



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

## Teaching Regulation of Philosophiae Doctor Courses

### **Art. 1 (Purpose)**

1. The 'Philosophiae Doctor' Courses (hereinafter referred to as 'PhD Courses' or simply as 'Courses') provide the skills necessary to carry out highly qualified research activities at Universities and public or private entities.

### **Art. 2 (Scope of application)**

1. This Regulation governs the activation and the functioning of the PhD Courses of SISSA in Trieste in compliance with the provisions referred to in art. 4 of the Law 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1998, no. 210, and of Ministerial Decree dated 30.04.1999, no. 224 'Regulation on the research doctorate'.
2. The Courses are taught within a Sector or in collaboration between various Sectors. Different Courses can be established within a single Sector.
3. The Courses can be activated also in consortium with other Universities or under the covenants with private or public entities of high cultural and scientific qualification and in possession of suitable facilities, equipment and personnel.
4. Each Course is regulated by specific Teaching Regulations which are based on this Regulation.

### **Art. 3 (Bodies of the Philosophiae Doctor Courses)**

1. Each Course has the Teaching Board and the Coordinator as its bodies.
2. The Teaching Board is comprised of professors and researchers who carry out teaching activities within the PhD Courses. The Coordinator is a full or associate professor member of the Teaching Board and called to direct the Course due to his/her capability and experience.
3. The Teaching Board is in charge of planning teaching activities of the Course and the corresponding activities aimed at introducing PhD students to research. The Teaching Board has the following powers and duties:
  - a) To determine the cycles of lessons to be held for the Course, the professors who shall hold them and their contents;
  - b) To approve the curricula of the students, which may also include cycles of lessons of other Courses;

- c) To approve the choice of the Supervisors by the students and their research projects for their PhD dissertations;
  - d) To express their opinion on the admission of students to the next year;
  - e) To express their opinion and proposals regarding the students, where provided by the regulations in force.
4. The Coordinator is responsible for the management, organisation and coordination of the teaching activities and activities aimed at introducing the students to research carried out during the Course. The Coordinator has the following duties and powers:
- a) convene and chair the Teaching Board's meetings and establish their agenda;
  - b) coordinate the scientific and educational activities of the Course;
  - c) manage the funds allocated to the Course, if any;
  - d) adopt the emergency measures pertaining to the Teaching Board, immediately submitting them for ratification at the next meeting of the Board.
5. The composition of the Teaching Board is proposed by the Sector Council where the Course is established, and is approved by the Senate before the start of each academic year. Professors and researchers from different Sectors who manage the Course can also be members of the Teaching Board. Proven experts external to the School, who have a high scientific profile, belong to other Universities or Research Institutes can also be part of the Teaching Board, as long as their number is no higher than 40% of the number of Board members who belong to SISSA. Each professor or researcher can belong to the Teaching Board of no more than two Courses.
6. The Teaching Board has the power to admit one or more students to participate in its meetings. The Student representatives in the Boards of the Sectors which manage the Course can apply to participate in a meeting of the Teaching Board where a topic proposed by them will be discussed.
7. The Coordinator is appointed by the Senate, upon proposal by the Teaching Board, and is chosen among the internal members of the School. The Coordinator's term of office is two years and can be consecutively renewed only once. Further appointments are possible only after a break of at least one term.
8. The Coordinator can designate a Vice Coordinator chosen among the full and associate professors of the Teaching Board; the Vice Coordinator shall replace the Coordinator in all functions in the event of absence or impediment of the latter.

**Art. 4**  
**(Requirements of eligibility and establishment of the Courses)**

1. The Courses are established by Directorial Decree, upon proposal by the Sector Council, after obtaining the opinion of the Evaluation Committee of the School on the existence of eligibility requirements and after the resolution of the

School's Senate and Board of Directors, which shall check the consistency of the Course with the educational plan, as well as the availability of the human and financial resources required for activation.

2. The Senate can resolve the closing of a Course upon proposal by the Director or the Sector Councils which manage the Course concerned. Course closure is implemented by Directorial Decree.
3. On an annual basis, the Evaluation Committee of the School checks the continuity of the requirements for each Course established; the Evaluation Committee shall immediately communicate a negative evaluation of a Course (if any) to the Director.
4. Following the publication of the Evaluation Committee report, the Director shall convene the Coordinators of the Courses to view the report and identify any possible strategies to improve the quality of the Courses.
5. Possible recommendations from external committees are transmitted to the Evaluation Committee, which shall take them into account in the performance of its activities.
6. Eligibility requirements are:
  - a) the Teaching Board must be comprised of at least three professors and researchers from the School who belong to the scientific disciplines of reference of the Course, counting the members who belong to the Teaching Board of two Courses as 0.5;
  - b) the availability of adequate financial resources and of specific operative and scientific facilities for the Course and the study and research activities to be performed by the students (laboratories, libraries, IT facilities);
  - c) the identification of a Coordinator in charge of the organisation of the Course, and of a Teaching Board which is proportionate in the number of its members to the students and whose scientific production in the scientific disciplines of the Course of the last five years has been documented;
  - d) the possibility of collaboration with public or private entities, both Italian or foreign, which allows the doctoral students to carry out experiences in a work context;
  - e) the identification of training Courses orientated to the exercise of highly qualified research activities at Universities and public or private entities;
  - f) the activation of evaluation systems relative to the continuity of the aforementioned requirements, the consistency of the Course with the educational objectives also in relation to job opportunities and the level of education of the students.

#### **Art. 5 (Admission requirements)**

1. Students, regardless of age and nationality, who are in possession of a *laurea specialistica/laurea magistralis* degree (or a *laurea* degree of the type existing

prior to the reform implemented by Ministerial Decree 03.11.1999, no. 509) obtained at an Italian University or equivalent academic qualification obtained abroad and recognised as suitable by the School's Senate, may be admitted to the Courses, subject to their passing an admission exam. Regarding the acquisition of the aforementioned qualifications, the Senate may establish a deadline which is a few months later than the start of the Courses.

#### **Art. 6 (Admission exam)**

1. The admission exam is aimed at assessing the candidates' attitude to scientific research, as well as their knowledge of the English language, and consists of an assessment of qualifications, a written and oral exam. For the purpose of the assessment, the Board of Examiners can award a total of 100 marks, of which 10 are for qualifications, 40 for the written exam and 50 for the oral exam. To be admitted to the oral exam, the candidates must pass the written exam with a score no lower than 28. Eligibility is obtained with an overall score (including qualifications, written and oral exams) no lower than 70. Upon a duly motivated request from the Teaching Board of a Course, the Senate may authorise the admission exam to be administered using different methods. At the end of each assessment, the Commission shall publish the results before the end of the same day. The minutes of the selection procedure shall be transmitted to the Sector Councils concerned and from them to the School Senate for the list of eligible candidates to be approved. The proceedings of the selection procedure are public and can be accessed pursuant to the legislation in force.
2. The Boards of Examiners for the admission of students to the PhD Courses are appointed by the Sector Council of the Sectors which manage the Course and are comprised of at least three professors or researchers, of whom at least one should be external to the School.
3. A contribution for travelling expenses may be paid to those candidates admitted to the oral exam and to those candidates who in the written exam submitted a paper which could be assessed; the amount of the contribution will be determined in the call for applications.
4. Exceptionally qualified candidates coming from Countries which are not Member States of the European Union can be admitted on the basis of their qualifications only. Within specific covenants, different admission procedure may be authorised. The students admitted on the basis of the procedures provided for by this paragraph shall in any event undergo a qualification exam at the end of the first year.

#### **Art. 7 (Enrolment)**

1. The students are university students enrolled in a third level degree Course. The students are obliged to attend the courses and pass all the exams provided for by the regulation of their Course. Each student may be enrolled in only one Course, and after enrolment they cannot be enrolled contemporarily in another doctorate or other university degree course in Italy or abroad, except in case of specific agreements for the joint tutorship of a doctoral thesis or for the attainment of a double PhD degree. With prior authorisation from the Teaching Board, the doctoral student may enrol in a Master's Course or Specialist

Course.

2. The students belong to the Sector which organises the Course. In the case of inter-sector Courses, the students belong to the Sector of their dissertation Supervisor or co-Supervisor, should the Supervisor be external to the School. Before the Supervisor is chosen, the students belong to the Sector of which the Coordinator of the Course is a member. The resolutions concerning the student shall be made by the Sector to which he/she belongs.

### **Art. 8 (Teaching and Research Activities)**

1. The Courses are comprised of a first period of mandatory teaching activity and a second period dedicated to research. The activities are carried out in English.
2. The teaching activities, both optional and mandatory ones, are regulated by the regulations of each individual Course, and in the first academic year are aimed at the acquisition of basic and specialist knowledge for the performance of research activities. During the period of mandatory teaching activity, the student is not required to carry out research activity.
3. The achievement exams at the end of the Courses are held in front of a Board of Examiners comprised of at least two members, among whom shall be the professor in charge of the course. The result is reported in the exam record signed by the candidate and by at least one member of the Board of examiners.
4. Before the end of the first year, each student shall agree on a line of research for his/her PhD dissertation with one of the available Supervisors. The Supervisor can be assisted by a co-Supervisor. The choice of the Supervisor and the line of research shall be submitted to the Teaching Board for approval. Changing Supervisor is permitted upon a motivated request of the student and shall be authorised by the Teaching Board.
5. The Supervisor shall be a professor or researcher of the School or other entity. Should the Supervisor be from another entity, he/she shall be assisted by a co-Supervisor (guarantor) of the School and shall obtain the prior approval of the Teaching Board and the Sector Council that manage the Course.
6. In the event that the Supervisor is temporarily absent (sabbatical year, sick leave) for a long period or has ceased to work as a professor at the School, the Teaching Board shall intervene so as to ensure the continuity of the student's research project.
7. Ph.D dissertation projects in joint tutorship with other universities may be activated with the consent of the Sector Council which manages the Course and the approval of the Senate and the Board of Directors for the related financial aspects.

### **Art. 9 (Research trips)**

1. The students' research trips, even if they do not involve expenses to be covered by the School, need to be previously authorised by the Coordinator of the Course.

**Art. 10**  
**(Admission to the second and subsequent years)**

1. The regulation of each Course establishes the methods for admission to the second and subsequent years.
2. At the end of the first year, the assessment takes into account both the results of the exams taken at the end of the Courses and the assessment of any research activity. Eligibility for admission to the subsequent years is based mainly on the assessment of research activities.
3. The research results are presented and discussed in front of a Board of Examiners comprised of at least three members of the Teaching Board. The date of the discussion is fixed and notified to the student well in advance. Each student shall be promptly informed of the results of the assessment of their research activities. The Sector Council, upon request of the Teaching Board of the Course, shall resolve on the admission of the students to the successive academic year in the first meeting after the acquisition of the elements for assessment and in any case in time to allow the Senate and the Board of Directors to proceed with the consequent resolutions.

**Art. 11**  
**(Transfer to another Course)**

1. The transfer of a student from a Ph.D Course to another is allowed following the favourable opinion of the Teaching Board of the receiving Course, which establishes case by case the course and research obligations of the student within the new Ph.D Course, informing the student about this beforehand.

**Art. 12**  
**(Duration)**

1. Each Course has an overall duration of three academic years.
2. Upon the proposal of the Sector Council to which the student belongs, and following the resolution of the School's Senate and the Board of Directors, a fourth year of enrolment may be granted to the students.
3. In the event of enrolment to a fourth year, as provided for in paragraph 2 of this section, the Teaching Board shall check whether the student is able to complete the doctoral programme before the end of the fourth year. This check shall be performed approximately within the month of June of the fourth year. Possible exceptions shall be adequately justified and promptly communicated to the Director.

**Art. 13**  
**(Final Exam)**

1. The title of Philosophiae Doctor will be conferred to the candidate who has obtained results of relevant scientific value, documented by a final written dissertation, the original character of which should give rise to one or more

articles to be submitted for publication in highly qualified journals. Such results are ascertained by a Board of Examiners formed by a minimum of five members of whom at least two are permanent professors at the School and two are external to the School, appointed by the Sector Council upon proposal by the Teaching Board. The candidate must receive the approval of the Board of Examiners, defending his/her results in a public discussion.

2. The final version of the dissertation, written in English, shall be sent to the Students' Secretariat at least one month before the date of the final exam, to allow it to be sent to the Examiners.
3. The final exam shall normally be held within the three months prior to the end of the Course or within the following three months. The exam may be postponed further upon a duly motivated resolution of the Senate. If approval is not given, the final exam may be repeated only once.
4. The title of Philosophiae Doctor conferred by the School is equivalent to a research doctorate as referred to in Presidential Decree. 11/07/1980 n. 382.

**Art. 14**  
**(Other diplomas)**

1. At the end of at least one year of the Course, the School can issue the diploma of 'Magister Philosophiae' and other diplomas or certificates.
2. Such diplomas or certificates are regulated by the Teaching Regulations of the various Courses.

**Art. 15**  
**(Direct admission to the second and subsequent years)**

1. The School's Senate, upon proposal by the Sector Council, can recognise the admission exams, the study and research activities that candidates have carried out at other institutions by admitting them directly to the second year of the PhD Course, and may allow them to undergo the final exam for achieving the title of Philosophiae Doctor prior to the deadline referred to in paragraph 3 of article 13.

**Art. 16**  
**(Non-attendance)**

1. Justified absences authorised by the thesis Supervisor and by the Course Coordinator shall be communicated to the Sector Secretariats in the event they exceed 15 days.
2. Justified absences exceeding one month shall be authorised by the Sector Council to which the student belongs, which shall decide on possible suspension of the student's scholarship.

**Art. 17**  
**(Scholarships)**

1. All PhD students benefit from a scholarship, from internal or external funds.

2. The Sector Council to which the student belongs may resolve to increase the amount of the scholarship by 50% for periods of stay abroad longer than one month.
3. Attendance at the Course and the disbursement of the scholarship may be suspended for a maximum of 12 months for the following reasons:
  - a) Obligatory civil service/military service;
  - b) Maternity or paternity;
  - c) Illness;
  - d) Serious personal reasons.

The request for suspension, duly documented, shall be submitted to the Sector Council for relative resolution. In the event of maternity, paternity or serious illness, the students may request the disbursement of a contribution equal to 70% of the scholarship, for a maximum of 5 months.

#### **Art. 18 (Transparency)**

1. The Teaching Board of each Course shall publish on the School web site, both in Italian and English, the following information, keeping them updated:
  - a) Procedures for PhD admission exams;
  - b) Academic obligations, divided per year: number of Courses, title and programme, hours of classroom teaching, course hours in laboratory, short dissertations, admission exam to the second and subsequent years;
  - c) Structure of the lines of research available for the doctoral dissertations;
  - d) Method of choosing the Supervisor and, if required, the dissertation subject, even if not codified, at least as established by the usual procedures;
  - e) Publications derived from the work for preparing the PhD dissertation, at least in the last three years;
  - f) Current position of the ex-students.
2. The Students' Secretariat shall publish each year in the restricted access area of the School's web site the following information on each Course:
  - a) For the admission exams of the last three years: number of candidates enrolled, number of candidates who submitted their application, number of places allocated, number of withdrawals by admitted students.
  - b) Average number of months between admission and attainment of the PhD degree in the last three years.