

**REGULATIONS FOR DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES AND  
DOCTORAL SCHOOLS AT UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL  
SACRO CUORE**

***ART. 1***  
***(Subject)***

1. The present Regulations govern - pursuant to and in accordance with the procedures established by current legislation and in compliance with the Statute, the University's Teaching Regulations and the University's Code of Ethics - the activation, at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (hereinafter referred to as Università Cattolica), of programmes for the award of a research doctorate (hereinafter referred to as doctoral programmes).
2. Università Cattolica shall organize its doctoral programmes within a system of Doctoral Schools (hereinafter referred to as Schools), which refer to the subject areas in which the University has consolidated a strong scientific, cultural and identity-related presence. The Schools are established by Rector's Decree, subject to the approval, given their competence, of the Academic Senate and the Governing Bodies of Università Cattolica, and include the doctoral programmes.
3. Doctoral programmes may comprise more than one subject or *curriculum*.
4. In accordance with the regulations in force, doctoral programmes may also be offered in associated form by entering into agreements or setting up consortia, which may be the administrative headquarters of the programmes, with one or more of the following entities:
  - a) other Italian or foreign Universities, with the possibility of awarding a multiple or joint final degree;
  - b) public or private, Italian or foreign, research bodies with high cultural and scientific qualifications and suitable scientific structures and equipment;
  - c) institutions referred to in Article 2(1) of Law No 508 of 21 December 1999, with the possibility of awarding a multiple or joint final degree;
  - d) companies, including foreign companies, carrying out qualified research and development;
  - e) public administrations, cultural institutions and research infrastructures of European or international importance, for the implementation of specific research and development or innovation programmes.Industrial doctorates, doctorates of national interest as well as doctorates in advanced training apprenticeships may also be launched, in accordance with the regulations in force.
5. The operation of the doctoral programmes referred to in the preceding paragraph may be governed, also by way of derogation from the provisions of these Regulations, by specific agreements and conventions approved by the academic and governing bodies of Università Cattolica.
6. Doctoral programmes are activated subject to accreditation of the same programmes and their locations by the Minister for Universities and Research.



7. Doctoral programmes are activated by decree of the Rector and have a duration of at least three years, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 8 of these Regulations.
8. Within the framework of the annual programme, the Administrative Council determines the overall resources to be allocated to the activation of the doctoral programmes, including the doctoral programmes referred to in paragraph 4 of this article. The allocation of resources to the Schools shall be proposed to the Governing Bodies for approval by the Academic Senate, which shall also make use of the evaluations expressed in accordance with the provisions of art. 12, par. 3. The Schools will distribute the resources according to the modalities outlined in art. 11, par. 4.

**ART. 2**  
**(Proposal for activation or accession)**

1. The activation of doctoral programmes, including the doctoral programmes referred to in paragraph 4 of art. 1 of these regulations, is proposed to the Faculty or Faculties concerned - taking into account the disciplinary area or areas of reference of the doctoral programme - by the Departments, Institutes, Graduate Schools and Doctoral Schools. The proposal, subject to the favourable opinion of the Faculty or Faculties concerned, is approved - if all the elements required by the regulations in force for accreditation purposes are present - by the Academic Senate and the Governing Bodies, according to their respective competences, which verify to this end the consistency of the programmes with the educational programme and the availability of the human and financial resources required.
2. The Academic Senate and the Governing Bodies of the University may request the University Evaluation Board to verify and evaluate proposals for activation or membership, also with reference to the results of the research activities carried out and to the career paths following doctoral training.

**ART. 3**  
**(Internationalisation)**

- 1 Università Cattolica promotes the activation of doctoral programmes with foreign universities and research bodies of high qualification and recognised international level, in compliance with the principle of reciprocity, also within the framework of programmes of the European Union and other international bodies. Università Cattolica also encourages other forms of internationalisation of doctoral programmes such as:
  - the implementation of training courses and seminars in foreign languages;
  - the participation of foreign lecturers in the Board of Teachers of doctoral programmes;
  - periods of study and research abroad by doctoral students at Università Cattolica;
  - periods of study and research at Università Cattolica by lecturers and doctoral students from foreign universities (visiting professors, visiting doctoral candidates);
  - the conclusion of doctoral thesis co-supervision agreements with foreign universities, in accordance with the guidelines approved by the Academic Senate;
  - the award of double or joint degrees with other universities;
  - the award of the *Doctor Europaeus* label.



**ART. 4**  
***(Teaching and tutoring activities)***

- 1 Teaching and tutoring activities may be entrusted to professors of the first rank, second rank and university researchers of Università Cattolica or of other universities, including foreign ones, and to highly qualified scientific or professional figures. For university professors and researchers at Università Cattolica, these activities, in accordance with the provisions of the "Regulations for the conferral of teaching" approved by the Academic and Governing Bodies of the University, are among the institutional duties to be recorded in the register of lectures.
- 2 Exceptionally, courses or modules activated in graduate degree programmes, postgraduate degree programmes or master programmes may be transferred for teaching activities in doctoral programmes, in accordance with the above-mentioned "Regulations for the conferral of teaching". The decision concerning the transfer, with adequate justification, is adopted by the Board of Teachers in agreement with the teacher in charge of the course to be transferred, after consulting the Dean of the Faculty concerned.
- 3 As a rule, curricular and extracurricular courses are also provided in foreign languages.

**ART. 5**  
***(Access arrangements)***

- 1 Admission to the doctorate programmes is open, with no age or nationality restrictions, to those who hold a graduate degree, or a degree obtained in accordance with the teaching regulations prior to the entry into force of Ministerial Decree no. 3 of November 1999, and no. 509 with subsequent amendments and additions, or an appropriate qualification obtained abroad. Those who will obtain the qualification required by the call for applications by the date of enrolment in the doctoral programme may also apply, on pain of forfeiting their right to admission to the
- 2 The competition notice, issued by the Rector in compliance with the regulations in force, governs the admission procedures, ensuring an appropriate assessment of the candidates, as well as the publicity of the acts.
- 3 The notice of competition must also
  - a the total number of places available;
  - b the number and amount of scholarships;
  - ) the number and qualifications of candidates who have been successful in the general merit list and who may be admitted in excess of the number of places available;
  - d contributions payable by doctoral candidates;
  - ) the deadlines for submitting applications.
- 4 The Rector, on the proposal of the Board of Teachers, appoints by decree the Admission committee for the doctoral programme, consisting of three full professors, to which



no more than two experts, including foreign ones, may be added, chosen from public and private research bodies and structures, guaranteeing, where possible, a balanced representation of women and men. In particular cases, adequately justified, related to the structuring of the doctorate into profiles, more than one Admission Committee may be set up, or an Admission Committee composed of a maximum of five full professors. Only full professors who meet the requirements of the periodic Research Quality Assessment (VQR) may be selected to be proposed as members of the Admission Committee, except in the case of non-compliance, proven justifications deriving from institutional positions held, positions in national and international bodies and institutes of high qualification, serious impediments or illness.

Subject to the approval of the Academic Senate, full professors may be appointed as members of the Admission Committee if, although they have not complied with the requirements set out in the previous sentence, they have registered in the institutional repository of their university, after the VQR reference period, at least three publications of the following types: monographs, articles in scientific journals, chapters in books.

5 Doctoral students who have spent at least one year on a doctoral programme at another university, in Italy or abroad, may apply to transfer to a doctoral programme at Università Cattolica under the following conditions:

- that there is a doctorate programme at Università Cattolica with objectives similar to the one attended;
- that the doctoral student documents the activities carried out at the university of origin and that these activities are recognised by the Board of Teachers as equivalent, for the purposes of preparation, to those required for the doctoral programme at Università Cattolica;
- that the doctoral candidate successfully passes an assessment carried out by the Board of Teachers.

If the transfer takes place, the Board of Teachers will identify the supervisor and one or more co-supervisors referred to in Article 10, paragraph 6, and shall define the year of admission to the new doctoral programme. For each doctoral programme, the number of students admitted by transfer may not exceed 20% (rounded up to the nearest whole number) of the number of places scheduled for each cycle. The transfer does not in any case provide for the award of scholarships by Università Cattolica. The doctoral student shall pay the University the registration fees.

**ART. 6**  
***(Rights and duties of doctoral candidates)***

1. The doctoral programme requires an exclusive, full-time commitment. The Board of Teachers may authorise doctoral students to carry out paid activities that enable them to acquire skills related to the doctoral programme, subject to an assessment of the compatibility of such activities with the effective performance of the training, teaching and research activities of the doctoral programme.
2. Doctoral students are required to read the Code of Ethics of Università Cattolica and to



respect its principles and aims.

3. The competent structures may entrust doctoral students, with their consent, with supplementary teaching activities for no more than 40 hours per year. These activities may be carried out with the prior authorisation of the Board of Teachers:
  - a) in undergraduate and graduate programmes at no cost to the University;
  - b) in the context of:
    - Master programmes;
    - Specialisation courses and programmes;
    - Postgraduate diploma programmes, with the exclusion of specialty training programmes,and may be remunerated.

With the prior authorisation of the Board of Teachers, doctoral students may also be entrusted with tutoring activities as part of undergraduate and graduate degree programmes. These activities may be remunerated.
4. At the end of each doctoral year, the activities of doctoral candidates are assessed by the Board of Teachers on the basis of a written report by the candidate. Following a positive assessment by the Board of Teachers, the doctoral student is admitted to the following year.
5. Doctoral students may request, for justified reasons laid down by law, suspension from attending the programme for a maximum of six months. Suspension for the same duration may also be ordered, subject to a reasoned decision by the Board of Teachers, in the event of relevant and proven reasons. This is without prejudice to the parental protection provisions laid down by current legislation. For the duration of the suspension, no scholarship or other equivalent funding will be paid. Suspension is ordered by decree of the Rector.
6. The Board of Teachers may propose to the Rector, by means of a reasoned resolution, that a doctoral student be suspended from the doctoral programme, or that he/she be excluded from it, with the consequent partial or total loss of any scholarship he/she may be receiving, in the following cases
  - negative judgement of the Board of Teachers on the doctoral student's activities;
  - unjustified and prolonged absences;
  - behaviour in conflict with the rules on incompatibility.
7. In the event of suspension, the reinstated doctoral student is required to make up for the entire period of suspension.

#### *ART. 7*

#### *(Contributions and scholarships)*

- 1 Doctoral students are required to pay contributions, the amount of which is determined annually by the Board of Directors.
- 2 The amount and conditions for the award of scholarships to doctoral candidates, as



the amount foreseen by law for research activities in Italy and abroad, are decided annually by the Board of Directors, after consultation with the Academic Senate, according to the following criteria:

- a) the amount of the grants and contributions may not be less than that determined in accordance with the law;
  - b) scholarships are awarded in the order of merit established by the Admission Committee.
- 3 The use of a scholarship for attendance on a doctoral programme is compatible with other income, including income received continuously during the calendar year in which the scholarship is granted, as long as it does not exceed the amount established for the scholarship itself. If the gross income limit is exceeded, the scholarship is considered revoked for the entire year in question. In order to verify the limit set, the person concerned is required to declare the income received each year and to report any exceeding of the prescribed limit.
  - 4 The scholarship may not be combined with any other scholarship for any reason whatsoever, except with contributions provided for by current regulations for research activities in Italy and abroad.
  - 5 The costs for the funding of scholarships are covered by Università Cattolica from its own budget. In accordance with the procedures resolved each year by the Academic and Governing Bodies, as far as they are concerned, it is also possible to finance doctoral scholarships: with funds specifically assigned to scientific research; with funds deriving from research financed on behalf of third parties; by means of agreements with subjects outside the university administration, to be entered prior to the issue of the call for applications, also in application of the laws in force.

#### ***ART. 8***

##### ***(Joint attendance with a specialty training programme)***

- 1 Pursuant to the provisions of Article 7 of Ministerial Decree no. 226 of 14 December 2021, joint attendance of a doctoral programme run by Università Cattolica is allowed for doctors attending specialty training enrolled in a specialty training programme. The doctoral programme shall in any case last no less than two years.
- 2 Doctors attending specialty training who are successful in the competition for admission to a doctorate programme at Università Cattolica may apply for joint attendance by submitting an application for a reduction in doctoral activities to the Doctoral Programmes Office, together with the following documentation:
  - a) clearance for joint attendance issued by the board of the specialty training programme certifying the compatibility of the doctoral project with the programme's teaching objectives;
  - b) list of publications and certification of research activities carried out during the specialty training programme, certified by the Board of the programme



concerned.

- 3 The Doctoral Programmes Office shall forward the application to the Board of Teachers of the doctoral programme, which may accept the application for a reduction in doctoral activities after positively assessing the consistency of the research activities already carried out during the medical specialisation path with the doctoral project.
- 4 If the application is accepted, the Board of Teachers forwards a positive opinion to the to the Doctoral Programmes Office, which proceeds with registration, by giving communication to the administrative office responsible for postgraduate diploma programmes for further compliance.
- 5 The participation of doctoral students in the medical area, whether with or without a scholarship, graduates in Medicine and Surgery or Dentistry and Dental Prosthetics, in clinical-assistance activities is permitted subject to authorisation by the Board of Teachers, in accordance with the procedures established by the Board itself. Participation in clinical-assistance activities is regulated, depending on the category, as follows:
  - a) Doctoral students who have a degree in Medicine and Surgery or Dentistry and Dental Prosthetics and the relevant qualification to practice medicine or dentistry:
    - cannot act independently;
    - may only participate in clinical care activities under the guidance and supervision of a *tutor*;
    - may not work on-call and/or on-call shifts;
  - b) doctoral students with a postgraduate diploma may participate in clinical-assistance activities within the limits set by the training project, in line with the qualification(s) held.

**ART. 9**  
**(Methods of obtaining the title)**

- 1 By 30 September of the last year of the doctoral programme, doctoral students shall submit an application to the Doctoral Programmes Office for participation in the final examination, addressed to the Rector. By the same date, doctoral candidates must submit the final text of their doctoral thesis to the Board of Teachers, accompanied by a summary in Italian or English, or in another language subject to authorisation from the Board of Teachers, a report on the activities carried out during the doctoral programme and any publications.
- 2 By 31 October, the Board of Teachers will send the thesis in hard copy or electronically, for evaluation, to at least two highly qualified lecturers, at least one of whom must be a university lecturer, hereinafter referred to as evaluators, who do not belong to the University awarding the doctoral degree. By 30 November, the assessors must express a written analytical judgement on the thesis and propose its admission for public discussion or its postponement for a period not exceeding six months if they consider significant additions or corrections necessary. After this period, the thesis shall in any case be admitted for public discussion, accompanied by a new written opinion from the same assessors, who must give their opinion within 15 days, made in the light of the corrections or integrations made.



- 3 The Board of Teachers, having examined the assessors' opinions, proposes the composition of the Examination Committee or Committees. Each Committee is composed of three members - respecting, where possible, a balanced representation of women and men - specifically qualified in the disciplines pertaining to the scientific areas to which the doctoral thesis refers. Two members shall be chosen from outside the administrative headquarters of the programme. In the case provided for in Article 1, paragraph 4, first sentence, no more than one member may be chosen from among the subjects participating in the doctorate. In any case, the Commission shall be composed of at least two members of academic origin. The Examination Committee is appointed by the Rector.
- 4 The Examination Committee may be supplemented by no more than two experts belonging to public or private, Italian or foreign research structures, even different for each doctoral thesis, with specific expertise on the research topics for each thesis.
- 5 The Examination Committee concludes its work within 90 days of the date of the rectoral decree of appointment.
- 6 If the Examination Committee is unable to complete its work, or if the Committee has not completed its work by the deadline referred to in the preceding paragraph, the Rector shall issue a reasoned decision appointing a new Committee in accordance with the procedures referred to in the third paragraph of this article.
- 7 For proven reasons that do not allow the presentation of the doctoral thesis within the timeframe envisaged by the duration of the programme, the Board of Teachers may, at the request of the doctoral student, grant an extension of a maximum of twelve months, without further financial expense.
- 8 An extension of the duration of the doctoral programme for a period not exceeding twelve months may also be proposed by the Board of Teachers for justified and proven scientific needs, not foreseeable at the start of the research, ensuring in this case the corresponding extension of the duration of the scholarship. The granting of the extension must be approved by the Academic and Governing Bodies of the University.
- 9 The periods of extension and suspension referred to in the preceding paragraphs 7 and 8 in this Article and paragraph 5 of Article 6 may not exceed a total of eighteen months, except in specific cases provided for by law.
10. The title of PhD is awarded following the successful evaluation of a research thesis that contributes to the advancement of knowledge or methodology in the chosen field of investigation. The discussion of the thesis takes place in the presence of the Examination Committee. In special cases, the Committee may decide that the discussion may also be conducted electronically. At the end of the discussion, the thesis is approved or rejected by a reasoned written collegial judgement. The Committee, by unanimous vote, may award honours in the event of particularly outstanding scientific results.





11. The title of PhD is deemed to have been obtained on passing the final examination.
12. The records of the evaluation procedures are public.

**ART. 10**  
***(Bodies of the doctoral programme)***

- 1 The bodies of the doctoral programme are:
  - the Board of Teachers;
  - the Coordinator.
- 2 For the purposes of identifying the members of the Board of Teachers, composed in accordance with the regulations in force, the Departments, Institutes, Graduate Schools and Doctoral Schools that have proposed the doctoral programme determine the deadline for the submission of applications by interested parties.
- 3 Applications are assessed by the Faculty or Faculties concerned according to parameters and criteria, relating both to the quality and quantity of the research, predetermined by the Faculties themselves in accordance with the regulations in force.
- 4 For the purposes of evaluating the applications received, as referred to in the preceding paragraph of this article, the Faculty or Faculties concerned may, if they deem it appropriate to carry out a preliminary examination, set up a Commission with the task of preparing a report to be submitted to the Faculties concerned.
- 5 In the event of failure to reach agreement between the Faculties concerned as regards the fulfilment of the obligations referred to in the preceding paragraphs, the Academic Senate shall act.
- 6 The Board of Teachers remains in office for the duration of the doctoral cycle and is responsible for
  - a proposing the Coordinator to the Faculty or Faculties concerned;
  - b proposing the names of the members of the Admission and Final Examination Committees;
  - c determining the procedures for admission to the doctoral programme; assigning each doctoral student at the beginning of the programme a supervisor and one or more co-supervisors as well as identifying other suitable forms of mentoring for one or more doctoral students;
  - d making proposals to the Rector for the conferral of teaching activities;
  - e evaluating the activities of doctoral candidates by means of appropriate forms of monitoring;
  - f identifying the evaluators referred to in the second paragraph of art. 9;
  - g propose to the Rector, in the cases referred to in Article 6, par. 5 and 6, the suspension or exclusion of the candidate from the doctoral programme;
  - h identify a member as a member of the School's Management Committee if the doctoral programme belongs to a School with several programmes. The member identified shall hold office for the duration of the doctoral cycle.



- 7 A doctoral student representative, elected by all the doctoral students enrolled in the programme, shall attend the meetings of the Board of Teachers to discuss teaching and organisational issues, in accordance with the procedures established by the Board of Teachers. The doctoral student representative shall remain in office for the entire duration of the doctoral cycle. The expired representative shall be replaced for the remainder of the term by the first of the non-elected candidates.
- 8 The Coordinator of the doctorate - in possession of a high level of scientific qualification, attested on the basis of the requirements provided by the regulations in force for access to the position of first rank professor - is proposed to the Faculty or Faculties concerned by the Board of Teachers. The Coordinator is indicated by the Faculty or Faculties concerned and approved by the Academic Senate, with simultaneous integration of the Board of Teachers if the person proposed is not already a member of the Board. The Coordinator chairs the Board of Teachers and is responsible for the overall organisation and functioning of the doctoral programme.
- 9 The Coordinator shall remain in office for the entire duration of the doctoral cycle. In the event of resignation or termination of the office of the Coordinator for any reason, the new Coordinator shall be appointed in the same way as in the previous paragraph and shall remain in office for the period remaining until the completion of the term of office.
10. The Board of Teachers, the Coordinator and the member referred to in paragraph 6, i) of this Article shall be appointed by the Rector.

***ART. 11***  
***(Doctoral schools)***

- 1 The Schools have the task of providing scientific and cultural guidance and organising and managing educational activities, and include doctoral programmes.
- 2 Where the School comprises several doctoral programmes, a Steering Committee shall be set up to assist the coordinators of the doctoral courses in planning and organising joint teaching activities. The Steering Committee is composed of the coordinators of the doctoral programmes of the School itself and the members referred to in article 10, paragraph 6, i) above.
- 3 The Steering Committee appoints a Chairperson from among the first-rank professors - or, failing that, second-rank professors - who, appointed by the Rector, coordinates its work. The Chairperson's term of office is three years and may be renewed. The meeting for the appointment of the Chairperson is convened by the Dean of the Steering Committee, who is identified as the professor in the first rank - or, failing that, in the second rank - with the most seniority in the role.
- 4 If the School comprises several doctoral programmes, the Steering Committee shall allocate the resources among the doctoral programmes concerned, plan and verify their use. If the School comprises a single doctoral programme, divided into profiles, the distribution proposal is made by the Coordinator and approved by the Board of Teachers.



- 5 Resolutions of the Steering Committee are adopted by an absolute majority of those entitled to vote present. In the event of a tie, the vote of the Chairperson or, in their absence, the vote of the oldest member of the Steering Committee shall prevail.
- 6 If the School comprises only one doctoral programme, the bodies of the School are the same as those of the doctoral programme.

**ART. 12**  
**(Council of Doctoral Schools)**

- 1 The Council of the Doctoral Schools has been set up with the task of providing scientific and cultural guidance to the School system, promoting and monitoring joint initiatives, and evaluating the activities carried out, such as, for example: promoting joint and transversal training activities for the Schools, drawing up joint guidelines on key issues (training model, internationalisation of courses, multidisciplinary integration, academic and professional career management).
- 2 The Council of the Doctoral Schools is composed of:
  - a the Rector, or their delegate, who chairs it;
  - b) by the Chairpersons of the Steering Committees of the Schools comprising several doctoral programmes;
  - c by the coordinators of the doctoral programmes of the Schools which include only one doctoral programme.
- 3 The Council of Doctoral Schools, as part of the annual planning, verifies the use of the scholarships awarded and collects applications for scholarships to be allocated for the following cycle represented by the Schools, and submits them to the Academic Senate. In order to carry out its tasks of promoting and monitoring teaching and scientific activities, as well as verifying the use of the resources provided and the results achieved, the Council of Doctoral Schools may avail itself of the collaboration of the Quality Assurance Body and Commission for University Quality Assessment. It will submit a detailed annual report on these aspects to the Academic Senate, which will be taken into account for the planning of doctoral programmes in the following years.

**ART. 13**  
**(Final and transitional provisions)**

- 1 For all matters not covered by these Regulations, please refer to the relevant regulations in force.
- 2 The rules in force at the time of their activation shall apply to doctoral programmes in operation on the date of entry into force of this Regulation.

