



The Leading Hotel Management Schools

January 2006

Swiss Higher Education System

This leaflet is established to inform the public of the system of recognition and accreditation of higher technical education in Switzerland. Education in Switzerland plays a very important role, since it is recognized that the human factor is most important for the future development of our economy and culture.

Switzerland – a small but diverse country with 26 states

Unlike foreign policy and defense which are centralized, education is a sector that is not transferred to the Central Government in Switzerland and is thus in the hands of each Canton (State). In fact, this is even more clearly indicated by the Swiss Federal Constitution in Article 62, *"education is a cantonal matter."* For this reason, each Canton has a Department (Ministry) of education. Therefore, evaluation and accreditation of schools/universities fall upon the shoulders of these cantonal education ministries. The Confederation may complement cantonal measures (e.g. establish or subsidize institutions) to encourage education, however must always respect cantonal autonomy in these matters (Article 66 of the Constitution).

Article 62 - Education	
1.	Education is a cantonal matter.
2.	The Cantons shall ensure a sufficient primary education open to all children. This education shall be compulsory, and shall be placed under state direction or supervision. It shall be free in public schools. The school year shall begin between mid-August and mid-September.
Article 66 - Support of Education	
1.	The Confederation may grant subsidies to the Cantons for the expenses that they may incur for scholarships and for other assistance towards education.
2.	It may, moreover, complement cantonal measures while respecting cantonal autonomy in school matters, and take its own measures to encourage education.

Higher Education in Switzerland is composed of traditional universities and modern Universities of Applied Sciences ("Fachhochschulen", "Hautes Ecoles Spécialisées"). Traditional universities refer to the Cantonal Universities and two Federal Institutes of Technology (FIT). According to the Constitution, responsibilities of these universities go purely to the Cantons except for the two FITs which are the result of the Confederation's being given this competency in these specialized domains. Typically Universities of applied sciences are rather vocationally/technically oriented. As they are related more directly to the national labor market, the Department (Ministry) of Public Economy is involved through the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OFFT-BBT). Therefore, the Cantons and the Confederation have shared responsibilities for these universities of applied science. In this specific case, the Federal administration, may legislate – and uses its competencies (Constitution, Art 63, al 1); it may take and coordinate supportive measures (e.g. accreditation) according to Art 63, al 2, when so decided by the Cantons. It is the case for the EHL (Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne).



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Article 63 - Professional Education and Universities

1. The Confederation shall legislate on professional education.

In Switzerland, freedom of economic activity is guaranteed by the Constitution (Art. 27). The permission for setting up a private university and the necessity to keep an eye on possible bogus institutes and diploma mills fall within the competence of the Cantons. As a result, cantonal recognition is by far the most concrete and direct level for a private university and most of Cantonal universities to reach.

Article 27 - Economic Freedom

1. Economic freedom is guaranteed.
2. It contains particularly the freedom to choose one's profession, and to enjoy free access to and free exercise of private economic activity.

As a conclusion, based on current Swiss Federal Constitution, Swiss Cantons have the supreme decision power in education affairs (including accreditation) with a very limited coordination power for the Swiss Confederation.

Swiss hotel management schools

Hotel schools in Switzerland have had a long-established worldwide reputation for their high level of professional quality, tradition and academic standards. Swiss hotel schools are known to be the best in the world – but not all of them.

The Swiss Hotel Schools Association (ASEH)

In 1986, the leading hotel management schools and the professional associations (hotelleriesuisse, GastroSuisse and the Swiss Union of Hotel Employees), established ASEH (Swiss Hotel Schools Association) to protect the quality image and promote the schools nationally and internationally. In 1992, an accreditation system for member schools was established and more schools could be admitted to the organization.

Today, ASEH counts 12 members. There are about 15 other hotel schools in the country, but many of them do not meet the ASEH standards.

A candidate school has to undergo a very strict admission procedure and to fulfill 120 membership criteria. Visits are made by an independent team of experts, which includes experts from the OFFT (Federal Office of Professional Education and Technology). Each establishment is then rechecked regularly to ensure that the ASEH quality standards are maintained.



The Leading Hotel Management Schools

The following school is recognized at the national level by the government as a University of Applied Sciences (HES):

- Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne *

The following ASEH member schools are recognized at the federal government level as « high technical colleges ES » (2 year diplomas):

- Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzern
- Ecole Hôtelière de Genève "ES"
- Hotelfachschule Thun
- Belvoirpark Hotelfachschule Zürich
- SSTH Schweizerische Schule für Touristik und Hotellerie
- SSAT Scuola superiore alberghiera e del turismo

Hotel schools recognized at a cantonal level

Some cantons (states) have established a system of recognition for private schools. The education departments of those states have established a control system for such schools.

The following hotel schools are recognized at a cantonal level:

- Institut Hôtelier « César Ritz »
- University Centre « César Ritz »
- SSAT Scuola superiore alberghiera e del turismo
- "Les Roches" Swiss Hotel Association School of Hotel Management *

The schools accredited by the Swiss Hotel Schools Association are the following:

(list according to the date of membership)

Language of Instruction

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| • Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzern | German |
| • Ecole Hôtelière de Genève « ES » | French |
| • Belvoirpark Hotelfachschule Zürich | German |
| • Hotelfachschule Thun | German |
| • HIM Hotel Institute Montreux | English |
| • Institut Hôtelier « César Ritz » | English |
| • SSTH Schweizerische Schule für Touristik und Hotellerie /
Swiss School of Tourism and Hotel Management | German / English |
| • SHMS Swiss Hotel Management School | English |
| • University Centre "César Ritz" | English |
| • DCT International Hotel & Business Management School | English |
| • IHTTI Hotel & Tourism Training Institutes | English |
| • SSAT Scuola superiore alberghiera e del turismo | Italian |

Some of the non-member schools:

Language of Instruction

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| • Ecoles Hôtelière de Lausanne * | French / English |
| • Glion Institute of Higher Education * | French / English |
| • "Les Roches" Swiss Hotel Association School of Hotel Management * | English |
| • IMI International Hotel Management Institute * | English |

* = not member of ASEH