

*This document is the translation into English of the Regulations of the University of Catania governing Ph.D. courses, issued with Rector's decree n. 3361 of October 31 2019.
Please be informed that only the Italian version of this regulations is legally binding and that the English version is provided for information only.*

Regulations of the University of Catania governing Ph.D. courses

Section I

Intent and definition

Art. 1 Intent

1. The present regulations governs the offer and implementation of Ph.D. courses according to the “Regulations concerning the accreditation of the institutions and Ph.D. courses and the criteria governing the implementation of Ph.D. courses by accredited institutions” (Ministerial Decree 45/2013) and the rules governing Ph.D. courses referred to in the aforementioned Ministerial decree.

Art. 1 Definition

1. The Ph.D. is a postgraduate degree corresponding to the third level of studies whose learning outcome is the knowledge needed to carry out advanced research at public or private bodies and access to regulated professions, in line with the creation of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area.

Section II Accreditation

Art. 3 Accreditation procedure

1. The implementation of a Ph.D. course is subject to the official accreditation by the Ministry of Education and Research, in compliance with the assent expressed by the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University System and Research (NAEUSR).
2. The request of accreditation concerns both the institution and the Ph.D. courses and is submitted by Universities according to the modalities and deadlines laid down every year in the Ministerial Guidelines for the Accreditation of Ph.D. courses.
3. The accreditation is authorized through ministerial decree for a period of five years. NAEUSR annually verifies the maintenance of the accreditation requirements.
4. The loss of one or more requirements leads to the revocation of the accreditation; the revocation is established by Ministerial Decree, upon assent expressed by NAEUSR.
5. In case of revocation of the accreditation, the university shall immediately interrupt the implementation of a new cycle of the Ph.D. course whose accreditation has been revoked.

Art. 4 Accreditation Requirements

1. The following requirements are necessary for Ph.D. courses and Universities to be accredited:
 - a. An academic board including at least sixteen academics, either from the administrative seat of the Ph.D. course or from Italian or foreign partner institutions, no more than one fourth out of which researchers, related to scientific micro-sectors coherent with the Ph.D. course learning outcomes. Each academic can be member of one Ph.D. academic board only. For the present requirement to be respected each academic can be counted only once at national level.

- b. An adequate scientific background held by each member of the academic board as laid down in the Ministerial Guidelines for the Accreditation of Ph.D. courses.
- c. The availability, for each Ph.D. course cycle to implement, of a minimum number of four (4) scholarships and an average number of six (6) scholarships. Other types of financial contributions of the same amount as the scholarship can be taken into account in the computation of the minimum and average number.
- d. The availability of steady, appropriate funding for the Ph.D. course financial sustainability with specific reference to the scholarships as in letter c) of this paragraph and to the support of doctoral students research/course activities.
- e. The availability of specific and qualified scientific structures for research activities and study of doctoral students, including, if pertinent to the type of doctoral course, laboratories, libraries, databases and IT equipment
- f. Course activities, also in collaboration with other Ph.D. courses, aimed at improving each student knowledge of his/her doctoral course research area, his/her linguistic and computer skills and his/her knowledge of European/International research programmes and methods of dissemination of research results.

Art. 5 Agreements

1. The University can submit the request of accreditation in one of the following arrangements:
 - a. In agreement with public/private, national/international universities. The coordinating institution is the University of Catania which is responsible for the issuance of the final degree.
In case of agreement with foreign universities, partners shall mutually share the financial costs of the course according to the principle of reciprocity. The issuance of a double or multiple degree, in case of more than one partner institution, can be provided for in the agreement.
In case of agreement with Italian universities, each university shall contribute at least three scholarships to the Ph.D. course.
Unless duly justified, the maximum number of national/international partners in the agreement is four. Each member institution shall continually guarantee doctoral students an effective system of sharing of structural and didactic resources.
 - b. In agreement with highly qualified public/private, Italian/international research centres. The coordinating institution is the University of Catania which is responsible for the issuance of the final degree. In this specific case, up to one fourth of the academic board can be composed of general managers, senior researchers or researchers from the research centre, or equivalent positions in case of foreign research centre. General managers, senior researchers and researchers shall take part in the meetings of the academic board. Their membership is limited to the duration and conditions stipulated in the agreement
 - c. In agreement with Italian/foreign enterprises carrying out Research and Development activities. The coordinating institution is the University of Catania which is responsible for the issuance of the final degree.
A quota of places in the doctoral programme, without the benefits of a scholarship and based upon specific agreement between the University and the enterprise, can be reserved to the employees of the partner enterprise on condition that they pass the selection procedure according to the provisions included in art. 12 of this regulations.
The agreements aimed at implementing learning pathways like those described in the previous paragraph shall establish, among others, how research activity is carried out at the enterprise and, with reference to places occupied by the enterprise employees, the distribution of the employee's workload and the duration of the course.

Art.6 Consortia

1. The University of Catania can submit the request of accreditation in consortium with other universities. Since the consortium represents a legal entity distinct from its members, the request of accreditation will be submitted by the University of Catania whenever it represents the administrative seat of the course(s) offered and implemented by the consortium.

2. Each member of the consortium shall contribute at least three scholarships to the Ph.D. course and ensure that doctoral students can share structures and didactic activities effectively and continuously
3. Unless duly justified, the maximum number of universities or research centres to form the consortium is four.
4. In case of consortium with foreign universities, the issuance of a double or multiple degree, in case of more than one foreign partner institution, can also be provided for in the agreement.

Art. 7

Submission of the request of accreditation

1. The request of accreditation is submitted through apposite online system according to the modalities and deadlines laid down every year by the Ministry of Education and Research.
2. For each Ph.D. course the associated department is the department submitting the request of accreditation. In case of interdepartmental request of accreditation, the associate department is indicated by the Ph.D. coordinator in the online application as in paragraph 1 taking into consideration the scientific sectors of the members of the academic board.
3. By no later than January 15 of each academic year - pending the publication of the apposite ministerial guidelines and with a view to an adequate programming of the offer of doctoral courses for the following academic year - the Department Council deliberates either on the proposal of continuation of an already accredited Ph.D. course or the proposal of implementation of a new Ph.D. course or the proposal of partnership with a Ph.D. course implemented by another administrative seat. Copy of the Council resolution is sent to the Rector by the Department Director by no later than the following January 20.
4. For each proposal of Ph.D. course, the following points must be covered:
 - a. the members of the academic board, in compliance with the minimum number of 16, no more than one fourth out of which researchers, related to the macro-sectors coherent with the course learning outcomes, with indication for each academic of full name, position and department of affiliation (academics not affiliated to the department submitting the proposal can join the academic board provided the authorization of the department of affiliation);
 - b. name and position of the coordinator of the Ph.D. course;
 - c. the number of scholarships or equivalent types of funding available at departmental level and indication of reservation of places with or without scholarship to graduates from foreign universities, if applicable;
 - d. indication of availability at departmental level of financial resources, further to scholarships, to sustain doctoral students research;
 - e. the availability of specific and qualified functional and scientific structures for doctoral students research and study, including, with reference to the type of course, laboratories, adequate libraries, databases and IT equipment;
 - f. Italian or foreign partner institutions, with indication of the possibility of award of double or multiple degree as regard to foreign institution, if applicable;
 - g. Financial resources made available by each of the partner institutions for the implementation of the Ph.D. course activities, provided that Italian partner institutions contribute at least three scholarships to the course;
 - h. Partner research centres, with indication of with indication of directors, senior researchers and researchers, if applicable;
 - i. Italian/foreign partner enterprises committed to Research and Development, if applicable;
 - j. Consortia with indication of the members, if applicable;
 - k. The possibility of training/research activities carried out in partnership with other departments submitting request of accreditation;
 - l. Indication of participation of the Ph.D. course in EU/international projects with reservation of places in the program to students involved in these projects and special procedures of selection and admission.
5. The requirements listed in paragraph 4, letters a)-l) are not to be considered definitive and might be subject of modification according to the ministerial guidelines.

Section III
Structure and implementation of Ph.D. courses

Art. 8
Duration, topics, structure

1. Ph.D. courses have a duration of no less than three (3) years and no more than four (4). The extension to four years must be properly motivated.
2. For each year of the Ph.D. courses activities begin on October 31 of a specified year and end on October 30 of the following year.
3. Ph.D. research topics shall refer to wide, well-organized and clearly defined scientific fields. Titles and curricula of each Ph.D. course are proposed by the University and evaluated by NAEUSR in the process of accreditation.
4. Each Ph.D. course is managed by an Academic Board and a Coordinator.

Art. 9
Academic Board

1. The academic board is composed according to the modalities reported in art. 4, paragraph 1, letter a) and art.5, paragraph 1, letter b) of this regulations.
2. The request to join an academic board of a specific Ph.D. course must be submitted by the interested academic to the didactic/research unit presenting the Ph.D. course according to the deadlines and modalities fixed by the University for the submission of the request of accreditation (art. 7, paragraph 2) in due time.
3. As a general rule, the status of member of a Ph.D. academic board has a duration of five years, equal to the duration of the accreditation of the Ph.D. course. For researchers on short-term contract the status of member of academic board last two years with and is renewable only once. In case of resignation or impediment to carry out his/her proper duties before the expiration of the five years of accreditation, the coordinator shall integrate the composition of the academic board with a substitute until the completion of the accreditation and with respect to the modalities of composition as in art. 4, paragraph. 1, letter a) of this regulations in order to guarantee the minimum composition of the academic board defined by the legislation in force.
4. Professors and researchers affiliated to other universities can join the academic board of Ph.D. courses of the University of Catania provided the authorization of their university of affiliation. Professors and researchers from the University of Catania can join Ph.D. courses offered by a department other than their department of affiliation provided the authorization of their department of affiliation.
5. A representative of the doctoral students regularly enrolled in the respective Ph.D. course, elected according to Chapter A of Section VIII of the University's electoral regulations, participate in the sessions of the Academic Board with the right to vote with regard to didactical and organizational matters.
6. The academic board, in defining the specific features of the Ph.D. course:
 - a. decides on initiatives aimed at improving the didactical/research program;
 - b. proposes the assignment of lectures, seminars or further teaching/didactic activities to various academics or "experts", even external to the Ph.D. course, to the Department of affiliation of the Ph.D. course having examined their requirements and availability;
 - c. approves research projects and study plans of doctoral students enrolled in the course;
 - d. assigns a supervisor to each doctoral student who is vested with the duty to supervise the doctoral student research work;
 - e. authorizes doctoral students to carry out periods of research or internships abroad according to the provisions included in article 16-bis;
 - f. authorizes doctoral students to carry out extra-curricular activities, if any, provided these activities are compatible with students research activity and do not represent a form of double registration;
 - g. assesses the annual report prepared by each doctoral student at the end of each year and expresses – based on the annual report, the attendance to the Ph.D. course activities and the supervisor opinion- an

evaluation on each student's diligence and work deliberating their admission to the following year or the exclusion from the course in case of unfavourable evaluation.

7. The sessions of the academic board can also take place in videoconference form. In this case, this type of participation in the academic board session must be reported in the session transcript.

Art. 10

Ph.D. course Coordinator

1. The coordination of the Ph.D. course is assigned to a tenured, full professor of the University of Catania or, in the absence of a tenured, full professor, to an associate, full professor of the University of Catania.
2. The coordinator is the academic who submits the request of accreditation according to the ministerial guidelines for the accreditation of Ph.D. courses. Reference is made to the University's statute with regard to his/her term of office. In case of early termination of the coordinator's mandate, the academic board shall appoint a new coordinator, adopting the procedure established in the University's electoral regulations for the election of the President of a degree course as it is compatible.
3. In case the mandate of the coordinator terminates before the completion of the five years of accreditation, the academic maintains the status of member of the academic board until the end of the five years of accreditation, except in the case of retirement.
4. The coordinator of a Ph.D. course cannot hold the office of president of a degree course, department director or department vice-director as well as any other incompatible office according to the legislation in force.
5. The Ph.D. coordinator is responsible for the coordination of doctoral activities. The coordinator establishes the agendas, convenes and chairs the meetings of the academic board and is responsible for the organization of the didactic activity aimed at training doctoral students to carry out research according to specific guidelines defined by the academic board itself.
6. The coordinator, having consulted the academic board, nominates a vice-coordinator among the full and associate professors of the University of Catania affiliated to the Ph.D. course, giving notice to the Rector. The vice-coordinator position has the same duration as the coordinator's mandate. The vice-coordinator replaces the coordinator, taking up all his/her duties, in case of impediment or absence of the latter.

Section IV

Attendance and admission

Art. 11

Access to the Ph.D. course

1. Access to Ph.D. courses is open, regardless of age and nationality, to candidates who, at the closing date of the call for applications as provided for in Article 14 of this regulations, hold a *laurea magistrale* or any suitable foreign degree or to candidates who obtain the degree required for admission by no later than October 31 of the same year, under penalty of invalidation of the admission in case of positive results of the selection procedure.
2. Holders of a foreign degree which has not yet been declared equivalent to an Italian *laurea magistrale* at the date of publication of the call for applications shall submit a request of suitability – for the purpose of admission to the Ph.D. course only – according to the modalities laid down in the call for applications. The suitability of the foreign degree is ascertained by the Ph.D. selection committee in compliance with the related legislation in force in Italy and in the country where the degree has been issued as well as international treaties governing the recognition of degrees finalized to the continuation of university studies.
3. Access conditions as provided for in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article also apply to graduates from foreign universities, scholarship holders from foreign countries and holders of scholarships financed through international mobility programs as well as employees of enterprises engaged in highly qualified activities participating in the selection procedure for reserved places, where appropriate.

Art. 12
Modalities selection

1. The candidates' selection is based on either evaluation of qualifications or evaluation of qualifications and exams according to the provisions of the call for applications.
2. The selection committee assign each candidate up to 120 points, no less than 40 out of which for the evaluation of qualifications.
3. The selection procedure is successfully passed if the candidates obtains a score corresponding to no less than 80/120.
4. At the end of the selection procedure, the committee draws up a ranking list based on the comprehensive score obtained by the candidates according to the provisions included in the call for applications.
5. Candidates are admitted to courses according to the order of the ranking list until all the available posts are filled. In case of renunciation of the eligible candidates before the start of the course, another candidate takes over according to the order of the ranking list.
6. Candidates with a disability of 66% or more who, despite having passed the selection procedure, do not fall within the ranks corresponding to the available places, are admitted to the course as supernumerary students in a place without scholarship.
7. The selection modalities defined in this article also apply, except as provided for in the following paragraph 9, to graduates from foreign universities and scholarship holders within international mobility programs as well as to employees of enterprises engaged in highly qualified activities participating in the selection for places reserved to their category, where appropriate. With reference to the aforementioned candidates, at the end of the selection procedure the selection committee draws up a separate ranking list based on the comprehensive score obtained by the candidates according to the provisions included in the call for applications. Candidates are admitted to courses according to the order of the ranking list until all the available posts are filled.
8. Reserved places remaining vacant can be filled by candidates who are in the ranking list for ordinary places
9. In case of projects of communitarian or international collaboration specific selection procedures can be envisaged, which take into account the characteristics of the project, provided these projects are implemented within an accredited Ph.D. course.

Art. 13
Selection committee

1. The committees in charge of the selection procedures for places in Ph.D. programs of the University of Catania are appointed by the Rector through his/her own decree, on proposal of the academic board.
2. The selection committees as provided for in the preceding paragraph are made up of three members chosen among tenured professors or researchers from the administrative seat, as a general rule, or from partner universities in case of Ph.D. courses implemented in partnership with other universities, related to the scientific sectors of the Ph.D. course or to comparable sectors. No more than two experts, either Italian or foreign, can be additional members of the selection committee. These experts can be chosen from partner Italian or foreign research centres or enterprises funding additional thematic scholarships, when appropriate, and can express their assessment only with regard to the selection of those candidates who submit a research project coherent with the thematic scholarship financed by the institution.
In case of foreign members, the related academic board shall ascertain the comparability of their scientific areas to those of the Ph.D. course. The academic board shall also designate three alternate members besides official members. In case of motivated resignation, one official member can be replaced by one alternate member according to the order of designation.
3. The rector initiates the procedures of nomination of the selection committees after the closing date of the call for applications, inviting the coordinators of each Ph.D. course to appoint the members, as provided for in the previous paragraphs, having heard the academic board.
4. The designation procedures must be completed within the closing date fixed by the rector. In case the academic boards should not provide for within the fixed closing date, the members of the selection committees will be appointed by the coordinator.

5. The selection committee is chaired by the senior tenured, full professor; seniority being equal, the selection committee is chaired by the older tenured, full professor. In case of absence of full professors, the selection committee is chaired by the senior associate, full professor; seniority being equal, the selection committee is chaired by the older tenured, associate professor.
6. The selection committees shall work assuring proper evaluation of the candidates and shall begin and complete their work by no later the September 30 of each year.
7. The reports of the selection procedure, duly signed by all the members of the selection committee, must be transmitted in original to the competent office of the administration within the indicated term.
8. Detailed dispositions concerning the selection procedures, not expressly covered in this regulations, will be further provided in the call for applications.

Art. 14
Call for applications

1. Admission to Ph.D. courses is based on a public selection procedure to be concluded by no later than September 30 of each year.
2. The call for applications, issued in Italian and English, is posted on the website of the University of Catania, the Euraxess website and the website of the Ministry of Education, University and Research.
3. The call for applications includes the following information
 - a. the Ph.D. courses offered in the academic year of reference;
 - b. the type of degree required by the legislation to access Ph.D. courses;
 - c. the number and type of scholarships as well as internship contracts, as provided for in art. 5 of the legislative decree n. 167 of September 14 2011, and other types of research/university financial contributions where appropriate;
 - d. fees and contributions to be paid by doctoral students taking into account the legislation on the right to education currently in force and the University's enrolment procedures;
 - e. the documents to be attached to the application form as annexes;
 - f. where applicable, the number of places reserved to graduates from foreign universities, scholarship holders from foreign countries or within international mobility programs as well as to employees from enterprises engaged in highly qualified activities, in case of Ph.D. courses in partnership with enterprises that carry out research and development activities;
 - g. where applicable, the quotas of university's scholarships or other types of financial contributions reserved to foreign graduates.

Section V
Rights and duties of doctoral students

Art. 15
Attendance

1. Doctoral students are required to fulltime attendance to all course activities according to the modalities defined by the academic board, to submit oral/written reports and to respect any rule disposed by the academic board.
2. Doctoral students cannot be contemporarily enrolled in other university courses, in Italy or abroad, except for cases whose compatibility is expressly authorized by the law and the case disciplined in the following article 16. The University of Catania regulates the cases of contemporary enrolment with internal provision in consideration of aspects connected to the payment of the scholarship where applicable.
3. Doctoral students can temporarily suspend the Ph.D. course to attend study courses only in those cases expressly authorized by the law. The University of Catania regulates the cases of suspension with internal provision in consideration of the aspects connected to the payment of the scholarship, where applicable.
4. The decree of the Minister of Labour and Social Security of July 12 2007 governing maternity rights is applicable in full to female doctoral students.

5. Doctoral students can suspend their Ph.D. courses for serious health problems of theirs or members of their family for maximum twelve (12) months, not necessarily consecutive, in the course of the three years of doctoral course, with the responsibility to recuperate the period of suspension. The University of Catania regulates the suspension with internal provision taking into account the suspension of the scholarship, where applicable, and processing the request of the doctoral student from time to time.
6. Public employees enjoy, for the duration of the Ph.D. course, of the leave stipulated by the collective bargaining or, for employees subject to the regime of public law, of extraordinary leave for study reasons, compatibly with the requirements of the administration according to article 2 of the law n. 476 of August 13 1984 and following modifications, with or without salary except for cases of explicit renunciation, only in case they are enrolled in a Ph.D. course for the first time, regardless of the scientific area.
7. At the end of each year of course doctoral students submit a detailed report on their research activity to the academic board that, having assessed each student's diligence and work, admits them to the following year or expel them from the course.
8. The Academic board, at the end of the last year of Ph.D. course, decides whether doctoral students who have suspended the course according to the disposition provided for in the previous paragraphs, have recuperated the period of suspension.
9. In case of suspension of the attendance for more than thirty days, the scholarship cannot be paid for an equal period. Likewise, the scholarship cannot be paid in case of expulsion from the course.
10. The dispositions included in the legislative decree n. 68 of March 29 2012 concerning the right to education are applicable to doctoral students.
11. Doctoral students can carry out remunerated activities on condition that they are compatible with the attendance to the Ph.D. course. The Academic Board shall determine how doctoral students involved in these activities can recuperate the mandatory attendance to course activities.

Art.16

Contemporary attendance to a Ph.D. course and a School of medical specialization

1. Contemporary attendance to a Ph.D. course and a School of medical specialization is admitted on the following conditions:
 - a. The student in the School of medical specialization has been selected in a Ph.D. course in the same University as that where he/she is attending the School of Medical specialization;
 - b. The contemporary attendance can be disposed during the last year of the School of medical specialization and must be compatible with the activity and the work required by the school itself upon authorization of the academic board of the school;
 - c. The Ph.D. academic board disposes the acceptance of the request of contemporary attendance, where applicable, following the evaluation of the activities already carried out by the candidate in the School and certified by the academic board of the school;
 - d. In the year of contemporary attendance the student cannot benefit from the Ph.D. scholarship;
 - e. In case of acceptance of contemporary attendance to school of medical specialization and Ph.D. course, the duration of the Ph.D. course is reduced to a minimum of two years according, in any case, to the provisions of the academic board;
 - f. The students of the School of medical specialization must attend the Ph.D. course activities, submit oral/written reports as provided for in art. 15 of this regulations and comply with all dispositions of the Academic board

Art. 16-bis

Research activity abroad

1. Doctoral students in places with scholarships must carry out part of their research activity abroad for a period of no less than 3 months if ordered by the Academic Board with reference to the research plan of the specific doctoral student.
2. Research activity abroad must be authorized by the Academic Board that shall also deliberate on its extension to up 18 months.
3. Both the mandatory 3 months, where applicable, and those related to the extension to 18 months do not have to be consecutive.
4. For doctoral students in places without scholarship the period of research abroad is not mandatory.

5. The rules included in this article shall apply to doctoral cycles implemented from the academic year 2019-2020.

Art. 17

Complementary activities of the Ph.D. plan of study

1. Doctoral students can carry out part of their research activity at Italian universities or research centres for periods not exceeding 18 months provided the authorization of the Academic board, where no specific limitations are imposed in connection with the programs funding the scholarship. These 18 months do not have to be consecutive.
2. Doctoral students can enrol in extra-curricular modules, chosen among those offered by the University of Catania in the year of reference except those included in curricula of degree courses subject to quota systems at national level, for no more than 24 credits. These credits shall be reported in the doctoral student's certificates.
3. Doctoral students, as integral part of their research plan, can obtain credits related to didactic activities, research activity, research activity finalised to the final thesis or traineeships carried out at public/private, Italian/foreign institutions. These credits shall be reported in the doctoral student's certificate.
4. Doctoral students can carry out tutorial supervision of students of the first and second level degree courses provided proper authorization of the academic board and without any increase of the scholarship (Ministerial decree 976/2014).
5. Doctoral students, as part of their research project and provided authorization of the academic board, can carry out free teaching activity for up to 40 hours each academic year. There is no time limit after the third year.
6. Doctoral students in Ph.D. medical courses can carry out hospital services on condition that it is necessary for and pertinent to the research program assigned to the doctoral student and is carried out under the supervision of his/her academic supervisor. Hospital services cannot be permanent but must be temporary and strictly connected to the research program of the Ph.D. student. The possibility to carry out hospital services is subject to formal request by the doctoral student to and the authorization of the Academic board upon official approval by the general manager of the hosting hospital. Hospital services can be carried out from the day after the authorization and is forbidden before this date. Hospital services are forbidden in case of lack of appropriate insurance coverage for civil liability.

Art. 18

Research grants

1. Research grants holders who have passed the selection procedure can be admitted to Ph.D. courses in places without scholarship as supernumerary students.
2. The admission of a research grant holder to a Ph.D. course to obtain the doctoral degree is subject to the assessment by the academic board of the equivalence of the themes of the doctoral course to the research topic for which the research grant has been assigned.
3. The research grant holder admitted to a Ph.D. course must comply with all the provisions governing Ph.D. courses.
4. Under no circumstances can a research grant holder be admitted to a Ph.D. course after the beginning of the doctoral course activities.

Art. 19

Suspension of a Ph.D. course – Internship

Abrogated

Art. 19-bis
Transfer

1. Doctoral students enrolled in other Italian or foreign university can request, within the end of their first year, to be admitted to the second year of a Ph.D. course of the University of Catania in a place without scholarship upon the following conditions:
 - a. the University of Catania has implemented a Ph.D. course whose learning outcomes and research themes correspond to the those of the original Ph.D. course;
 - b. the admission of the transferred doctoral student does not alter the minimum percentage of places without scholarship consented by the legislation in force and corresponding to 25% of the total of the available places;
 - c. the academic board accepts the request of transfer having assessed the doctoral student activities in the university of origin.
2. In case the academic board accepts the request of transfer, the candidate can finalize his/her enrolment in the Ph.D. course at the University of Catania on condition that appropriate certification is issued by the University of origin attesting the candidate's successful completion of the first year and his/her admission to the second year of doctoral course in the University of origin.
3. The terms of completion of the application for transfer are the same as those for enrolment in any of the year of the Ph.D. course.

Section VI
Final examination
Art. 20

Admission to final dissertation and postponement of the final dissertation

1. The Ph.D. thesis, along with an abstract in Italian or English, can be written in Italian, English or any other language authorized by the Academic Board.
2. The thesis, annexed to which is a report of the doctoral student on the activities carried out in the course of the Ph.D. and on his/her publications, where appropriate, is assessed by at least two highly qualified academics, even from foreign institutions, external to the institution(s) issuing the Ph.D. degree, hereto defined evaluators and nominated according the dispositions provided for in article 22.
3. By no later than October 10 of each academic year, the external evaluators express a written analytical assessment of the thesis and propose to the academic board the admission of the doctoral student to the public dissertation or the postponement for a period up to 6 months if they deem that the thesis must be modified or integrated. After this period of 6 months, the thesis is admitted to the final dissertation, accompanied by a new written judgment by the same evaluators based on the corrections or integrations to the thesis, when applicable. The postponement for a period up to 6 months can entail neither any financial expense for the administration nor further title to benefit from a scholarship - which terminates with the conclusion of the Ph.D. course - nor any other forms of contributions provided by the university system.
4. All doctoral students enrolled in their last year of course submit forma application to the Rector in order to be admitted to the final dissertation by no later than October 20 of the last year, under penalty of exclusion from the final dissertation itself. The procedure or application for the final dissertation is web based through the University's online system.
5. Doctoral students admitted to the final dissertation in the first instance upload their thesis onto the University's online system by no later than November 30. Doctoral students admitted to the final dissertation after the 6 months of postponement upload their thesis onto the University's online system by no later than May 31.

Art. 21
Public dissertation, degree, deposit of the thesis

1. The final examination consists in a public dissertation against a committee made up according to the dispositions as provided for in the following article 22, at the end of which the thesis is approved or rejected with motivated, written assessment.
2. The committee, with unanimous vote, can attribute the distinction “cum laude” in presence of results of particular scientific value.
3. The title of Philosophic Doctor, abbreviated with “Dott.Ric.” or “Ph.D.”, is awarded after positive evaluation of a thesis which improves the existing knowledge and methodology in chosen research field.
4. The University where the final dissertation is held, upon request of the interested person, certifies the conferral of the degree title, with the distinction “cum laude” if attributed.
5. Within thirty days from the dissertation and the approval of the thesis the University deposits the digital version of the thesis into the ministerial database. Provided the authorization of the academic board, parts of the thesis can be rendered inaccessible as related to data covered by industrial property protection according to the legislation in force on intellectual property rights and their exploitation, without prejudice to the deposit of the thesis in the national libraries of Rome and Florence.

Art. 22
Nomination of the evaluators and the final examination committee

1. For each doctoral student enrolled in his/her last year, the evaluators are nominated by the Ph.D. academic board. The evaluators shall be nominated within 6 months from the end of the doctoral cycle.
2. The final examination committee is nominated by the rector on proposal of the academic board. The commission is composed by three members chosen by the Ph.D. academic board among tenured university professors and researchers who are highly specialized in the research fields connected to the Ph.D. course and do not belong to the Ph.D. academic board. At least two members must be affiliated to Universities, either Italian or foreign, not involved in the offer and implantation of the Ph.D. course. Two supplementary examiners must be appointed in addition to the effective members, of which one full professor and the other associate professor, affiliated to different universities. No more than two experts, either Italian or foreign, can be added to the final examination committee. These experts can be chosen from partner public/private institutions financing additional thematic scholarships, when applicable. These two experts can express their assessment only with regard to the final examination of those candidates in the place with scholarship financed by the institution. The evaluators cannot be members of the final examination committee.
3. The rector initiates the procedures leading to the nomination of the final examination committee after the closing date of the submission of the application for the final examination by each doctoral student, urging coordinators to provide for the designation of the relative members. In case the academic boards do not comply with the prescribed terms, the coordinator can nominate the final examination committee, if applicable.
4. The final examination committee is chaired by the senior full professor or the senior associate professor, if applicable. The office of secretary is held by a researcher or a junior professor according to the case.
5. In case of international agreements the composition of the final examination committee is governed by the dispositions included in the apposite agreement.

Art.23
Evaluation procedure

1. Once the final examination committees are nominated, doctoral candidates will be informed so that they send copy of thesis, along with the assessment of the evaluators and a doctoral activity report, to each of the examiners.
2. Once the date of the final dissertation is fixed, the coordinators shall inform doctoral candidates at least fifteen days prior to the dissertation. The exams calendar will be notified in the institution of affiliation of the Ph.D. course.

3. Final examinations committees must complete their duties within ninety days from the transmission of the rector's decree of nomination. The resignation of one of the committee members, if any, must be properly motivated; they come into force at the moment of the rector's acceptance.
4. Expired the term as in the previous paragraph with the examiners not having completed their duties, the committee is dismissed and the rector nominates a new committee with the exclusion of the members from the dismissed committee.
5. In case one member of the final examination committee is not able to attend the dissertation for reasons outside his/her control, he/she can attend the final dissertation in the form of videoconference. This instance must be properly recorded in the report of the final examination committee.
6. The university assures the publicity of the final evaluation procedures, including the each doctoral candidate's assessment.

Section VII

Scholarships

Art. 24

Payment and renewal of the scholarship and internship contract

1. Scholarships have a duration of one year and can be renewed on condition that the doctoral student completes the activities scheduled in the previous year, verified according to the dispositions provided for in article 15, without prejudice to the obligation to pay the scholarship after the pass of the assessment of the academic board.
2. The amount of the scholarship, to be paid in monthly instalments, is determined in first application not less than the amount stated in the Ministerial decree of June 18 2008, published on the Official Journal of the Italian Republic n. 241 of October 2008. This amount is increased to maximum 50% for a period not exceeding 18 months, if the doctoral student is authorized to carry out research activities abroad.
3. The scholarship is subject to the payment of fiscal contributions to the National Institute of Social Security regime of separate management, art. 2, paragraph. 26 of the law n. 335 of August 8 1995 and following modification, to the extent of two thirds charged to the administration and one third to the scholarship beneficiary. Doctoral students benefit from the relative protection and rights.
4. From the second year each doctoral student, either in a place with scholarship or in a place without scholarship, is granted a budget – additional to the scholarship and within the available resources of the budget of the administration- for activity in Italy and abroad adequate to type of course and no less than 10% of the scholarship. This budget must be available to the doctoral student within 15 days from the admission to the second/third year.
5. If the doctoral student does not receive positive evaluation for the renewal of the scholarship or renounces to the scholarship, the amount not already paid remains at the disposition of the institution for the same purposes.
6. Scholarships cannot be cumulated with other scholarships except for those granted by national or foreign institutions and functional to integrate doctoral students' research and study activity abroad.
7. Under no circumstances can doctoral students in places with scholarship receive financial contributions from the budget of the University's administration.
8. Doctoral students who have already benefited from a scholarship, even for a year or a proportion of a year, cannot benefit from a scholarship twice.
9. The extension of internship contracts or other form of financial contributions in the years following the first is subject to the same provisions as those applied to the maintenance of the scholarship
10. The provisions included in this article do not apply to scholarship holders from foreign countries and beneficiaries of financial contributions within international mobility programs. The ruling of this type of funding is referred to in the apposite agreements.

Section VIII

Ph.D. Thesis co-direction

Art. 25

Definition

1. The thesis co-direction concerns a modality of development of a Ph.D. course involving the registration of the doctoral student with two universities of two different countries. A thesis co-direction path can be implemented with any foreign country provided a framework agreement has been signed by the two institutions or an intergovernmental agreement concerning the collaboration in the field of university education has been signed by the related governments. The thesis co-direction agreement is an executive covenant of the framework or intergovernmental agreement. The thesis co-direction agreement must include:
 - a. doctoral candidate's insurance policy;
 - b. amount of enrolment fees;
 - c. title of the research project;
 - d. names of supervisors from both institutions;
 - e. periods of research from both institutions;
 - f. modality of the final dissertation and institution where the final dissertation will take place.
2. The doctoral student in thesis co-direction must be enrolled in two Ph.D. courses: one at the home institution (university which selected and admitted the candidate to the place in the Ph.D. program) and one at the partner institution. Each institution assigns a research supervisor to the doctoral candidate.
3. The development of course activities and thesis preparation must be divided into alternate periods at both institutions, whose duration is provided for in the apposite thesis co-direction agreement. The doctoral students pay the registration fees at the home institution and must be exempt from the payment of these fees at the partner institution, with this latter being able to require the payment of additional costs whether required by the legislation in force in the pertinent country.
4. At the end of the Ph.D. program the doctoral student shall take one final dissertation exam, as a general rule at the home institution and against a joint committee whose composition is defined according to the legislation in force in both countries. On successful pass of the final dissertation exam the doctoral student is awarded the Ph.D. degree from the home institution and, if permitted by the legal provisions of the partner country, the Ph.D. degree from the hosing institution (double or joint degree).
5. The University of Catania will confer the Ph.D. degree upon doctoral students from foreign universities, registered at the University of Catania as candidates in thesis co-direction, on condition that they carry out at least twelve months of research activity, not necessarily consecutive, at the University of Catania.

Art.26

Procedure of implementation

1. Doctoral students from the University of Catania can submit their request of thesis co-direction within their first year and by no later than the end of their second year at the latest. The request must be submitted to the Coordinator of the Ph.D. course and in cc to the Ph.D. Students Office and must be approved by the Academic board within the candidate's second year of course. The Academic Board must determine the availability of the financial resources necessary to the implementation of the thesis co-direction.
2. Doctoral students from foreign Ph.D. courses can submit request of thesis co-direction within their first year and by no later than their second year at the home institution at the latest. The request must be submitted to the coordinator of the Ph.D. course at the University of Catania in which the candidate desires to enroll and in cc to the Ph.D. Students Office.

The Ph.D. Academic Board in which the candidate desires to enrol must assess the correspondence of the research project of the candidate to the research themes of the Ph.D. course and approve the thesis co-direction.

Provided the approval of the Academic board, the doctoral student will be registered as supra-numeral student in thesis co-direction without financial expenses for the University of Catania.

Section IX
Additional certifications
Art. 27
Doctor Europaeus

1. Upon request of the interested person, the University of Catania can award the “Doctor Europaeus” certification provided the following parameters of the European University Association have been met and the interested candidate has submitted formal request to the academic board of the Ph.D. course in which he/she is enrolled:
 - a. The Ph.D. thesis must be accompanied by the positive judgement from at least two academics from two universities of two different European countries, other than the country where the Ph.D. thesis will be defended and the Ph.D. degree will be awarded;
 - b. At least one member of the final examination committee must be from an university of a European country other than the one where the Ph.D. thesis will be defended and the Ph.D. degree is awarded;
 - c. Part of the thesis dissertation must take place in one of the official languages of the European Union, other than the language of the country where the thesis will be defended.
 - d. The thesis must be partly prepared after a period of at least one trimester in another European country.

Art. 28
International Doctor

1. Upon request of the interested person, the University of Catania can award the “International Doctor” provided the following parameters of the University’s Board of Trustees have been met and the interested candidate has submitted formal request to the academic board of the Ph.D. course in which he/she is enrolled:
 - a. The thesis must be partly prepared after a period of at least one trimester in an extra-European country;
 - b. The Ph.D. thesis must be accompanied by the positive judgement form at least two academics from two universities of two different countries, other than the country where the Ph.D. thesis will be defended and the Ph.D. degree will be awarded (preferably extra-European countries);
 - c. At least one member of the final examination committee must be from an university of a country other than the one where the Ph.D. thesis will be defended and the Ph.D. degree is awarded (preferably an extra-European country);
 - d. The thesis dissertation must take place in a foreign language other than the language of the country where the thesis will be defended.

Section IX
Final and transitory provisions
Art. 29

1. The provisions included in this regulations apply to the cycles of doctoral courses offered and implemented as from the academic year 2020/2021.
2. The provisions included in this regulations also apply to the doctoral courses of cycles XXXII, XXXIII, XXXIV and XXXV except for articles 7, 9 and 10 with regard to which the version in the Regulations for doctoral courses issued with Rector’s decree n. 2788 of July 3 2013 remain in force.
3. For any aspect not expressly ruled in this Regulations, the University of Catania refers to the legislation in force.