Abstract: In the last decade, in Europe, there has been a constant decrease of enrolment in university degrees with scientific orientation. In Italy, those degrees are characterised by at least one compulsory mathematics course. Our hypothesis is that a negative attitude towards mathematics (i.e. a negative emotional disposition towards mathematics) plays a role in the refusal to enrol in university scientific courses. After presenting arguments to maintain the existence of a link between attitude and university choice, it seems crucial from researchers’ point of view to understand which kind of experiences with mathematics characterise a negative emotional dispositions towards the discipline. With these aims a study has been carried out within a national Project, using a purposefully designed questionnaire, namely QCM (Questionnaire on the Characterization of Mathematics). This report discusses the main features of the QCM, describes some results of that study and suggests some implications for research on attitude.