



APPENDIX 2 - Recognition of foreign degrees and transfer of credits earned abroad

Amended by resolution of the Academic Senate dated 12 December 2023.

The university is responsible for reviewing degrees and university credits earned abroad, for the purposes of admitting students into a university degree programme, placing them on an accelerated track, or awarding a degree.

A) Admission into a study programme of the University of Milan with a foreign qualification

Requirements

1. To be admitted to a **Bachelor's or single-cycle Master's degree programme**, applicants must hold an upper secondary school diploma awarded at the end of at least 12 years of schooling and allowing them to enrol in a university programme analogous to the Italian one within the foreign education system in question. Where a local school system contemplates, instead, ten or eleven years of schooling, the student must make up the missing years by following the *Procedures for students applying for a student visa for a higher-education programme*, as published each year by the Ministry of University and Research (MUR) in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For some international upper secondary school diplomas, additional prerequisites apply. The list of these diplomas and the prerequisites appear in Annex 1 of the *Procedures for students applying for a student visa for a higher-education programme*, as cited *supra*.
2. To be admitted to a **Master's degree programme**, applicants must hold a first-cycle university degree as defined by the Bologna Process Qualifications Framework (level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework – EQF), obtained from a higher education institution and allowing students to enrol in a degree programme of the following cycle (second cycle of the Bologna Process Qualifications Framework / level 7 of the EQF) in the same country where it was issued. Moreover, the degree must bear no “substantial difference” as defined by the Lisbon Recognition Convention and as understood by the evaluation methodology adopted by the Italian ENIC-NARIC Centre (CIMEA). Additionally, applicants must meet the background knowledge and curricular requirements for the programme.
3. To be admitted to a **doctoral programme (PhD)**, applicants must hold a second-cycle university degree (EQF level 7) allowing them to enrol in a third-cycle university programme (EQF level 8) in the same country where it was issued. Moreover, the degree must bear no “substantial difference”, as defined by the Lisbon Recognition Convention and as understood by the evaluation methodology adopted by the Italian ENIC-NARIC Centre (CIMEA). Additionally, applicants must meet the background knowledge and curricular requirements for the programme.

Documents

Upon matriculating, students must produce the following documents (originals and one copy):

a) Bachelor's and single-cycle Master's degree programmes

- Upper secondary school diploma legalised by the competent authorities of the issuing country, with an official translation into Italian;
Declaration of Value (*dichiarazione di valore in loco*) issued by the Italian Embassy in the country where the diploma was awarded, or **CIMEA statement of comparability** or statement of validity issued by ENIC-NARIC centres;



- Certificate of enrolment in the university along with a transcript of records, or a post-secondary diploma earned through a non-university programme, or a certificate of completion for a “foundation course” if the local system contemplates fewer than 12 years of pre-university education;
- Certificate of the Higher Education Entrance Examination, if contemplated in the student’s home country;
- Valid residence permit (only for non-EU citizens);
- Tax ID number;
- ID.

b) Master’s degree programmes

- Upper secondary school diploma legalised by the competent authorities of the issuing country, with an official translation into Italian;
- Bachelor’s degree (first cycle or EQF level 6) legalised by the competent authorities of the issuing country, with an official translation into Italian;
- Declaration of Value (*dichiarazione di valore in loco*) issued by the Italian Embassy in the country where the qualification was obtained or CIMEA statement of comparability or statement of validity issued by ENIC-NARIC centres;
- Valid residence permit (only for non-EU citizens);
- Tax ID number;
- ID.

c) Doctoral programmes (PhD)

- Master’s degree (second cycle or EQF level 7) legalised by the competent authorities of the issuing country, with an official translation into Italian;
- Declaration of Value (*dichiarazione di valore in loco*) issued by the Italian Embassy in the country where the qualification was obtained or CIMEA statement of comparability or statement of validity issued by ENIC-NARIC centres;
- Valid residence permit (only for non-EU citizens);
- Tax ID number;
- ID.

Upper secondary school diplomas, university or other post-secondary certifications, and first-cycle and second-cycle degree certificates will also be accepted in French, English, German, and Spanish (unless the rules for the specific degree programme require otherwise).

The legalised translation of the university degree and the related Declaration of Value / statement of validity may be substituted by a Diploma Supplement issued by any university falling within the European Higher-Education Area.

In addition to these documents, **non-EU applicants who reside abroad** must also submit:

- their residence permit receipt;
- their student visa;
- any Italian language certifications.

Additional documents may be required for enrolment, as specified in the call for applications of the degree programme in question, or if the competent offices of the University deem it necessary.

B) Recognition of an academic degree earned abroad

The goal of the recognition process is the award of an Italian qualification having legal value within our system.



Requirements

The foreign degree for which a student is applying for recognition must have been issued by a university or other university-level institution which is an official part of the education system in question.

In the case of Bachelor's and Master's degrees, the foreign degree must be the final academic qualification of a first-cycle or second-cycle programme (respectively), as defined by the Bologna Process Qualifications Framework (level 6 or 7 of the European Qualifications Framework – EQF). Moreover, the foreign degree programme must be comparable to an Italian *Laurea*, *Laurea Magistrale* or *Laurea Magistrale a ciclo unico* in terms of nature, level, duration, qualification required for admission and academic requirements to earn the degree, and must allow students to enrol in a programme of the following cycle within the foreign education system in question.

For doctoral programmes, the foreign degree must be the final academic qualification of a third-cycle programme as defined by the Bologna Process Qualifications Framework (EQF level 8), which must be comparable to an Italian *Dottorato di Ricerca* in terms of nature, level, duration, qualification required for admission and academic requirements to earn the degree.

The degree analogous to the foreign degree for which recognition is sought must be contemplated within the University of Milan's academic offerings for that specific academic year. Recognition of a foreign degree may only be requested for programmes that have been fully available at our University through their last programme year.

Direct recognition of a first-cycle degree (EQF level 6) shall in no case be granted to students who were admitted into the foreign university after fewer than 12 years of schooling, as any exams taken during the years of schooling needed for admission into Italian universities cannot be considered.

The application for recognition of a Master's degree necessarily implies an assessment of the first-cycle degree (EQF level 6), or the initial course of studies for any single-cycle programme, to ensure that the minimum requirements for admission to the Master's degree programme, as set by the University, have been satisfied.

The application for recognition of a doctoral degree (PhD) necessarily implies an assessment of the second-cycle degree (EQF level 7), or the whole course of studies for any single-cycle programme, to ensure that the minimum requirements for admission to PhD programmes, as set by the University, have been satisfied.

One must meet the language-proficiency requirements of the study programme for which recognition is sought.

Foreign degrees earned at the end of study programmes attended mainly in Italy may be recognised, directly or partially, only if the issuing institution operating in Italy has been accredited pursuant to the provisions of Italian Decree no. 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 no. 148 of 11 July 2002)", which implemented article VI.5 of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Procedure and deadlines for submitting an application for degree recognition

In order to secure the recognition of a foreign academic degree, applicants must submit an online application in the dedicated period, as set out from year to year on the international-degree-



recognition page of the University's website. The application must be accompanied by the documents listed below.

Non-EU citizens who reside abroad must also abide by all student-visa application requirements specific to higher education.

Applications for recognition submitted pursuant to specific international agreements must comply with the terms and conditions, if any, set forth in such agreements.

Documentation required to apply for foreign degree recognition

For the purposes of recognition of **first-cycle and second-cycle degrees**, the following documents are required:

1. Upper secondary school diploma;
2. University degree, with an official translation into Italian and a Declaration of Value, or **CIMEA statement of comparability** or statement of validity issued by ENIC-NARIC centres;
3. Transcript of records issued by the foreign university (including all exams taken and the respective dates, grades awarded, and number of credits/hours), translated and legalised;
4. Detailed syllabi of all exams taken, printed on university letterhead, embossed with the university's seal and translated;
5. Valid ID;
6. Tax ID number;
7. Residence permit (for non-EU citizens only).

For the purposes of recognition of **doctoral degrees (PhD)**, the following documents are required:

1. Second-cycle degree (EQF level 7) that granted the applicant admission to the foreign PhD programme, with an official translation into Italian and a Declaration of Value, or **CIMEA statement of comparability** or a statement of validity issued by ENIC-NARIC centres;
2. Doctoral degree (third-cycle degree, EQF level 8), with an official translation into Italian and a Declaration of Value, or **CIMEA statement of comparability** or statement of validity issued by ENIC-NARIC centres;
3. Statement/certificate issued by the foreign higher education institution and specifying the contents of the PhD programme, the programme duration in years, and the activities conducted by the PhD student to earn the final degree. The statement/certificate must be translated and legalised;
4. Copy of the doctoral dissertation and/or link to the University's or Library's repository where the approved version of the dissertation is stored and available for consultation, or contact details of the office to which access to the dissertation should be requested, for verification purposes.
5. Valid ID;
6. Tax ID number;
7. Residence permit (for non-EU citizens only).

Upper secondary school diplomas, university or other post-secondary certifications, and first-cycle, second-cycle and doctoral degree certificates will also be accepted in French, English, German, and Spanish (unless the rules for the specific degree programme require otherwise).

The legalised translation of the university degree and the related Declaration of Value / statement of validity may be substituted by a Diploma Supplement issued by any university falling within the European Higher-Education Area.

In addition to the documentation already submitted, applicants shall also produce any other documents that the University may request from them for the purpose of evaluating the foreign degree, such as: translations, legalisations, Diploma Supplements, exam certificates, statements issued by the Italian ENIC-NARIC Centre (CIMEA), Declarations of Value issued by the competent



diplomatic missions, or any other certificates that may be of use for the purpose of verifying the details of the foreign degree.

Procedures and deadlines for assessing degrees

Within 15 days from submission of the application, the competent office of the University shall check compliance with the formal requirements and notify the applicant of one of the following outcomes:

- the application has been accepted and is under review;
- the application must be supplemented with additional documents, by the deadline established for the submission of applications for recognition;
- the application has been rejected.

Rejection shall be based on the concept of "substantial difference", both in consideration of the elements of the corresponding foreign and Italian qualifications (nature, level, duration), and also taking into consideration the structural elements of the foreign system in question on the basis of the general organisation of the Italian higher education system (Italian Law no. 148 of 11 July 2002, "Ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, approved in Lisbon on 11 April 1997, and regulations for adaptation in national law").

Once the application has been accepted, the competent office shall forward the documentation to the instructors charged with the academic assessment. An ad-hoc committee, appointed by the Academic Board of the study programme or the Faculty of Instructors of the PhD programme, will review the documentation, and decide on the outcome of the student's application. The outcome of the academic assessment must be memorialised in a resolution passed by the committee within 90 days after all documents have been received.

Should direct recognition be denied, such decision shall be duly justified by the committee tasked with reviewing the application, and forwarded by the competent office to the applicant.

Assessment results

The procedure for reviewing the application for recognition of a **Bachelor's or Master's degree** may conclude with direct, partial or denied recognition.

Direct recognition (also known as "equipollence") shall only be granted where the foreign educational pathway is entirely congruent with the one needed to earn the equivalent Italian degree.

For this recognition to be granted, the foreign degree must have **all** the following characteristics:

- it must be an official qualification of the foreign higher education system in question, awarded by an official institution of the foreign higher education system;
- it must carry the same academic rights in the foreign higher education system in question;
- it must present corresponding elements of nature and academic discipline as the Italian qualification, in terms of duration, academic nature and/or research elements, and academic requirements to earn the degree;
- there must be an Italian *Laurea* or *Laurea Magistrale* pertaining to the same academic field and comparable to the foreign degree in terms of both type of degree and academic subject.

The committee is also entitled to rule on the obsolescence of the knowledge and skills acquired by the applicant.



In the case of direct recognition, the applicant will be awarded an Italian academic degree equivalent to the one earned abroad, by Rector's Decree. No final degree mark will be indicated, in such cases.

Likewise, no final degree mark will be indicated for any degree recognised as equipollent by virtue of a bilateral agreement, unless a conversion of the mark is explicitly contemplated in the agreement itself.

For any partial recognition, the applicant is given the option to enrol on an accelerated track within a specific degree programme considered equivalent to the one completed abroad. The year of admission, and the credits transferred, are determined based on criteria established by the Academic Regulations of the study programme.

In some cases, the recognition is conditional upon passing an entrance exam. Degree programmes contemplating this procedure appear in the page dedicated to international-degree recognition on the University's website. Moreover, admission to a programme with capped enrolment other than in Year I is conditional upon the availability of space in the programme. In such cases, an assessment of academic potential is made. The final degree mark may only be calculated when the student has earned at least 2/3 of their university credits (CFU), as contemplated for the degree programme for which they have requested recognition, at the University of Milan.

With respect to each exam taken abroad, the committee's resolution shall specify: the original name and the name of the corresponding exam included in the study plan of the degree programme of our University, the subject area (*Settore Scientifico-Disciplinare* – SSD), and the corresponding credits and marks. This applies to both direct and partial recognition.

The procedure for reviewing the application for recognition of a **doctoral degree** may conclude with direct recognition or with a conditional award of the degree.

Direct recognition shall only be granted where the educational pathway completed abroad is entirely congruent with the one needed to earn the equivalent Italian degree.

For this recognition to be granted, the foreign degree must have **all** the following characteristics:

- it must be an official third-cycle qualification (PhD) of the foreign higher education system in question, awarded by an official institution of the foreign higher education system;
- it must carry the same academic rights in the foreign higher education system in question;
- it must present corresponding elements of nature and academic discipline as the Italian qualification, in terms of duration, academic nature and/or research elements, and academic requirements to earn the degree;
- there must be an Italian *Dottorato di Ricerca* pertaining to the same academic field and comparable to the foreign degree in terms of both type of degree and academic subject.

The committee is also entitled to rule on the obsolescence of the knowledge and skills acquired by the applicant.

In the case of direct recognition, the applicant will be awarded an Italian academic degree equivalent to the one earned abroad, by Rector's Decree. In no case may a final degree mark be indicated, not even for doctoral degrees recognised as equipollent by virtue of bilateral agreements.

In the case of a conditional award, to earn the corresponding Italian qualification (*Dottorato di Ricerca*), the applicant will have to fulfil certain academic requirements, with regard to the learning outcomes and specific objectives of the Italian PhD contemplated within the academic offerings of the University of Milan.



Language-proficiency requirements

One must meet the language-proficiency requirements of the study programme for which recognition is sought. Applicants who fall short of such proficiency shall be assigned an additional learning requirement, as contemplated for the study programme; they shall not be awarded the Italian degree until they fulfil such additional learning requirement.

Tuition and fees

Applicants are required to pay a non-refundable administrative fee (as set each year by the *Regulations on Tuition and Fees, Waivers and Scholarships*) to have their application reviewed.

In the case of direct recognition, in order to receive their Bachelor's, Master's or PhD parchment, students must submit a request to the Student Office of their degree programme or to the Student Office for PhD Programmes, and pay the fee specified in the above-mentioned Regulations.

Special cases

Further provisions are established in the Regulations on the recognition of degrees in Medicine and Surgery, Dental Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, respectively.

C) Recognition of the student's academic career at a foreign institution

In order to receive transfer credits, students who matriculate into the University of Milan and already hold a foreign degree or have attended a foreign university must submit an application for their prior university career to be reviewed.

Requirements

The credits or degree for which the student is applying for transfer credits must have been earned from a foreign university or other university-level institution which is an official part of the education system in question.

Should the student have been admitted to the foreign university after fewer than 12 years of schooling, any exams taken during the period needed for admission into an Italian university (i.e. during the 12 years contemplated for primary and secondary school) will not be considered.

Application procedure and deadlines

Applications for recognition of a prior academic career completed abroad must be submitted within 3 months after matriculation, pursuant to the procedures set forth on the dedicated webpage of the University's website.

Students who do not submit such application within the mentioned time frame waive the right to submit one thereafter.

Documentation required to apply for recognition of a prior academic career

For the purposes of recognition of a prior academic career, the following documents are required:



1. Transcript of records issued by the foreign university (including all exams taken and the respective dates, grades awarded, and number of credits/hours), translated and legalised;
2. Detailed syllabi of all exams taken, printed on university letterhead, embossed with the university's seal and translated (for any exceptions, please see the University website);

Assessment of the student's prior academic career: procedures and deadlines

Within 15 days from submission of the application, the competent office of the University shall check compliance with the formal requirements and notify the applicant of one of the following outcomes:

- the application has been accepted and is under review;
- the application must be supplemented with additional documents, within 3 months after matriculation;
- the application has been rejected.

Rejection shall be based on the concept of "substantial difference", both in consideration of the elements of the corresponding foreign and Italian qualifications (nature, level, duration), and also taking into consideration the structural elements of the foreign system in question on the basis of the general organisation of the Italian higher education system (Italian Law no. 148 of 11 July 2002, "Ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, approved in Lisbon on 11 April 1997, and regulations for adaptation in national law").

Once the application has been accepted, the competent office shall forward the documentation to the instructors charged with the academic assessment. An ad-hoc committee, appointed by the Academic Board, will review the documentation, and decide on the outcome of the student's application. The committee is also entitled to rule on the obsolescence of the knowledge and skills acquired by the applicant.

The outcome of the academic assessment must be memorialised in a resolution passed by the committee within 30 days of document receipt.

Assessment results

With respect to each exam taken abroad, the committee's resolution shall specify: the original name and the name of the corresponding exam included in the study plan of the degree programme of our University, the subject area (*Settore Scientifico-Disciplinare – SSD*), and the corresponding credits and marks. The year of admission and the credits transferred are determined based on criteria established by the Academic Regulations for the degree programme.

After being notified of the outcome of the academic assessment, the applicant may:

1. Acknowledge and accept the outcome;
2. Reject the outcome. Should the outcome be rejected, the student shall matriculate without any transfer credit; no application for recognition of the prior academic career may be submitted thereafter.

Should the student accept the outcome, the Student Office for the degree programme in question will add transfer credits to the student's academic record.



Marks conversion

To convert the marks of any exam, the University uses the following marks-conversion system, as established by MIUR (Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research) and as copied *infra*, as well as the international databases for the ENIC-NARIC centres.

$$\text{Mark} = M - M_{\min} / M_{\max} - M_{\min} * (I_{\max} - I_{\min}) + I_{\min}$$

M = Mark to be converted

M_{min} = Minimum mark needed for passing at the home university

M_{max} = Highest available mark at the home university

I_{min} = Minimum mark needed for passing at an Italian university (=18/30) I_{max}

= Highest available mark at an Italian university (=30/30)

For grades provided on a qualitative scale, the following conversion table is used:

Grade to be converted	Mark
A	30
B	28
C	26
D	23
E	18

In any case where mark conversion is not possible, the exam will be denoted "passed" on the student's academic record.