

## ***Chapter I - General principles for Doctors of Philosophy Courses***

### ***Article 1 - Scope and people involved***

1. These rules govern the creation, commencement and functioning of Doctors of Philosophy Courses (hereafter, also the PhD Courses) at the University of Milan - Bicocca (hereafter, also the University), in compliance with Article 4 of Law no. 210 of 3 July 1998, as amended by Article 19, subsection 1, of Law no. 240 of 30 December 2010, and the related Ministerial Regulation dated 8 February 2013.
2. These rules also govern the creation of the University's PhD School.
3. For PhD Courses instituted in accord with other universities and with public or private research entities, the rules shall be those issued by the administrative university for the course.

### ***Article 2 - Purposes of PhD Courses***

1. The PhD Courses are designed to provide advanced knowledge, suitable for highly qualified research at private or public entities, and the exercise of liberal professions, helping to create the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area.

## ***Chapter II - Commencement of PhD Courses***

### ***Article 3 - Accreditation, institution and commencement***

- 1 PhD Courses can commence, once accreditation has been granted by the Ministry on the basis of an opinion from ANVUR (National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes), in compliance with the agreed European guidelines.
- 2 Accreditation involves initial authorisation to commence courses - such accreditation lasts five years and is granted via ministerial decree - and also necessitates passing the annual evaluation to determine accreditation requirements continue to be met, pursuant to Article 3 of the Ministerial Decree dated 8 February 2013.
- 3 Direct monitoring to determine that accreditation requirements continue to be met is done annually by ANVUR, partly on the basis of the checks conducted by the University's Assessment Team (*Nucleo di Valutazione d'Ateneo*).
- 4 The accreditation proposal shall indicate the total number of places for which the proposal is being made, for each PhD Course. Without prejudice to the subsequent assessment, this number can be increased once accreditation has been granted by submitting a reasoned application.
- 5 Pursuant to the regulations, the following are eligible to apply for accreditation:
  - a) The University, potentially on the basis of a convention with other universities and public or private research bodies, Italian or foreign, meeting appropriate, high standards for culture, science, staff, facilities and equipment, without prejudice to the fact that in such cases the administrative centre for the PhD course is a university, which shall award the doctorate;
  - b) Consortia formed with other universities, with the option to award double, multiple or joint doctorates;

- c) Consortia formed between universities and public or private research bodies of high repute, without prejudice to the fact that in such cases the administrative centre for the PhD course is a university, which shall award the doctorate;
- d) The University that has a convention, pursuant to Article 4, subsection 4, of Law no. 210 of 3 July 1998, with businesses, potentially not located in Italy, that conduct research and development, without prejudice to the fact that in such cases the administrative centre for the PhD course is a university, which shall award the doctorate.
- 6. The subjects for PhD Courses must fall within broad, structured and clearly defined disciplines. The names for PhD Courses and, where relevant, the syllabus, shall be assessed by ANVUR when accrediting a PhD Course.
- 7. Proposals to create new courses shall be formulated by the Departments, using the form drawn up by the relevant office, and submitted to the Rector by the deadline established annually by the University on the basis of ministerial instructions for accreditation. By such deadlines, the Departments must present, each year, an application for a new cycle of already accredited PhD Courses to commence.
- 8. Having acknowledged the opinion on complying or continuing to comply with the accreditation requirements issued by the School Council as per Chapter VIII of these Rules, the Academic Senate shall issue its own opinion on the proposals indicated in subsection 7 and formulate proposals on the uses of resources allocated in the budget by the Governing Body. These proposals shall be submitted to the Governing Body for approval.

***Article 4 Requirements for the accreditation of courses and venues for PhD Courses***

- 1. The following requirements are necessary for the accreditation of PhD courses and venues:
  - a) A Faculty Board with at least sixteen members of the teaching staff, of which at least twelve are full (1st level) or associate (2nd level) professors, working in macro-sectors consistent with the educational targets of the PhD Course. Each member of the teaching staff may only be counted once in Italy. Where the doctorate was commenced by one of the consortia indicated in Article 3, subsection 4, letter d), one quarter of the members of the Faculty Board can be research directors, lead researchers and researchers at research bodies, or equivalent positions at foreign bodies;
  - b) The Faculty Board's members have proven, internationally recognised research in the areas covered by the PhD Course, especially in the five years preceding the accreditation application date;
  - c) For a doctoral cycle to be commenced, an average of at least six research scholarships per PhD Course, without prejudice to the fact that this number cannot be less than four for an individual doctoral cycle. To meet this requirement, other forms of funding that are at least equivalent to the amounts for scholarships can be included in the calculation. For doctorates commenced by the consortia indicated in Article 3, subsection 5, letter b), each institution in the consortium must guarantee funding for at least three scholarships;
  - d) Suitable, stable funding to ensure the sustainability of the PhD Course, especially for the scholarships indicated in letter c) and to support research in the sphere in which the doctoral students are working;
  - e) The availability of specific, suitable operational and scientific facilities for the educational and research purposes of the doctoral students, including, depending on the course type, science laboratories, an adequate library, databases and resources for electronic computation;

- f) Teaching in the discipline and interdisciplinary, potentially involving more than one doctoral course, language and computer courses and, as part of learning about managing research and European and international research systems, training to teach students to make optimal use of research results and intellectual property.
2. For the conventions referred to in Article 3, subsection 5, letter a) above, the parties in a convention must commit to running doctoral cycles for at least three years. For each PhD Course, such conventions must further ensure compliance with the requirements in subsection 1 by indicating, for each party in the convention, the number of teachers, the funding and the operational and scientific facilities provided to guarantee the sustainability of the PhD course and, save for doctoral courses with foreign institutions, at least three scholarships per doctoral cycle. Where doctoral programmes are run on the basis of a convention with foreign institutions, the number of scholarships provided by each party to the convention shall be governed by the individual conventions pursuant to Article 22, without prejudice to complying with the requirement established by subsection 1, letter c), point 1. For conventions between universities, it is possible to establish that double, multiple or joint doctorates will be awarded.
3. For accreditation applications for PhD Courses submitted by consortia pursuant to Article 3, subsection 5, letters b) and c), the maximum number of universities and research institutes that can normally form a consortium is four, unless a reasoned case is made for an exception, which shall be assessed as part of the accreditation process. The institutes in a consortium must guarantee the effective, ongoing sharing of facilities and teaching and research activities.

### **Article 5 - Bodies**

1. The following are the Course bodies:
- a) Faculty Board (*Collegio dei docenti*);
  - b) Graduate Director (*Coordinatore*).
2. Without prejudice to what is established by Article 4, subsection 1, letters a) and b), the Board consists of full (1st level) and associate (2nd level) professors, university researchers, lead researchers and research directors, or equivalent roles in public research bodies, as well as experts with proven qualifications who may not necessarily hold positions within the accredited bodies; however, the total number of these experts cannot exceed the overall number of those holding positions in accredited entities.
3. The Faculty Board shall decide annually on new applications received from the Graduate Director in accordance with Article 3, subsection 7. For candidates who work for the University, admission is subject to a decision from the Department in which the person works; for candidates from other universities, to authorisation from the relevant body at that university.
4. Membership of University teachers to a Faculty Board for PhD Courses established by other universities requires authorisation from the Department in which the person works.
5. A representative of the doctoral students for each cycle shall be involved in the workings of the Faculty Board, but solely for didactic and organisational issues.

6. The Faculty Board is responsible for planning and coordinating the PhD Course, overseeing the educational activities in the Course, helping to guide and direct PhD students in their scientific research, and checking educational targets are attained.
7. Where courses are organised with multiple curricula, the Faculty Board can institute an executive body, with at least one representative per curriculum, to organise the educational activities. The composition of this executive body, how it operates and its remit are determined by the Department in question. Such an executive body does not have decision-making power.
8. The Faculty Board shall be chaired by a Graduate Director elected by the Board itself from among the full time full professors or, if these are unavailable, the full time associate professors at the University. The election is called by the Dean for the University professors on the Faculty Board and voting in the first round is by absolute majority of those with the right to vote. From the second round, voting shall be by absolute majority of those present. Voting is personal and confidential. Proxy votes shall not be accepted. Minutes shall be drafted of the elections. The Graduate Director shall hold office for three calendar years and may be re-elected. The Graduate Director can select a Deputy in case of impediment or absence. The Graduate Director and Deputy Graduate Director shall be appointed by a Decree from the Rector.
9. The Graduate Director shall be the representative for the PhD programme at the body or bodies that promoted the programme and with any academic bodies. He/she is responsible for the overall organisation and functioning of the PhD Course and the educational courses included within it. In case of proven urgency, he/she can take measures within the Faculty Board's competence by submitting them for ratification at the first meeting of the Faculty Board.
10. When a PhD course is renewed, the Graduate Director-in-office coordinates the new cycle and all the previous cycles of the same PhD course.
11. The Graduate Director chairs the meeting made up of all the Faculty Boards of the cycles he coordinates.
12. It falls to the Governing Body to assign PhD Courses to Departments, pursuant to Article 12 of the Statutes.
13. Certified teaching and tutorial activities conducted by professors and university researchers as part of doctoral programmes form part of meeting the institutional requirements established by Article 6 of Law no. 240 of 30 December 2010.

#### ***Article 6 - Meetings of Faculty Boards***

1. Notwithstanding the need to fulfil all other obligations, the Faculty Board shall meet at least twice a year, once to plan the activities in the programme and then to verify their implementation.
2. The Faculty Board may meet using remote communication methods.
3. The meetings of the Faculty Board indicated in subsections 1 and 2 are duly convened when the majority of those with voting rights are present, having removed any justified absences from the calculation.
4. Members of the Faculty Board who fail to attend three consecutive meetings without providing a justification for their absence shall cease to hold office. This provision shall not apply to professors/teachers from foreign universities.

5. Unless otherwise indicated in these rules, decisions shall be taken by the absolute majority of those present. In the case of a tie, the Graduate Director shall cast the deciding vote.

***Article 7 PhD programmes in cooperation with companies, industrial PhDs and advanced level internships***

1. Subject to the accreditation indicated in Article 3, the University can commence PhD Courses on the basis of a convention with businesses that conduct research and development.
2. Furthermore, the University can commence PhD Courses or industrial PhD curricula, with the option to allocate a certain number of the available places, as agreed in specific conventions, to employees of companies who are involved in highly specialized activities, provided they pass the relevant selection process.
3. The conventions to form the courses in subsections 1 and 2 above shall establish, *inter alia*, the syllabus and the methods for research at the company. Likewise, for the places for company employees, they shall establish the total commitment required by the employee and the duration of the doctoral programme. The conventions shall establish that:
  - a) The training of the doctoral student remains the responsibility of the University, although the university tutor, as designated pursuant to subsection 6 of Article 13, can be assisted by an external co-tutor, from the body the University has the convention with, who is responsible for the activities conducted by the doctoral student at its premises;
  - b) Any intellectual or industrial property rights, and non-disclosure obligations are governed by specific agreements.
4. This is without prejudice to the option, established by Article 45 of Legislative Decree no. 81 of 15 June 2015, to have doctoral programmes as apprenticeships with external institutions and companies.
5. Contracts for apprentices and the places made available pursuant to the conventions in subsections 1 and 2 above are considered equivalent to scholarships when calculating the minimum number required to commence a course.
6. In order to promote the interaction with external Institutions and the industrial world, the University, drawing up specific conventions, can commence, within courses already accredited, programmes devoted to those who have business relations, even self-employment, with businesses provided those relations go on at least as the length of the Course and to PhD students with contracts for apprentices of Higher Education (PhD Executive).
7. Those programmes may last four years and are in any case incompatible with the use of the PhD scholarship.
8. For the doctorates indicated in this Article, it is possible to establish a different deadline for applications submission and course commencement dates. Similarly, the organisational methods adopted for educational activities can differ. All of this is to make the doctorate function optimally.

***Chapter III - Entrance and admission to PhD Courses***

### **Article 8 - Admission requirements**

1. Applications for PhD Courses can be submitted, regardless of citizenship, by candidates holding a *laurea magistrale* (master's degree) or foreign equivalent, or by those who are awarded one by 31 October of the year in question, on penalty of the application becoming invalid.  
Those people who are already enrolled in the same doctoral course cannot submit applications.
2. The suitability of foreign qualifications shall be determined by the Examination Commission indicated in Article 11, following the relevant offices checking the requirements established by Italian law and the country in which the qualification was issued, and any international treaties or agreements governing the recognition of qualifications for further study.

### **Article 9 - Selection procedure**

- 1 Admission to PhD Courses follows a public selection procedure that shall be completed by no later than 30 September of each year.
2. The call for applications, drafted in Italian and English, shall be published on the University's website, the European site *Euraxess* and the Ministry's site. It shall include:
  - a) Entrance requirements and assessment criteria for qualifications and publications;
  - b) Methods to be used for conducting entrance exams and the language in which these will be done;
  - c) Number of places available, indicating the scholarships pursuant to Article 15, subsection 1, the apprentice contracts, pursuant to Article 45 of Legislative Decree no. 81 of 15 June 2015, any other forms of funding, coming from research funds or other University resources, including the research grants indicated in Article 22 of Law no. 240 of 30 December 2010, which can be granted to one or more successful candidates, and any places without scholarships;
  - d) Any fees and contributions payable by doctoral students, as determined annually by the Governing Body;
  - e) Criteria for determining what will happen to any unassigned scholarships;
  - f) Any places reserved for specific categories;
  - g) Methods to be used to determine the level of knowledge of one or more foreign languages;
  - h) Any special or additional assessments/exams for the awarding of forms of funding other than scholarships or for scholarships allocated to specific research projects **or curricula**.
3. For doctorates run in cooperation with companies, the provisions of Article 7 shall apply.

### **Article 10 - Admission Exams**

1. The selection process is designed to determine a candidate's attitude to scientific research and involves assessing the candidate's qualifications and publications. In addition to this, there is a written and/or oral examination, determined in compliance with what is decided by each Faculty Board.
2. Any oral exam shall be public.

3. The oral exam, according to the Call, may be taken through videoconference or other technology allowing the remote viewer of the candidates.
4. Special or additional exams might be required to award any funding other than scholarships or for the scholarships for specific research projects or curricula during the oral examination.
5. The Commission can assign up to 80 points. 20 points shall be for the assessment of qualifications and publications. The Examination Commission shall assess the qualifications prior to the oral exam and, if this is preceded by a written exam, prior to it being corrected.
6. 60 points shall be for the exams. Suitable candidates must be awarded at least 40 points in the exams. If the selection process has two exams, then each shall have 30 points, and candidates shall need to be awarded no less than 20 points in each one to be considered suitable.
7. The final points score is calculated as the sum of the points for the assessment of qualifications, publications and exams.
8. For EU or international cooperation projects, it is possible to allow specific admission procedures and organisational methods that take into account the nature of the individual projects, provided they are commenced as part of accredited doctoral programmes.
9. Where places are reserved for students who graduated from foreign universities, for scholarship recipients from foreign countries or for specific international mobility programmes, it shall be possible to establish selection methods based on assessing qualifications, if necessary, completed by an interview via video conference. In such cases, a separate final ranking shall be created. Any reserved places that are not awarded may be made available to the admission procedures for unreserved places.
10. At the end of each exam, the Commission shall inform the candidates of the outcome.
11. Commissions shall conclude their role by submitting the record of the selection process, signed by all commission members, to the relevant administrative office within three days of the exams being completed.

### ***Article 11 - Examination Commission***

1. On the basis of a proposal from the Faculty Board, the Rector shall decree the appointment of the Commission that shall select the candidates. It shall consist of three or five members selected among university professors and researchers, with at least one being a tenured professor. It shall be possible to add no more than two additional members to the Board from experts not working for the University and non-teachers, who are selected from public and private research entities and facilities. Where PhD Courses have multiple curricula, the Commission shall be divided into sub-committees, with each having no more than three members.
2. Where admission requires different exams for different curricula, the Commission can create a final ranking for each one.
3. The chair of the Commission shall be held by the higher tenured professor who has been in that role the longest and, where full professors have been in the role for the same length of time, by the eldest. Members of the Commission and experts can be foreigners.
4. The initial session, to assess the qualifications, and the final session for Commissions that have sub-committees, can be held remotely, potentially via phone or video conference.



***Article 12 – Admission and publication of the rankings***

1. Each ranking of candidates shall be presented in decreasing order of points scored overall by each candidate as per the methods indicated in Article 10.
2. The general ranking for admission to the course shall indicate which candidates are suitable for scholarships for specific research projects and curricula, or for forms of funding other than scholarships. Such suitability is a prerequisite for granting such funding/scholarships.
3. The rankings shall be approved in a decree by the Rector and shall be published in the Official Register of the University and on its website.
4. Candidates shall be admitted to PhD Courses on the basis of the ranking, up to the number of places made available for each doctorate. Failure to complete registration, within 5 days from the publication of the ranking, shall result in the loss of the right to be admitted to the relevant PhD Course. In this case, the places not taken shall be allocated to those people who came next on the ranking.
5. If places should become free within a month of the commencement of the first year of the course due to people withdrawing from the PhD Course or because of a failure to obtain a qualification pursuant to Article 8 above, then they shall be assigned to the next people in the ranking, taking into account, as needed, the specific research area for the funding.
6. If the Commission drew up a ranking for each curriculum, candidates are admitted to each curriculum until the places made available for that curriculum in the call for applications have been filled. If fewer candidates are admitted to a curriculum than the number of places with scholarships indicated in the call for applications, the remaining scholarships can be assigned to candidates competing for spaces with other curricula, as per the methods defined in the call. The same are applied in the cases in subsection 5.
7. If a candidate withdraws or does not meet the requirements within a month of the commencement of the PhD Courses, the doctoral student shall have no right to the first instalment of the scholarship or the payment of any other form of funding.

***Chapter IV - The Course******Article 13 - Organisation of activities***

1. Without prejudice to what is established by Article 7, the educational activities for PhD Courses shall commence on 1 November.
2. PhD Courses shall last for no less than three years, without prejudice to what is established in Article 16.
3. Scientific, organisational and educational responsibility for each PhD Course lies with the relevant Faculty Board, which defines the schedule of activities over the years of the PhD Course, the total number of mandatory hours and methods to be used for the annual verification of the knowledge acquired.
4. The programme of educational activities is published annually on the website for the PhD course.
5. The Faculty Board shall approve, in accordance with the appropriate planning of its activities, the research project a doctoral student plans to work on during the PhD Course in compliance with any



conventions or agreements signed with outside funding bodies, especially when the doctoral student shall be using a scholarship or another form of funding for a specific research topic.

6. During the first year of a PhD Course, the Faculty Board shall appoint, from within, having checked availability and consulted the doctoral student, a tutor who shall follow and guide the education and research done by the doctoral student.
7. A tutor can be assisted by a supervisor, who need not be on the Board, who has the task to oversee and guide the research and writing activities targeted at the drawing up of the Phd thesis.

### ***Chapter V - Rights and duties of doctoral students***

#### ***Article 14 - Rights and duties of doctoral students***

1. Without prejudice to what is established in Articles 7 and 16, enrolling in a doctorate requires full time, exclusive commitment.
2. The Faculty Board shall assess whether any additional forms of work and traineeships are compatible with the PhD Course, provided they require a limited time commitment.
3. Doctoral students are required to take part in the educational activities in their curricula, as indicated by the Faculty Board, and to conduct the assigned research.
4. The Graduate Director shall inform the relevant offices of any repeated failure by a PhD student to take part in the required activities, potentially with a view to suspending any scholarship, grant or the like in accordance with Art. 15, paragraph 8.
5. At the start of each year following the first year, doctoral students must renew their enrolment in the PhD Course. Failure to renew this enrolment for more than a year shall result in the loss of the status of doctoral student.
6. At the end of each year of a PhD Course, the doctoral student shall submit his/her publications to the University's open archive and present a written report to the Faculty Board on the research conducted and the results achieved, on participation in any seminars and congresses, and on other scientific initiatives, along with any publications produced. The Faculty Board shall then use this to determine admission to the following year. Should the Faculty Board determine the student cannot be admitted to the next year, it will mean the student can no longer do the PhD Course and will lose any scholarship or other funding.
7. Doctoral students can, as an integral part of their educational programme, tutor students doing University courses, provided they are authorised to do so by the Faculty Board and it does not increase the amount of the scholarship. Under similar conditions, but up to a limit of forty hours per academic year, such students can also do additional educational activities and curricular education to strengthen skills (practical work, labs, field education). Once the third year of the PhD is complete, this limit is abolished.
8. Doctoral students in the medical area can be involved in clinical healthcare activities, provided they have appropriate third party professional liability insurance, either entered into by them or by signing up for - at their own expense - the University's third party professional liability insurance policy.
9. As far as is compatible, doctoral students shall enjoy the same conditions for university services as other students enrolled at the University.

10. Doctoral students can undertake a period of study at other universities or research institutes, in Italy or abroad, provided they have prior authorisation from the Faculty Board and for a period of no more than 18 months, except for cases of international agreements as per Article 22.
11. Public employees who are accepted onto doctoral courses shall be enjoy, for the standard duration of the PhD Course, the treatment set out in the collective bargaining agreement or, for employees under public law, a special period of leave to study, in accordance with the needs of the administration they work for, pursuant to Article 2 of Law no. 476 of 13 August 1984, as amended, with or without allowance and excluding an explicit waiver, only if they are enrolling for the first time in a PhD Course, regardless of the specific field.
12. The actions provided for in Legislative Decree no. 68 of 29 March 2012 shall be extended to doctoral students.

### ***Article 15 - Scholarships and contributions***

1. Scholarships shall be for one year and shall be renewed provided the doctoral student passes the annual assessment of his/her activities by the Faculty Board, pursuant to Article 14, subsection 6 above.
2. If a doctoral student with a scholarship does not pass the assessment or gives up the scholarship, then the unused amount goes to the University, which shall use it for the same purpose.
3. The same principles indicated in subsection 1 above shall be used to determine whether an apprenticeship contract or other forms of funding, as indicated in Article 9, subsection 2, letter c) are kept in the years following the first year.
4. The principles in this article shall not apply to recipients of foreign scholarships or those who receive specific funding as part of specific mobility programmes pursuant to what is established in the specific rules.
5. A scholarship is subject to social security (*INPS*) contributions, under the separate national insurance and pension scheme in force. Doctoral students enjoy the consequent protections and rights.
6. The amount of a scholarship cannot be below the amount set by the law in force.
7. Scholarships shall start from when the educational activities commence and are paid in monthly instalments, for the month past.
8. Failure to attend the programme for 30 consecutive days shall result in the payment of the scholarship or other funding being suspended.
9. The total of the contributions required for PhD Courses where the University is the administrative centre, and the amount of and terms for awarding scholarships to doctoral students shall be decided by the Governing Body, taking into account current laws governing the right to study.
10. Scholarships are assigned in the order of the ranking referred to in Article 12. In the event of equal merit the younger candidate shall prevail.
11. The duration of the scholarship shall be equal to the duration of the PhD Course.

12. The amount of the scholarship shall be increased by up to 50% for any period of study abroad. Regarding the increase of the scholarship, the minimum period of training abroad must be of thirty days running and cannot exceed 18 months in all.
13. From the second year of the course onwards, each doctoral student enrolled, both with and without scholarship, shall receive a budget provided for research of the amount not less than 10% of the scholarship. The funds are assigned to the Department under which the PhD course is held and the Coordinator of the course allows PhD students to use those funds.
14. Prior to issuing a call for applications, the relevant research facilities can deliberate to increase the value of the scholarships, allocating the money from their own budget in compliance with how funds can be used. Such an increase must be for all the scholarships included in the call for each PhD Course and, furthermore, must include a 50% increase - if applicable - for a period abroad and the research budget. The total value of the scholarship cannot exceed the minimum amount paid for the research grants.
15. Prior to issuing a call for applications, the relevant research facilities can use their own funds or those from external entities to institute other forms of funding, for an amount equal to the value of the scholarships, allocating the money from their own budget in compliance with how funds can be used.
16. It is possible to earn income in addition to a research scholarship, up to the amount set annually by the Governing Body for the calendar year. In order to check this threshold any income support paid out considering the amount of the scholarship is not taken into consideration (such as the maternity benefit or the monthly unemployment benefit), as well as incomes produced after the payment of the last instalment, before the achievement of the Degree, or at the withdrawal from the PhD course indicated in Article 18, subsection 8.
17. If the income threshold is exceeded, then the scholarship shall be revoked for the entire academic year in question, with repayment of the instalments received unduly. In order to determine compliance with the set threshold, the relevant party shall make an annual declaration of any income received and indicate if the threshold has been exceeded.
18. Such scholarships cannot be combined with other scholarships, except for those intended for supplementary educational and research activities, through a period abroad.

#### ***Article 16 Connection between PhD Courses and medical specialisation schools***

1. It is possible to attend a PhD Course and the medical specialisation school (residency), with the potential reduction of the PhD Course to a minimum of two years in compliance with the following general criteria:
  - a) The medical residents must have been selected in a call for applications for a PhD Course at the same university where he/she is doing his/her residency specialisation. Where such specialisation schools are aggregated or federated, the Steering Committee can allow the student to do a doctoral course in one of the universities in the aggregation.
  - b) Joint attendance can be organised for the final year of the specialisation school and it must be compatible with the activities and commitment required by the school, following authorisation being issued by the governing body of that school;

- c) The Faculty Board for the PhD Course can accept an application for a reduction in the number of hours on the basis of an assessment of research already done during residency, as certified by the governing body of the specialisation school;
- d) During the year in which both courses are attended jointly, the medical resident cannot receive a doctoral scholarship or other form of funding.

### ***Article 17 – Incompatibility***

- 1. It is not possible to enrol for PhD Courses and, at the same time, for degree courses, specialisation courses, masters and advanced courses, individual courses, Italian teacher traineeships (TFAs) or other doctoral courses in Italy or abroad, except for those cases where specific international agreements are in place and what is indicated in Article 22. Anyone who is enrolled in a degree or postgraduate course that wishes to and can apply for a PhD Course shall have to seek a temporary suspension of the other course.

### ***Article 18 - Suspension, termination, revocation or withdrawal***

- 1- The provisions protecting maternity envisaged by Ministry of Labour and Social Provisions decree dated 12 July 2007, as published in Official Journal no. 247 of 23 October 2007, shall apply to doctoral students. In order to ensure the health and safety of the student in question is safeguarded, she must inform the relevant office in the University's Protection and Prevention Service (*Servizio di Prevenzione e Protezione*), the doctoral office and the Graduate Director for the PhD Course of her pregnancy.
- 2. The PhD Course shall be suspended for maternity, following the submission of the relevant application, from two months prior to the due date and for three months after it or from the month prior to the due date and for four months after it. It is possible to request that the suspension for maternity be extend for up to a year in total.
- 3. If it is necessary at any time during pregnancy, for the health of the mother and/or the foetus, then the suspension for maternity shall be mandatorily ordered by the Faculty Board, having consulted the Head of the Department in question.
- 4. Attending PhD Courses can be suspended, for up to a year, at the request of a doctoral student for the following reasons:
  - a. Serious, documented illness
  - b. Attending Italian teacher traineeship courses (TFAs)
  - c. Specific personal reasons assessed by the Faculty Board.

In the case of a suspension in accordance with subsections 2 and 4 above, the student shall maintain the right to a scholarship, although pay-out shall be interrupted and recommence when the suspension ceases, notwithstanding the fact that the number of years of the scholarship cannot exceed the duration of the PhD Course.

- d If a student is hired on an open-ended contract by the Public Administration, for the trial period, with the right to the scholarship being waived for the same period.

In case of a deferral of a dissertation defence as per Article 19, subsection 6, a suspension may solely be requested for maternity or serious illness.

5. Once the cause for suspension has ceased to exist, the Faculty Board shall decide on how the educational activities can be made up. In no case can the duration of a PhD Course be shortened.
6. Removal from a PhD Course shall be ordered by the Faculty Board in a justified decision in the following cases:
  - a) A negative assessment during the annual end-of-year assessment;
  - b) Unjustified absence from the course for more than 30 days (not necessarily consecutive);
  - c) Situations covered by the rules on incompatibility, as per Article 17.
7. For the case indicated in subsection 6, letter c) above, the Rector can require, in a justified decree, that the doctoral student repays the scholarship or other form of funding from the moment in which the incompatibility arose.
8. Where a doctoral student withdraws from a PhD Course, he/she must inform the Graduate Director and Rector one month in advance. The payment of the scholarship or other form of funding shall continue until the date of withdrawal.

## ***Chapter VI - Obtaining Qualifications***

### ***Article 19 - Drafting a thesis***

1. The academic qualification of doctor of philosophy, abbreviated as "*Dott.Ric.*" or "Ph.D.", shall be issued at the conclusion of a doctoral course, following a positive evaluation of a research thesis that helps to advance knowledge and investigative methods in the chosen field.
2. A doctoral thesis, with an abstract in Italian and in English, shall be drafted in Italian, English or, following authorisation from the Faculty Board, in another language. The thesis shall include an attachment from the doctoral student on the activities undertaken during the PhD and any publications.
3. The thesis shall be assessed by at least two highly qualified university teachers or experts in the field, potentially from foreign institutions, hereinafter simply the "assessors". The assessors can't be member of the University, of the Scientific Board or part of the bodies with a convention and/or members of a consortium, of the bodies funding a possible scholarship and mustn't be co-author of joint publications with the author of the thesis. The supervisor of the thesis can't be the assessor of the same thesis.
4. The assessors shall be appointed, for each doctoral student, by the Faculty Board, at least 30 days before the end of the cycle.
5. Before the end of a doctoral cycle, all PhD students except for those who had suspension periods that still need to be made up, shall submit their thesis and related attachments, as per subsection 2.,
6. Within 30 days of the receipt of the communication of the appointment and the subsequent access to the thesis, each assessors shall submit their analytical assessments of the thesis to the relevant office, recommending it be admitted to a public defence or a six-month deferral, if they feel significant additions or corrections are required. These assessments are sent to the Graduate Director, the candidate and the Examination Commission.
7. In the case of conflicting opinions from the assessors, the Scientific Board shall resolve the conflict.

8. Once any deferral period has passed, the thesis shall be admitted to public defence, along with a new written opinion from the same assessors, once again requested by the Graduate Director, and with evidence of the changes or additions made.
9. During such a deferral period, as per subsection 6 of this Article and subsection 6 of Article 25, the doctoral student shall not have the right to receive a scholarship or other forms of funding and, until the time of the final exam, shall extend his/her status as a doctoral student to ensure access to the facilities required to complete the research.
10. When submitting a thesis in electronic format, a doctoral student can, in order to protect the industrial and/or intellectual property, and the right to economic use, ask the Rector that the thesis only be made freely available after a period of no more than 36 months. The relevant offices shall fulfil the requirements established by law for the legal conservation of documents and the submission to the ministerial database.

### ***Article 20 - Final exam***

1. The final exam to earn the qualification of doctor of philosophy involves a public thesis defence by the candidate in front of the Examination Commission, as per Article 21, once the thesis has been evaluated by the assessors, as per Article 19.
2. The Rector can grant authorisation for the defence to be via video conference, following a justified request from the Graduate Director.
3. The public defence of the thesis is normally done within two months from the submission of the final assessment of the assessors.
4. If a doctoral student is absent for the final exam, such an absence shall be deemed justified if it is due to illness or force majeure. In such cases, once the relevant student has submitted suitable documentation proving the reason for the absence, he/she shall be allowed to defend his/her thesis as soon as the impediment has ceased to exist.
5. Where an absence at the final exam is unjustified, then the right to take the final exam is forfeited.

### ***Article 21 - Examination Commission***

1. The Examination Commission for the final exam is appointed by the Rector in a decree, on the basis of a proposal formulated by the Faculty Board at least 30 days prior to the end of the PhD cycle.
2. Without prejudice to what is indicated in subsection 4 of this Article, the Commission appointed for each cycle is tasked with examining the doctoral students allowed to defend their theses within the standard deadlines and those who had a deferral on the basis of the assessors' opinions.
3. The Commission shall have three members, chosen from among university professors and researchers, including at least one full professor, with specific qualifications in disciplines that are part of the scientific areas of the PhD Course. The Commission may include no more than two additional experts from public or private research bodies, Italian or foreign, not university teaching staff. The assessors may not sit on the Commission.
4. Solely in the cases of doctorates with curricula, the Faculty Board may apply to the Rector for multiple Examination Commissions to be established. These shall be composed as per the subsection above,

consisting of university teaching staff and, potentially, external experts with specific expertise in the disciplines covered by the individual curricula.

5. The chair of the Examination Commission shall be held by the highest ranking professor who has been in that role the longest; where professors have been in the role for the same length of time, by the eldest.
6. Following the defence, the thesis, accompanied by a reasoned, written assessment from the commission, is approved or rejected, without a score being assigned. Where the scientific results are especially significant, the Commission has the power to approve the thesis with honours, although this requires a unanimous vote.
7. If a thesis is not approved, the doctoral student shall cease to be a doctoral student and lose the right to defend his/her thesis again.
8. The qualifications awarded bear the wording *Scuola di Dottorato dell'Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca* and the name of the PhD course.

## **Chapter VII - Internationalisation**

### **Article 22 - Internationalisation**

- 1 In compliance with the principles underlying the Bologna Process for the creation of a European Higher Education area that is integrated with the research area, the University promotes the internationalisation of PhD Courses as follows:
  - a) Teaching by qualified, international teaching staff;
  - b) Encouraging international mobility for students enrolled in PhD Courses;
  - c) Doctoral student participation in international projects of research;
  - d) Creation of PhD Courses on the basis of conventions or in consortia with foreign universities and entities;
  - e) Reciprocal agreements to recognise qualifications and PhD Courses;
  - f) Awarding of double or joint qualifications on the base of framework government agreements or agreements between universities.
- 2 Where PhD Courses are commenced, following accreditation pursuant to Article 3, with highly qualified and internationally recognised foreign research entities and universities, the conventions must set out the actual sharing of educational and research activities, an equal division of costs, the governance methods for funding, including scholarships, the means to be used for exchange and university teaching staff and student mobility, and the awarding of joint, double or multiple doctoral qualifications.
3. International cooperation agreements and those with universities that fall under specific agreements can establish rules that are exceptions to the current rules for the following:
  - a) Commissions and selection methods;



- b) PhD course is organisation;
  - c) Commission and methods for final exam;
  - d) Time spent abroad for which there is an increase in the amount of the scholarship.
4. Following an application from the relevant party and a favourable opinion from the Faculty Board, the University can issue "Doctor Europaeus" certification in addition to the national qualification of doctor of philosophy when the following conditions are complied with:
- a) Positive assessment of the thesis work from at least two referees, appointed by the Faculty Board, from universities in two European countries that are not the same as the one in which the thesis will be defended (the referee reports must be attached to the record of the final exam);
  - b) At least one member of the Commission should come from an institution in another European country, other than the one where the thesis is defended;
  - c) A part of the defence must be in one of the official languages of the European Union, other than the one of the country where the thesis is defended (French, English, German, Spanish);
  - d) The thesis must have been partly prepared as a result of a research period of at least 3 months spent in another European country.
5. In cases where specific international co-tutorship agreements have been signed by the University with a foreign university, the doctoral thesis can be done with a supervisor from each of the universities.
6. In cases of co-tutorship agreements governing students from foreign universities, it is necessary for such students to spend at least 6 months at the University.
7. The co-tutorship agreement shall be approved by the Faculty Board.
8. The Commission for awarding qualifications shall have an equal number of scientific representatives from both countries. The thesis drafted in such a situation shall only be defended in one place, but provided the Examination Commission approves the thesis, then the universities in the agreement shall issue a double doctor of philosophy qualification.
9. The doctoral thesis shall be drafted in the language of one of the countries involved or in English, with an abstract in another language.
10. Where a double qualification is issued on the basis of the co-tutorship of a thesis, the qualification shall be issued with an indication of the University party to the convention.

## ***Chapter VIII***

### ***PhD School***

#### ***Article 23 Institution and goals***

1. All PhD Courses where the administrative centre is the University of Milan - Bicocca are linked to the School of Doctoral Studies of the University of Milan - Bicocca (PhD School). The University remains in charge of the PhD Courses and responsible for their accreditation. The PhD School has an

independent cultural programme, with general guidelines that respect the specific nature of the individual PhD Courses. It is tasked with coordinating the PhD Courses and managing shared activities.

2. The School's goals are as follows:

- a) Improve competitive research sectors in Europe and internationally by developing excellence in scientific skills (both in specific disciplines and interdisciplinary);
- b) Work with companies to help train people with advanced skills that can then be used in the local socio-economic setting;
- c) Promote Italian and international cooperation in higher education and science on issues that have a significant impact on society;
- d) Improve the University's PhD Courses to make them more attractive to students from other universities, especially foreign ones.

#### ***Article 24 Bodies of the PhD School***

1. The PhD School has the following bodies:

- a) Chair
- b) Executive Committee
- c) Council

In addition, the PhD School has a specific administrative office, determined by an Order from the Director General, to conduct its administrative and management tasks.

2. The Chair of the School is appointed in a decree issued by the Rector and shall be from among the University's full professors, having consulted with PhD School's Council.
3. The Chair:
  - a) Represents the PhD School in internal and external relations;
  - b) Steers and coordinates the school's cultural programme;
  - c) Promotes the quality of the PhD Courses and organises the procedures to institute, accredit and assess them;
  - d) Convenes and chairs the Executive Committee and the Council;
  - e) Presents an annual report on the PhD School's performance to the Academic Senate.
4. The term of office for the Chair shall be three calendar years and can be renewed consecutively only once. The office is incompatible with that of Graduate Director, Head of Department, President of the Inter-Departmental School or member of the Assessment Team. The Chair can appoint a deputy to replace him/her in case of absence or impediment.
5. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, three members of the teaching staff elected by the graduate directors from among the graduate directors for PhD Courses, ensuring representation of the various different disciplines. The members of the Executive Committee shall be appointed in a decree issued by the Rector and they shall remain in office for three years. Their term in office can

only be consecutively renewed once. The head of the administrative office referred to in subsection 1 of this Article shall attend meetings of the Executive Committee without voting rights to help the chair in drafting the minutes.

6. The Executive Committee:

- a) Assists the Chair in the exercise of his/her functions;
- b) Proposes and coordinates the interdisciplinary educational activities shared by all PhD Courses;
- c) Ensures these rules are applied and proposes amendments to them.

7. The Council of the School consists of the Chair, the Graduate Directors for the PhD Courses, the head of the administrative office indicated in subsection 1 of this Article (without voting rights) and three representatives selected from the doctoral students.

These students shall remain in the role for two years. The electorate and those eligible to stand for election are all people enrolled for PhD Courses at the University. In order that the elections are valid, a quorum isn't required.

If a representative ceases to hold the role having finished the course, withdrawn from it or no longer being registered, then that place shall be taken by the first candidate who was not elected.

8. The Council:

- a) Acts as the link between the School, the Departments and the Faculty Boards for the individual PhD Courses;
- b) Approves changes to these rules to be submitted to the Governing Bodies;
- c) Defines the shared guidelines for PhD Courses, especially for the procedures for admission and awarding qualifications, to be submitted to the University's Governing Bodies;
- d) Approves the planning for the interdisciplinary educational activities shared by all PhD Courses;
- e) Approves the signing of conventions with external Italian and foreign parties that are in the general interest;
- f) Formulates opinions and proposals on how the PhD Courses function and are organised;
- g) Proposes criteria to the Governing Bodies for how to allocate scholarships and the resources to fund PhD Courses, drawing inspiration from the criteria of merit indicated in Article 13, subsection 2 of Ministerial Decree no. 45/2013, but bearing in mind individual specific aspects;
- h) Provides mandatory opinions on doctoral programmes organised as consortia or on the basis of conventions where the administrative centre is not the University;
- i) Provides mandatory opinions on the proposals to institute and/or renew PhD Courses;
- j) Defines and approves the use of financial, human and material resources made available annually to the PhD School by the Governing Bodies;
- k) Approves the report drafted annually by the Chair of the PhD School.

9. The PhD School's financial resources shall be determined annually by the Governing Bodies.

***Chapter IX - Final provisions***

***Article 25 - Transitional rules and entry into force***

- 1. These rules, approved by the Academic Senate following a favourable opinion from the Governing Body, shall come into force through the issuing of a Decree from the Rector.

2. The amendments indicated in article 5, subsection 10, don't apply to the terms of office when these amended Rules come into force.
3. The previous rules for PhD Courses shall remain in force for the PhD cycles commenced prior to these rules coming into effect.
4. For any aspects not expressly provided for in these Rules, reference shall be made to the Ministerial Decree dated 8 February 2013 on the "Regulation concerning the accreditation methods for doctoral courses and venues and the criteria for the institution of doctoral courses by accredited entities", to current laws governing research doctorates and the University's rules.
5. Solely for doctoral students in the XXIX cycle, at least 3 months prior to the end of the cycle, the Faculty Board shall assess progress on theses and determine whether they can be submitted for external assessment or delayed by 6 months, after which the thesis shall in any case be submitted to the assessors. At the same time, the assessors for each doctoral student shall be appointed. Within 30 days of receiving a thesis, the assessors shall submit their analytical assessments of the thesis to the relevant office, recommending it be admitted to a public defence or sent back for a deferral period of six months, if they feel significant additions or corrections are required. These assessments are sent to the Graduate Director, the candidate and the Examination Commission:-