



USI Accademia di architettura Mendrisio

Fact Sheet optional Italian language courses

The USI Università della Svizzera italiana is a multilingual university with a strong international orientation, in fact its students come from at least eighty different countries.

Italian is the third language in Switzerland and 350.000 inhabitants of Canton Ticino uses it as its main language. Being USI the only University of Italian language and culture in the Swiss Accademia, since 2006 it is particularly committed in the organization of Italian language courses, both intensive and semestral.

The programme is designed for USI students and USI professionals at all levels who want to develop and improve their practical Italian skills.

Each year more than 350 USI students attend the Italian language courses and more than 200 obtain the Certificate of attendance.

WHY STUDY ITALIAN

- There is an increase in need for communicative skills in a second or third language.
- According to the European Commission, Italian is the fourth most commonly used language in EU.
- Multilingualism is a central issue in Switzerland.
- Italian is a minority language in Switzerland. Only 8,1% of the Swiss populations speaks Italian.
- Switzerland and canton Ticino has long been a magnet for the tourism industry.
- Italy is the country with the highest number of UNESCO sites in the world and a very popular destination for travelers.
- Many literary authors known worldwide are Italian writers.
- The 1980s saw a celebration in the Swiss architecture of the movement Ticino Tendenza. It represents a unique symbiosis of rationalism, modernism, awareness of history and reference to landscape.

PARTICIPANTS

All non Italian-speaking students, researchers, assistants, professors and staff studying or working at Università della Svizzera italiana are most welcome to take the free of charge Italian language courses offered every semester. As class size is an important factor in language learning it is on the other hand not possible to admit family members, friends or students studying in other higher Institutions.

LECTURERS

USI value good teaching. All lecturers have a long teaching experience and are highly motivated to make the learning experience as pleasant as possible favoring friendly and stimulating contacts with all participants.

COURSES

All courses are designed accordingly to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. All four skills are taught (reading, writing, listening and speaking) with particular emphasis on grammar in the lower levels A1-B2 and particular emphasis on oral communication and reading authentic texts in the higher levels B2-C1.

→ Detailed information on courses from level A1 until level B1/B2 at Accademia di Mendrisio:

www.arc.usi.ch/en/academy/general-information/non-parli-italiano

→ Detailed information on courses from level A1 until level C1 at Campus Lugano:

www.usi.ch/italian_course

ORGANIZATION INTENSIVE COURSES

Autumn Semester, Accademia di Mendrisio: three intensive courses are offered two weeks prior to the semester start at absolute (A1), elementary (A2) and intermediate level (B1).

Spring Semester, Lugano Campus: three intensive courses are offered two weeks prior to the semester start at absolute (A1), elementary (A2) and intermediate level (B1).

COURSE LOAD INTENSIVE COURSES

Tuition involves six hours per day taught over a period of two weeks from Monday to Friday from 09:00 until 12:30 and from 14:00 until 15:30.

The intensive courses encourage to get fully involved in the language. The morning class focus on grammar and writing whereas the afternoon class focus on improving listening and speaking skills, expanding vocabulary and developing confidence.

ORGANIZATION SEMESTRAL COURSES

General Italian courses:

The courses develop grammatical accuracy and builds vocabulary with a communicative teaching method incorporating reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

The courses held at Accademia di Mendrisio are divided into three levels: beginners 1 (A1-A2), intermediate 1 (B1) and intermediate 2 (B1-B2).

The courses held in Lugano are divided into seven levels: absolute beginner (introductory Italian A1), beginners 1 (A1-A2), beginners 2 (A2), intermediate 1 (B1), intermediate 2 (B1-B2), upper-intermediate (B2) and advanced (B2-C1).

Students willing to study the Italian language at B2 or C1 level are welcome to enroll in Lugano at the following link:

www.usi.ch/presentazione-studiare/italian_course.htm

To encourage participants to make rapid progress through active class participation we do our best to guarantee small group sizes especially in the higher levels B2 and C1.

COURSE LOAD SEMESTRAL COURSES

Our aim is to provide participants with the opportunity to acquire as much knowledge of the language as possible in a corresponding amount of time. Tuition involves two hours per week taught over a period of thirteen or fourteen weeks (in total 26 or 28 hours per semester depending from the course). Additionally, all courses requires at least two hours of individual study each week.

INDIVIDUAL STUDY

Each week students will be offered self-study exercises based on the areas of grammar which the class has focused on. Depending from the teacher and level, participants will also be encouraged to read short chapters of continuous reading, produce pieces of writing or prepare presentations. The student would be expected to perform at least two hours of homework outside of class every week.

ENTRANCE TEST

All higher level courses require knowledge of material covered in other courses. A definitive decision about admission can consequently be taken only after the entrance test organized the first day. The lecturer will address participants who chose the wrong level to the correct one after the first lesson.

EXEMPTION

All students who passed the exam of the lower level intensive course held before the start of the semester are exempted and are automatically admitted in the higher level semestral course. All other students have to take the entrance test even after successful completion of the final exam of the previous course.

LATE ARRIVAL

Since the entrance test is compulsory, students have to take the course starting from the first week. Exceptionally a new examination date can be scheduled for those students who experience delays in their arrival plans due to unexpected problems.

The latest possible access in the classes is however the 1st of October in Autumn Semesters and 1st of March in Spring Semesters.

FINAL EVALUATION TEST

Regular examinations, midterm and final, are held each semester. The results are strictly informative (passing or failing) and give the chance to the teaching staff to recommend following courses.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- A regular and active attendance is required once admitted. In order to benefit fully from the course, a 100% attendance is recommended.
- Participation in classroom activities is the basis for all course work together with independent learning and homework. For this reason, though three absences during the semester are excusable, not more than three consecutive absences are ac-

cepted. It is the participant's responsibility to always notify in advance any absence via email to the teacher and ask about assignments and homework.

- For the good quality of the courses, any student wishing to drop the class once admitted should contact the teacher as soon as possible.

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

All students who attended at least the 75% of the course obtain a Certificate of Attendance. The attendance certificate will state the name of the participant and the level of the course but not the grade.

ECTS POINTS AND FINAL COURSE GRADE

Italian language courses do not count towards a degree at Università della Svizzera italiana. Only Swiss, European (SEMP) and International exchange students are entitled to receive ECTS points after having passed a test and attended at least the 75% of the course.

2 ECTS points are assigned for the Intensive courses and 1 ECTS point for the Semestral courses. At USI all examinations on official courses are graded on the 1 to 10 scale. For language courses the evaluation is however expressed by a binary system (Pass or Fail).

COURSE REGISTRATION

Participants should use the self-assessment Grid of the European Language Portfolio before registration. Central to the European Language Portfolio are the six levels of communicative proficiency defined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The levels are summarised for the five skills of listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and writing. Based upon the result, students can choose the most appropriate course level. Self-assessment Grid: www.arc.usi.ch/en/academy/general-information/non-parli-italiano

The application is online. Registration begins in March (for Autumn semesters) and in October (for Spring semesters). For the good organization of the programme, students should register only if seriously interested.

Online registration: www.arc.usi.ch/en/academy/general-information/non-parli-italiano

CONFIRMATION OF ENROLMENT

The online application enrolls participants automatically. A detailed informative email confirming the enrolment will however be sent few days before the beginning of each course. In case of unexpected withdrawal, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the administration by writing to italiancourses@usi.ch as soon as possible.

COURSE BOOKS

Elementary level A1-A2:

Marco Mezzadri, "Italiano Plus A1-A2", Volume 1, Bonacci editore, anno di pubblicazione 2015, ISBN 9788820108816

Intermediate level B1:

Marco Mezzadri, "Italiano Plus A2-B1", Volume 2, Bonacci editore, 2015, ISBN 9788820109981

The books are available in "Libreria dei ragazzi", Via Gismonda 9 in Mendrisio.

Extra materials are chosen by the teacher depending on the needs of the class.

GRADED READERS

Graded readers or 'readers' are books that have had the language level simplified to help second language learners read them. The language is graded for vocabulary, complexity of grammar structures and also by the number of words.

A collection of graded readers from level A1 until level B2 can be borrowed in the Biblioteca universitaria di Lugano.

SUGGESTED GRAMMAR BOOK

Fabia Gatti, Stella Peyronel; "*Grammatica in contesto. Strutture e temi di italiano per stranieri*". Loescher editore, 2006.

COURSE FEEDBACK

We value your opinion. All participants have the opportunity to give general feedback on the courses either by filling out an evaluation form in class at the end of the semester or by speaking to the teacher.

OFFICIAL ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY PLIDA

Università della Svizzera italiana also offers an official Italian language proficiency test in Lugano twice a year in cooperation with *Società Dante Alighieri* in Italy. The PLIDA Certificate attests competence in Italian as a foreign language according to a scale of six levels.

The levels advance from A1 to C2 in progression of difficulty and correspond to the levels established by the Council of Europe.

For more information, please visit the webpage:

www.usi.ch/en/esami_plida

ITALIAN LANGUAGE COURSES IN FIGURES

Academic Year 2013-2014, Università della Svizzera italiana
Total number of students enrolled in the Italian language courses: 358 participants.

Total number of students who obtained the Certificate of attendance: 212 participants.

Academic Year 2014-2015, Università della Svizzera italiana

Total number of students enrolled in the Italian language courses: 398 participants.

Total number of students who obtained the certificate of attendance: 224 participants.

CONTACT

For any issue relating to the Italian language courses please write to

Lugano campus

italiancourses@usi.ch.

Coordinator: Susanne Stigen Pesca

Office: Room 222, Main Building, Via Buffi 13, 6904 Lugano

Mendrisio campus

fabiana.bernasconi@usi.ch

Coordinator: Fabiana Bernasconi

Office: Ground floor Villa Argentina, Largo Bernasconi 2, 6850 Mendrisio