

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF PHD PROGRAMMES

(issued by R.D. n. 1468/2016 of December 5th 2016 and subsequent amendments and supplements)

(Coordinated text for information purposes only and without force of law)

DISCLAIMER: This is a non-official version of the PhD Programmes Regulation. Only the version published in the University of Bologna Bulletin (Bollettino Ufficiale n. 241 del 15/12/2016) shall prevail and be binding.

Art. 1 – Purpose and scope of application

1. These Regulations shall govern the establishment and functioning of PhD programmes at Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna (hereinafter, the “University”), in compliance with the criteria and requirements laid down by the legislation in force.

Art. 2 – Accreditation, establishment and duration of the programmes

1. PhD programmes shall be established in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University General Statute and as resolved by Departments.

2. The Board of Governors shall approve the establishment of each PhD programme, having heard the opinion of the Academic Senate and of the Student Board.

3. The University shall establish PhD programmes subject to accreditation by the Italian Ministry of University and Research (hereinafter, the “Ministry”). Accreditation provides for a five-year authorisation to establish PhD programmes and an annual verification of the maintenance of requirements for accreditation itself.

4. The legal duration of PhD programmes may not be less than three years, without prejudice to any exceptions under the relevant legislation.

5. As instructed by the Ministry, the University shall adopt a quality assurance system in designing and managing doctoral education, pursuant to the quality assurance standards in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Art. 3 – PhD programme bodies

1. The PhD programme bodies are the Academic Board and the PhD Programme Coordinator.

Art. 4 – Academic Board

1. The members of the Academic Board shall be appointed by the Boards of the Departments involved in the PhD programmes, from among full professors, associate professors and assistant professors whose fields of research are consistent with the subjects covered by the relevant PhD programme and in compliance with the requirements for accreditation and with the law. The appointment shall be provided for each PhD cycle.

2. Professors and assistant professors from other Universities may be appointed as members of the Academic Board, subject to authorisation of their Home University. Professors, directors of research

and other professionals holding equivalent positions at Institutions collaborating with the University on the basis of specific agreements may be appointed as members of the Academic Board in accordance with the provisions laid down by the above-said specific agreements.

3. The Academic Board shall be made up of at least twelve members, including the PhD Programme Coordinator. Where possible, membership must be gender balanced. At least half of the members must be tenured full and/or associate professors, or professors holding equivalent positions at foreign Universities. The remainder must be tenured assistant professors at Universities or public research Institutions, or, in the case of PhD programmes in partnership with public research Institutions, also directors of research, researchers or senior researchers at such Institutions, without prejudice to the minimum number set for professors. Pursuant to Ministerial Decree 226/2021, up to one-third of the total number of members of the Academic Board may be experts who are not part of Universities or other public research Institutions, but are demonstrably and highly scientifically or professionally qualified in fields of research that are consistent with the training objectives of the relevant PhD programme. The membership of the Academic Board must in any case abide by the ministerial provisions on accreditation requirements.

4. In the case of PhD programmes covered by agreements with foreign Universities and Institutions, the Academic Board shall be established in accordance with both the aforesaid criteria and the provisions laid down by the relevant agreements.

5. The Academic Board of the industrial PhD programmes referred to in Article 25 must be comprised of at least one highly scientifically or professionally qualified person from each company involved in the relevant PhD programme.

6. Each member of the Academic Board may only be part of one Board countrywide. Being a member of another Board shall only be possible if this refers to a PhD programme established in partnership with others, including industrial PhD programmes and PhD programmes of national interest as per Ministerial Decree 226/2021.

7. The membership of the Academic Board, to be updated on an annual basis, shall be resolved by the Department Boards at the time the request for establishment is made and shall be filed with the Ministry together with the application for accreditation.

8. At the beginning of each cycle, the Academic Board shall take charge of any cycles of the same programme already underway and not yet completed. Having regard to newly established programmes, the Academic Board shall be entitled to pass resolutions as of the day after appointment, without prejudice to the methods and deadlines for ministerial verification.

9. The Academic Board shall be responsible for setting the objectives, planning and implementing the PhD programme, and for any related scientific, organisational and teaching tasks.

10. The Academic Board shall resolve on the following matters, *inter alia*:

- a. definition and assessment criteria for the PhD programme admission examinations;
- b. award of the scholarships referred to in Article 13;
- c. appointment of the supervisors referred to in paragraphs 17 and 18;

- d. planning and monitoring of training and research activities for each PhD student;
 - e. deadlines and methods for the annual verification of the activities carried out and findings obtained by PhD students;
 - f. exclusion of PhD students, based on the reasoned advice of supervisors;
 - g. authorisation to carry out activities compatible with the PhD programme;
 - h. authorisation to study and carry out research in Italy and abroad for a certain period of time;
 - i. appointment of external evaluators for PhD theses;
 - j. scheduling of the dates for the final exam to be awarded the PhD degree;
 - k. transfer requests;
 - l. approval of cotutelle (co-tutorship) agreements;
 - m. advices on the signature of agreements with Universities and research Institutions, public or private Institutions, or companies;
 - n. identification of the members of the Admission Board referred to in Article 9 and of the Examination Board referred to in Article 22, to be submitted to the Rector.
11. The meetings of the Academic Board shall be validly constituted when the absolute majority of its members is present, also by electronic means, without taking any excused members into account. The members of the Academic Board are not allowed to delegate their functions to others.
12. The resolutions of the Academic Board shall be validly passed with the votes in favour of the absolute majority of participants, including those casting their vote by electronic means. In the case of a tie, the vote of the PhD Programme Coordinator shall prevail.
13. The minutes of the Academic Board's meetings and resolutions shall be duly signed and sent to the competent Offices within five working days of the date of the meeting.
14. When discussing teaching and organisational issues, the membership of the Academic Board shall be supplemented by up to two representatives of the PhD students enrolled, without voting rights.
15. The two PhD student representatives shall remain in office for three years. Elections shall be called by the PhD Programme Coordinator duly in advance. The right to vote and to stand as a candidate shall be granted to PhD students duly enrolled on the election date. Voting shall be valid when at least one-third of those entitled participate. In the case of a tie, the selection shall be made by drawing lots.
16. The PhD student representatives shall remain in office as long as they maintain their PhD student status; should they lose this status before the end of their mandate, they shall be replaced by the next unelected candidates in the list or by holding new elections, if replacement is not possible. The mandate of the substitute representative shall expire at the end of the three-year term valid for the other representatives.

17. For each PhD student, the Academic Board shall identify a supervisor and one or more co-supervisors, at least one of whom must be a University member. Supervisors and co-supervisors must be demonstrably and highly scientifically or professionally qualified in fields of research that are consistent with the training objectives of the relevant PhD programme. Supervisors and co-supervisors need not be members of the Academic Board, provided that, in this case, at least one of them holds the requirements applicable to the members of the Board itself.

18. Supervisors and co-supervisors shall be responsible for overseeing the PhD student's research activities and thesis preparation. They shall hold their position until award of the corresponding PhD degree. If a supervisor retires before the PhD degree is awarded, he/she may be appointed as co-supervisor. A new supervisor must be appointed in those cases.

Fixed-term assistant professors and those who have been hired which research contracts ex L. 79/2022 may be appointed as supervisors or co-supervisors: at the end of their working contract, the Academic Board shall evaluate whether to confirm or not the assigned role, if the conditions are still fulfilled.

Any changes in those positions must be resolved by the Academic Board.

Art. 5 – PhD Programme Coordinator

1. In accordance with the guidelines detailed in the following paragraph 2, the Academic Board shall be coordinated by a full professor, working on a full-time basis, or, if he/she is excused, by an associate professor, working on a full-time basis, who holds the requirements under Article 4, paragraph 1, point a), no. 3 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021. The PhD Programme Coordinator may also be a director of research of an Italian or foreign Institution, and must in any case be a member of the Academic Board.

2. Elections of the PhD Programme Coordinator shall be called by the Dean of the Academic Board. Voting shall be by secret ballot: the meeting shall be validly constituted when the absolute majority of the members is present, also by electronic means, without taking any excused members into account. All full professors and directors of research may stand as candidates in the first vote; the PhD Programme Coordinator shall be elected by the absolute majority of voters. All full professors, associate professors and directors of research may stand as candidates in the second vote, to be held if the first one was unsuccessful; the PhD Programme Coordinator shall be elected by the absolute majority of voters. All full professors and associate professors may stand as candidates in any subsequent votes; the PhD Programme Coordinator shall be elected by the relative majority of votes.

3. The PhD Programme Coordinator shall be appointed for a term of three years and may be re-elected only once for another three-year period. The position of PhD Programme Coordinator may only be held at one Academic Board countrywide.

4. The PhD Programme Coordinator shall coordinate the activities of the PhD programme and shall call and chair the meetings of the Academic Board. Upon appointment, the PhD Programme Coordinator shall take charge of the management of activities relating to any cycles of the same PhD programme already underway and not yet completed.

5. Upon a proposal of the PhD Programme Coordinator, the Academic Board may appoint a Deputy Coordinator from among the University full and associate professors being part of the Board. The Deputy Coordinator shall replace the PhD Programme Coordinator if he/she is absent or unable to attend to his/her duties.

Art. 6 – Admission requirements

1. Regardless of age and citizenship, applicants with any of the following academic qualifications may apply for admission to PhD programmes:

- a. Laurea Specialistica or Laurea Magistrale (second cycle degree);
- b. Laurea Vecchio Ordinamento (previous system degree equivalent to a second cycle degree);
- c. academic qualification issued by Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale (Advanced Artistic and Musical Training) Institutions;
- d. second-level academic qualification awarded abroad, recognised as equivalent to those covered by letters a., b. and c.

2. Further specific requirements may be established for each PhD programme and set out in the relevant call for applications.

3. The academic qualification required to access the PhD programme, as per paragraph 1 above, must be awarded before completing enrolment. Successful applicants for a PhD position who are waiting to award their qualification may be enrolled under condition. Enrolment may only be completed when the applicant submits proof of qualification, with the methods and by the deadlines laid down by the call for applications. Under all circumstances, the qualification must be awarded before the programme starts.

4. Having regard to applicants holding a foreign academic qualification, their eligibility shall be assessed by the Admission Boards pursuant to the legislation in force both in Italy and in the country where the qualification was awarded, and in accordance with the relevant international treaties or agreements dealing with the recognition of academic qualifications for the purpose of access to further studies. Upon enrolment, successful applicants for a PhD position who hold a foreign academic qualification must provide a document to ascertain the validity of the qualification awarded. Suitable documents may include, but shall not be limited to the Diploma Supplement, the “Dichiarazione di Valore” issued by the Italian diplomatic authorities in the country where the qualification was awarded, and the statement of comparability issued by international centres for recognition of academic qualifications. Should any doubts arise about the nature or validity of the academic qualification, the University reserves the right to make further enquiries even after enrolment is completed.

5. If, following verification, the qualification submitted fails to meet the requirements under paragraphs 1, 3 and 4, the candidate shall be excluded from the PhD programme and required to return any scholarship payments unduly received.

Art. 7 – Call for applications

1. Admission to the PhD programmes shall be conditional on a public comparative assessment of the applicants.

2. The call for applications, written in both Italian and English, shall be issued by Rector's Decree and published on the University website, on the Euraxess website and on the Ministry website. It shall indicate:

- a. the list of PhD programmes established (including those covered by agreements);
- b. the starting date and the legal duration of the programmes;
- c. the number of available positions, including those funded by scholarships;
- d. any reserved positions as specifically provided for by the law or in the call for applications;
- e. any topic-specific positions;
- f. any positions conditional on the execution of PhD Apprenticeship contracts;
- g. any forms of financial support, drawing on research funds or other University resources, including research fellowships, that may be awarded to one or more eligible applicants;
- h. the amount of tuition fees to be paid by PhD students in the academic year of enrolment, including exemptions where relevant;
- i. the documents to be submitted by the applicants in order to take the admission examinations;
- j. the procedures and scheduling of the admission examinations and their assessment criteria;
- k. the procedures and scheduling to submit applications.

3. Should any additional positions become available even after publication of the call, these may be assigned provided they are disclosed and published at least 10 days before the date of the admission examinations.

4. Additional eligible PhD applicants may be admitted if further funds become available up to one month before the starting date of the programme. In the case of funds from external sources, the relevant agreements must be executed by that date. Eligible PhD applicants shall be admitted based on the ranking list.

Art. 8 – Admission examinations

1. The admission examinations shall be resolved by the Academic Board and may involve:

- a. Assessment of qualifications and/or research project and examinations;
- b. Assessment of qualifications and/or research project.

2. Examinations shall be carried out by the deadlines and with the procedures indicated in the call for applications. Examinations may be taken in any of the foreign languages indicated in the call for applications. Candidates may not be present at the session for the assessment of qualifications.

Art. 9 – Admission Committees

1. Upon a proposal of the Academic Board, the Rector shall appoint a specific Admission Board for each PhD programme. The Board shall be usually composed of three University professors and/or assistant professors, up to a maximum of five members. In the case of PhD programmes made up of more than one curriculum, the Board may be expanded to include at least one professor or assistant professor who is competent in the field of study covered by each curriculum. The Academic Board shall also provide for a sufficient number of substitutes.
2. The Board shall be responsible for the comparative assessment of the applicants, on the basis of the criteria established by the Academic Board. Before the admission examination takes place, the Board may define any sub-criteria for the assessment, which shall be published by the deadlines and following the instructions provided by the call for applications.
3. In the case of scholarship funded by external Institutions, after executing a specific agreement, the Board may be expanded to include an expert representing the funding Institution, for the sole purpose of expressing an opinion on the eligibility of the candidates that compete for the relevant externally funded scholarship.
4. Insofar as the agreements so specify, the Board may also be expanded to include one or more experts appointed for the sole purpose of assessing the candidates covered by the aforementioned agreements.
5. Any expenses incurred by the members of the Board shall be reimbursed in accordance with the “Regolamento delle missioni, delle trasferte e relativo rimborso spese” (Regulations on missions, travel expenses and related reimbursement), issued by R.D. 21/2014 of 10/01/2014.
6. The Board may meet by electronic means to carry out the preliminary session and to assess the applicants’ qualifications and/or research projects.
7. As a rule, the longest-serving member shall be appointed to chair the Board; in the event of equal seniority, the eldest member shall be appointed. The Board may establish other rules to appoint its Chair. If a standing member is absent or unable to attend to their duties, one of the substitutes appointed as per paragraph 1 shall replace them.

Art. 10 – Ranking lists

1. At the end of the assessment procedure, the Admission Board shall prepare a ranking list for each PhD programme. The Board shall also prepare any specific ranking lists in the event of reserved positions as provided for by the law and/or in the call for applications. If the call for applications envisages the award of any positions aimed at developing specific topics, the Board shall also assess the specific eligibility of those applicants that expressed their intention to participate in the selection for such positions, in accordance with the scheduling and procedures stated in the call for applications. Eligibility shall be granted in light of the skills, expertise and inclinations of the applicants, as well as based on their suitability for the profile sought. The Rector shall approve the selection procedures and general ranking lists by decree.
2. Successful applicants shall be admitted to the relevant PhD programme according to the ranking list and until all positions available are covered. Any positions aimed at developing specific topics shall only be awarded to those applicants that the Admission Board recognised as specifically eligible.

3. In the case of a tie, preference shall be given to the younger applicant. If a scholarship is granted, precedence shall be given to the financial situation of the applicant's family, to be calculated in accordance with the legislation in force on the right to education.
4. The enrolment of successful applicants must be completed with the methods and by the deadlines indicated in the call for applications.
5. Should a position with scholarship become available following any withdrawals, all successful applicants without a scholarship shall be informed, including those that have withdrawn in due time.
6. Following either the express or tacit withdrawal of a successful applicant, the substitute applicant shall be informed by notice with the methods indicated in the call for applications. Eligible substitute applicants who fail to complete the enrolment by the deadlines and with the methods indicated in the above-said notice shall be considered to have tacitly withdrawn.
7. No replacement shall be allowed after the starting date of the PhD programme.
8. In order to enrol, any successful applicants who are already enrolled in another PhD programme must withdraw from the previous programme. Those who have already benefited from a PhD scholarship in Italy may not do so twice.

Art. 11 – Extra-quota positions

1. The following applicants may be granted an extra-quota position after participating in the call for applications referred to in Article 7 and passing the admission examination referred to in Article 8:
 - a. applicants who have been awarded scholarships funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation or by Institutions in their own Country of birth, citizenship, residence or domicile;
 - b. applicants covered by PhD Apprenticeship agreements outside the positions available under the call for applications;
 - c. applicants that benefit from funds in the framework of international mobility and training programmes and/or applicants from foreign Countries with which the University has entered into agreements aimed at the admission to PhD programmes.
2. The applicants referred to in letter c. of the previous paragraph may also be awarded extra-quota positions, without being required to participate in the call for applications referred to in Article 7 and pass the admission examination referred to in Article 8, insofar as they are selected via comparative assessment procedures and subject to the Academic Board's positive opinion on their scientific eligibility.

Art. 12 – Tuition fees

1. The provisions of the University Regulations on tuition fees, issued by R.D. 662/2018 of May 7th 2018, shall apply to PhD students.
2. Withdrawal or exclusion from the PhD programme shall not entitle to reimbursement of tuition fees.

3. In order to obtain the PhD degree, an application fee for admission to the final exam and for the issuance of the diploma must be paid, the amount of which shall be defined by the Academic Bodies.

Art. 13 – Scholarships

1. The Academic Bodies shall resolve on the University funds to be allocated to PhD scholarships. Additional funds may be allocated by the University Departments/Institutions based on agreements or funds from external Institutions.

2. For accreditation purposes, an average of at least four scholarships must be available at University level per PhD programme, without taking into account any scholarships covered by agreements or consortia. The number of scholarships per PhD programme may not be less than three.

3. Scholarships shall be paid to PhD students in deferred monthly instalments, from the starting date of the programme.

4. The minimum amount of scholarships shall be determined by ministerial decree. Upon establishment of a PhD programme, the Board of the Main Department may resolve to increase the minimum number of scholarships as resolved by the Academic Bodies on an annual basis, subject to compliance with the requirements of the legislation. In this case, the increase shall apply to all scholarships made available for the concerned PhD programme.

5. All PhD students enrolled on whatever basis must be granted an additional budget of 50% of the amount of the scholarship referred to in paragraph 4 for any periods spent abroad under Article 14, paragraph 7. This budget may not be used for stays of less than one continuous month or for stays in the PhD student's place of residence. The additional budget for research periods abroad may be used for up to 12 months. This period may be extended for up to 18 months in total for PhD students covered by cotutelle agreements with foreign parties or pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 2 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021. PhD students must apply for the balance of the scholarship increase within six months of the end of their stay, failing which their entitlement to the economic benefit shall lapse.

6. From the beginning of the PhD programme and until the PhD degree is obtained, the University Departments/Institutions must grant to each PhD student enrolled in a PhD programme on whatever basis a budget of no less than 10% of the amount of the scholarship referred to in paragraph 5. This budget, to be managed by the Departments/Institutions, shall be aimed at covering any costs linked to training and research activities in Italy and abroad, including the reimbursement of travel expenses. Any undrawn amounts at the end of each year shall be accumulated with those available to the PhD student for subsequent years.

7. The provisions laid down by paragraphs 5 and 6 shall not apply to the scholarship holders referred to in Article 11, paragraph 1, points a) and c).

8. The scholarship shall be subject to the payment of the National Social Security Institute (INPS) contributions pursuant to the legislation in force, i.e. two-thirds to be paid by the University and one-third to be paid by the scholarship holder. PhD students shall benefit from the corresponding rights and protection.

Art. 14 – Rights and duties of PhD students

1. The PhD student status shall be obtained by enrolling in a PhD programme. It shall run from the programme starting date and be maintained until the PhD degree is awarded, or until exclusion or withdrawal from the programme where relevant. Exclusions from PhD programmes shall be ordered by Rector's Decree. The compatibility and incompatibility rules referred to in Articles 15 and 16 below shall not apply after the end of the legal duration of the programme.
2. A PhD student must attend the PhD programme throughout its legal duration, on a full-time and exclusive basis, without prejudice to the provisions of Articles 15, 18 and 25 below.
3. PhD students are required to follow the learning activities and carry out the research activities planned by the Academic Board for each academic year, as well as to submit the papers and findings of their research by the deadlines and with the methods established by the Academic Board. Each PhD student's activities shall be assessed by the Academic Board at least once a year. A negative assessment shall result in the exclusion from the PhD programme. In that case, any scholarship payments shall stop as of the date of the exclusion decree.
4. At any time, by submitting an appropriate request to the University, a PhD student may irrevocably withdraw from:
 - a. their enrolment in the PhD programme;
 - b. their scholarship, while remaining enrolled in the PhD programme.
5. The aforesaid withdrawals shall result in the interruption of any scholarship payments as of the effective date of the withdrawal.
6. In both cases of exclusion and withdrawal referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4, PhD students shall be required to return any scholarship instalments improperly received after the effective date of the exclusion or withdrawal.
7. On an ordinary basis throughout the legal duration of the PhD programme, and subject to prior authorisation by the Academic Board, PhD students shall perform research and training activities that are consistent with their PhD project at highly qualified Institutions abroad.
8. As an integral part of their training project, subject to prior authorisation by the Academic Board and without any scholarship increase, PhD students may undertake the tutoring of first-cycle and second-cycle degree students, also for consideration, as well as supplementary teaching activities up to a maximum of 40 hours per academic year. This provision shall no longer apply after the end of the legal duration of the PhD programme.

For the activities referred to in this paragraph, PhD students shall be paid the grants referred to in Article 1, paragraph 1, point b. of Decree-Law 105/2003, converted with amendments by Law 170 of July 11th 2003.
9. The provisions protecting maternity and paternity envisaged by the legislation in force shall apply to PhD students.
10. In order to award the PhD degree, each PhD student must access the IRIS online catalogue and enter the information concerning their own scientific production.

11. Upon completion of the PhD programme, PhD students are required to complete the online assessment questionnaire relating to the PhD programme they attended.

Art. 15 – Compatible activities

1. Subject to both prior authorisation of the Academic Board and approval by the supervisor, the following activities shall be compatible with enrolment in a PhD programme:

a. professional and practical internship not envisaged in the PhD programme, provided that the relevant methods and timing allow the pursuit of the PhD programme activities and provided there are no conflicts of interest;

b. tutoring activities not envisaged in the PhD programme, subject to the limits laid down by the Regulations on teaching and tutoring contracts, issued by R.D. 418/2011 of April 20th 2011.

2. The Academic Board may authorise a PhD student to carry out paid work that allows them to acquire skills pertaining to the training field of the relevant PhD programme, subject to both approval by the supervisor and verification of its compatibility with the training, learning and research activities envisaged by the PhD programme.

3. PhD students are required to ask for an authorisation to perform the activities under paragraphs 1 and 2, failing which they shall be excluded.

4. Public Administration employees admitted to PhD programmes shall be subject to the legislation in force on compatibility.

Art. 16 – Incompatibility and non-accumulation regime

1. Enrolment in a PhD programme shall not be compatible with:

a. the concurrent enrolment in another PhD programme, and in the other cases provided for by the legislation in force;

b. the concurrent appointment as an adjunct professor responsible for teaching, training and language training modules at any University or Institution awarding academic qualifications.

2. Scholarships may not be accumulated with:

a. other scholarships awarded on whatever basis, except those granted by national or international Institutions, or Institutions established in foreign countries, aimed at funding periods spent abroad;

b. the emoluments of medical doctors under specialist training. Scholarship payments shall be suspended for the period of concurrent enrolment in a medical specialisation school;

c. research fellowships. Research fellows who are also awarded a PhD scholarship must irrevocably withdraw from either the research fellowship or the scholarship before the starting date of the programme.

3. Violation of the incompatibility regime referred to in paragraph 1, letter a. shall result in the forfeiture of the second enrolment. Violation of any other grounds for incompatibility and of the non-accumulation regime referred to above shall result in the exclusion from the PhD programme.

Art. 17 – Clinical and healthcare activities for PhD students in the medical and veterinary field

1. Subject to authorisation by the Academic Board, PhD students in the medical and veterinary field may carry out clinical and healthcare activities and veterinary services, respectively, in the forms and with the methods defined by the Academic Bodies and agreed in writing between the University and the Centres where those activities take place.

Art. 18 – Joint attendance of PhD programmes and medical specialisation schools

1. Medical doctors under specialist training may jointly attend PhD programmes under the following conditions:

a. also in light of the distance between the two premises, compatibility of the activities of and commitment in the specialisation school and PhD programme, to be certified by the medical specialisation School Board and PhD Academic Board;

b. incompatibility of the PhD scholarship with the emoluments, however denominated, received in relation to the activities of the specialisation school.

2. In the cases of joint attendance as per this article, PhD students may submit a request for reduction of PhD activities to the Academic Board. The Academic Board shall accept the request after assessing the consistency of any research activities already carried out in the medical specialisation programme with the PhD project. For the request referred to above to be granted, the specialisation School Board's advice on the compatibility of the PhD project with the teaching purposes of the specialisation school itself shall also be required. Should the aforesaid request be granted, the duration of the PhD programme must in any case be of at least two years.

3. The provisions of the Regulations on specialisation schools, issued by R.D. 1/2011 of January 3rd 2011 and subsequent amendments and additions, and of the specialist training contract shall apply to PhD students who are enrolled in a medical specialisation programme.

Art. 19 – Suspension and extensions

1. PhD students may request a suspension in the following circumstances:

a. civilian service;

b. severe and documented illness;

c. severe and documented personal and family reasons.

2. In all of the above cases, suspension may be requested for a minimum period of one month and up to six months, with the exception of the cases envisaged by the law.

3. Attendance must mandatorily be suspended in the event of maternity, paternity, adoption and foster care, pursuant to the relevant legislation in force, and in the case of illness or injury with duration of more than 30 days, duly documented. The provisions protecting maternity envisaged by Decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of July 12th 2007 and the provisions of Article 22, paragraph 6, last sentence of Law 240 of December 30th 2010 shall apply to female PhD students, including PhD students referring to social security Institutions other than INPS.

4. Suspension shall entail the postponement of the legal duration of the PhD programme to cover the entire suspension period used.

5. The PhD career cannot be suspended after the end of the legal duration of the PhD programme.
6. Suspension must be requested by submitting an appropriate and documented request to the University, and may not run before the date on which the request is submitted.
7. During the suspension period, both career and any scholarship payment shall be suspended.
8. At the end of the suspension period, the PhD student shall resume attendance by informing the PhD Programme Unit for the enrolment in the current academic year to be regularised. Otherwise, the PhD student shall be excluded. As to PhD students who hold a scholarship, this shall be paid from the moment when attendance resumes until the entire duration of the scholarship itself is reached.
9. On the request of a supervisor and subject to the PhD student's consent, the Academic Board may decide to extend the duration of the PhD programme for justified scientific reasons, by ensuring in that case that the scholarship is extended accordingly and by guaranteeing financial coverage thereof with the funds of the University, the Departments/Centres and/or the funding Bodies. The extension may be by one month at a time, for up to 12 months.
10. On the request of a PhD student, the Academic Board may also grant an extension of the deadline to submit their PhD thesis, up to 12 months, when the usual deadline cannot be met for justified reasons. The extension shall be granted at no extra cost for the University.
11. The suspension and extension periods referred to in this article may not exceed 18 months in total for each PhD student, without prejudice to any special cases envisaged by the law.

Art. 20 – Ownership of findings and confidentiality

1. The intellectual and industrial property rights over any findings of the PhD student, including but not limited to software, industrial inventions (patentable or otherwise), know-how, models, data and data collections, shall be governed in accordance with the legislation in force, the University regulations and any agreements executed with other Universities, companies or Institutions involved.
2. PhD students shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement in relation to any confidential information, data and documents that may come to their attention in the course of their work at and/or on behalf of the University.

Art. 21 – Award of the PhD degree

1. The Doctor of Philosophy degree, which may indicate the specific curriculum, shall be awarded subject to a positive assessment of the PhD thesis. The latter must contribute to the advancement of knowledge or methodologies in the selected research field. The final diploma must be accompanied by a document that certifies the training activities carried out by the PhD student (Diploma Supplement).
2. The PhD thesis, together with an abstract in English and a report by the PhD student on the activities carried out and any publications made, shall be written in Italian or English, or in any other language subject to approval by the Academic Board.

3. The PhD student must submit their thesis by uploading it to the University applications. The thesis, together with the report on the activities carried out during the programme and any publications made, shall then be forwarded to at least two external evaluators, unrelated to the individuals issuing the qualification, selected by the Academic Board and for whom no consideration is envisaged. At least one of them must be a member of the University teaching staff. Within 30 days of receiving the thesis, the evaluators shall express a written, analytical assessment on the same and propose its admission to or deferral of the defence for a period not exceeding six months, in the case significant additions or amendments are needed. Upon expiration of this time limit, the thesis shall be admitted to the defence in any case, together with a new written assessment by the same evaluators, issued after any amendments or additions are made.

4. Admission to the defence shall be conditional on the PhD student uploading their thesis, in digital format, to the University Institutional repository, ensuring conservation and public access where applicable.

5. The thesis defence shall be held before the Examination Board referred to in Article 22 and shall be public, save on an exceptional basis for confidentiality reasons or to protect the ownership of the findings. At the end of the defence, the Board shall draw up the minutes stating its reasoned and detailed assessment on the PhD thesis defended by the candidate.

6. In the event of unexcused absence from the final exam, the PhD student shall forfeit their right of being awarded the PhD degree.

Art. 22 – Examination Boards

1. Upon a proposal of the Academic Board, the Rector shall appoint one or more Examination Boards for each PhD programme. To the extent practicable, membership must be gender balanced. Each Board shall be usually composed of three University professors and/or assistant professors, up to a maximum of five members. In the case of PhD programmes made up of more than one curriculum, the Board may be expanded to include at least one professor or assistant professor who is competent in the field of study covered by each curriculum. The Academic Board shall also provide for a sufficient number of substitutes.

2. The supervisors and co-supervisors of PhD students may not be members of the Board. In any case, the Board shall be made up of at least two-thirds of members from outside the Home University of the programme and for up to one-third of members that are parties involved in the PhD programme pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 2 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021. In any case, at least two-thirds of the Board shall be made up of University members.

3. At the end of the defence, the Board shall give a written, reasoned assessment on the thesis; in the event of outstanding scientific findings, the Board may unanimously award the PhD degree with honours.

4. Any expenses incurred by the members of the Board shall be reimbursed in accordance with the Regulations on missions, travel expenses and related reimbursement, issued by R.D. 21/2014 of January 10th 2014.

5. The members of the Board may attend the defence by electronic means.

6. As a rule, the longest-serving member shall be appointed to chair the Board; in the event of equal seniority, the eldest member shall be appointed. If a standing member is absent or unable to attend to their duties, one of the substitutes appointed as per paragraph 1 above shall replace them.

7. Agreements with foreign Universities and Institutions envisaging the award of a multiple or joint PhD degree may provide for criteria covering the membership of the Board that are different from those described in the above paragraphs.

Art. 23 – Transfers from other Universities

1. By the end of the first year of the programme, PhD students enrolled in other Italian or foreign Universities may request to be enrolled in the second year of a PhD programme at the University of Bologna, provided that:

a. a PhD programme with similar training and research objectives to those foreseen by the previous PhD programme is available at the University;

b. having assessed the work already carried out by the PhD student at their Home University, the Academic Board grants the transfer request.

2. In the case the transfer request is granted, the concerned PhD student must submit appropriate certification of successful completion of the first year of the programme.

3. Under no circumstances may the concerned PhD student be granted a scholarship.

Art. 24 – PhD programmes covered by agreements

1. Subject to approval by the Academic Bodies and after executing specific agreements, the University may establish PhD programmes in partnership with one or more of the following:

a. other Italian or foreign universities, with the option of awarding a multiple or joint qualification;

b. highly culturally and scientifically qualified public or private research Institutions, in Italy or abroad, equipped with appropriate facilities and equipment;

c. Advanced Artistic Musical and Dance Training Institutions accredited pursuant to Article 15 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021, with the option of awarding a multiple or joint qualification;

d. companies, including foreign companies, that perform qualified research and development activities;

e. public administrations, cultural Institutions and research centres of European or international relevance, for the implementation of special research and development or innovation programmes.

2. Any agreements with the parties referred to in paragraph 1 must be executed in due time to ensure the submission of the application for ministerial accreditation referred to in Article 2, paragraph 3, and the publication of the call for applications referred to in Article 7.

3. The agreements referred to in paragraph 1 shall cover the following issues:

a. sharing of the training and research activities;

- b. methods for PhD students to carry out their activities at the facilities made available by the parties;
- c. availability of appropriate operational and scientific facilities;
- d. fair allocation of the costs among the partners pursuant to the legislation in force;
- e. scientific and teaching contributions of the parties and management of related intellectual property;
- f. exchange methods, teaching staff and PhD students' mobility, and any form of cotutelle;
- g. option of awarding multiple or joint PhD degrees.

Art. 25 – Executive PhD and PhD Apprenticeship programmes

1. Subject to approval by the Academic Bodies, the University may establish executive PhD programmes based on agreements with companies, including foreign companies, that perform qualified research and development activities. The research topics covered by executive PhD programmes boost the promotion of economic development and of the production system, fostering joint planning in relation to PhD students' research topics and activities.
2. Calls for applications for executive PhD programmes may:
 - a. indicate specific requirements for the carrying out of research activities, such as participating in international networks, implementing cross-sectoral programmes and interdisciplinarity, having regard in particular to the business sector;
 - b. allocate a number of available positions to employees of partner companies or Institutions carrying out highly qualified activities, who are admitted to the PhD programme subject to passing the relevant admission examination.
3. Subject to approval by the Academic Bodies, the University may establish PhD Apprenticeship programmes with public and private Institutions. These envisage the execution of apprenticeship agreements between the Institutions and the candidates, who are admitted to the programmes subject to participating in the call for applications referred to in Article 7 and passing the admission examination referred to in Article 8.

Art. 26 – PhD programmes of national interest

1. Subject to approval by the Academic Bodies and after executing agreements or establishing consortia among several universities, as well as with internationally recognised and highly qualified research Institutions, also abroad, the University may establish PhD programmes of national interest, co-funded by the Ministry and subject to the requirements pursuant to the legislation in force.
2. Such agreements must provide for the following:
 - a. actual sharing of the training and research activities,
 - b. methods to regulate the forms of financial support,

c. methods to regulate the teaching staff and PhD students' exchange and mobility, and any form of cotutelle,

d. at least 30 scholarships per PhD cycle,

e. contribution to support research and training initiatives increased by 20% of the amount of the scholarship, drawing on the ministerial co-funding.

3. Already during the accreditation stage, coordination and joint planning of research activities must be envisaged between at least one university and at least four other applicants as defined in Article 3, paragraph 2 of Ministerial Decree 226/2021, in order to implement highly qualified training courses and allow access to research facilities that are suitable for PhD students to carry out their research projects.

Art. 27 – International PhD agreements

1. The University promotes the execution of international PhD agreements with foreign Institutions and Universities, aimed at establishing multi-year partnerships. Subject to approval by the Academic Boards, the University may enter into agreements aimed at:

a. establishing joint PhD programmes;

b. executing cotutelle framework agreements;

c. facilitating and fostering mobility of PhD students.

2. In addition to the matters referred to in Article 24, paragraph 3, joint PhD agreements shall regulate the following:

a. Home University of PhD students;

b. applicable tuition fees and any exemptions;

c. selection procedures, which, pursuant to Article 11, paragraph 2, may be carried out by international boards and/or by European Union bodies in the framework of competitions for funding;

d. criteria for the membership of Admission Boards and Examination Boards;

e. mobility plans for both PhD students and the teaching staff concerned;

f. procedures to be complied with for drafting and defending the PhD thesis;

g. the name and typology of the qualification to be awarded, whether double, multiple or joint.

3. In addition to the matters referred to in Article 24, paragraph 3, cotutelle framework agreements shall regulate the following:

a. the relevant PhD programme(s);

b. applicable tuition fees and any exemptions;

c. applicable insurance scheme;

d. methods and location of the final exam;

e. criteria for the appointment of the Examination Board, balanced in composition, in order to ensure equal representation of all the Universities involved;

f. the exact name of the qualifications issued by the Universities involved, subject to passing the final exam.

4. Individual cotutelle agreements shall regulate:

a. the duration and starting date of the PhD programme;

b. the subject of the research project;

c. the mobility plan. In the case of individual cotutelle agreements in favour of PhD students enrolled in foreign Universities, the research period that the student must spend at the University of Bologna shall be of at least one year, even not continuous. Periods of less than one year, but more than six months, must be approved by the Academic Boards;

d. the provisional title of the thesis;

e. the names of supervisors at the Home and Hosting Institution;

f. the exact name of the qualifications issued by the Universities involved, subject to passing the final exam.

5. Individual cotutelle agreements may be executed in favour of PhD students enrolled in the University or in foreign Universities. As a rule, individual cotutelle agreements shall be executed during the first year of a PhD programme. Under certain circumstances, individual cotutelle agreements may be executed in favour of PhD students enrolled in the first semester of the second year of a PhD programme.

6. PhD students covered by cotutelle agreements shall be required to comply with the rights and obligations laid down by these Regulations. They shall also be subject to verification by the Academic Boards of the activities carried out and findings obtained, for the purpose of passing each year of the programme.

Art. 28 – Final and temporary provisions

1. These Regulations shall enter into force and be effective as of the day after publication of the relevant Rector's Decree in the University Official Bulletin and shall apply from the XXXVIII cycle.

For previous cycles, the Regulations on PhD programmes issued by R.D. 1468 of December 5th 2016 and subsequent amendments and additions shall apply.

2. As to any matters not explicitly covered by these Regulations, reference is made to Ministerial Decree 226 of December 14th 2021 and to the legislation in force on PhD programmes.