



UNIVERSITÀ  
di **VERONA**

## REGULATIONS FOR PHD STUDIES

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## SECTION I – General principles

### HEADING I – PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

#### Art. 1 - Purpose and scope

1. PhD students are university students enrolled in a third-level educational programme where they must attend PhD lessons and carry out study and research in the premises designated for this purpose.
2. PhD students have the same rights as university students regarding access to general services and scholarships or study grants.
3. These Regulations govern the educational activities for PhD students in compliance with the law, ministerial provisions, the University Regulations and Statute.

#### Art. 2 - Educational objectives and programmes of study

1. PhD study aims to allow students to develop their academic research skills; PhD programmes include the use of new technologies and spending periods of education and work experience at public or private bodies in Italy and abroad.
2. The methods for defining the educational objectives and study programme of each PhD are governed by the Regulations for PhD Schools and PhD Programmes.

## SECTION II – PhD programme admission and attendance

### HEADING I – ADMISSION TO PHD PROGRAMMES

#### Art. 3 - Admission requirements

1. To be admitted to a PhD programme, applicants must:
  - a) Have a master's-level academic degree (*laurea magistrale* or *laurea specialistica*), or an old system degree if obtained in Italy prior to Ministerial Decree no. 509/1999.
  - b) From abroad: have an academic qualification recognised as equivalent to the Italian requirement in terms of duration, level and learning results (e.g. Master of Science, Master of Arts), which would permit access to a PhD programme in the country where it was gained.
2. Applicants who do not have a recognised equivalent qualification must attach the appropriate relevant documents to their application so that the suitability and authenticity of their studies can be verified. This is for the purpose of admission to the PhD programme only.
3. Documents from foreign applicants may be submitted in Italian or English. Official documents (e.g. degree certificate, exams taken, marks obtained, nationality certificate) in other languages must be accompanied by a self-certification in Italian or English.
4. Candidates who are due to earn the qualification required for admission may also apply, as long as they graduate before the date of their enrolment in a PhD programme, or else their enrolment will be revoked.
5. Candidates who already have a PhD cannot be admitted to the admission process for programmes in a similar field to the one in which they obtained their qualification. Applicants who have already received, a PhD scholarship (or part of it) may not receive another one.
6. Without prejudice to the provisions of point 5 above, current PhD students at the University who wish to change to another PhD programme may be admitted to the application process of programmes for which there are places available without a scholarship.
7. Public employees admitted to a PhD programme shall benefit, for the normal duration of the programme, from the leave of absence provided for by collective bargaining or, if they are employees under public law, from an extraordinary leave of absence for study purposes, compatibly with the needs of the administration, pursuant to Article 2 of Law no. 476 of 13 August 1984, with or without allowance and unless explicitly waived, only if enrolled for the first time in a PhD programme, regardless of the disciplinary field. However, they will retain the right to be allocated a budget for research activities carried out in Italy and abroad.

#### Art. 4 - Call for applications for admission to PhD programmes

1. The call for applications for each individual PhD programme is to be published in Italian and English at least once during the year, and defines the policies and procedures regarding:
  - a) Admission criteria and evaluation of applicants' prior qualifications
  - b) Admission test methods
  - c) Number of scholarships, apprenticeship contracts and any other form of financial support provided



- for by national legislation and/or joint agreement
- d) Amount of taxes and contributions payable by the PhD students
  - e) Any additional scholarships reserved for applicants who graduated from foreign universities, foreign scholarship students or students on specific international mobility programmes.
  - f) Any additional scholarships connected with community or international collaboration projects
  - g) Evaluation Committee, as described in Art. 5 below
2. The additional scholarships indicated in letters e) and f) may have specific admission procedures with special lists of eligible applicants, to be described in the call for applications.
  3. In the case of national, European and international joint projects, specific admission procedures and organisational arrangements may be established, depending on the individual doctoral projects implemented as part of accredited PhD programmes.
  4. The call for applications shall be issued by Rector's decree and published on the websites of the University, Euraxess and the Ministry, where it shall be made publicly available for at least 30 days.

#### **Art. 5 - Evaluation Committee for the admission process**

1. The Evaluation Committee for the admission process consists of three members of the PhD programme's Teaching Committee. They are to be nominated by the Teaching Committee itself and appointed by Rector's decree.
2. The Committee may additionally include internal or external local or foreign experts in the field, coming from public or private research bodies. Where specific agreements are in place, the appointment of experts shall be governed by those agreements. These experts shall participate fully in the work of the Committee.
3. The Committee appoints a Chairperson and a Secretary from among its members.

#### **Art. 6 - Admission process and general ranking lists**

1. All applicants are admitted to the competitive admission process under condition. Candidates who do not meet the requirements may be excluded at any time after the application process has taken place.
2. The purpose of the admission process is to assess applicants' prior experience and aptitude for scientific research and to ensure a fair comparison of the candidates. Selection may be made based on applicants' qualifications and/or an exam and/or an interview, as preferred by the Teaching Committee. The interview can require the submission and discussion of a research project.
3. If requested by the candidate, the admission process may also be held in a foreign language specified in the call for applications.
4. Where appropriate, oral tests/interviews may take place via internet provided it is possible to verify the candidate's identity.
5. Once the tests have been completed and the requirements specified in the call for applications have been verified, a general merit ranking list for each PhD programme shall be published by Rector's decree.
6. Foreign students' academic qualifications obtained abroad may be verified after the ranking lists are published, with a sworn translation requested if they are not in English. The University reserves the right to ask applicants for documents issued by the Italian diplomatic consuls on site to prove the validity of the declared qualifications.
7. Candidates who are offered a place with or without a scholarship are admitted to the programme in the order of the ranking list until all the available places are filled.

## **HEADING II – ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE**

#### **Art. 7 - Enrolment**

1. Candidates offered a place on a programme must enrol within 15 days of the publication of the ranking list, unless otherwise provided for in the Call for applications or in the Rector's Decree related to the general merit ranking list.
2. Should any student withdraw within the first three months of the programme, the next available candidate on the ranking list will be offered a place.
3. Upon initial enrolment in the programme, students are issued a registration number and an ID card so they can use student services and facilities.
4. Starting from the academic year 2022/2023, simultaneous enrolment in a PhD course and a non-compulsory bachelor's/master's degree course, a non-medical specialisation course and short masters programme (I or II level) is permitted. Enrolment is subject to the approval of the respective Academic Bodies, which must verify the sustainability of dual attendance for the achievement of the knowledge



and skills required by each course. Simultaneous enrolment in a PhD course and a medical specialisation course is also permitted, pursuant to Article 7 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021 and in the manner regulated by Article 9 below.

5. The simultaneous enrolment and, consequently, the joint attendance of two PhD courses (except in the case of co-doctoral agreements or enrolment in international doctoral programmes aimed at awarding double or joint degrees) and of a PhD course and a bachelor's/master's degree course involving compulsory attendance is not allowed. At the time of enrolment, the PhD candidate must opt for one of the two courses. In the event of a false declaration and where the dual enrolment persists, the University shall issue a formal provision signed by the Rector annulling the enrolment on the course and proceed to recover any sums paid by way of a grant in accordance with the procedures laid down by law. The ban on double enrolment continues until the end of the last year of the Course (third/fourth year).
6. Receivers of a research grant (*assegno di ricerca*) who successfully gain a scholarship place on a PhD programme may either:
  - a) Keep the research grant and renounce the PhD scholarship
  - b) Renounce the research grant and enrol on the PhD with a scholarship.In both cases, the choice is irreversible.
7. If a student withdraws after the first three months (art. 7 paragraph 2) but within the first year of the PhD programme, the Teaching Committee may transfer the scholarship to a non-scholarship student from the same cycle.

#### **Art. 8 - Additional student enrolments**

1. Contingent on approval of the Teaching Committee, enrolments are also accepted as stated in Art. 7 from:
  - a) Individuals successfully chosen from a selection procedure as part of an international agreement or research programme in which the University is a coordinator or partner. The duration of the programme must be at least as long as the PhD programme.
  - b) PhD students at foreign universities with agreements with the University for the awarding of co-tutored PhD qualifications.
  - c) Students with European Community scholarships for specific PhD projects may be admitted in addition to the number of places advertised in the call for applications for the PhD programme.

#### **Art. 9 - Medical specialisation students**

1. Medical specialisation students who are offered a place on a PhD programme must:
  - a) Officially confirm they are enrolled in the final year of a Medical Postgraduate Specialisation school at the University of Verona or other university.
  - b) Submit a *nulla osta* (clearance) certifying that the joint attendance between the PhD Programme and the Medical Postgraduate Specialisation is sustainable, even taking into account the distance between the seats of delivery of both courses. This clearance must be jointly signed by the Director of the Medical Postgraduate Specialisation School and the Coordinator of the PhD Programme and forwarded to the respective Boards/Councils.
2. In cases of joint attendance, the Student may apply for a shorter PhD programme, which may not, however, last less than two years. The application must be approved by the PhD programme's Teaching Committee and by the Council of the Medical Postgraduate Specialisation School, on the basis of an assessment of the consistency of the research activities already undertaken in the medical specialisation programme with the doctoral project.
3. Students are not permitted to receive PhD scholarship payments during the period where the two programmes overlap. They remain subject to the rules for doctors in specialist training and the related contract.
4. Medical Specialisation students receiving a Specialisation scholarship may not recover any PhD scholarship funds not received during the overlap period of the two programmes.

#### **Art. 10 – Supervisors and Co-Supervisors**

1. Each PhD student is assigned a Supervisor and one or more Co-Supervisors at the beginning of the first year of the PhD programme. Of the assigned Co-Supervisors, at least one must be a University lecturer. Supervisors and Co-Supervisors are to be chosen by the Teaching Committee and may not necessarily be members of the same Teaching Committee, provided that at least one meets the requirements for members of the same Committee.
2. Supervisors and Co-Supervisors:
  - a) Guide PhD students through their research activities until the completion of their thesis.



- b) Inform the Teaching Committee of students' progress at least once per year.
- c) Express their opinion on whether students have made satisfactory progress to be admitted to the following year of the programme; express whether students are ready for the final examination and graduation.
- d) Notify the Teaching Committee of any need for disciplinary action concerning a PhD student.

#### **Art. 11 - Progression to the next year of the programme**

1. At the end of each academic year, students are evaluated by the Teaching Committee regarding:
  - a) Admission to the following year of the programme, provided the student has obtained the required number of educational credits (60 CFU per academic year); or admission to the final examination after the thesis has been sent to external revisers
  - b) Continuation of the scholarship.
2. After approval by the Teaching Committee, it is each student's responsibility to enrol in the following year and/or final examination of the programme. PhD students who do not renew their enrolment in the programme or are inactive for eight consecutive academic years shall lose their PhD student status.

#### **Art. 12 - International education and experience**

1. PhD students may carry out periods of study and internships with public or private entities abroad.
2. Periods abroad cannot exceed 12 months in total, with the only exception of co-tutorship agreements, for which the period of stay abroad is agreed between the parties and it cannot exceed in any case 18 months.
3. In defining the modalities of the above activities, PhD students shall be authorized by the Teaching Committee for periods of six consecutive months or more abroad, from the Coordinator for periods of less than six consecutive months.

#### **Art. 13 - Disciplinary measures**

1. PhD students are subject to the disciplinary rules provided for in Royal Decree Law no. 1071/935 and the University Student Regulations, where compatible.
2. For disciplinary actions more serious than a warning, decisions are to be made by the Teaching Committee, or in the most serious cases, by the Academic Senate.
3. PhD students must behave responsibly, i.e. with respect for their own and other people's dignity and for the decorum of the places where teaching and research activities take place.
4. PhD students must also ensure the integrity and functionality of the equipment and facilities they use.

### **HEADING III – SPECIFIC SITUATIONS**

#### **Art. 14 – Suspension, extension, disqualification and exclusion from the PhD programme**

1. The Teaching Committee may authorise PhD students to put their programme on hold in the following cases:
  - a) Maternity, paternity, adoption or custody, in compliance with the law
  - b) Proven illness or injury lasting more than 30 days
  - c) Attendance of teacher training courses and all other similar purposes provided for by law
  - d) Serious, proven personal or family reasons.
2. Suspension periods may not exceed more than a total of six months throughout the whole duration of the programme, without prejudice to specific cases provided for by law, and must be recovered at the end of the cycle. While studies are on hold, students are not permitted to receive any scholarship payments. Payments will restart when the student resumes their studies. The total number of monthly payments cannot exceed 36 for 3-year programmes or 48 for 4-year programmes
3. Should a programme be put on hold, fees and contributions already paid by the PhD student are deferred to the following academic year, subject to adjustment.
4. Students are responsible for notifying the Teaching Committee when they wish to resume their programme. In taking note, the Teaching Committee must decide how the suspended period should be recovered.
5. If notified by the Tutor, the Teaching Committee may also suspend or exclude students from the PhD programme in the following cases:
  - a) Unexplained or unjustified extended absence from the programme
  - b) Serious violation of the programme regulations
  - c) Unsatisfactory performance on the programme.



Graduated measures depending on the severity of the infringement may consist of:

- a) 1 month's suspension from the programme and 1 month's suspension of any scholarship payments
  - b) 1-3 months' suspension from the programme and 1-3 months' suspension of scholarship payments
  - c) Exclusion from the PhD programme and annulment of the scholarship.
6. For justified reasons that do not allow the PhD thesis to be submitted on time, the PhD student may request an extension period of a maximum of 12 months. The request for an extension must be approved by the Teaching Committee and the relevant extension period cannot be financially covered by a scholarship.
  7. An extension of the PhD programme duration for a period not exceeding 12 months may be established by the Teaching Committee for justified scientific reasons. The extension requested by the Committee, for scientific reasons, is financially covered by extending the scholarship with funds from the University budget, subject to the relevant budget availability.
  8. The periods of suspension and extension referred to in paragraphs 1, 6 and 7 may not exceed a total of 18 months, without prejudice to specific cases provided for by law.

#### **Art. 15 - Programme attendance and duties**

1. PhD programme attendance is considered an exclusive, full-time activity; any activities other than education and research must be approved by the Supervisor and Co-Supervisors and authorised by the Teaching Committee.
2. PhD students with a scholarship may only undertake activities that are aimed at acquiring skills in the area relevant to their Programme, provided this is approved by the Teaching Committee and compatible with the programme schedule.
3. The remuneration paid to PhD scholarship holders for carrying out authorised working activities must not exceed the annual amount of the scholarship. Subordinate employment contracts with public or private entities involving a continuous commitment for a fixed or indefinite duration are considered in determining of the above remuneration.
4. For PhD students without a scholarship, any incompatibilities between the PhD and work must be evaluated in concrete terms.
5. Subject to the authorisation of the PhD Teaching Committee, PhD students may carry out, as an integral part of their training project, supplementary teaching activities within the limit of forty hours per academic year as well as student tutoring and guidance activities within the Bachelor's and Master's Courses. In the latter case, the PhD Teaching Committee shall be responsible for defining the maximum number of hours that PhD students may carry out each year. For the activities referred to in this paragraph, PhD students are paid the allowances referred to in Article 1, paragraph 1, letter b) of Decree Law no. 105 of 9 May 2003, converted with amendments by Law no. 170 of 11 July 2003.

Medical PhD students may participate in clinical and assistance activities if approved by the Teaching Committee.

#### **Art. 16 - Transferring from another university**

1. PhD students who have attended at least one year of a PhD programme at another Italian or foreign university may apply to enrol in the second year at the University of Verona.
2. The conditions for transferring are as follows:
  - a) The PhD programme must have the same research theme
  - b) Students must submit a permission form (*nulla osta*) from their previous university, together with a detailed report on the activities carried out there, to the Teaching Committee of the new PhD programme they wish to transfer to.
  - c) The activities carried out at the previous university must be deemed equivalent by the Teaching Committee
  - d) Students must pass an interview with an Evaluation Committee appointed by the Teaching Committee
3. If the transfer is approved the student may enrol in the second year of the programme, without a scholarship from the University. The Teaching Committee is responsible for allocating a Tutor and specifying the necessary resources to cover the 10% research budget.

### **SECTION III – Conclusion of the programme**

#### **HEADING I - THESIS, FINAL EXAM AND AWARDING OF THE DEGREE**



**Art. 17 - PhD thesis evaluation procedure**

1. PhD theses are to be written in Italian or English (or in another language if authorised by the Teaching Committee) and accompanied by a summary in English.
2. Before the end of the final year of the PhD programme, students must submit their thesis, along with a report on their activities carried out during the programme and a list of any publications, to their Tutor and co-tutor/s who will send these to the Teaching Committee. At least two external revisers will then be identified to evaluate the thesis. Revisers may belong to international foreign institutions provided they are external to the University and affiliated institutions and must be in possession of a recognised and qualified professional experience in the field. At least one reviser must be a university lecture.
3. Within 30 days of receiving a thesis, the revisers must provide a written, analytical opinion on the work and recommend to the Teaching Committee either that the student be admitted to the thesis defence, or that the final examination be postponed for up to six months if significant additions or corrections need to be made. If there are two revisers and their opinions differ, the decision will be made by the Teaching Committee.
4. If the final examination is postponed, the Teaching Committee will indicate how the thesis should be improved, taking account of the suggestions put forward by the revisers.
5. After the defined period, the thesis shall be accompanied by a new evaluation written by the same revisers and will in any case be admitted to the public discussion.
6. At least 15 days before the date of the final examination, PhD students must submit their thesis to the University Catalogue (IRIS). Failure to do so will exclude the student from admission to the thesis defence.
7. The PhD thesis shall be made available to the public within 30 days of the public discussion, except in the case of an embargo period for works containing data protected by industrial secrecy and/or publication rights.

**Art. 18 - Evaluation Committee for the thesis defence and awarding of the degree**

1. The Evaluation Committee for the award of the PhD is appointed by the Rector on the proposal of the Teaching Committee and is composed of at least 2/3 of individuals who do not belong to the Programme location (i.e. where the PhD programme is administratively based), and no more than 1/3 of members belonging to the PhD programme. In any case, at least 2/3 of the Committee shall be made up of University lecturers. The composition of the Committee should be gender balanced whenever possible.
2. The Evaluation Committee must complete its work within 90 days of being appointed. If the Committee does not complete its work within this time period, it will be dissolved and the Rector shall appoint a new Committee with completely different members.
3. For PhD programmes or pathways with particular agreements, the Committee will be composed as specified in the relevant agreement.
4. If the Evaluation Committee has members abroad, the Teaching Committee may authorise the thesis defence to take place via videoconferencing. In all cases, PhD students must be ensured the possibility of presenting and discussing their thesis in the presence of the full Evaluation Committee.
5. Thesis defences normally take place in April of the year following the end of the PhD programme, and in any case no later than eight months after the end of the programme, and shall consist of an interview with the candidate on the subject of their thesis. At the end of the interview, the committee shall issue a written judgement about the thesis and, when it unanimously recognises its particular scientific importance, it may award honours.
6. The thesis defence date cannot be disregarded. However, in specific justified circumstances, a PhD student may ask the Teaching Committee to postpone the date a maximum of one time only.
7. Educational activities that are attended by PhD students at one or more Programme locations may be certified and included in a diploma supplement, to be attached to the PhD diploma.

**Art. 19 - "Doctor Europæus" certificate**

1. PhD students may ask the Teaching Committee to approve the issue of a "*Doctor Europæus*" certificate together with the national PhD qualification, contingent upon the following conditions:
  - a) The doctoral thesis must be revised by at least two lectures belonging to universities located in two European Country, that is different to the country where the thesis will be defended;
  - b) At least one member of the Evaluation Committee must belong to a university of a European Country that is different to the country where the PhD programme is administratively based
  - c) Part of the thesis defence must take place in a European language that is different to the national language of the country where the PhD programme is based
  - d) The student must have spent at least one trimester abroad carrying out research in a Country (three



consecutive months).

**Art. 20 - International Standard Book Number (ISBN) attribution**

1. If authorised by the Teaching Committee, students may request an ISBN code for their thesis, at least 30 days after the thesis defence, following the instructions on the PhD website.
2. The entire procedure must be completed within 60 days of the discussion.

**SECTION IV – Final provisions**

**Art. 21 - Issuing and entry into force of these Regulations**

1. These Regulations have been recommended by the Board of Directors, approved by the Academic Senate and issued by the Rector's decree.
2. These Regulations are published in the University's Official Journal and, if not otherwise specified by the decree itself, shall enter into force the day immediately after publication.
3. With regard to Ph.D cycles that have not yet been completed, the regulations in force at the time of their establishment shall apply until their completion. These Regulations shall apply with effect from the XXXVIII Ph.D cycle.

**Art. 22 - Changes to the Regulations**

1. Changes to these Regulations must be made by the same procedure specified in Art. 21.