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Ministry of
Education
and Culture



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Item 10: Application of the Republic of San Marino to join the EHEA
Information prepared by the BFUG Secretariat, accompanying the Preliminary National report of the Republic of San Marino

The Republic of San Marino expressed its interest to join the EHEA through a letter sent to the Head of the BFUG Secretariat on 9 August 2019.

The letter was circulated to the BFUG Co-Chairs and BFUG Vice-Chair on 2 September 2019.

According to the rules of procedure, the BFUG Secretariat prepared the template for the national report, as required previously for applications to join the EHEA. The prepared document was discussed in the Board meeting in Istanbul on 24 September 2019.

The Board asked the BFUG Secretariat to contact the representatives of the Republic of San Marino, and in accordance with the rules of procedure, set 1 November 2019 as the deadline to receive the national report.

San Marino sent the enclosed document to the BFUG Secretariat on 30 October 2019. In the message accompanying the document, the San Marino representatives emphasized that the document is **considered a preliminary National Report**, sent to the BFUG Secretariat to meet the deadline on 1 November 2019, as well as to ask BFUG's feedback in its meeting in Helsinki on 12-13 November 2019.

The document, as received, has been uploaded on the designated section of EHEA web site and again, should be considered preliminary. The report was forwarded to the BFUG Co-Chairs, BFUG Vice-Chair and the CoE for comments.

These comments suggested that the BFUG Co-Chairs inform the BFUG that a preliminary national report has been received, showing San Marino is progressing, but that San Marino has indicated they need a little more time for the complete report.

The BFUG Co-Chairs suggest that at this stage, the discussion should be focused on the bases of the proposal about next steps and not on the report itself. The BFUG Co-Chairs

propose the procedure should be as previously, setting up a small *ad hoc* group, composed of the BFUG Co-Chairs, the BFUG Vice-Chair, BFUG Secretariat, the CoE, and/or Board and any other BFUG Member interested, which would look at the national report and make recommendation to the BFUG. Representatives of the Republic of San Marino should forward to the BFUG Secretariat the complete National Report the latest by **10 January 2020**, making possible for the Board to have a preliminary discussion in its meeting in Zagreb on 7 February 2020, in order to prepare for a BFUG recommendation in its meeting in Kyiv on 4-5 March 2020.





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PER L'ISTRUZIONE E LA CULTURA E L'UNIVERSITA', LA RICERCA, L'INFORMAZIONE,
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National report on higher education of San Marino

The University System of the Republic of San Marino

In 2014, thanks to the awareness that the Sammarinese higher education law could not fulfill the University needs any longer, the Republic of San Marino was endowed with a new framework law concerning. The wording of the new framework law has been inspired by some principles, first of all those stated on the Magna Charta Universitatum.

Then, the new law has been developed on the basis of the goals required to subscribe EHEA, those are:

- joining the 3+2 course of study system;
- introduction of an assurance quality system with evaluation systems of internal and external activities;
- students' involvement to the University management;
- subscription to ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System);
- promotion of student and teaching staff mobility.

The university system is now organised in 3 cycles: the Laurea, the 1st cycle academic degree, grants access to the 2nd cycle, and the Laurea magistrale, the main degree of the 2nd cycle, gives access to 3rd cycle courses awarding the Dottorato di ricerca. In addition to the three sequential degrees mentioned above, the system offers other programmes with their respective degrees.

First cycle

First cycle studies consist exclusively in Corsi di Laurea, aimed at guaranteeing students an adequate command of general scientific methods and contents as well as specific professional

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LO SPORT, L'INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E I RAPPORTI CON L'A.A.S.S.

skills. The general access requirement is the school leaving qualification awarded on completion of 13 years of global schooling and after the relevant State examinations.

Laurea courses last 3 years. The Laurea (1st degree) is awarded to students who have earned 180 credits; the completion of a training period and the defence of a thesis may also be required.

The Laurea grants access to competitions for the civil service, to regulated and non-regulated professions, and to 2nd cycle courses.

Second cycle

Second cycle studies include the following typologies:

A) *Corsi di Laurea magistrale*; they are aimed at providing students with an advanced level of education for the exercise of a highly qualified activity in specific areas. Access is usually by a *Laurea*; workload: 120 credits; length: 2 years. The awarding of the degree, *Laurea magistrale* (2nd cycle degree of the "Bologna process") is conditional on the defence of a thesis. All *Lauree magistrali* grant access to competitions for the civil service, to regulated and non-regulated professions, research doctorate programmes and all the other degree courses of the 3rd cycle.

B) *Corsi di Master universitario di primo livello*. They consist in advanced scientific courses or higher continuing education studies open to the holders of a *Laurea*; admission may be subject to additional conditions. Length: minimum 1 year; workload: 60 credits at least. The *Master universitario di primo livello* does not give access to the 3rd cycle.

Third cycle

Third cycle studies include the following typologies

A) *Corsi di Dottorato di Ricerca* aim at training students for very advanced scientific research; they

adopt innovative teaching methodologies, updated technologies, training periods abroad and supervised activities in specialized research centres. Admission requires a *Laurea magistrale* (or a

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SEGRETERIA DI STATO
PER L'ISTRUZIONE E LA CULTURA E L'UNIVERSITA', LA RICERCA, L'INFORMAZIONE,
LO SPORT, L'INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E I RAPPORTI CON L'A.A.S.S.

comparable foreign degree) and to pass a specific competition; studies last a minimum of 3 years; the doctoral student must work out an original dissertation to be defended in the final examination.

B) *Corsi di Master universitario di secondo livello* consist in advanced scientific courses or higher continuing education studies, open to the holders of an LM. Length: minimum 1 year; workload: 60 credits at least.

Credits: degree courses are usually structured in credits. A university credit generally corresponds to 25 hours of global work per student, time for personal study included. The average workload of a full time student is conventionally fixed at 60 credits per year.

Academic titles: the *Laurea* confers the title "*Dottore*", the *Laurea magistrale* that of *Dottore magistrale*, the *Dottorato di ricerca* that of "*Dottore di ricerca*".

Joint degrees: San Marino university may establish degree courses in cooperation with foreign partner universities; on completion of integrated curricula joint or double/multiple degrees are awarded.

Quality System

The University of San Marino acknowledges a fundamental role to the assurance quality system in order to guarantee the achievement of efficacy and efficiency goals in its activity, comparable to those belonging to higher education institutes abroad.

For this purpose, our University has been providing a quality assurance system concerning the educational syllabus, teaching activities, research activities, third mission initiatives and administrative processes. The quality assurance system provides:

- to define responsibilities of the people involved in performing activities and administrative processes;

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SEGRETERIA DI STATO
PER L'ISTRUZIONE E LA CULTURA E L'UNIVERSITA', LA RICERCA, L'INFORMAZIONE,
LO SPORT, L'INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E I RAPPORTI CON L'A.A.S.S.

- to formally define adopted strategies, policies and procedures in order to realize its own quality system and aimed at the continuous improvement of the quality;
- a continuous process of internal evaluation of research, teaching and administrative activities;
- a periodic cost analysis aimed at comparing costs to higher education institutes in other countries;
- international attendance, cooperation and networking on the topic of quality assurance.

In order to reach these goals an Independent Evaluation Body has been recently established. It is made up of 3 members (2 external Lecturers – one of them is appointed President – and 1 internal Lecturer). Its duty is to monitor meticulously and systematically and to carry out an overall evaluation of the teaching, scientific and administrative activities promoted by the University in order to guarantee the achievement of the required level of quality.

All data, documents and information concerning the quality assurance system are publicly accessible.

Types of student participation

Within the University of San Marino bodies, students partake in higher education governance electing:

- one representative without right to vote taking part to the University Board Committee meetings
- one member of the Senate
- one representative for each degree course as a member of the related Departmental Council;

REPUBBLICA DI SAN MARINO



SEGRETERIA DI STATO
PER L'ISTRUZIONE E LA CULTURA E L'UNIVERSITA', LA RICERCA, L'INFORMAZIONE,
LO SPORT, L'INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E I RAPPORTI CON L'A.A.S.S.

- two representatives belonging to the Territorial Pact, an authority with an advisory and constructive function, promoting orientation proposals and development approaches of the University in cooperation with local stakeholders

Within the University of San Marino there is the Student Advisory Board. It is a coordinating body of the students' representatives and is made up of its own representatives within university boards. The Student Advisory Board delivers its opinion to the authority in charge, concerning teaching and services to the students for:

- annual budget expected;
- University three-year strategic programming document;
- Rules guidelines;
- General norms about fees charged to students and about the right to study.

The Student Advisory Board addresses to the University governing bodies proposals and questions concerning teaching and services for students. University bodies are expected to answer to proposals and questions.

The functioning of the Student Advisory Board and the election of its members are established in specially devised rules issued by the University Board, on a proposal of the Student Board. The University guarantees resources and facilities to students in order to accomplish their own duties.

Since 2017 a self-managed space has been provided to students. This space is available 24/7 and students can work on their assignments, set up working groups, arrange educational, cultural and entertainment activities.

To provide suitable and completely anonymous support to students (also psychological), the figure of the "Student Guarantee", assisted by an actual counseling service, has been established. Its aim is to make easier and to mediate relationship with professors and higher education institutions.

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**SEGRETERIA DI STATO
PER L'ISTRUZIONE E LA CULTURA E L'UNIVERSITA', LA RICERCA, L'INFORMAZIONE,
LO SPORT, L'INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E I RAPPORTI CON L'A.A.S.S.**

Level of international participation

The University of San Marino is a member of the international scientific community and adopts its principles and instruments. It promotes its international dimension, promoting integration and cooperation between universities and research groups.

The University cannot yet participate directly in the Erasmus student mobility programme, because the State of San Marino is not yet an EU member.

Consequently, the University has its own international mobility programme for students and professors, through the stipulation of general agreements, mobility agreements and MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with many European and non-European universities.

To this day, more than 40 universities have signed agreements with the University of San Marino, which allow for the international mobility of students in the first and second cycle of the EHEA system, for the international mobility for internships and degree theses, and for the international mobility of academic and administrative staff.

In 2017, the University also adopted regulations to host Visiting Researchers and Visiting Professors. Furthermore, San Marino University participates in various international projects, including a three-year Erasmus+ project on the challenges of democracy in small states and a Horizon 2020 project in the field of civil engineering.

Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and Periods of study abroad

The Diploma Supplement is an integrative certification of the official graduation qualification, written in both Italian and English. The University of San Marino adopted, and consequently, uses the DS standard format developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES.

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**SEGRETERIA DI STATO
PER L'ISTRUZIONE E LA CULTURA E L'UNIVERSITA', LA RICERCA, L'INFORMAZIONE,
LO SPORT, L'INNOVAZIONE TECNOLOGICA E I RAPPORTI CON L'A.A.S.S.**

The University of San Marino releases the Diploma Supplement upon request of the graduated student, without any additional charge and, as already mentioned, both in English and Italian.

In 2011 the Republic of San Marino ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention and at present is a member of the ENIC-ARIC network and is working to fully implement the Lisbon Convention, included the recognition of periods of study abroad.

Upcoming challenges and social dimension of the Bologna process

Beginning in 2014, the year of the implementation of the Reform of the University of San Marino, the University has been growing rapidly and steadily both in terms of the number of students and the services provided by the University itself. For example, the call for applications for a position as head of the Internationalization Office is currently underway.

Over the coming years, of course, this growth must be consolidated and strengthened with the further implementation of the necessary personnel for our University, both scientific and technical-scientific.

In these years, the cooperation with the San Marino community has grown considerably, through the stipulation of agreements with a large section of the San Marino entrepreneurial world, but also with various associations and institutions, and it will be able, in time, to consolidate itself further and constitute an essential point of reference for the entire San Marino society. From this perspective, a new necessary step is the regulation of the establishment of university spin-offs and academic start-ups.

The expansion of the internationalization is also one of the areas that the University intends to focus on and will continue to do so in the near future.

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