



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI PADOVA

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# **CHARTER OF SERVICES**

## **ACCREDITED DEGREE COURSES IN MAINLY DISTANCE-LEARNING MODE AND FULLY DISTANCE-LEARNING MODE**

Charter approved by the Academic Senate  
on 4 November 2025

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## INTRODUCTION

The University of Padova has introduced a Charter of Services for its degree courses delivered in “mainly distance-learning mode” and “fully distance-learning mode”, in compliance with the provisions of Ministerial Decree no. 1835 dated 6 December 2024.

This Charter of Services commits all Members of the University to complying with the principles set out in the University Statute, as well as with the values of individual dignity, the good name of the University, and the proper use of its resources. The University provides information services on the right to study and on all matters related to student participation in University life, collecting and making available all the necessary data.

This Charter of Services is an addition to University Regulations and individual Degree Course Regulations. Its purpose is to provide students with clear information that will ensure they understand how the teaching for accredited degree courses in mainly distance-learning mode and fully distance-learning mode is organised, and how the related services are dispensed. The Charter establishes the features of the University’s services and explains how students can access and use them. It also ensures that personal data are protected by all of the security measures required by current law.

This Charter of Services will be published on the University’s website before teaching activities begin.

## TITLE I: TEACHING

### Art. 1: Features of online teaching activities

1 Online teaching can be divided into two types: Delivered Teaching (DT) and Interactive Teaching (DI), as stated in “Glossary of Key Terms and Concepts Used in Quality Assurance Processes in AVA3”.

- Delivered Teaching (DT) covers all teaching activities that are comparable to face-to-face lessons, i.e. ones based on lecturer-led presentation and discussion of content (e.g. synchronous or asynchronous lessons, audio or video lessons, that include slides and other teaching materials);
- Interactive Teaching (IT) covers any form of interaction between lecturers, tutors and students in a learning environment designed and created to facilitate and foster social interaction. It comprises any activity that enables students to acquire practical skills, interact with lecturers, tutors and peers, activate communication mechanisms and develop transversal skills (e.g. interactive activities in synchronous web conferences, asynchronous teaching interventions in forums, workshops and wikis, plus e-tivities such as exercises, case studies, problem-solving, web-quests, research projects, questionnaires or mid-course assessments).

2. For degree courses in mainly distance-learning mode or fully distance-learning mode, at least 20% of face-to-face lessons will be delivered synchronously.

3. To support course design, the University undertakes to provide Learning Designers and Technologists to ensure that resources and activities can be used to their full potential in an online environment.

## **Art. 2: Syllabi of training activities**

1. Lecturers are required to design their course units in accordance with specific learning objectives and expected learning outcomes; said objectives and outcomes will align with general degree-course objectives and the University's Guidelines. They will also detail how content is structured, as well as the teaching and assessment methods used.

2. Course-unit design is illustrated in the syllabus for each course unit, which is published on the University website before teaching starts.

3. Syllabi contain a range of information, including:

- teaching method (in-person, blended or online);
- language of delivery;
- admissions requirements (academic background, knowledge and skills);
- skills and competences to be acquired (see the Dublin Descriptors and their learning objectives);
- in-person examination methods (plus details on assessment methods used to verify whether expected learning outcomes have been achieved and on any formative assessments, if envisaged, in conjunction with the summative assessment);
- assessment criteria;
- course-unit content (summary of the main topics and expected learning outcomes);
- learning activities and teaching methods, including a description of both for Delivered Teaching and Interactive Teaching (e.g. video lessons, podcasts, MOOCs, simulations, interactive quizzes, student response systems, working groups, forums, home assignments, social-annotation environments, interactive whiteboards). The teaching organisation model is also explained, with it stating:
  - o percentage of scheduled synchronous and asynchronous online teaching hours;
  - o schedule, weekly organisation, commitment required and delivery methods for synchronous online teaching;
  - o online teaching tools, e.g. asynchronous interactive and/or active resources and activities;
  - o amount of flexibility for the specific needs of learner types and how teaching can be combined with specific aids and tools;
- information on study materials (e.g. audios/videos, texts, articles, handouts, MOOCs);
- reference texts (bibliography, automatic link to the University library system catalogue, which states authors and titles for all texts);
- innovative teaching methods (tick boxes for learning-activity strategies);
- UN Agenda 2030 goals (tick degree-course related Sustainable Development Goals).

## **Art. 3: Delivery methods, teaching interaction and teaching materials**

1. Teaching on degree courses delivered in mainly distance-learning mode and fully distance-learning mode is designed to valorise the potential of educational and learning technologies, with a focus on valorising multimedia, interactive teaching materials, active and collaborative teaching strategies, customisation of teaching pathways, as well as content accessibility and flexibility of use.

2. Against this backdrop, the main objective of the University's Moodle-based Learning Management System (LMS) is to create a learning environment where interpersonal relations are valued as equally as providing information, even when students and lecturers are separated by space and time. The interpersonal relations installed by educational and teaching activities will be dealt with via the LMS's interaction tools (e.g. forums, wikis, collaborative environments, learning feedback).

3. Most of the University's interaction tools are integrated into the LMS in a bid to offer students and lecturers a one-stop shop, as well as automatically synchronised feedback and assessment results in the assessment register.

The following tools are available:

- **an audio-video conferencing and communication system**, used for synchronous activities, both face-to-face and interactive (e.g. exercises, group work, office hours);
- **a Video Content Management System** that allows the creation, distribution and use of video content, with view tracking;
- **an integrated Student Response System platform**, a real-time interaction environment for synchronous and asynchronous lessons that encourages active involvement via surveys, quizzes, brainstorming and open questions;
- **an integrated platform for social annotation on texts, audios and videos**, which enables students to work on collaborative and annotated reading, listening and viewing, thus promoting critical analysis and asynchronous discussion among peers;
- **an interactive online whiteboard**, i.e. a collaborative virtual space/an online notice-board used for creative activities, brainstorming, shared reflection and group work;
- **a teaching-management information system (Esse3)**, which contains information on student careers, ECTS credits earned and official assessments, and ensures interoperability between teaching and administrative systems.

4. Information on University tools is available at [<https://elearning.unipd.it/dlm/>].

#### **Art. 4: Online-teaching structure**

1. For each course unit, online teaching is divided into Delivered Teaching (DT) and Interactive Teaching (DI), both of which can be delivered synchronously and asynchronously.

2. Delivered Teaching (DT) is provided via a range of means:

- **synchronous** lessons, delivered on the University platform;
- **asynchronous** lessons, which provide essential theoretical and methodological content. Content can be delivered via two main means:
  - 1) video lessons (or audio/text resources) created by lecturers;
  - 2) Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), produced specifically for the degree course. MOOCs are hosted on open-access platforms, both on the University platform and on affiliated national or international ones;
- all basic resources can, wherever possible, be supplemented by external open-access resources (e.g. scientific articles, podcasts, online manuals or tests), available via links.

3. When degree courses are delivered in a vehicular language, all sources will always be in that language alone. Occasional web-conference lessons will also be held and made available for asynchronous use. Where teaching is combined with a curricular MOOC, each course unit includes some **synchronous teaching**. Synchronous teaching involves **at least one weekly distance-learning lesson** on the University's platform, with lecturers exploring specific content in detail.

4. Interactive Teaching (IT) comprises a set of synchronous and asynchronous activities, both individual and collaborative, which includes:

- flipped teaching, which reverses the learning process, with students first going through the lecturers' interactive materials on their own; then, classroom time (in-person or synchronous) is devoted to practical and collaborative activities, plus discussions. A third and final lecturer-supervised phase involves extension tasks and content round-ups to reinforce learning;
- activities offer scaffolding for students, breaking down complex tasks into more manageable steps or, for example, putting forward discussion activities within a dedicated forum to nurture a critical approach to course-unit topics, or the creation of shared glossaries;
- lecturer and/or tutor intervention to address any doubts on course-unit content;
- work in small groups on specific topics for each course unit;
- research simulation or case studies;
- formative assessments in the shape of self-evaluation (e.g. mid-course assessments) and peer-evaluation, with monitoring and feedback from students and lecturers;
- summative assessments during the semester course units are taught;
- creation of digital multimedia artefacts, such as short videos, podcasts, tutorials, simulations and infographics.

#### **Art. 5: Interaction methods**

1. Information will be exchanged continuously, especially during the semester when course units are taught.

2. There are three main channels of interaction:

- a) a notice-board, which lecturers and tutors use to send students official communications;
- b) a student forum moderated by lecturers and/or tutors, and/or a lecturer-/tutor-managed forum used to answer student questions;
- c) private messaging between the lecturers/tutors and students.

3. Interaction is also promoted within course units via participation in structured teaching activities, which are lecturer-coordinated. See Art. 4.

4. Specific spaces are set up to:

- a) monitor and troubleshoot any technical issues (i.e. the Technology Help Desk);
- b) enable the degree-course secretary's office and director of the degree course to provide all key information to make student progress as smooth as possible.

#### **Art. 6: Examinations**

1. The final examination for each training activity is held in-person on University premises, save for exceptions specified by regulations and governed by the Academic Senate, in accordance with the University's Regulations. Examination commissions comprise at least two members: one acts as Chair and is responsible for the training activity; the other is a lecturer from the same or a related academic discipline (SSD), or a subject expert.

A student's results in mid-course assessments may also contribute to examination marks.

## **TITLE II: CERTIFICATION OF TEACHING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITY PLANNING**

### **Art. 7: Certification and updating of teaching materials**

1. Every year, Degree Course Boards appoint a special committee to certify that the asynchronous DT materials for each course unit are adequate and up-to-date. Each committee ensures that materials and content are:
  - consistent with learning objectives;
  - up-to-date;
  - accessible and usable.
2. Each committee presents an annual report at a meeting of its related Degree Course Board.

### **Art. 8: Activity planning and coordination**

1. When a degree course is being reviewed, the Review Group will have at least one joint meeting with the aforementioned committee so that together they can establish whether the University's online educational offering is adequate, with student opinions and current developments within the subject being considered.
2. Lecturers and tutors shall schedule at least one joint coordination and planning meeting before teaching activities begin each semester in a bid to hone teaching and tutoring methods. Minutes are taken in all meetings.

## **TITLE III: STUDENT SERVICES**

### **Art. 9: Orientation and tutoring services**

1. The University of Padova's Student Services Office - Orientation and Tutoring provides students with guidance throughout their university career with its welcome service, organisational and study support, and re-orientation advice should they wish to switch degree courses.
2. Its objective is to offer support to students who might be struggling with the pace of a university education and their new responsibilities, thus helping them adapt to University life and giving organisational advice so that they can benefit fully from lessons.

### **Art. 10: Information and teaching tutors, buddy tutors for inclusion, and Psychological Support Service (SAP) tutors**

1. Tutors are selected from the ranks of the brightest, most accomplished students in the final years of their Second-cycle/Master's degrees and PhD courses. They mediate between students and the University system, support younger students in their University careers, guide them through their studies, and provide them with information. Tutors also play a preventive role, as they offer personalised support in the shape of monitored targeted projects based on active listening and peer-tutoring, which ease concerns and enable students to open up about their main difficulties so that they are better equipped to tackle their studies.

2. All of the University's degree courses have a tutoring programme. Tutors are selected from among the University's student population with a bespoke annual call for applications. Candidates are selected on the basis of their academic merit and motivation for becoming a tutor, a role that is recognised as providing scaffolding for students, smoothing their pathway into University life, and ensuring their successful integration.

3. The tutors assigned to the degree courses work in the related departments and provide students with welcome services, as well as with organisational and educational support. They also foster contact with lecturers and help students find information, acting as facilitators, mediators and supervisors. Furthermore, they coordinate educational and supplementary activities, as well as provide support for particularly critical examinations and educational workshops.

4. **Information tutors** act as facilitators and mediators, providing organisational support and assisting students so that they become active participants in their learning process. Special care is focused on first-year undergraduates, international students, and students with dual careers, e.g. student athletes, or with refugee status. They also provide information during orientation initiatives aimed at future first-year undergraduates.

5. **Teaching tutors** mainly provide teaching and study support for particularly critical examinations, as well as laboratory assistance for core academic disciplines. Again, their services are mainly targeted at first-year undergraduates.

6. Other support roles selected at University level are: **buddy tutors for international students**, who welcome and help new arrivals as they explore and settle into a new academic and cultural setting; **buddy tutors for incoming mobility students**, who support new arrivals on Erasmus+, ARQUS, SEMP, COIMBRA, bilateral agreements and double degrees; **inclusion tutors**, who offer study support, guidance and assistance with admissions tests and examinations; **tutors for dual career students** (student athletes); and **Psychological Support Service (SAP) tutors**.

7. Generally, tutors are given compulsory training before they begin their work; training is followed by a pathway of monitoring meetings, sharing good practices, and development courses. These activities help to ensure the quality and consistency of tutor support, which is a key feature of the educational quality of the University's degree courses.

### **Art. 11: Technical and Subject tutors**

1. In addition to the aforementioned tutors, degree courses in mainly distance-learning mode or fully distance-learning mode benefit from other tutor-types that are selected by the departments running the degree courses.



2. **Technical tutors** provide technical support and teaching assistance, helping students to familiarise themselves with the learning platform and technological environment, as well as how their log-ins are recorded, how material is stored, and how they can participate in online training activities.

3. **Subject tutors** are appointed for each course unit and are responsible for facilitating, stimulating and optimising the learning process, as well as monitoring class progress. They provide students with the tools they need to study their subject as successfully as possible, supporting them in their learning process until it is time to take the related examination. They liaise with lecturers and carry out their work in the course unit's virtual classroom.

4. For Subject tutors, student-tutor interaction takes three main forms:

- orientation/advice;
- monitoring overall class progress;
- coordinating groups of students.

5. Orientation/advice essentially involves supporting students in a bid to further their understanding of content. These activities are carried out in synchronous and asynchronous virtual interactive spaces (e.g. forums, web conferences, live sessions) or, for instance, by email when students require more personalised advice.

6. Tutors have the following interaction tools:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): a system of guided emails based on a course-topics index which builds an information repository that students can consult before sending their questions;
- forums: tutors establish the main course issues and open discussions at regular intervals, inviting students to report any issues and discuss them;
- virtual office hours: synchronous interaction tools (mainly chats, although others are available) enable students to ask tutors questions in periodic meetings.

7. Tutor monitoring activities involve periodic checks on overall group progress so that any changes can be made during the course unit (e.g. posting supplementary material, live seminars for further study).

8. Monitoring can be carried out via:

- development of periodic online tests. Tests may be synchronous (i.e. students must be online at a specific time and complete them within a time limit), or asynchronous (i.e. students have a limited timeframe to complete and submit them);
- opening of virtual questions, both synchronous, and asynchronous via forums, which enable a tutor to ask a question and then check the students' responses.

9. Tutors are selected in accordance with current legislation and their academic qualifications.

## **Art. 12: Call Centre service**

1. The University has a Call Centre that provides prompt responses to queries and issues related to student careers and administrative matters.
2. The University Call Centre provides useful information on every stage of a student's entire University career, i.e. on:
  - educational offerings: from degree courses to postgraduate training;
  - enrolment and administrative procedures;
  - the right to education (fees, benefits, total and partial exemptions, scholarships, healthcare, services for students with disabilities);
  - Uniweb, the University's online system that manages career-related procedures and the student e-mail service;
  - centralised University authentication (Single Sign-On): username, password, password activation code;
  - emails with the @studenti.unipd.it and @phd.unipd.it domains;
  - office opening-times and location of University facilities.
3. The Call Centre's phone number is 049 8273131; it is open from Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm.

## **Art. 13: Services for students with disabilities**

1. The University ensures equal study opportunities for all students, with a focus on students with disabilities, specific learning disorders and special educational needs, in accordance with current legislation. It is also careful to offer alternative materials that are compatible with assistive technologies, as well as subtitled videos and transcripts, in accordance with European and national accessibility guidelines; it also monitors the accessibility of teaching materials.
2. The University also strives to ensure a high-quality, accessible and personalised digital environment via:
  - features tailored to various user profiles;
  - device-independent access;
  - interactivity to facilitate simulations and exercises;
  - tools for building learning and collaborative communities.

## **TITLE IV: LECTURER TRAINING**

### **Art. 14: Lecturer training**

1. The University provides initial compulsory training for newly hired researchers and optional development training for its lecturers on how to:
  - design blended and online teaching materials;
  - select teaching tools and methods based on expected learning outcomes;
  - use platforms, tools and technological infrastructures;
  - use active and collaborative teaching methods;
  - use multimedia video-recording systems;

- conduct online teaching, with a focus on interactive activities;
- deliver multimedia teaching materials and online teaching activities;
- use generative artificial intelligence for teaching.

2. Training is provided both by educational trainers under the Teaching4Learning@unipd project and by the Digital Learning and Multimedia office, which uses specific tools.

3. The University also has Change Agents, lecturers with specific training certified with Open Badges, who work in each department to support colleagues and provide advice.

3. All training activities (initial and development) are delivered both in-person on regular courses and remotely in synchronous and asynchronous modes. MOOCs and audio-video materials are available on the University's platforms. All activities are documented and tracked, including by issuing lecturers with the Bestr Cineca Open Badge.

## **TITLE V: TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEARNING PLATFORMS**

### **Art. 15: Technological infrastructure and learning platforms**

1. The University employs an advanced technological infrastructure designed to ensure that its degree courses in mainly distance-learning mode and fully distance-learning mode are delivered and exploited to their full potential, both synchronously and asynchronously. Its systems ensure stability, efficiency, security and accessibility, thus offering students a modern, flexible learning experience.

2. Its cloud-based infrastructure is managed by leading national and international providers that employ advanced management and constant monitoring systems to provide an uninterrupted service 24-hours a day. The architecture is dynamically sized and scalable to ensure simultaneous access for all enrolled students, with resources being allocated automatically according to need.

3. Its systems are protected by top levels of security, both logical, via firewalls and antivirus software, and physical, via anti-intrusion systems and continuous surveillance of data-processing centres. Cloud virtualisation technology with load balancing and storage systems guarantee data speed, integrity and security. Databases containing information on student and teaching activity are constantly backed up on a daily basis, in compliance with privacy regulations.

4. Students log-on to the platforms via the Single Sign-On (SSO) authentication system used by all national and international universities. This digital-identity system allows students to access all educational resources with a single authentication, simplifying the use of services and ensuring interoperability with major academic institutions. All access to University systems is via secure, encrypted protocols.

5. The University provides e-learning platforms that comply with national and international standards. Their features include delivering educational multimedia content, tracking student activity, managing course catalogues and enrolments, online tutoring and collaboration, as well as compiling learner reports and enabling learner monitoring. The platforms are engineered on multi-level architecture and adopt international e-learning standards, thus ensuring maximum content-management flexibility and technological independence. Educational content is optimised to ensure that it is accessible even when connectivity is suboptimal, and that response times are rapid.

6. Infrastructure has been designed with a focus on technological accessibility, thus ensuring that content can be exploited to its full potential, even on older devices. A flexible cloud architecture and optimised teaching materials ensure that students can participate in courses via everyday devices,

such as computers, tablets and smartphones, even when using older models and moderate-speed home internet connections. Students are also able to use widely available software, such as up-to-date web browsers, and the most common file and multimedia reading freeware.

7. The University provides students with the software they need to study free-of-charge, ensuring that technological barriers are no obstacle to education.

8. The University is committed to maintaining its technological infrastructure up-to-date so that it can fully support teaching activities and ensure that every student has access to its educational services, regardless of their own personal technology.

#### **Art. 16: Technological standards and privacy**

1. Online-course teaching materials are designed to comply with recognised international standards such as the IMS Global Learning Consortium, IEEE Learning Technology Standards Committee, and ISO/IEC 40180 for quality in e-learning. Said standards guarantee premium-standard content that can be reused via modular flexible learning objects, as well as interoperability between platforms and learning systems. In addition, training pathways can be customised to meet individual student needs. Content is organised, classified and stored in a repository using standardised criteria that make it straightforward to access and update.

2. The University tracks and records the length of time students spend on the platform, their participation in live lessons, and their consultation of recorded materials, as well as the results of their assessments and tests. Only degree-course lecturers and tutors are authorised to access information on student activities, in full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Students can view their own personal pathway, but no student has access to another student's data.

#### **Art. 17: Monitoring and traceability of teaching activities**

1. The combined use of the aforementioned tools enables a student's learning pathway to be monitored constantly and transparently, with learning analytics ensuring the traceability, customisation and quality of teaching and learning processes, in full compliance with current legislation on personal data protection.

2. The University provides all students with:

- **their own unique digital identity** (Single Sign-On) for secure access to all online infrastructures and services;
- specific digital solutions for monitoring "**certified attendance**" of training activities and assessments.

3. The University's main teaching tools collect, store and analyse training activity data for all users, i.e. students, lecturers and tutors. The aforesaid data include:

- **log-ins and time spent** on a platform;
- **completion of activities** (exercises, forums, quizzes, assignments);
- **engagement data** (video views, live interactions, survey responses, shared annotations);
- **quantitative and qualitative feedback** (formative assessments, comments, peer feedback);
- **results of tests and assignments, and how long they took;**
- **interaction maps** showing video views and contribution history.

4. Access to said data is governed as follows:

- **students** can view their progress, results, feedback and activity history via their personal account on Moodle and linked platforms;
- **lecturers** have full access to the data of all students enrolled on their course units, can analyse participation patterns, and use analysis tools to customise teaching;
- **Teaching and Technical tutors** have selective access to the data they need to support a student's learning, in compliance with their role and activity types (e.g. forums, exercises, technical support);
- **Degree-course directors and QA managers** have access to aggregated and anonymised data on participation, activity completion and results for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating teaching quality.

5. All data are stored in compliance with current legislation on privacy and personal data protection (GDPR, 2016), according to documented University policies, with access being regulated and tracked. The University is required to retain records of a student's online accomplishments for a minimum of three years.

## **TITLE VI: PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA**

### **Art. 18: Protection of personal data**

1. The University guarantees the confidentiality and protection of personal data, in accordance with related current legislation. The University, in accordance with the principle of accountability, guarantees full compliance with current legislation on the protection of personal data. The University will therefore undertake an approach to ensure that the processing of personal data complies with the principles laid down by Art. 5 of EU Regulation 2016/679 - GDPR (lawfulness, fairness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimisation, accuracy, storage limitation, integrity and confidentiality).