

The Italian University System

The university system is organized in 3 academic cycles: the 1st cycle is the equivalent of a **Bachelor's degree (Laurea triennale)** and lasts 3 years. This Bachelor's grants access to a **Master's degree (Laurea Magistrale)** which is considered the 2nd cycle, and gives access to 3rd cycle **PhD programmes (Dottorato di Ricerca)**. In addition to the mentioned degree sequence, the system offers other degree programmes within the 2nd and 3rd academic cycles.

Main types of degree programmes

DEGREE PROGRAMMES	TITLE REQUIRED	DEGREE EARNED	ECTS/CREDITS	YEARS
First cycle	High school Diploma	Bachelor's degree	180	3
Second cycle	Bachelor's degree Diploma	Master's degree	120	2
Long single-cycle	High school Diploma	Master's degree	360	5+
Short specialisation (Master I level)	Bachelor's degree Diploma	Specialisation certificate	Minimum 60	1-2
Short specialisation (Master II level)	Master's degree Diploma	Specialisation certificate	Minimum 60	1-2
Specialisation programme	Master's degree Diploma	Specialisation Degree	60-300	1-5
Third cycle	Master's degree Diploma	Doctoral degree		3+

- **FIRST CYCLE** degree programme – Bachelor's degree (Laurea triennale)

It gives general scientific methods and contents, as well as specific professional knowledge.

- **SECOND CYCLE** degree programme – Master's degree (Laurea magistrale)

It provides high qualification in highly specialized areas.

- **LONG SINGLE-CYCLE** degree programme – “Laurea Magistrale a ciclo unico”

These degree programmes provide a master's degree after a single cycle of 5 or 6 years in various disciplines regulated by special European protocols (Medicine, Veterinary medicine, Law, Architecture, etc.).

- **SHORT SPECIALISATION** programme – “Master di I livello” e “Master di II livello”

It is a postgraduate programme of 1st and 2nd level. It lasts 1 or 2 years and it focuses on specific subjects. It provides practical professional and specialist skills for the placement in the job market.

- **DOCTORAL** degree programme (PhD) – “Dottorato di ricerca”

It is the highest academic degree. Aimed at developing the professional competence required to

carry out high-level research in private companies, public entities, universities and research centres.

Students can apply to an Italian University only if they have a qualification of secondary education awarded after a **study period of at least 12 years**. If the educational qualification has been awarded in less than 12 years, it has to be accompanied by the academic certification of the examinations taken or a post-secondary title to compensate for any missing years of secondary education.

Grading system

Exams are graded according to a scale ranging from 0 to 30, with 18 as a passing mark. A *cum laude* may be added to the highest grade (30 e lode), as a special distinction.

Minimum passing grade	18
Adequate	19-23
Satisfactory	24-26
Good	27-28
Very good	29-30
Outstanding	30 <i>cum laude</i>

The minimum passing mark for the final degree is 66/110, whereas the maximum is 110/110. For outstanding students degrees may be awarded a *cum laude* distinction.

The Credit System (ECTS)

The European Credit Transfer System is used to measure the student's workload of every single course. Credits measure the workload of class attendance, classwork, laboratory work and individual study. It is possible to obtain credits for other training courses, or project works, group works, theses, internships, knowledge of foreign languages or basic computing skills, and training in communication and public relations.

One credit corresponds to a workload of about 25 hours and the yearly workload for an average study course corresponds to about 60 credits.

Each subject is assigned a number of credits which the student obtains when s/he passes the final examination.