

Instituto Libre de Segunda Enseñanza

Buenos Aires, Argentina



Born from an 1892 faculty walkout at Colegio Nacional, still governed under University of Buenos Aires oversight near Plaza Lavalle.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	58/100
Academic outcomes	60/100
University placement	62/100
Prestige & heritage	68/100
Alumni network	54/100
Facilities	57/100
Transparency	44/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Instituto Libre de Segunda Enseñanza occupies a narrow and interesting niche in Buenos Aires. Founded in **1892**, it is not another polished private school selling global branding and inflated promises. ILSE sits under the University of Buenos Aires, and that matters: the school carries the weight of a public intellectual tradition rather than the social signalling of a clubby fee-paying institution. For parents, the attraction is clear. This is a secular day school for ages 12 to 18, teaching in Spanish and English, with an Argentinian curriculum and a university-linked identity that gives it *institutional seriousness*, *historic ballast* and a *distinctly academic cast*.

What is special here is governance and lineage. The school's editorial history starts with an 1892 faculty walkout at Colegio Nacional, and that origin still gives ILSE a sharper profile than many conventional local schools. It belongs on a shortlist for families who value *intellectual rigour* over polish, and substance over spectacle. The UBA connection sets an expectation of demanding teaching, academic independence and a culture that prizes ideas. That same connection also marks it out from both the city's elite private schools and its standard state options: ILSE occupies a hybrid, semi-private space, tied to one of Argentina's most important universities and located near Plaza Lavalle. At **134** years old, it has longevity few schools can match.

The right student for ILSE is academically motivated, self-directed and comfortable in a school that carries *a serious scholastic temperament*. This suits pupils who want challenge, who like being around peers with intellectual drive, and who do not need glossy pastoral packaging to thrive. It will also appeal to families who want a secular education with public purpose rather than imported prestige. Parents hunting for lavish facilities, heavy hand-holding or the social theatre of the top-fee market will find stronger fits elsewhere. Parents who want *a strong sense of mission* and *an education with civic weight* should pay close attention.

STRENGTHS

- Founded in 1892 as the first secondary school placed under the academic supervision of the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), giving it a unique century-long university affiliation.
- Teaching staff is drawn largely from UBA professors, and the school offers an optional sixth year equivalent to the UBA's Ciclo Basico Comun, letting students start university credit while still at school.
- Notable alumni include Nobel Peace Prize laureate Carlos Saavedra Lamas, former president Roberto M. Ortiz, and Cervantes Prize-winning writer Adolfo Bioy Casares.
- Curriculum is plurilingual, including English and French, with the possibility of sitting international language certifications alongside the Argentine bachillerato.
- Offers three differentiated bachillerato tracks (Social Sciences and Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Economics and Administration), giving some academic specialisation before university.

TRADE-OFFS

- Entry is via a competitive year-long curso de ingreso with exams in Mathematics, Language, History and Geography, so places are not guaranteed and the process is demanding for 12-year-olds.
- Unlike the other two UBA-affiliated secondary schools, ILSE is self-financed through monthly family fees rather than public funding, and current fee levels are not published online.
- The school was boys-only and morning-shift only until 1985, a comparatively recent shift to coeducation that some families may want to weigh when assessing institutional culture.
- It follows the standard Argentine curriculum rather than an international programme (IB, A-Levels, etc.), which may matter for expat families planning onward moves to other education systems.

ADMISSIONS

Entry to first year is via a year-long curso de ingreso, open to students finishing 7th grade (CABA) or 1st year secondary (PBA), with exams in Mathematics, Language, History and Geography. Registration typically opens in October the year before and closes by end of March. Documentation includes proof of current schooling and a passport-style photo, submitted in person at the Secretaria Academica. Given the school's reputation and UBA affiliation, the process is considered selective relative to other Buenos Aires secondaries.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_c4f38f106e.