasting eight years (6 to 14-year-old kids). Secondo ciclo di istruzione - Second cycle of education (14-19 years old).

Regarding the higher education system, various adjustments and changes were made in Italy in order to align domestic rules with the European Union level. These changes are described below:

In 1999, the higher education ministries of the signatory countries to the Bologna Declaration decided to generate a Qualification Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF for the EHEA).

This framework comprises three main cycles of higher education and presents a general description of the qualification way awarded at the end of each training cycle, in relation to the number of credits of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System - ECTS achieved and expected as learning outcome.

The Italian Ministry of Higher Education began working on this Qualification Framework, as agreed and established a procedure at European level, starting in

1999. After developing the initial proposal from the Centro Informazioni Mobilità Equivalenze Accademiche – CIMEA, a team made up of technical consultants from the Ministry and Italian experts from the Bologna Agreement, the Italian Qualifications Framework for Higher Education for 2010 (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010) was created and published.

This framework was reviewed and validated by all relevant stakeholders/actors in higher education in Italy, including:

- General Directorates of the Ministry.
- Consiglio Universitario Nazionale - National University Council.
- Consiglio Nazionale degli Studenti Universitari - National Council of University Students.
- Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università Italiane - Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities.
- Consiglio Nazionale per l'Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale - National Council of Colleges of Arts and Music.
- Social partners.
- Professional associations.

Structure of the Italian Higher Education System

Once completed the training process and having obtained the Italian school certificate or its equivalent (according to the above mentioned basic and secondary education system), anyone may apply for admission to higher education in Italy (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, 2020).

Below is the structure of the Italian Higher Education System, training options and higher education qualifications.

Within the Italian education system, different structures of academic levels can be distinguished, which are subdivided as follows: a) regular/general training qualifications; b) artistic training qualifications; and c) educational qualifications in health areas.

a) Titles of regular / general training

Technical training / Formazione tecnica

In Italy, this type of training takes place at the Istituti Tecnici Superiori - ITS (Higher Technical Institutes), schools with a high post-diploma technological specialization leading to the title of higher technician. They are the expression of a strategy based on the connection of education, training and labor policies with industrial policies.

The aim of this type of institution is to support interventions aimed at the productive sectors, with particular reference to the innovation and technology transfer needs of small and medium-sized enterprises, enabling students to obtain an Advanced Technical Diploma - Diploma di Tecnico Superiore (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, 2020).

The areas of knowledge are six, technological, and are listed below:

1. Area of energy efficiency.
2. Area of sustainable mobility.
3. Area of new technologies for life.
4. New technology area for Made in Italy.
5. Area of Innovative Technologies for Cultural Heritage and Activities - Tourism.
6. Information and Communication Technologies Area.

These areas of knowledge are determined for each ITS at the territorial level, depending on the needs and technological applications required in each context. The courses are designed through shared and participatory planning with companies

and other stakeholders (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, 2020).

The average timing of these training programs is between four (4) and six (6) semesters (1800/2000 hours), where 30% (at least) is developed in the company, generating a close link with the productive sector (through internships, which can be held abroad). Another important aspect is that, on average, 50% of the teaching plant comes from the real sector.

At the end of the training process, the Diploma of Advanced Technician - Diploma di Tecnico Superiore- is obtained, with the certification of the corresponding skills (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, 2020).

To find about the STIs of each region, endorsed by the Italian government, please check here: [Istituto Nazionale Documentazione Innovazione Recerca Ecuativa - INDIRE](#)

Laurea Triennale / Three-year Degree

Provides university students with adequate knowledge of general scientific principles, mastery of related methods and specific professional skills in areas of knowledge such as administrative and accounting sciences, engineering, social sciences, legal sciences, among other. It is classified as a First Cycle Degree and is awarded by universities recognized by the State. It has a workload/academic dedication of 180 ECTS academic credits and a lenght of three (3) years full-time.

For options of titles, go to the following link: <https://www.universitaly.it/index.php/cercacorsi/universita>

To be eligible for this type of training, you must have an Italian school certificate or a comparable foreign one (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010).

Admission to undergraduate programs may be restricted or open, or may be subject to a motivation test or entrance exam (SI - Study in Italy, 2020).

The requirements for access to this level of education include:

- It is required, as a fundamental part of the process, pre-registration request (for the specific requirements, the Embassy of Italy has available information) at the Cultural Office of the Embassy of Italy, starting from March of each year. The deadline is set by the Circular of the Italian Ministry of Education, which also regulates the whole process.
- For secondary education diplomas other than Italian (for example, the Colombian baccalaureate diploma), please check requirements at the following link: [Embajada de Italia](#).
- It is required to present the Official Certificate of Knowledge and Proficiency of the Italian Language, equivalent to 4 levels (B2, according to the Common European Framework). This certificate can be issued by: a) Foreigners University of Siena (CILS), b) Foreigners University of Perugia (CELI), c) University of "Roma Tre" (CERT-IT), o d) Dante Alighieri Society (PLIDA).

Laurea Magistrale / Master's degree

Una vez que el estudiante obtiene la Laurea, puede continuar con estudios avanzados, solicitando la Laurea Magistrale (equivalente a Maestría en Ciencias) o una maestría universitaria de primer nivel (SI - Study in Italy, 2020).

En esta formación, se encuentran dos tipos de ciclos de formación. El primero de ellos es el Laurea Magistrale, el cual pretende otorgar a los estudiantes una educación avanzada y rigurosa en sectores específicos (SI - Study in Italy, 2020). Del mismo modo, propende por facilitar conocimientos y herramientas que posibiliten la investigación avanzada. Se clasifica dentro del Grado de Segundo Ciclo, con una carga académica de 120 créditos ECTS y una duración de dos (2) años a tiempo completo (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010).

Upon completion of the Laurea Magistrale programme, the 3rd cycle / PhD programme (SI - Study in Italy, 2020) is available.

The second is the Laurea Magistrale a Ciclo Único / Master's degree of single cycle, which corresponds to trainings lasting from five (5) to six (6) years, full time, in the following areas of knowledge:

- Law (5 years)
- Architecture (5 years old)
- Pharmacy (5 years old)
- Dentistry (6 years old)
- Veterinary (5 years old)
- Medicine and Surgery (6 years)

In addition, it has an academic dedication of 300 to 360 ECTS credits, and is also considered a Second Cycle Degree (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010).

On the other hand, the following titles can be identified or recognized:

- Master Universitario di Primo Livello / First level university master's degree

This type of master's degree seeks to provide graduates with excellent education and professional training for better job opportunities. Its classification is Second Cycle Degree, with a load of 60 ECTS (academic credits) and a minimum length of one (1) year.

It should be specified that this master's degree does not allow access to doctoral and third cycle programmes since its courses do not comply with the general requirements established at the national level, but it is offered under the autonomous responsibility of each university (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010).

- Master Universitario di Secondo Livello / Master's degree at second level

In this type of master's degree, the training offers graduates advanced scientific knowledge in a given field. Its classification is of Third Cycle Degree, lasting minimum one (1) year and 60 ECTS credits. This type of master's degree does grant access to doctoral programmes (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010).

For admission to this level of studies, the requirements are the same established to access the Laura Triennale / Three-year Degree. The difference is that the interested party should not pre-register for university. It must be done according to the dates and requirements established at the university of interest.

Dottorato di Ricerca / Research doctorate

It aims at providing postgraduates with advanced training in high-specialty research. Candidates must pass a specific exam and complete original research leading to a thesis. The academic doctoral qualification is obtained after a study and research programme of at least three years under the supervision of a faculty council. The primary objective of this high-level training is to prepare candidates for the positions of university professors and research scholars, or for other careers that require advanced knowledge and research skills (SI - Study in Italy, 2020).

This level is considered the highest in terms of university education, and belongs to the Third Cycle Degree. For access to this training process, candidate must have a degree of Laurea Magistrale. It takes at least three (3) years (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010).

b) Titles in the arts

Studies in the arts and music

The artistic and musical formation, in Italy, is supported by Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale - AFAM (for its acronym in Italian), where the institutions are divided as follows (SI - Study in Italy, 2020) (QTI Quadro dei Titoli Italiani, 2010):

- Fine Arts Academies (state and legally recognized).
- Higher Design Schools (Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche - ISIA).
- Official Music Conservatories.
- Higher institutes of musical studies.
- National Academy of Dance.
- National Drama Academy.

The official list of Italian AFAM institutions is available on the following website:

<http://www.afam.miur.it/argomenti/istituzioni.aspx>

The AFAM system is also organized into three (3) training cycles, as follows:

First cycle

Includes courses of the First level of academic title / Diploma Accademico di Primo Livello, which are intended to ensure that students acquire sufficient mastery of artistic methods and techniques of specific professional and sectoral skills.

The main requirement for access is the State Examination Diploma upon completion of upper secondary school courses (Diploma di Esame di Stato conclusivo dei corsi di istruzione secondaria superiore), commonly known as "Diploma di Maturità" or an equivalent foreign qualification.

Admission depends on the approval of any entrance tests they may take at the Institution, which are designed to validate sufficient initial competencies. These titles require three (3) years of study (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020).

General characteristics of this cycle: (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020):



- Workload: 180 ECTS.
- Duration: three years.
- Further education: admission to the Diploma Accademico di Secondo Livello / Second level academic degree; Diploma Accademico di Specializzazione (I) / Specialization degree (I) y Diploma di Perfezionamento o Master (I) / Master's degree or master's degree (I).

Second cycle

This training cycle includes the courses of Academic Title of Second Level (Diploma Accademico di Secondo Livello), which enable students to obtain an advanced educational level, where they acquire a full command of artistic methods and techniques, as well as highly qualified professional skills. The duration of the training process is two (2) years (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020).

Admission to these advanced training courses depends on the First Level Academic Degree (Diploma Accademico di Primo Livello) or a comparable foreign degree. The admission process is subject to the specific requirements of the training as of the offering institution (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020).

General characteristics of the cycle: (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020):

- **Access:** with a First Level Academic Degree (Accademico di primo livello), or an equivalent foreign degree, it is also necessary that the acquired preparation be consistent and in line with the second level training being applied, which can be verified by an admission examination.
- Workload: 120 ECTS.
- Duration: two (2) years.

- Complementary studies: admission to the Diploma Accademico di Formazione alla Ricerca/Academic title of research training; Diploma Accademico di Specializzazione (II)/Academic title of specialization (II) and Diploma di Perfezionamento o Master (II)/Postgraduate or Master's degree (II).

Third cycle

This level of training includes studies related to the academic title of research training (Diploma Accademico di Formazione alla Ricerca), which aims to provide the necessary competences for the programming and implementation of research activities of higher qualification (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020).

General characteristics of the third cycle (CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche, 2020):

- Access: for a second level academic degree (Diploma Accademico di Secondo Livello), or an equivalent foreign title.
- Workload: n.a.
- Time length: minimum three (3) years.

c) Educative qualifications in health areas

Studies in the area of health

In Italy, the academic regulations of the areas of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Psychology, have been approved by the Council of Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry, Pharmacy and Medicine, and Medicine and Psychology, which were discussed and are in accordance with the 270/04 Ministerial Decree. The degrees of programs of surgery and medicine are taught in a period of six (6) years, and established in the faculties of Pharmacy and Medicine, Medicine and Dentistry, and Medicine and Psychology.

According to Council Directive 75/363 / CCE (European Economic Community - ECC), training in this area of knowledge must provide the scientific basis and practical theoretical preparation required for the exercise of the medical profession, as the level of professional, decision-making and operational autonomy, derived from the holistic approach to health problems of healthy or sick people, and the relationship with their chemical-physical, biological and social environment. For this purpose, this type of single cycle degree includes 360 ECTS credits distributed over the six (6) years of training, where at least 60 credits correspond to practical training activities aimed at the development of specific professional competences (specialties or deepening that students want to opt for). Moreover, at least six (6) credits are allocated to language training activities, in accordance with the objective of the degree programme that graduates "must have acquired the written and oral command of at least one language of the European Union other than Italian".

***Note:** Officially, health studies information is not published on their web portals. However, it is available in the different universities that have the academic offer in health areas, and has been summarized in the previous sections.*

Diploma Supplement (DS)

The Diploma Supplement (DS) is a document that complements the official qualification obtained upon completion of a higher education programme at a university or institution. The DS gives a detailed description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies carried out and completed by the student, according to a standard eight-point model, developed at the initiative of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO (Ministero dell'Istruzione, Università e della Ricerca, 2009).

It is recommended that, once the official training certificate has been completed and obtained in Italy, a request be made to the higher education institution to issue this document.

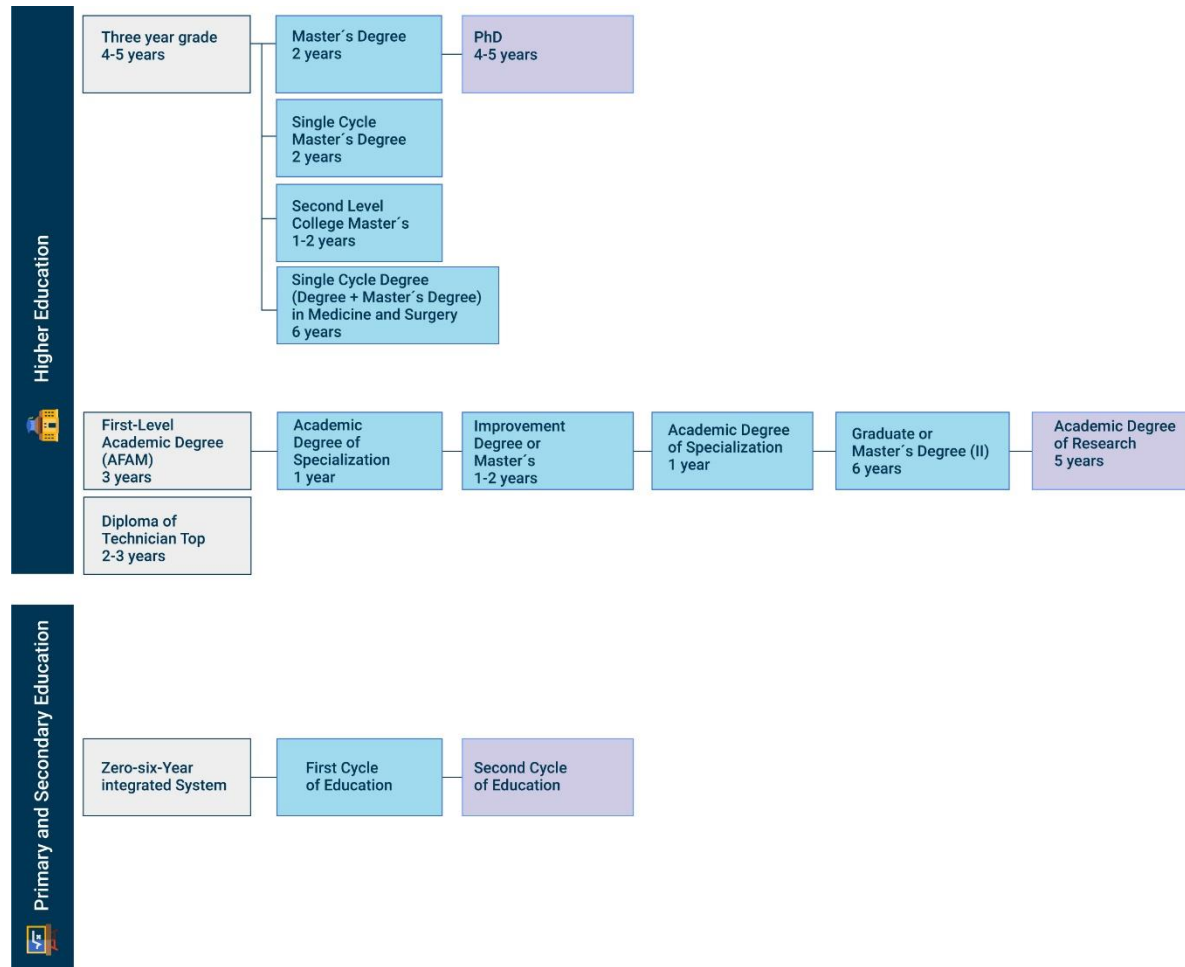


This document contains the following information:

- Diploma Supplement Programme 2013 in Italian and English.
- Information on the national higher education system (consolidated text the preparation of point 8 [document link in English, also available in Italian]).
- Descriptive graph of the Italian Higher Education System (general structure of the system).
- Notes for the compilation.



Structure of the Italian Education System



Based on the Italian University System and Studies in Italy for Artistic and Musical Training (AFAM)

It is important to mention that the Vatican City has its own educational system and differs from the previously mentioned systems. This type of training is not mentioned in this guide.

1.1 Comparative table of educational levels in Italy and Colombia

It is important to know the particularities of each of the educational levels, both in Italy and in Colombia. Therefore, the following table presents a comparative



analysis of both systems. In this comparison, reference is made to higher education levels:

- Level 8: Doctoral level or equivalent.
- Level 7: Master's level, specialization or equivalent.
- Level 6: Tertiary education degree or equivalent.
- Level 5: Short-cycle tertiary education.

Comparative table: educational levels in Italy and Colombia

CINE - UNESCO LEVELS	NAMING OF LEVELS ITALY	LENGHT IN YEARS	NAMING OF LEVELS COLOMBIA	LENGHT IN YEARS
8	Diploma Accademico di Formazione alla Ricerca / Academic title of research training	5	Doctorate	4-5
8	Dottorato di Ricerca / Research doctorate	5		
7	Diploma di Perfezionamento o Master (II)/ Postgraduate or Master's degree (II) [AFAM]	6	Specialization in Medical Surgery	1-5
7	Laurea Magistrale in Medicina e Chirurgia / Bachelor's degree (Bachelor's degree + Master's degree) in Medicine and Surgery	6		
7	Diploma Accademico di Specializzazione (II)/ Specialization degree (II) [AFAM]	1	Medical Specialization	2
7	Laurea Magistrale / master's degree	2	Master's degree	2



CINE - UNESCO LEVELS	NAMING OF LEVELS ITALY	LENGHT IN YEARS	NAMING OF LEVELS COLOMBIA	LENGHT IN YEARS
7	Laurea Magistrale a Ciclo Único / Single cycle master's degree	2		
7	Master Universitario di Secondo Livello / Master's degree at second level	1-2		
7	Master Universitario di Primo Livello / First level university master's degree	1-2		
7	Diploma di Perfezionamento o Master (I) / Master's degree(I)	1-2		
6	Diploma Accademico di Specializzazione (I) / Specialization degree (I) [AFAM]	1	University specialization	1
6	Laurea Triennale / Three-year degree	3	University Professional Degree	4-5
6	Diploma Accademico di Primo Livello / First level academic degree (AFAM)	3		
5	N/A		Technological specialization	<1
5	N/A		Technical specialization	1
5	N/A		Technologist	3
5	Diploma di Tecnico Superiore - Diploma of Senior / Higher Technician	2-3	Professional technician	2

Source: based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2013) and the link

<http://www.quadrodeititoli.it/index.aspx?IDL=2>

It is important to highlight the length of time corresponding to educational levels and their comparison with international standards:

- a) Academic credits:** In both, Colombia and Italy, the estimated time of academic activity of the student according to the academic competencies that the program is expected to develop, is expressed in units called academic credits.

Academic credit in Colombia:

An academic credit is equivalent to forty-eight (48) hours for an academic period. Institutions should determine the ratio between the direct relationship with the instructor and the independent practice of the student, justified according to the learning process and learning outcomes expected for the programme.

Institutions must describe, in academic credits, all training activities that are part of the curriculum (Decree 1330 of 2019, article 2.5.3.2.4.1).

Academic credit in Italy:

University studies are based on a system of university credits (Crediti Formativi Universitari) evaluating and measuring the workload, electivity in hours and the effort of higher education in each year (SI - Study in Italy, 2020). On the other hand, they can also measure student dedication.

- Credits represent the total workload of the student, required to pass the exams, and includes the aspects of class attendance, class work, laboratory work and individual study. It is possible to obtain credits for other training courses, projects, theses, internships, foreign languages, basic computer skills, communication and public relations training, and group work.
- One credit is equivalent to a workload of approximately 25 hours, and the annual workload for an average training course goes to, approximately, 60 credits, equivalent to 1500 hours.

- Each subject is assigned a number of credits that the student can obtain after passing the exams.

For the Bachelor's Degree (Laurea Triennale), 180 credits (CFU) are required; for the Bachelor's Degree (Laurea Magistrale), other 120 credits (CFU) must be obtained. On the other hand, for the Single Cycle Lauree Magistrali, it is required to obtain 300 to 360 credits (CFU).

For medical and surgical studies, the credit corresponds to a student commitment of 25 hours. An academic credit can be 12.5 hours of lessons, lab, or guided exercises. It also amounts to 25 hours of vocational training (in small groups with teacher guidance), or assisted study (self-study in the classroom or laboratory, with teacher assistance), activities chosen by the student, or preparation for the final exam (SAPIENZA Università di Roma, 2020).

Based on the above mentioned, the comparison is presented as an approximation of the level of study in each educational system and, similarly, of the length in years.

- a) **CINE-UNESCO:** The International Standard Classification of Education (Clasificación Internacional Normalizada de la Educación - CINE), proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO, is a reference framework for collecting, compiling and analyzing internationally comparable statistics in the field of education.

1. LEGALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND INSTITUTIONS

UNIVERSITALY is the website created and managed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, with different purposes of service to the community, which are:

- The first of these is aimed at students and families of students who are attending high school and need to choose a university. It is useful for university students, Italian or foreigners, who wish to continue their studies.
- On the other hand, the website is aimed at educational institutions, such as those at secondary level that wish to monitor their teaching processes or, in the case of universities that intend to present their academic offer in a clear and functional way.
- It seeks to provide guarantees on the endorsement and legality of the institutions that are operating and that are recognized by the Italian Government.

Through this website, in its section on Universities, the different institutions that are endorsed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, in the different areas of knowledge, levels of study and regions of the country can be found.

In the following link, the database of these institutions is available: [UNIVERSITA' > Cerca corsi](#)

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Ministry of Education, University and Research, on the basis of 2012 No. 19 Legislative Decree and the 2016 No. 987 Ministerial Decree, through the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research System (Agenzia Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario e della Ricerca - ANVUR), leads a periodic evaluation of study centres and courses for the purpose of regular accreditation.

These periodic evaluation processes are carried out by the ANVUR (for its acronym in Italian), which is responsible for analyzing the results obtained by the universities, based on the face-to-face perceptions obtained by the Commissions of Evaluating



Experts (Commissioni di Esperti della Valutazione - CEV), and culminates with the assessments assigned to each university in one of the following classes of judgment: very positive, fully satisfactory, satisfactory, conditional, unsatisfactory.

This periodic accreditation was published and implemented in 2015, and applies to all Italian universities. The accreditation period is at least five (5) years for institutions and at least three (3) years for training programmes (UNIVERSITALY, 2020).

To know the institutions that are granted with decrees of ministerial accreditation after evaluations carried out to date, it is necessary to consult the website University, in the section "Accreditamento Periodico degli Atenei" (Periodic accreditation of universities). Such information can be found at [Results of accreditation](#).

ELEMENTS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR INITIATING THE PROCESS OF VALIDATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMAS OBTAINED IN ITALY

2019 Resolution 10687 of the Ministry of National Education (***Resolución 10687 de 2019, del Ministerio de Educación Nacional***) regulates the validation of higher education diplomas awarded abroad, recognizing the quality assurance systems from the countries where the diplomas were issued.

The recognition of higher education diplomas in Colombia is part of the Quality Assurance System for Higher Education (***Sistema de Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior***), which guarantees that, as well as what happens with our national offer, that from other countries has been officially recognized by the states where such certificates were issued.

IMPORTANT: If the undergraduate degree is in law, accounting, education or the health sciences area, additional requirements must be verified. They are stipulated

in chapters one and two of 2019 Resolution 10687 by the Ministry of National Education (***Resolución 10687 de 2019 del Ministerio de Educación Nacional***), available at the following link: https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/articles-401316_archivo_pdf.pdf

Aspects to be taken into account for the process of title recognition

The title recognition of higher education diplomas issued abroad is not mandatory, except in the following cases:

1. For regulated professions where recognition is required by professional bodies.
2. For persons wishing to work in the public sector as contractors or civil officers.
3. For participating in public tenders where specifications indicate it as necessary.
4. For teachers in public education institutions to be properly graded.

In order to study in Italy and, subsequently, get recognition of the title in Colombia, the following must be taken into account:

1. Studies must take place in an institution of higher education recognized by the State of Italy.
2. Have the respective apostille or legalization chain in the documents.

In order to begin the recognition process in Colombia, the following should be taken into account:

1. Studies must take place at a legal higher education institution in the home country.
2. Have the apostille, since Italy is a party to the Hague Convention.
3. **To which documents is the apostille certification process necessary?** This process must be carried out for notarial, judicial, civil status, certificates and titles of studies carried out in Italian institutes or universities (Ambasciata d'Italia Bogotá, 2020).

4. **Apostille:** The 1961 October 5th Convention, abolishing the requirement of legalization of foreign public documents (1961 HCCH Apostille Convention), facilitates the use of public documents abroad. The purpose of such agreement is to abolish the traditional legalization requirement and replace the often lengthy and costly legalization process with the issuance of a single Apostille Certificate by a competent authority at the place where the document was issued (HCCH - Hague Conference on Private International Law, 2020).

In Italy, the competent authority is:

- For judicial documents, civil status documents and notarized acts, the prosecutor of the courts of the jurisdiction in which the documents were issued.
- For all other administrative documents provided for in the convention, the prefect with territorial competence. For the Aosta Valley, the President of the Region and, for the provinces of Trente and Bolzano, the Government Commissioner).

The different validation criteria must be taken into account, according to the programme and the higher education institution that grants it.

When a diploma has been issued by a higher education institution in Italy, and recognition of the title is required, the following frequently asked questions might help:

- When is it necessary to recognize a foreign higher education degree? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidations/Convalidations-Education-Superior/350670:Know-the-process>



- What is the difference between homologation and recognition? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>
-
- In case of doubt, who can help? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>
- What are the steps for the recognition of higher education diplomas? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.gov.co/ficha-tramites-y-servicios/T366>
- What are the costs of the process of validation of higher education diplomas? The answer to this question can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidations/Convalidations-Education-Superior/350995:Cost-and-duration>

In case of more questions regarding the process, the following link might help:
<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/convalidaciones/Convalidaciones-Educacion-Superior/355353:Preguntas-Frecuentes>

CONSULTED SOURCES

Ambasciata d'Italia Bogotá. (13 de 11 de 2020). *Ambasciata d'Italia Bogotá*.
Obtenido de Apostille:
https://ambbogota.esteri.it/ambasciata_bogota/it/informazioni_e_servizi/servizi_consolari/stato_civile/legalizzazioni.html

CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche. (18 de 11 de 2020). *CIMEA - Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche*. Obtenido de Qualifications of the AFAM system:



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