



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Foundation Programme - English Track

2025/26

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Foundation Year aims to provide thorough training in the English language and related academic skills which will enable international students to best achieve their academic potential at university and raise their level of English to C1+.

Alongside classes and course books, students will be supported by an online learning platform, providing them with a range of tasks and activities specifically designed to develop and extend their language and academic skills outside the classroom and to give students more control over their own learning.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students will develop awareness and competency in a range of language-related academic skills, including the processes of academic writing, extensive reading strategies, effective participation in seminars and delivery of academic presentations, and listening to and recording information effectively from lectures. Students will also develop the accuracy and range of written and spoken language required to use language effectively and appropriately, with clarity and confidence in an academic context.

PREREQUISITES

Students should have an initial B1+ level of English and be highly motivated.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE:

Subject Courses (140 hours)

- o **Science and Technology**

Communication, Environment, Medicine, Technology



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

- o **Human and Social Studies**

Globalisation, Psychology, Cultures

- o **Art and Literature**

Literature and Film, Architecture, Art

- o **Business and Tourism**

Sustainability, Fair Trade, Economy

During the first semester, Foundation Year students will focus on English through the four academic topics above and cover a wide range of topic-related vocabulary and language. These lessons will work towards building the confidence and skills students need to succeed in academic study and using English in a globalised world. Apart from developing students' language awareness and language skills, students will also be exposed to aspirational videos with leading professionals from a variety of fields in order to increase students' ability to understand real-life English in an academic or professional context. In addition, the lessons will teach students how to do their best in academic studies by giving them advice on how to better understand lectures/presentations, take notes, participate in discussions and providing them with an extensive range of useful academic strategies.

English Language and Academic Skills (500 hours)

Advance from B1 to B2+/C1+ with comprehensive training in reading, writing, speaking, and listening for academic purposes.

The English Foundation Year is meticulously designed to foster holistic development in English language proficiency, combining academic rigour with practical application. Core modules, including English in Academic Contexts, Listening and Speaking Skills, Reading Skills, Writing Skills, Academic content relevant lexis and discourse supporting structure, and real-world Language Practice and Application, form a major part of this comprehensive programme.

Our Foundation year is strategically structured to achieve several key objectives. Our first aim is to cultivate proficiency across all language skills, empowering students to excel in diverse academic and social contexts. By substantially enhancing and developing reading, listening, speaking, and writing, students will navigate the complexities of university-level discourse with confidence and fluency.

Secondly, we prioritise the acquisition of academic vocabulary and language necessary for success in higher education. Through targeted instruction and immersive experiences, students will develop the



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

linguistic sophistication needed to comprehend and articulate complex ideas within an academic context.

Additionally, the Foundation Year is designed to enhance students' communication abilities, fostering the confidence and skillset required for active engagement in class discussions, debates and academic presentations. These interactive components not only refine students' oral proficiency but also nurture their capacity for articulate expression and persuasive argumentation.

The Foundation Year also places a strong emphasis on critical thinking and analytical skills development, fundamental in today's academic contexts. Through a variety of reading, listening and writing tasks, students will not only engage deeply with academic texts but also learn to evaluate, analyse, and synthesise information effectively. This prepares students not just for academic success, but also for linguistic confidence in learning and professional growth in an ever-evolving global landscape.

The Foundation Year is much more than a language programme — it's a transformative educational experience designed to equip students with the linguistic, cognitive, and communicative tools essential for academic excellence and personal advancement, thus empowering them to navigate the challenges of higher education and beyond.

Italian Language and Culture (160 hours)

Achieve A2 level Italian, equipping Foundation Year students for real-life interactions and academic integration in Italy.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Students will be assessed in all four language skills areas: listening, reading, speaking and writing, this is assessed through coursework (participation and attendance), assessed written assignments and presentations, in addition to continuous assessment, regular progress tests and final exams. Throughout the academic year, students will also have at least four one-to-one tutorials with teachers to ensure they are on track.

Attendance/ Participation **20%**

Progress tests **35%**

Exams **45%**



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

COURSE MATERIALS

Course books and materials will be provided and will also be made available on blackboard.

LANGUAGE TRAINERS' BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES

Grant Moore - Director of Studies, Course Coordinator and Language Trainer.

Born in Liverpool, UK, he has lived in Italy for 35 years and has been teaching English as a foreign language for 34 years. During that time, Grant has gained extensive experience and expertise in language training and has taught a wide variety of students and courses. Grant obtained his CELTA qualification in 1990 and then went on to obtain his DELTA qualification in 2000. He was a teacher trainer for 15 years and was a Cambridge examiner (KET, PET, FCE, BEC and IELTS) for 13 years. He has been working as a language trainer at Cattolica University for 17 years and he has also been Director of Studies / Course Coordinator for language courses run by the Global Engagement and International Education Department at Cattolica University for the last 3 years.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

grant.moore@unicatt.it

Roberta Moen – Language trainer

Roberta Moen is an English language instructor with extensive experience in academic and business contexts. She holds a BA in Sociology from the University of Maryland (USA) and a CELTA certification from Cambridge University. Since 2011, she has been teaching in Milan, including undergraduate and graduate courses at Bocconi and Cattolica Universities, ranging from Business Writing and Communication to IELTS and TOEFL preparation. She also collaborates with professional development agencies in providing Business English training courses. She has worked as a translator and editor on academic and cultural projects. A native English speaker, she is bilingual in Italian.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

roberta.moen@unicatt.it

Arianna Jacobs – Language Trainer

Arianna Jacobs was born and educated in England. She moved to Italy to attend the Italian University 'Scuola di Lingue Moderne per Interpreti e Traduttori' at the University of Trieste, where she graduated in translation. Since 1984, she has been teaching English at the Università Statale di Milano, where she specialises in advanced grammar, academic writing, stylistics, and communication skills. Since



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

2006 she has also been an Academic Fellow at Università Bocconi, teaching Business English, IELTS, and BEC in undergraduate and master's courses. She is currently also an IELTS Instructor at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. Over the years, she has taught translation at Civica Scuola Superiore per Interpreti e Traduttori and SSML Limec Milano. In addition to her university positions, she works as a freelance language trainer, preparing students for international exams, UK boarding school entry, and professional business English courses.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

arianna.jacobs@unicatt.it

Jessica Smith – Language Trainer

Jessica Smith is from London. After completing her degree at Oxford Polytechnic and her CELTA in London she moved to Italy where she worked as a teacher and teacher trainer for the British Council for over 20 years. She currently teaches both undergraduate and post graduate students at Bocconi University and the University of Milan and has taught IELTS preparation courses at the Università Cattolica. She continues to work as a teacher trainer, specializing in CLIL for Italian school teachers, and has written materials for secondary school students for international publishers. She has been a Speaking Examiner and Trainer for international examination boards for 30 years.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

jessica.smith@unicatt.it

Alina featherstone – Language Trainer

Alina Featherstone studied in London, where she completed both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees before moving into a career in design and later in language teaching. She holds the CELTA qualification and has extensive experience as an English language teacher and teacher trainer. She has taught at leading institutions in Milan, including Università IULM, where she served as Director of Studies, and has developed and delivered courses in Business English, Academic English, and exam preparation. Alongside her university teaching, she has designed tailor-made training programmes for major companies and institutions such as Borsa Italiana, Motorola and Shiseido, with a focus on professional and corporate communication. She currently teaches at Università Cattolica, Università Bocconi and Università degli Studi di Milano.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

alina.featherstone@unicatt.it



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Foundation Italian One

2025/26

Prof. Maria Chiara Biotti

Prof. Micaela Papale

Prof Barbara Bettinelli

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed for students who have no or very little knowledge of Italian. In this course students will learn useful Italian grammar structures and vocabulary while developing their communicative skills for real-life situations and university contexts. The course strongly focuses on communication: students will learn the language they need to interact effectively with Italian speakers in both everyday life and academic environments.

Students will also explore key cultural aspects essential for daily life in Italy and for successful participation in university life. Through practical activities and cultural insights, they will be prepared to live, study, and engage confidently in an Italian-speaking environment.

Throughout the course, particular attention will be given to developing listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills to support effective communication in both social and academic settings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

Listening

Understand the main points of clear, standard speech on familiar subjects commonly encountered at university and in daily life. Comprehend common announcements in public transport, airports, train stations, and/or requests in shops, bars, restaurants, public offices and university departments.

Reading

Understand simple texts that mainly use language related to everyday life and university contexts. Read restaurant and bar menus, and understand basic information provided in public offices and on public transport. Comprehend signs, notices, and communications related to services offered within the university.

Spoken Interaction

Handle simple routine communication in everyday and academic situations and ask for clarification when needed. Ask and answer simple questions in public places such as bars, restaurants, shops, and on public transportation. Interact effectively with university staff, requesting information and advice, and providing personal information or data when necessary.



UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA del Sacro Cuore

Writing

Write simple, connected texts, emails or messages to communicate effectively with university colleagues and professors, for example emails to schedule appointments, request information about exams or lessons schedule, and seek advice or guidance regarding various university services.

PREREQUISITES

The course is designed for students who have no or very little knowledge of Italian.

METHOD OF TEACHING

Lessons will be interactive and focused on real-life communication. Role plays, group work and task-based activities will be used throughout the course. Students will be actively involved in the learning process through a communicative, learner-centred approach and will have opportunities for practical spoken application within a supportive atmosphere. The course will also include activities outside the classroom to explore real contexts and help students practice Italian in meaningful situations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to engage proactively in their learning by attending classes regularly, participating meaningfully in tasks and class activities, and completing self-study exercises. If students can't attend, they should ask their classmates for notes and information about the activities done and topics covered.

HOURS

The course is 160 hours long and will take place in the first semester.

GRADING

- Progress tests will be used to track progress and identify areas where students may need additional support.
- Written and oral tests will be administered to evaluate skills and knowledge of the language.

The assessment follows the Italian grading scale (top grade 30, passing grade 18).

COURSE READINGS AND MATERIALS

- Bettinelli, Della Putta, Visigalli, *Buona idea* A1 and A2, Pearson.
- Additional study materials will be available on Blackboard.

INSTRUCTOR BIO



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Prof. Maria Chiara Biotti was born and educated in Italy. She holds a degree in Linguistic Sciences and Foreign Literatures and the DITALS II Level certification, which attests to advanced competences in teaching Italian as a Foreign Language. She has several years of experience teaching Italian language and culture to a variety of students and in different contexts, primarily university students enrolled in international programs such as Marco Polo, Turandot and Erasmus, collaborating with cultural and academic institutions including Fondazione Italia-Cina, Università Cattolica, and others. She also has expertise in language assessment for CILS and CELI exams. She regularly takes part in professional development courses to deepen her knowledge of effective teaching practices.

Prof. Micaela Papale was born and educated in Italy. She graduated in Modern Literature and earned a Master's Degree in Teaching Italian as a Second Language, thus achieving advanced methodological and didactic competences. She has twenty years of teaching experience in Italian language and culture in several contexts: from foreign executives and business professionals working in multinational companies based in Milan to university students enrolled in international programs up to students involved in humanitarian integrative programs. She has been collaborating with Università Cattolica for several years and managing a Language School in Milan for the last 16 years. She is engaged in professional training and development courses.

Prof. Barbara Bettinelli was born and educated in Italy where she worked as a language teacher and teacher trainer in the Italian state system up to her late 20s. She then spent fifteen years in the UK where she completed her PhD and taught Italian at the University of Nottingham Language Centre. She has worked as a trainer in Italy, the UK, and China. She currently teaches Italian and English and delivers courses to international students who follow International Curriculum courses in Cattolica where she also works as Education Developer for the Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation. She has written many books aimed at students of Italian and English which are published in Italy by Pearson Longman.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Maria Chiara Biotti: mariachiara.biotti@unicatt.it

Micaela Papale: papale.micaela@gmail.com

Barbara Bettinelli: barbara.bettinelli@unicatt.it