

Fact Sheet - Mendrisio Campus Academy of Architecture

2025/2026



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Erasmus code
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International rankings
USI in the Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rankings (QS), which are amongst the world's most popular and well-known global rankings - latest available data:

QS World University Rankings 2025
405th globally
(out of 1503 universities considered).

THE World University Rankings 2025
Range 301-350
(out of 2092 universities considered).

THE World's Best Small Universities 2024
9th worldwide
among small universities.

THE Young University Rankings 2024
44th worldwide
among 'young' universities
(less than 50 years old).

QS Top 50 Under 50 2021
26th worldwide
among 'young' universities
(less than 50 years old).

International Relations and Study Abroad website

All relevant information for incoming students, including application instruction is available on the International Relations Service website: usi.ch/en/academic-mobility-usi-incoming-students

Autumn Semester deadlines

- For nomination (via Mobility Online): 01 May
- For online registration: 15 May at the latest

Spring semester deadlines

- For nomination (via Mobility Online): 31 October
- For online registration: 15 November at the latest

Academic calendar

arc.usi.ch/en/l-accademia/calendario-accademico

- Autumn Semester:
15 september – 19 december
- Spring Semester:
16 february – 29 may

Switzerland and Canton Ticino

Despite its small population (8 million people), Switzerland has four national languages (German, French, Italian and Romansh). The part of the Swiss Confederation which lies entirely south of the Alps is known as "Italian" Switzerland. It comprises Canton Ticino and Grigioni italiano. Italian is the official language for this region.

Language of instruction

Courses at the Academy of Architecture are taught in Italian and English. For non-native Italian speakers it is not required to have an Italian language certificate.

Course lists and descriptions

The course catalogue 2025-26 will be updated around July 2025. The learning agreement should be prepared on the current version of the catalogue bearing in mind that changes may occur in 2025-26.

Study programs

- search.usi.ch/educations/6/master-of-science-in-architecture/courses
- www.arc.usi.ch/sites/arc.usi.ch/files/storage/attachments/arc-arc_piano_studi.pdf
- www.arc.usi.ch/sites/arc.usi.ch/files/storage/attachments/arc-arc_prospectus.pdf

Study outline

Exchange students are free to attend a variety of classes, both at undergraduate and graduate levels.

Approval of the study plan (learning agreement)

The study plan must be approved by the relevant Faculty or Department of the home institution. All students have to make sure that any examination taken during the exchange term will be accepted as fulfilling the requirements of the original degree programme.

Courses registration

Students must sign up for bachelor and master courses. Application with USI login and password: <http://sv.arc.usi.ch>

Limited access to courses

Please note that some courses have a limited number of places.

An early application is highly recommended.

Pre-selection of the studios

Information will be sent by the International Relations-Service of the Academy of Architecture in July/August 2025 and in January/February 2026.

Selection of the studios (estimated period)

- First semester:
September 2025
- Second semester:
February 2026

Class schedules

arc.usi.ch/it/informazioni-pratiche/altri-calendari-orari

Italian language courses

In September the Italian intensive language course takes place at the Academy of Architecture whereas in February it only takes place at Lugano campus.

- Fall semester:
first two weeks of 2025 in Mendrisio.
- Spring semester:
first to week of 2026 in Lugano
- Application:
www.italiancourse.usi.ch
- Costs:
Free for all exchange students

During the academic year Italian courses at various levels run parallel to the semestral study program.

Tuition fees

Tuition fees are waived at USI Università della Svizzera italiana where a reciprocal exchange agreement has been signed, and students are formally nominated by their home university.

- Extra fees:
CHF 200.- as a deposit fee for school material. If no problem occurs, the deposit will be returned at the end of the stay.
CHF 250.- as a cost for Visa and permit of study for Non-EU/EFTA students.



SEMP scholarship

Switzerland will not participate as a program country in Erasmus+ for the academic year 2025/2026. In order to ensure reciprocity, Switzerland will pay the scholarships for students doing an exchange at a Swiss university. Grants are awarded to individual students if all the necessary conditions are met. Students will be informed about the procedure for obtaining the grant upon arrival in Mendrisio. The precise monthly amount of the grant will be announced in due time, but it is likely to be similar to the one paid in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. The grant is paid regardless of the number of ECTS earned.

Please be aware that exchange students who intend to reside in their home university country during their exchange semester at USI are not eligible for the SEMP mobility programme.

Heyning-Roelli Foundation

The Heyning-Roelli Foundation provides scholarships to talented but financially underprivileged students for travel and subsistence expenses. Please note that these are external funds and do not affect scholarships already granted within SEMP. Information on the conditions and application process may be found at www.heyning-roelli-stiftung.ch

Registration procedure

USI is currently implementing Mobility Online. Nominated students will be informed about the registration procedure in due time.

To finalize the application applicants are required to attach the following documents to the International Relations Service of the Academy of Architecture by May 15 (Fall semester / Whole academic year) or by November 1st (Spring semester):

1. passport- style picture taken in full face view directly facing the camera;
2. most recent Transcript of records;
3. a photocopy of the ID or of the relevant pages of the passport;
4. a nomination letter of the home university (not for Mobilité Suisse students);
5. extra documents for students who need an entry visa for Switzerland for a stay more than 90 days:
 - a short CV (résumé) in Italian language;
 - a short motivation letter in Italian language.

Reports of former exchange students

Students are invited to read the experience reports written by former exchange students. These reports give precious information on courses, as well as on cultural and social aspects of USI, on the residence and on Mendrisio. The reports can only be accessed with the USI login and password, that will be sent to exchange students after having successfully completed the online application.

www.usi.ch/en/end-study-reports

Welcome meeting

Exchange students will be invited to an orientation meeting where they will receive a welcome package containing their personal USI badge and account, the necessary documents for registration at Migration Office and the City of Mendrisio, information about the health insurance as well as general information. We strongly recommend to be present on that day. Detailed information will be sent after the application deadline. The meeting will take place on-line if anti-Covid measures should be applied.

Exam periods

- First semester
19 January – 31 January 2026
- Second semester
22 June – 4 July 2026
- General session
24 August – 05 September 2026

Exams can be taken only on the official dates. Exchange students are not authorized to schedule their exams individually with their professors or to ask for extra-muros exams. Students should make their travel arrangements in accordance with the examination periods.

Transcript of records & credit transfer

Examination results are released approximately 2 weeks after the end of the exams. An official transcript will be sent to the student's personal address and to the home university's exchange office by ordinary mail. The credits transfer is under the responsibility of the home institution.

Living in Switzerland

Students from Non-EU/EFTA country bound by a Visa requirement must request a Visa to the Swiss Embassy or Consulate in their home country before entering Switzerland. Within 14 days of the arrival in Switzerland students from EU/EFTA and Non-EU/EFTA countries must apply for a residence permit "L" for educational purposes. All students must register to the town population office within 8 days of arrival in Switzerland. The International Relations Service will assist exchange students with the procedure.

Health insurance

All Swiss residents, including foreign students holding a residence permit valid for more than three months, are obliged by law to be insured with a recognised Swiss health insurance company, providing basic coverage when in need of medical care in case of illness or accident. Foreign students living in Switzerland may be exempted from this obligation if they can prove they are covered by an equivalent insurance in their home country. To ask for exemption, the student must make an official request using the appropriate form.

Students coming from EU/EFTA countries who have a Health Insurance Card. Students with private insurance in EU/EFTA countries who can prove that it complies with Swiss standards, i.e. that it is unlimited. Students from Non-EU/EFTA countries who can prove that such insurance complies with Swiss standards, i.e. that it is unlimited.

The International Relations Service staff will assist exchange students with the procedure. In order to provide students not eligible for exemption with an appropriate coverage at a more affordable price, USI has negotiated with a health insurance company.

desk.usi.ch/en/health-insurance-students

Housing

The Academy of Architecture has a students' home, a residential complex which houses up to 72 students.

- Application:
by 1 June 2025 or by 6 January 2026.
- Information:
arc.usi.ch/en/l-accademia/campus/casa-dell-accademia
- Application at:
form.arc.usi.ch/form/view.php?id=24369
- Other source of information on housing:
facebook.com/usialloggimendrisio
<https://client-alloggi.usi.ch>
- Further information on housing is available on:
www.arc.usi.ch/en/l-accademia/campus/casa-dell-accademia

Sport Service USI/SUPSI

The Service for Sport and Leisure promotes joint sporting activities between the Università della Svizzera italiana and the University of Applied Sciences of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI) and coordinates local members' participation in national and international university sports events.

The Service organises regular sports activities, free or at preferred rates.
www.sport.usi.ch

Living costs

The cost of living per month for a student will be approximately a minimum of CHF 1.500 and a maximum of CHF 2.000.