

# UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS GOVERNING PhD PROGRAMMES

## ***TITLE I*** ***General principles***

### **Art. 1 - Scope**

1. These Regulations govern the PhD programmes of the University of Padua pursuant to Italian Ministerial Decree 45/2013.

### **Art. 2 - Aim of PhD programmes**

1. PhD programmes aim at promoting, organising and managing the activities related to educational projects at doctoral level, including inter and multidisciplinary ones, thus being a core part of the third-cycle training offer of the University of Padua.

2. PhD programmes provide the necessary competencies to carry out highly qualified research activities in public and private bodies and to obtain a professional qualification to work freelance, thus contributing to the European Higher Education Area and to the European Research Area.

### **Art. 3 - Accreditation of PhD programmes**

1. The University of Padua's PhD programmes are activated by prior accreditation granted by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (hereinafter 'Ministry') pursuant to art.2 of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

### **Art. 4 - Resources**

1. PhD programmes are resourced as follows:

- a) adequate facilities and services made available by the University's Departments and Centres proposing the establishment of the programme;
- b) possible scholarships covered by the University's Budget;
- c) possible scholarships financed by public and private bodies;
- d) possible scholarships funded by the University's Departments or Centres;
- e) possible apprenticeship contracts;
- f) other possible types of funding opportunities equal in amount to scholarships and lasting at least three years.

### **Art. 5 - Establishment and renewal of PhD programmes**

1. The Board of Administration annually decides on the resources for new PhD programmes cycle to activate.

2. The application for the establishment of PhD programmes and each subsequent accreditation, along with the approval of the proposing University's Departments or Centres, must be submitted to the Rector by the deadline and following the procedures laid down by the University.

3. The Board of Administration, having obtained the opinion of the PhD Programme Coordinators Board and of the Academic Senate, approves the application for establishment; the University submits the application for accreditation of new programmes to the Ministry by the deadline set by the Ministry itself.

4. The application for accreditation of PhD programmes must state that the requirements set forth by art. 4 of Italian M.D. 45/2013 are met.
5. Each PhD programme can gain ministerial accreditation of up to five curricula. For each curriculum at least eight professors of the Academic Board must be present.
6. Accreditation is granted for five years.
7. Following ministerial accreditation, PhD programmes are established by Rector's Decree.
8. The PhD programmes which have already gained accreditation are renewed by Rector's Decree prior approval of the Board of Administration, having obtained the opinion of the Academic Senate, without prejudice to annual checks on the prerequisites referred to in art.4, paragraph 1, letters a), c), d), e), f) by ANVUR (Italian National Agency of the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institute), also in accordance with the report by the University's Evaluation Group.
9. Enrolment of the students selected for admission to PhD programmes is subject to positive outcomes of checks on the above-mentioned prerequisites.

#### **Art. 6 - Termination of PhD programmes**

1. PhD programmes are terminated when less than four students have enrolled for two consecutive activated cycles.

#### **Art. 7 - PhD Schools**

1. Several PhD programmes may establish a PhD School, as per art. 6, paragraph 5, of Italian M.D. 45/2013.
2. PhD Schools are entrusted with coordinating the programmes and managing common activities, in accordance with art. 6, paragraph 5, of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

### **TITLE II** ***PhD programme bodies***

#### **Art. 8 - PhD programme bodies**

1. Each PhD programme has its own governing bodies, listed as follows:
  - a) the PhD Programme Coordinator;
  - b) the Academic Board;
  - c) the Executive Board, if established.

#### **Art. 9 - The PhD programme Coordinator**

1. The PhD programme Coordinator is elected by the Academic Board from among its members and must be a full professor or, if not possible, an associate professor, both working on a full-time basis. The PhD Programme Coordinator must serve roles of the University of Padua or, in case of interuniversity PhD Programmes, of one of the Consortium partner Universities.

The Dean of the Academic Board shall call the election with adequate period notice. Voting shall be by secret ballot. For voting to be valid, an absolute majority of those with voting rights shall be required in the first ballot; a majority of at least one third in the second ballot. In the event no one is elected, a run-off election is held between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the last ballot; in the event of a tie, the longest-serving candidate shall be elected and, in the event of equal seniority, the youngest candidate shall be elected.

The candidate obtaining the absolute majority of votes shall be elected.

The PhD Programme Coordinator is appointed by Rector's Decree. The term in office shall last three years from the date of appointment, with the possibility of re-election for no more than one further consecutive term. In the event of early termination of the term of office, regardless of the reason, fresh elections shall be held within two months. In between the termination of the term of office and the PhD Programme Coordinator appointment by the Rector, the relevant duties shall be taken over by the Deputy PhD Programme Coordinator, as referred to in art. 10, paragraph 2.

Upon expiry of the three-year term, the PhD Programme Coordinator shall remain in office until a new Coordinator is appointed, which shall be within two months.

2. Upon appointment, the PhD Programme Coordinator takes over the management of the activities relating to any pre-existing and not yet completed PhD cycles of the same programme.

3. The office of PhD programme Coordinator is incompatible with the office of Rector, Head of the Department, Subject Area Coordinator, Head of the University School, Head of the Centre and any other office set forth by the regulations in place.

#### **Art. 10 - The PhD Programme Coordinator's duties**

1. The Coordinator represents the PhD programme, is responsible for the activities of the Programme itself and convenes and chairs the Academic Board.

2. The Coordinator appoints a Deputy PhD Programme Coordinator, from among the professors of the Academic Board, to replace the PhD Programme Coordinator in case of absence or inability to attend his/her duties.

#### **Art. 11 - The Academic Board**

1. The Academic Board consists of at least sixteen professors, of whom at least twelve are associate and/or full professors, whose research macro-areas are consistent with the training objectives of the PhD programme. They may be joined by experts who do not serve university roles but who prove to be highly qualified. The number of experts cannot exceed the overall number of the members serving roles of the accredited parties. The members of the Academic Board cannot participate in the Academic Boards of other Italian PhD programmes. Professors and researchers of the University of Padua who are not already members of other Boards may participate in the Academic Board of PhD programmes activated by other Universities prior authorisation, pursuant to art 53 of Italian legislative decree no. 165/2001 as amended by art.6 of Law no. 240/2010.

2. A representation of PhD students equal to 15%, rounded up, of the overall number of the Board's members shall participate in the Board's meetings with voting rights, only when training and organisational issues are discussed. The representatives of PhD students are elected annually.

3. The membership of newly established Academic Boards are recommended by the proposing Departments.

4. To be granted membership of the Academic Board, professors must be authorised by the relevant Department, in case of professors belonging to the University of Padua, or by the relevant University, in case of professors belonging to another University.

5. In case of renewal, the Academic Board decides by absolute majority of those with voting rights on any changes or increase in the membership of the Board itself that may be deemed necessary. Following each new accreditation, the approval by the relevant Department is required. Changes in the Academic Board's membership shall fulfil the requirements laid down in art.4 of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

6. Without prejudice to the methods of and time limits for the checks to be carried out by the Ministry, the Academic Board of the PhD programme is entitled to make decisions on the newly accredited or renewed PhD cycle, starting from the day after the adoption of the departmental decisions about the Board's membership. Starting from the beginning of the academic year, the Academic Board takes charge of any pre-existing and not yet completed PhD cycles of the same programme.

## **Art. 12 - The Academic Board's duties**

1. The Academic Board plans the training and research activities of the PhD programme.
2. The Academic Board is also tasked with:
  - a) within three months of the start date of the programme, deciding the training plan for each PhD student and selecting the supervisors, from among the Board's members, who oversee the training and research activities of students. For specific training and research reasons, the Academic Board may select a supervisor from outside the Board and, should this be the case, appoint a Board's member to assist them. The Board may also appoint a co-supervisor to contribute to the training of PhD students by collaborating in the research activities included in the doctoral training plan;
  - b) deciding on the procedures for the admission exams;
  - c) in case of several curricula, each with a separate ranking list, allocating the scholarships among the different curricula;
  - d) with reasoned resolution, having obtained the opinion of supervisors, suggesting the exclusion of PhD students from the programme to the Rector, in the cases provided for in art.25;
  - e) upon request, deciding on the reduction in duration of the programme for medical doctors undergoing specialised training, following assessment of the research activities carried out by the trainees and confirmed by the Board of the Specialisation School;
  - f) setting the procedures and the deadlines for checking both the activities carried out and the achievements of PhD students, and submitting the minutes for admission of PhD students to the following year to the relevant office, within 15 days before the end of the academic year;
  - g) approving the names of two examiners for each doctoral thesis and express an opinion about the research activities carried out before the end of the last year of the programme;
  - h) suggesting the membership of the Examination Committees to the Rector which are entrusted with admissions to the programme and with the final examination to award the qualification;
  - i) upon request of PhD students and subject to favourable opinion of supervisors, authorising any activities of PhD students other than the training and research ones (e.g. working activities, teaching activities, health care activities);
  - j) upon request of PhD students and having obtained the opinion of supervisors, authorising off-campus stays for periods cumulatively exceeding six months;
  - k) upon request of PhD students and having obtained the opinion of supervisors, authorising embargo of specific sections of the thesis;
  - l) authorising the suspension from the programme for serious and duly documented reasons;
  - m) producing an annual report on the progress of the PhD programme of the relevant Department.
3. The Academic Board validly meets when the absolute majority of its members is present, either in person or remotely, excluding the excused members. The decisions are passed by majority vote of the participants having voting rights. In the event of a voting tie, the Coordinator's vote shall prevail. The Academic Board may also meet remotely in the cases and in accordance with the procedures laid down in dedicated guidelines. Pending the adoption of the latter for online meetings, the tools used must allow simultaneous, or at least consecutive, connection with all the participants, as well as the possibility of viewing the proceedings of the meeting, participating in the discussion, exchanging documents and voting. The decisions must be recorded in the minutes.
4. For the sake of a better coordination of the training activities and a more efficient organisation of activities, the Academic Board, considering the specific needs of the programme, may establish internal committees with specific and well-defined tasks.

## **Art. 13 - The Executive Board**

1. The Academic Board may establish an Executive Board consisting of at least five members of the Academic Board, including the Coordinator, the Deputy Coordinator, one representative of each curriculum, one representative of each proposing Department, and up to three members selected from among and by the Academic Board.

The membership of the Executive Boards of the PhD programmes established jointly with institutions abroad is subject to the relevant agreement.

2. If established, the Executive Board shall take over all the tasks referred to in letters from f) to k) of paragraph 2 of art.12 of these Regulations.

3. The Executive Board may also meet remotely in the cases and in accordance with the procedures laid down in dedicated regulations.

4. The representatives of PhD students in the Academic Board appoint two representatives from among the Board's members to participate in the meetings of the Executive Board only when training and organisational issues concerning the PhD programme are discussed.

### **TITLE III** **PhD students**

#### **Art. 14 - PhD programmes duration and admission requirements**

1. The duration of PhD programmes cannot be less than three years, without prejudice to art. 7 of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

2. Admission to PhD programmes is subject to a public selection for each programme.

3. Regardless of citizenship, applicants with a Master's degree, or a degree obtained prior to Italian M.D. no. 509/1999, or similar academic qualification obtained abroad and recognised as equivalent to the aforementioned Italian academic qualifications, can apply for admission to the selection procedures for PhD programmes. The Selection Committee shall assess the eligibility of the qualification obtained abroad for the access to PhD programmes, pursuant to the relevant legislation in force both in Italy and in the Country where the qualification was awarded and in accordance with the international treaties and agreements concerning qualification recognition to access further studies. The qualification must be awarded upon completion of at least a four-year degree programme that gives access to a PhD programme in the Country where the qualification was awarded. To avoid discrimination of any kind, any different conditions may be authorised by the Rector. In any case, applicants must be awarded the qualification by the date set in the call for selection for admission.

4. The applicants holding an academic qualification obtained abroad who do not provide the requested documents upon enrolment are enrolled conditionally. They will be excluded from the PhD programme and required to refund any scholarship amounts improperly received, if:

- a) they do not provide the requested documents within twelve months of the start date of the PhD Programme;
- b) following verifications, the qualification provided does not fulfil the admission requirements referred to in paragraph 3.

#### **Art. 15 - Call for selection for admission to PhD programmes**

1. The call for selection is issued by Rector's Decree in compliance with art.8 of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

It must be widely disseminated and, in any case, published on the University's website, the Euraxess website and the Ministry's website.

#### **Art. 16 - Admission requirements and application**

1. Applicants must apply for admission to the PhD selection process in compliance with the procedures and the deadlines set forth in the call for selection. If admission to PhD programmes is subject to separate exams for each curriculum, applicants shall apply for one curriculum only. When applying, civil servants must state their intention to benefit from leave of absence, pursuant to art. 2, paragraph 1, of Law 476/1984 and subsequent amendments and additions thereto.

2. Admission to PhD programmes is conditional to the public comparative evaluation of applicants to be carried out by a Committee, appointed by Rector's Decree upon proposal of the Academic Board. The Committee shall consist of three full members and the same number of substitutes selected from among professors and researchers in the fields or subject areas covered by the selection, from Universities both in Italy and abroad. In case of PhD programmes made up of more than one curriculum, the Committee may be expanded so as to include one expert professor (and substitute) for each curriculum. The Committee may be expanded so as to include up to two experts, also from abroad, selected from among public and private bodies also carrying out research activities.

In the case of scholarships linked to specific research topics, the Committee is entitled to call on experts, without voting rights, to express a technical opinion.

3. Admissions procedures are established by the Academic Board which, in any case, shall select one of the following procedures for admission examination:

- a) assessment of applicants' qualifications, and examinations
- b) sole assessment of applicants' qualifications

The Academic Board may also set separate or additional exams to award types of funding other than scholarships, or scholarships linked to specific research topics or curricula.

4. The applicants' aptitude for scientific research is assessed with the procedures and in the dates and places specified in the sheets of each PhD programme.

The Committee may use IT tools to carry out the exams in the cases and in accordance with the procedures provided for in the call for selection.

5. The exams, if set, may be carried out in one of the languages specified in the call for selection.

6. If, in the call for selection, a certain number of places is reserved for graduates from Universities abroad, the admissions procedures and criteria may differ, without prejudice to the need for drawing up separate ranking lists.

7. In addition to the number of places available announced in the call for selection, the winners of a PhD place/scholarship reserved for graduates from Universities abroad, if announced by the University of Padua, are also admitted to PhD programmes.

8. The admissions procedures for PhD programmes established under international interuniversity cooperation agreements are set out in the agreement itself.

### **Art. 17 - Ranking list**

1. At the end of the selection procedure, one single ranking list of applicants admitted to PhD programmes shall be drawn up by each Committee, according to the comparative evaluation of the applicants. If admission is subject to exams that differ according to the curriculum, the Committee shall draw up one ranking list for each curriculum. Specific ranking lists are also drawn up by the Committee for admissions of graduates from universities abroad, if any places are reserved for them. In case of places with scholarships or funding linked to specific research topics, the applicants' eligibility for carrying out such research activities is also considered during selection. The ranking lists are also made public on-line.

2. Each admission exam is considered passed if candidates score at least 7/10 in each test.

3. The Committees draw up the provisional general ranking list according to the score obtained in each admission exam.

4. The competition records, the general ranking list of candidates admitted to PhD programmes, and the closing dates for enrolment applications are approved by Rector's Decree.

5. The competition records are publicly available, and access to them is granted as per the procedures set forth by Law 241/1990. The Rector may postpone access to competition records until the end of the selection process.

#### **Art. 18 - Extra-quota places**

1. The applicants who have been awarded funding for research activities within international projects are granted extra-quota places, by prior approval of the Academic Board of the PhD programme after checking the research topic is consistent with the subject areas covered by the programme itself and the scholarship holders are eligible for admission.

2. The scholarship holders from Countries abroad or under specific international mobility programmes are also admitted by prior assessment of the dedicated Committee, in accordance with the procedures set out by the University's bodies.

#### **Art. 19 - Application for enrolment**

1. The candidates awarded with a place must apply for enrolment in the PhD programme following the procedures and by the deadlines set forth by the Rector's Decree approving the ranking list.

2. The places and scholarships shall be awarded according to the ranking list and in compliance with the call for selection.

3. Eligible candidates in the ranking list for admission to PhD programmes may be awarded the reserved places and scholarships, referred to in art. 16 paragraph six, should these remain vacant after the closing date for enrolment and in compliance with the type of funding and its regulations.

4. If the Committee has drawn up a ranking list for each curriculum, candidates are admitted to each curriculum until all places available for that curriculum are covered. If the number of candidates admitted to a curriculum is lower than the number of places available with scholarship or if some places/scholarships remain available after the closing date for enrolment, the vacant places/scholarships may be awarded to the candidates competing for other curricula, according to their rank on the list, in compliance with the procedures laid down in the call for selection. The same procedures apply to the cases referred to in paragraph three.

#### **Art. 20 - Tuition fees and scholarships**

1. By Rector's Decree and prior decision of the relevant University's bodies, the following shall be decided annually:

a) the amount of the tuition fees to access and attend the PhD programmes, also considering the existing legislation on the right to education;

b) the number of scholarships allocated to each PhD programme, the related amount and method of payment.

2. The number of scholarships available for each PhD programme may increase as a result of external funding.

3. The scholarships cannot be combined with other scholarships regardless of the type, except for those awarded by national or foreign institutions to supplement the research activities of PhD students with stays abroad.

4. Scholarships are effective from the start date of PhD programmes or from the first day of attendance, should this be different. Scholarships are paid on a monthly basis in arrears. A 50% increase in the scholarship amount is granted for stays abroad exceeding 20 days. This increase is granted for no longer than 18 months.

5. Those who have already received a scholarship for a PhD programme in Italy cannot apply for a second one.

6. Scholarships have a one-year duration and are renewed by the Academic Board prior checks on the activities carried out and prior admission of PhD students to the following year of the programme.

7. Should a PhD student holding a scholarship withdraw from studies, the remaining amount of the scholarship may be awarded, if compliant with the regulations on the scholarship itself, to a PhD student without scholarship of the same PhD programme and cycle.

8. Pursuant to art. 9, paragraph 3, of Italian M.D. 45/2013, starting from the second year and for the remaining legal duration of the PhD programme, each PhD student must be guaranteed a budget for research activities in Italy and abroad covering not less than 10% of the amount of the scholarship.

This budget does not apply to scholarship holders of countries abroad or to beneficiaries of funding under specific mobility programmes, in compliance with the relevant regulations.

#### **Art. 21 - International PhD programmes**

1. The University establishes PhD programmes, subject to accreditation, with highly qualified and internationally recognised universities and research institutes abroad, pursuant to art. 10 of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

2. Such PhD programmes shall be allocated at least four scholarships overall.

#### **Art. 22 - Visiting PhDs**

1. PhD students of other Universities (either in Italy or abroad) spending a research period of more than one month at the University of Padua, not included in specific agreements, are given, upon request of a professor of the University, the status of Visiting PhD.

2. Visiting PhDs are not enrolled in any PhD programme of the University of Padua and are not awarded the PhD degree by the University.

3. They will be given an ID badge to access the University's general research assistance services such as library services, internet, computer rooms.

#### **Art. 23 - Industrial PhD programmes and higher apprenticeships**

1. Pursuant to art. 11 of Italian M.D. 45/2013, the University may establish industrial PhD programmes in collaboration with companies carrying out R&D activities.

2. The University may also add industrial PhD programme places to the places available for an already accredited PhD programme. Such places are reserved for employees of companies carrying out highly qualified activities, and their admission to the programme shall be subject to the relevant selection process.

3. The University and the companies for which the industrial PhD programme places are reserved, as per paragraph above, shall comply with specific agreements.

4. The University may establish PhD apprenticeship programmes with external institutions and companies.

#### **Art. 24 - Rights and duties of PhD students**

1. The PhD student status is obtained following enrolment in a PhD programme. It shall run from the start date of the programme until the awarding of the PhD degree, loss of the status, exclusion or withdrawal from the programme. The compatibility regime pursuant to these Regulations and the existing legislation shall no longer apply after the end of the legal duration of the programme.

2. Admission to PhD programmes entails exclusive and full-time attendance, in accordance with the provisions of the Academic Board without prejudice to art. 7, 11 and 12, paragraph 4, of Italian M.D. 45/2013.

3. PhD students, as part of their training plan, are required to assess both the achievements of the research activities carried out and their abilities to present them, according to the procedures established by the Academic Board.

4. PhD students are required to submit a written report of the research activities and related achievements the deadline set by the Academic Board. In the report, participation in seminars, conferences or other scientific events, and any scientific production must also be included. A positive assessment by the Academic Board results in the admission of PhD students to the following year.

5. PhD students can spend a period outside the administrative premises of the programme or the partner or consortium premises. As a rule, such period cannot exceed half of the actual duration of the PhD programme. Periods outside the above-mentioned premises equal to or cumulatively equal to six months are subject to authorisation by the PhD programme Coordinator; longer periods shall be approved by the Academic Board.

6. Subject to prior authorisation of the Academic Board, PhD students are allowed to carry out tutoring activities to Bachelor's and Master's students and, up to forty hours per academic year complying with the limits set forth by Italian M.D. 45/2013, teaching assistance activities according to the provisions of the University's bodies.

7. Subject to prior authorisation of the Academic Board, PhD students are allowed to carry out work activity, provided it is compatible with the doctoral training and research activities planned to be carried out on a full-time basis.

8. Following enrolment, PhD students must activate their institutional mailbox to send and receive institutional messages.

9. In order to be awarded the PhD degree, PhD students must access the IRIS online catalogue and enter their own scientific production, if any.

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

11. Enrolment in years subsequent to the first is subject to tuition fees payment. The payment serves as enrolment application and must be made by the deadlines set by the relevant University's bodies.

#### **Art. 25 - Reasons for exclusion and loss of PhD student status**

1. With reasoned resolution, having obtained the opinion of the supervisor and the PhD student, the Academic Board may suggest the exclusion of PhD students from the programme to the Rector, even during the academic year, in the following cases:

- a) unauthorised work activities;
- b) extended unexcused absences;
- c) negative assessment by the Academic Board;
- d) breach of the University of Padua's code of conduct.

2. PhD students lose their status, and their career shall be automatically terminated, in the following cases:

- a) failure to submit the report referred to in art. 24 paragraph 4 and art. 30 paragraph 4 by the deadlines and according to the procedures established by the Academic Board's resolution within 6 months of the start of the new year of the programme;
- b) failure to register for the final examination and to submit the thesis, in digital format, and the final report on the activities carried out in the three-year period, by the deadlines and according to the procedures set out by the ufficio Dottorato e Post Lauream (PhD office) and made public on the University's website each year by 31 July, without prejudice to documented reasons;
- c) failure to sit the final examination by the end of the last session available;
- d) in the case of industrial PhD programmes, termination of the employment relationship with the company, following decision by or reasons attributable to PhD students themselves.

#### **Art. 26 - Suspension from PhD programmes**

1. Suspension from PhD programmes applies for:

- civilian service;
- serious and documented illness.

2. The maternity protection provisions of the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Security decree dated 12 July 2007 and published in the Italian Official Gazette no. 247 dated 23 October 2007 apply to PhD female students.

3. In the event of birth of a child, attendance at doctoral activities shall be suspended compulsorily starting from two months before the estimated due date and for the following three months.

Subject to authorisation by a medical specialist of the National Health Service and the relevant doctor, the suspension may run from one month before the expected date of birth and for the following four months, or for the five months following childbirth.

4. At the end of the obligatory maternity leave, PhD students may request an additional suspension period up to six months. Such suspension may be granted to fathers/PhD male students, as an alternative to mothers.

5. Other serious and duly documented reasons may be ground for suspension from the programme, by prior authorisation of the Academic Board.

6. At the end of the suspension period, PhD students shall resume the programme and submit a resumption statement signed by the PhD programme Coordinator to the relevant office. PhD students can make up for suspension up to thirty days throughout the programme. Suspension periods exceeding thirty days entail the deferment of the duration of the PhD programme to cover the whole of the suspension period granted.

7. Admission to the following year of the programme or assessment of the thesis by examiners, in case of PhD students enrolled in the last year, is not possible until they fully make up for the suspension period.

8. During suspension periods longer than thirty days, scholarship payment is deferred and resumed when PhD students make up for the suspension period.

#### **Art. 27 - PhD programmes and Medical Specialisation Schools**

1. Students of Medical Specialisation Schools, if selected, can enrol in a PhD programme:

- if they are already enrolled in the last or next to last year of a specialisation School of the University of Padua;
- if they are already enrolled in the last year of a Specialisation School of a university other than the University of Padua. In any case, joint attendance must be deemed compatible and authorised by the relevant Specialisation School Board.

2. PhD students, upon request to be forwarded within one month of the end of the joint attendance, may have the joint attendance period recognised by the Academic Board of the PhD programme to obtain a reduction in the duration of the programme itself. Such recognition is subject to prior checks on the research activities carried out during the joint attendance year and confirmed by the Specialisation School Board. Students of Medical Specialisation Schools at associated venues can be admitted to the PhD programme of the University where they attend the Specialisation School.

3. The thesis and thesis assessment shall in any case comply with art. 31 et seq of these Regulations.

4. During the joint attendance period, students of Specialisation Schools cannot be granted doctoral scholarships or other types of funding.

#### **Art. 28 - Incompatibility**

1. Enrolment in a PhD programme is not compatible with concurrent enrolment in Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, short specialisation degrees, active traineeships, Specialisation Schools (except for Medical Specialisation Schools referred to in art. 27) or in other Schools or PhD programmes of either the University of Padua or other Universities in Italy and abroad. Students enrolled in a Bachelor's or Master's degree programme (awarding a qualification other than the entry qualification) must gain all the credits, except for those relating to the final examination, by the beginning of the PhD programme and pass the final examination within ninety days of its start date.

Students enrolled in a short specialisation degree must complete training activities before the beginning of the PhD programme and pass the final examination within ninety days of its start date.

#### **Art. 29 - Withdrawing from PhD programmes**

1. PhD students can withdraw from the programme at any time by submitting the relevant irrevocable and unconditional application.
2. Students withdrawing from the programme are no longer subject to pay tuition fees, including those accrued, to the University of Padua. Withdrawal from PhD programmes does not entitle PhD students to be reimbursed of the tuition fees already paid.

#### ***TITLE IV***

#### ***Awarding of the PhD degree***

#### **Art. 30 - Thesis assessment and admission to the final examination**

1. The achievements of the research activities must be presented in a final thesis highlighting its originality and scientific relevance.
2. The thesis can be written either in Italian or in English, or in another language by prior approval of the Academic Board. The thesis shall include an abstract which shall be written in Italian or in English.
3. Two examiners shall make a judgment on the thesis. The following can take the role of examiner:
  - professors external to the University of Padua and to the partner Universities awarding the qualification;
  - highly qualified experts from public or private research institutes which are not partner of the PhD programme;
  - highly qualified experts from public or private partner research institutes, only for those venues not covered by the agreement.Examiners cannot be members of the Academic Board of the PhD programme.
4. Within 15 days before the end date of the programme, the Academic Board assesses the overall three-year activities as described in the PhD students' report and expresses an opinion for the thesis to be assessed by the examiners.
5. The examiners are provided with the following documents in digital format:
  - a) the thesis;
  - b) the opinion of the Academic Board;
  - c) the PhD student's report on the activities carried out during the programme and on their scientific production.
6. To comply with art. 8 of Italian M.D. 45/2013, the relevant University's office shall collect the opinions of the two external examiners who can propose either the admission to the thesis defence or, if significant additions or amendments are needed, the deferral of the thesis defence for a period not exceeding six months. The above-mentioned office also activates the procedure for the evaluation by an Examination Committee, without prejudice to the possibility given to PhD students to revise the doctoral thesis in the event of a deferral decided by the examiners.
7. Exceptional circumstances or cases of force majeure not attributable to PhD students but preventing them from carrying out the research, if properly justified, may be ground for a deferral of the deadline for registering for the final examination to a strictly necessary extent. Should this be the case, PhD students shall submit their request to the Rector, who shall take a decision by means of a measure, having obtained the opinion of the PhD Programme Coordinators Board.
8. The final examination consists of the doctoral thesis defence before the Committee referred to in art. 31.

9. Any deferral of the thesis defence or of the deadline for registering for the final examination, as per para. 7 of this article, does not entitle PhD students to the scholarship or entail any economic burden for the University of Padua; any insurance charges are to be borne by the PhD student concerned.

### **Art. 31 - The Examination Committees**

1. The Examination Committee is appointed by Rector's Decree upon proposal of the Academic Board.
2. The Academic Board, if necessary, may propose more than one Committee considering the different training and research paths of the candidates. As a rule, it cannot be appointed more than one Committee per curriculum activated for the cycle which is about to end.
3. The members of the Committees shall give reasons for their resignation.
4. The Examination Committee shall make all the assessments by the end of the session for which it was appointed. The Committee not fulfilling its tasks by the above-mentioned deadline is considered no longer in office and a new Committee shall be appointed by Rector's decree.
5. The Committee appointed for final examinations shall consist of a minimum of three to a maximum of five full members and the same number of substitutes selected from among university professors and researchers, or experts in the subject areas covered by the PhD programme and working in public or private research institutes. The supervisors and the examiners of the PhD students, as well as the Academic Board's member assisting the external supervisor - where applicable, cannot be members of the Examination Committee, unless otherwise provided for in specific internationalisation agreements. The Committee cannot include members of the Academic Board only.
6. The Committee has the power, by unanimous vote, to award the PhD degree with honours for remarkable scientific achievements.
7. The Committee, upon proposal of the Academic Board, may invite the examiners referred to in art. 30 to participate in the thesis defence.

### **Art. 32 - The final examination**

1. PhD students must register for the final examination following the online procedure by the deadlines set by the University. Admission to the final examination is conditional on the payment of all the enrolment fees due in the three years of the programme.
2. The application for admission to the final examination must include:
  - a) a copy of the thesis, in digital format, for the institutional repository storing theses and ensuring public access. The storage also fulfils the obligation to store the thesis at the national libraries of Rome and Florence. In the event of a request for revision by the examiners, the final thesis is to be stored in accordance with the deadlines and the procedures annually established by the University;
  - b) a report, either in Italian or in English, on the activities carried out throughout the PhD programme, along with any scientific production.
4. A confirmation by the supervisor through the online procedure is needed for the thesis to be stored and submitted to the Committee members.
5. PhD students are notified of the date and place of the final examination electronically.
6. The PhD students who pass the final examination are awarded with the PhD degree and issued with a diploma stating the PhD programme attended and the curriculum, if any.
7. At the end of the defence, the Committee, with a reasoned written opinion, approves or rejects the doctoral thesis.
8. Upon reasoned request of the Committee members and/or of the PhD student and by Rector's approval, PhD students may defend their thesis remotely. The Head of the Committee and the secretary must be physically present.

### **Art.33 - Absence from the final examination**

1. Absence is justified, on the basis of appropriate documentation, in the following cases:
  - a) illness;
  - b) unforeseeable circumstances or force majeure.
2. In such cases, PhD students may ask the Rector, within 30 days following the final examination date, for another date to be arranged to sit the exam.
3. Upon reasoned proposal of the Academic Board and considering the circumstances that prevented the PhD student from defending the thesis, the Rector appoints a Committee, following the procedures referred to in article 32, or admits the student to the next final examination session.

### **Art. 34 - Final and transitional provisions**

The provisions in art. 14 shall come into force starting from XXXVI cycle.

The provisions referred to in art 25 para. 2 shall apply starting from XXXIV cycle.