

Higher Education in Art, Music and Dance (Alta formazione artistica, musicale e coreutica – Afam)

Higher Education in Art, Music and Dance (*Afam*) is part of the Italian higher education system and includes:

- Academies of Fine Arts (*Accademie di belle arti*): national (state) and legally recognized institutions
- Music Conservatories (*Conservatori di musica*) and Institutions of Musical Higher Education considered legally equivalent to public institutions (*Istituzioni musicali pareggiate*)
- Higher Schools of Design (*Istituti superiori per le industrie artistiche*)
- National Academy of Dance (*Accademia nazionale di danza*)
- National Academy of Drama (*Accademia nazionale di arte drammatica*)
- Institutions authorized to award qualifications of higher education in Art, Music and Dance (art.11 DPR 8.7.2005, n.212): Siena Jazz Foundation, Saint Louis Music Center, Academy of Costume and Fashion, European Institute of Design.

The institutions carry out teaching, production and research in visual arts, music, dance, drama and design. Since the 1999 reform, *Afam*'s educational offering has been structured in three cycles, in accordance with the Bologna Process objectives.

The first cycle is made up of **first level diploma programmes** (*Corsi di diploma accademico di primo livello*) that aim to provide students with adequate mastery of artistic methods and techniques as well as with specific professional and disciplinary skills. Admission requirements are an upper secondary school diploma issued after a total of 13 years of schooling and successful completion of the required state exams, or a comparable foreign diploma. Admission procedures may also require candidates to take an entrance exam to demonstrate an adequate level of knowledge, in accordance with institutional regulations. There may also be preparatory educational activities carried out in collaboration with upper secondary schools. The maximum number of places available is determined by each individual institution. Study programmes last three years. To obtain the first level diploma (*Diploma accademico di primo livello*), the student must have acquired 180 credits. The diploma gives holders access to competitive exams in the public sector, as well as to artistic careers and further studies in the 2nd cycle.

Second cycle is made up of **second level diploma programmes** (*Corsi di diploma accademico di secondo livello*), which offer students an advanced level of education for complete mastery of artistic methods and techniques as well as a high level of professional competency. Admission requirements are either a first level diploma, a university degree or a comparable foreign qualification. There may also be specific requirements as defined by the different institutional regulations. Study programs last two years and require the acquisition of 120 credits. The diploma gives holders access to competitive exams in the public sector, as well as to artistic careers and further studies in the 3rd cycle.

Third cycle. This cycle is made up of **Research training programmes** (*Corsi di formazione alla ricerca*). Their goal is to provide the competences to plan and carry out high-level research activities.

Other courses. *Afam* institutions may also offer:

- **Specialization academic courses I** (*Corsi accademici di specializzazione I*): these courses provide high level professional competences in specific areas. Admission requirements are either a first level diploma, a first level university degree or a comparable foreign qualification.

- **Specialization academic courses II** (*Corsi accademici di specializzazione II*): these courses provide high level professional competences in specific areas. Admission requirements are either a second level diploma, a second level university degree or a comparable foreign qualification.

- **Advanced or Master courses I** (*Corsi di perfezionamento o master I*): these courses provide in-depth study in specific sectors as well as professional development, retraining and continuing education. They have a minimum of 60 credits. Admission requirements are either a first level diploma, a first level university degree or a comparable foreign qualification.

- **Advanced or Master courses II** (*Corsi di perfezionamento o master II*): these courses provide in-depth study in specific sectors as well as professional development, retraining and continuing education. They have a minimum of 60 credits. Admission requirements are either a second level diploma, a second level university degree or a comparable foreign qualification.

Academic credits (*Crediti formativi accademici - Cfa*): study programs are expressed in academic credits. One academic credit generally corresponds to 25 hours of student workload. The average workload for one academic year is conventionally set at 60 credits.