

Regulations of the SISSA Philosophiae Doctor courses (Director's Decree n. 750 dated 31 October 2022)

Art. 1 (Purpose)

1. "Philosophiae Doctor" courses (hereinafter called "Ph.D. Courses" or simply "Courses") provide the necessary skills to perform highly qualified research activities at universities, public and private institutes, contributing to the establishment of the European Higher Education Space and the European Research Space, also for the purposes of access to careers in public administrations and the integration of highly innovative professional paths.

Art. 2 (Field of application)

1. The present regulations discipline the activation and the functioning of the SISSA Ph.D. Courses.

2. Courses are established within the framework of a SISSA Scientific Area (hereinafter called "Area"), with the potential collaboration of other Areas. Several Courses can be established within an Area.

3. Courses can be activated, also in associated form, through the stipulation of agreements or the constitution of consortia with public or private subjects, including Italian or foreign universities, research bodies as well as companies, also foreign, that carry out qualified research, development, and innovation activities.

4. Each Course is disciplined by its own Regulations based on the present one.

Art. 3 (Course Bodies and relevant tasks)

1. The Teaching Board and the Coordinator are the Bodies of each Course.

2. The Teaching Board is made up of the professors and researchers who perform didactic activities in the Ph.D. Course. At least half of the members of the Teaching Board must be tenured University Professors both full and associate (*prima e seconda fascia*). For the remaining part by tenured researchers from universities or public research institutions or, to the maximum extent of one-third of the total composition of the college, by experts, although not belonging to universities or public research

institutions, possessing high and proven scientific or professional qualifications in research areas consistent with the educational objectives of the PhD course.

3. The composition of the Teaching Board is proposed by the Area Board at which the course is established and approved by the Academic Senate

4. The minimum number of members of the Teaching Board is 6, more than 50% of whom pertaining to the teaching staff of the School. Each professor or researcher in the School may participate in up to two Boards related to the Courses organized by the School.

5. In addition to the full members of the Teaching Board identified in the previous paragraph, other teachers, and researchers, carrying out didactic activities in the Ph.D. Course, can also take part in meetings of the Teaching Board, as adjoint members. Teaching Board adjoint members are proposed by the Area Board where the Course is established and are to be approved by the Academic Senate.

6. For the purpose of accreditation, researchers belonging to the Teaching Board must possess the scientific qualification for access to the functions of associate professors (*seconda fascia*), and the professors must possess scientific qualification provided for access to the functions of the position they belong to. Any members belonging to foreign universities or research institutions must possess at least the minimum qualifications required by current regulations for access to the functions of associate professors (*seconda fascia*).

7. The Teaching Board plans the Course didactic activities and the corresponding research introduction activity. The Teaching Board shall:

- a) define the training goals and topics of the Ph.D. Course.
- b) on a yearly basis, draft the Course didactic activities, divided into lecture cycles, to be approved by the Area Board and the Academic Senate for its publication on the School website by the month preceding the beginning of the Course itself. For each lecture cycle, divided into mandatory and optional lectures, the name, the Professor in charge, attendance period and expected duration have to be specified, in compliance with the Regulations on the SISSA Professors' and Researchers' academic duties. The cycles of frontal teaching lessons are divided into:
 - institutional courses aimed at providing a spectrum of specialized knowledge common to the interdisciplinary research activities carried out within the course, held mainly during the first year.

- monographic courses intended as a specialized in-depth training activity, aimed at a small group of students enrolled mainly in years following the first and functional to specific research projects undertaken and therefore carried out in parallel with them and lasting no more than 60 hours.

- c) approve students' syllabuses, which may even include lecture cycles of other Courses.
- d) assign a supervisor based on the preferences expressed by the students and the available research lines, and one or more co-supervisors pursuant to art. 9 paragraph 4 and 5.
- e) decide on students' admission to the following year.
- f) collect students' opinions on institutional teaching.

8. The Coordinator is a full-time full Professor (*prima fascia*) or, in case of justified unavailability, an associate full-time Professor (*seconda fascia*). He/She must be in possession of a high scientific qualification, based on the requirements provided for by current legislation for access to the functions of full Professor (*prima fascia*). The function of Coordinator may be exercised in only one college.

9. The Coordinator is appointed by the Academic Senate, upon proposal by the Teaching Board, and is chosen among the full members of the School. The Coordinator's term in office lasts for two years, it can only be renewed for a second consecutive term. Further terms are only possible after an interruption of at least one mandate.

10. The Coordinator can appoint a Deputy Coordinator who will replace him/her in every function in case of absence or impossibility to act. The Deputy Coordinator is chosen among associate and full Professors (*prima e seconda fascia*) who are part of the Teaching Board.

11. The Coordinator is responsible for the management, organization and coordination of didactic activities and introduction to research carried out during the Course. The Coordinator shall:

- a) summon and chair the Teaching Board and draft its agenda.
- b) coordinate the Course training activities.
- c) manage the funds allocated to the Course if any

- d) adopt urgent measures lying within the framework of the competence of the Teaching Board, submitting them for approval to the following Board meeting.

12. The students' representative of the Course in the Area Board takes part in the Teaching Board meetings to deal with didactic and organization issues.

Art. 4

(Course establishment, suitability requirements and assessment)

1. The Area Board is entitled to propose the establishment of a Ph.D. Course. The Evaluation Committee of the School, after consultation with the joint Student-Professor committee, expresses an opinion about the fulfilment of suitability requirements. Subsequently, the proposal is submitted for approval to the Academic Senate and the Board of Directors, which verify the consistency of the Course with the training planning, as well as the availability of human and financial resources needed to activate it.

2. Courses are established by a Director's Decree, following the acknowledgement of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (hereinafter referred to as "MUR").

3. Upon proposal by the Director or the reference Area Board, the Board of Directors, following an opinion by the Academic Senate, can decide to close a Course. The closure is implemented by a Director's Decree.

4. Courses are evaluated every year by the Evaluation Committee, in agreement with the Joint Committee and the Quality Assurance Unit with the support of the Students' Secretariat, in the time and manner established by the School's regulations pertaining to quality assurance procedures. Judgments made by students in questionnaires administered to them also contribute to this evaluation. The School's International Scientific Committee also performs advisory and directing functions related to Ph.D. courses.

5. Accreditation requirements are as follows:

- a) Composition of the Teaching Board as established in art. 3 paragraphs 2, 3, 4 of this Regulation.
- b) Availability of suitable and stable financial support to sustain the PhD Course, with specific reference to the availability of fellowships and support to Students' activities.

- c) Availability of specific and qualified operating and scientific structures for students' study and research activities, adequate for the number of fellowships provided, including, depending on the type of Course,
- d) facilities of a caring nature, scientific laboratories, a suitable number of books, databases, and resources for electronic calculations.

- e) planning of activities, possibly in common among several doctorates, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary training, linguistic and IT improvement, as well as teaching activities, research management, knowledge of European and International research system, valorization and dissemination of research results, intellectual property and open access to research data and products, and the fundamental principles of ethics and integrity.

- f) A system of quality assurance, project planning, and management of doctoral education that complies with the standards for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) according to ANVUR guidelines.

Art. 5

(Admission requirements)

1. The Courses can be accessed, having passed an entrance exam, by candidates of any age and citizenship with a "Laurea Specialistica/Magistrale" or an equivalent academic title obtained abroad, recognized suitable by the Admission Committee. The academic title must be held by the date of enrolment in the PhD course under penalty of forfeiture of admission to the course. However, enrolment must be completed by the end of the month of the beginning of the course.

Art. 6

(Call for applications)

1. The call for applications, in Italian and English language, is issued by a Director's Decree and advertised for at least thirty days on the School's website on the Euraxess website and on the MUR (Ministry of University and Research) website.

2. All Ph.D. students receive a fellowship.

3. The number, the total amount of scholarships and their allocation to individual courses are decided annually by the Board of Directors upon the approval of the Academic Senate.

Art. 7 **(Admission procedures)**

1. Admission to the Courses takes place through a public selection, held at least once a year.

2. The entrance exam, that can be provided in-person or online, aims to ascertain a student's suitability for scientific research, as well as knowledge of the English language, and consists in the evaluation of his/her titles, and a written and/or oral test as indicated in the call for application.

3. For the assessment, the Committee has 100 points, 10 of which are for academic titles, 40 for the written test and 50 for the oral test, or 30 for academic titles and 70 for the single oral or written test.

Upon request of the Teaching Board, the call for application may provide for a different distribution of scores. Each stage of the procedure is understood to have been passed with a minimum score of 7/10 of the score given to that test. Eligibility is achieved by passing all the tests. Upon completion of the evaluation of each test, the committee shall make the results public.

The minutes of the competition are forwarded to the Students' Secretariat, which will forward them to the respective Teaching Boards and from these to the Academic Senate for the approval of the rankings of eligible candidates.

In case of eligible candidates with the same score, the priority titles to be admitted to the courses are those envisaged by President Decree No. 487/94 and amendments thereto. In case of equal qualifications, according to art. 2, paragraph 9 of Law No. 191 dated 16.06.1998, modified by art. 3, paragraph 7 of Law No. 127 dated 15.05.1997, the younger candidate will be preferred.

The records of the competition are public and access to them is permitted according with the current legislation.

4. The selecting Committees for students' admission to the Philosophiae Doctor Courses are appointed by the Teaching Boards which manage the Courses and are made up of at least of three professors/researchers, at least one of whom is external to the School and to the Teaching Board.

5. Candidates directly admitted to the oral test and those which handed in an assessable written test may be granted a travel expense reimbursement, determined by the call for application.

6. Candidates with exceptional qualifications coming from countries not belonging to the European Union may be admitted to the Ph.D. Courses by academic records only through specific call for application. Students admitted based on the procedures envisaged by this paragraph must in any case take a qualification examination at the end of the first year, according to the rules of the Teaching Board.

7. Within the framework of agreements as well as national and international collaboration projects, specific admission procedures and organizational arrangements appropriately agreed upon between the participating institutions may also be provided.

8. Upon proposal by the Teaching Board, the Academic Senate may acknowledge the studies and research carried out at other Institutions by candidates who have passed their admission examinations, admitting them to the second year of the Ph.D. directly.

9. Part of the positions available may be reserved to:

- graduates in foreign Universities
- students receiving fellowships from foreign States.
- students from specific mobility or International research programs.

In such cases, different admission methods and times and a separate ranking can be envisaged.

Art. 8 **(Enrollment)**

1. Students of the Courses are university students enrolled in a post-graduate third level training course. Attendance is mandatory as envisaged by the doctoral program, subject to the provisions of Article 15. Each student can be enrolled in a single Course, after enrolment, he/she cannot be enrolled in another doctorate in Italy or abroad, except if this is envisaged by specific agreements for joint doctorate or for achieving a double doctorate title. Participation to a degree course, master's degree or to a master I or II level, attendance at which is not mandatory or specialization course at the School or other institutes, is subject to the authorization of the Teaching Board.

2. Students belong to the Area organizing the course.

Art. 9

(Didactic and research activities)

1. Courses include a first mandatory training activity period, lasting at least six months, and a second period dedicated to research and specialized training activities. Activities are carried out in English. Teaching activities are disciplined by internal regulations of each Course, in accordance with the terms of Article 3 Paragraph 7.
2. Access to individual didactic courses may be allowed to a selected and limited number of students from Italian and foreign universities, such as not to prejudice the functionality of the teaching activities and facilities of the School, upon the proposal of the Course Holder subject to the approval of the Ph.D. course coordinator. Access to teaching activities may also be provided under specific agreements.
3. The results of profit tests at the end of individual institutional teaching courses, or the certification of attendance of the courses are registered in the appropriate telematic platform. Profit tests are evaluated by a committee of at least two members, including the Course Holder who acts as chairperson, the result will be communicated to the student.
4. By the end of the first year, each student is assigned a supervisor and one or more co-supervisors. It is possible to change supervisor by submitting a motivated request, and if approved by the Teaching Board.
5. At least one among the supervisor and co-supervisors must be members of the Teaching Board employed by the School. The Teaching Board shall identify appropriate ways to ensure the continuity of the research project for the student, even in the case of temporary unavailability of the supervisor or other critical issues that have occurred.
6. In order to solve any problems in the relation between student and supervisor, a student can refer to the Ombudsperson in the ways defined in a specific regulation.
7. The research activity of the students is carried out under the direction of the supervisor, by using the School's facilities, infrastructural and financial resources and other resources made available by appropriate agreements.
8. Each doctoral student is normally expected to carry out research and training activities, in line with the doctoral project, at highly qualified institutions in Italy and abroad and to participate in national and international conferences.

9. For carrying out the research activity in Italy and abroad and everything related to it, a budget of at least 10% of the amount of the Ph.D. fellowship is guaranteed to each student.

Art. 10

(Admission to years following the first)

1. Each Course determines, by its own regulations, the methods for students' admission to the years following the first one.

2. At the end of the first year, the evaluation takes into consideration both the results of the exams at the end of the Courses or attendance of Courses and the assessment of research activities, if any. Admission to the following years is mostly based on the assessment of research activities.

3. Research results are explained and discussed before a Committee made up of at least three members of the Teaching Board. The date of the discussion is set and notified to the student duly in advance. The Committee forwards the research activity assessment results to the Students' Secretariat, which forwards them to each student. The assessment at the end of the penultimate year of the course must necessarily include some precise indications in case of a student's serious difficulties to discuss the thesis by the last year of the course. Critical issues are reported to the student, whose progress will be checked at the end of the first and second term of the last year of the course.

All the proceedings of the previous assessments must be promptly notified to the Students' Secretariat, which will forward them to the relevant Boards.

4. The Teaching Boards resolve on Students' admission to the next academic year in the first useful meeting after acquiring the assessment elements and in any case in due time for the following resolutions by the Academic Senate and the Board of Directors.

Art. 11

(Change of Ph.D. Course)

The passage of a student from one Ph.D. Course to another is allowed after the favorable opinion of the Teaching Board of the receiving Course, which establishes case-by-case teaching and research obligations of the student in the new Ph.D. Course and notify them to him/her in advance.

Art. 12 ***(Mobility)***

1. Ph.D. Course students may spend study and research periods at universities, research institutes or enterprises, in Italy and abroad, with the approval of their supervisor and Course Coordinator, for a total amount of time not exceeding 12 months. Specific agreements regulate the co-tutoring thesis procedures, which may envisage activities in other locations for period up to 18 months.

2. In the case of study and research periods abroad, subject to the prior authorization of the course Coordinator, the Council (or, in its absence) the Board of the Area to which the student belongs may decide to increase the amount of the fellowship by 50% for periods of continuous stay abroad of no less than 14 days and no more than 12 months in total. This period may be extended up to a maximum total of 18 months for doctorates in co-partnership with foreign institutions.

3. Student missions, even if they do not imply an expense for the School, must be authorized in advance by the Course Coordinator in accordance with the SISSA "Mission regulations".

Art. 13 ***(Additional teaching activities and other external activities)***

1. Ph.D. Course students may carry out additional teaching activities and coaching for Bachelor and Master's degree students in other Italian Universities, provided that this engagement is not in conflict with their research activities. This activity is subject to the prior authorization of the Teaching Board, based on compatibility with ordinary research activities, and must in any case be within the limit of 40 hours per academic year.

2. The Teaching Board may authorize the doctoral student to carry out paid activities that allow him/her to acquire skills concerning the educational field of the doctorate after assessing the compatibility of the same activities with the profitable performance of the training, teaching and research activities of the Ph.D. course. The maximum limit of the additional salary may not, however, exceed the amount of the fellowship itself.

3. Based on specific agreements with Companies, approved by the competent Bodies, students of a Ph.D. course can also carry out Company internships, subject to the authorization of the Supervisor and the Course Coordinator.

4. Any other external activities, such as teaching in the secondary and high school must be authorized in advance by the Teaching Board. In case of breach, the Director may suspend or revoke the fellowship.

Art. 14
(Course duration)

Each Course normally lasts for a total of four academic years. If a student's scientific maturity and the results achieved make it possible, a thesis can be discussed before the end of the fourth year. In any case, the title will not be issued before the minimum term envisaged by the Italian law on the duration of doctorate courses.

Art. 15
(Absence and fellowship suspension)

1. Absence exceeding 15 days must be authorized by the thesis Supervisor and the Course Coordinator and notified to the Students' Secretariat.

2. Absence exceeding one month must be authorized by the Area Council (or, in its absence, the Area Board) the student belongs to, which will decide whether to suspend the fellowship.

3. It is possible to suspend attendance of the Course and of the fellowship for up to 6 months in the following cases:

- a) mandatory civil/military service
- b) maternity or paternity leave
- c) disease
- d) serious personal reasons
- e) special cases whose exceptionality must be evaluated by the Supervisor and the Teaching Board and approved by the Academic Senate.

In all the cases mentioned above and without prejudice to the application of the rules for the protection of parenthood referred to in the decree of the Minister of Labour and Social Security of 12 July 2007, published in the Official Gazette of 23 October 2007, n. 247, Doctoral Students on leave retain the right to the fellowship. At the end of the suspension period, the fellowship is awarded at the resumption of course attendance up to the total duration of the fellowship itself.

4. In the case of parental leave, students who are entitled to benefit from the INPS allowance can require the payment of a supplementary contribution up to the value of the doctoral fellowship for all the months for which the allowance is provided. For cases

of documented illness or for cases of parenthood in which INPS coverage is not provided, students can require a contribution of 70% of the fellowship for a maximum of 5 months per type of event up to a maximum of 12 months in the case of mandatory interdiction.

5. The renouncement of a fellowship by a student before the end of the academic year does not entail the return of the amounts received, on condition that the Teaching Board certifies the regular and profitable carrying out of study and research activities until the time of renunciation. Should this concern a period shorter than that accrued at the date of cancellation, the refund of the amounts received in the period not covered by the certification itself will be required.

Art. 16

(Final examination and awarding the title)

1. The title of Philosophiae Doctor is awarded after a positive assessment of a research thesis contributing to the advancement of knowledge or methodologies in the chosen investigation field, whose original nature is such as to result from one or more articles to submit for publication in highly qualified journals.

2. The Ph.D. thesis is written in English. The final draft, along with an abstract in English, must be submitted to the Students' Secretariat at least one month before the date of the defense, to allow a prompt sending it to the Committee members.

3. The thesis and an enclosed student's report on the activities carried out during the doctorate course and any publications, is assessed by at least two evaluators, hereinafter called assessors, not belonging to the School, with highly qualified experience at least one of whom must be a university professor or researcher. Assessors are chosen by the Teaching Board, and they might belong to foreign or international institutions. Within 30 days of receipt of the thesis and in any case within 7 days from the date scheduled for the defense, the Assessors express a written analytic judgement about the thesis and propose the public defense or postponement for a period not exceeding six months. After this period, the thesis is in any case admitted to public defense, accompanied by a new written opinion by the assessors.

4. The public defense of the thesis takes place before a Committee appointed by the Teaching Board, respecting, where possible, gender balance, composed of at least two thirds of members not belonging to the School (and not involved in the supervision of the thesis) and no more than one third of members belonging to the Institutions participating in the doctorate, pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 2. In any case, the Committee must be composed of at least two thirds of academic members.

At the end of the defense, the Committee shall give a written and reasoned opinion on the thesis, unanimously the Committee may attribute honors (cum laude) in the presence of particularly relevant results from a scientific point of view. In case of negative result, the final test cannot be repeated.

5. As regards the presentation, filing and public access methods of the thesis, see Annex 1 to these regulations.

6. Except for what provided by art. 15, the defense normally takes place by the end of the last year of the course or during the following month. For duly proved exceptional reasons that do not allow the presentation of the doctoral thesis within the time provided for by the duration of the course, the Teaching Board may grant, upon request of the Ph.D. student, an extension of the maximum duration of six months, without further financial burdens for the School.

An extension of the duration of the doctoral course for a period not exceeding six months may also be decided by the Teaching Board for justified scientific needs, ensuring in this case the corresponding extension of the duration of the fellowship with funds borne by the Student's Supervisor or, in their absence, charged to the budget of the reference Research Group.

7. The periods of extension and suspension referred to in the previous paragraph and Article 15 paragraphs 2 and 3 may not exceed a total duration of 18 months, except in specific cases provided for by law.

Art. 17

(Other certificates)

1. The School can award "Magister Philosophiae" diplomas and other diplomas or certificates at the end of at least one year of course upon submission of a written assignment (Master Thesis) approved by the Teaching Board.

2. Upon student's request, following a favorable opinion by the Teaching Board, the School can issue the title of Doctor Europaeus, under the terms and conditions envisaged by the European University Association.

Art. 18

(Transparency)

1. The Teaching Board of each Course makes the following information available on the School web pages and keeps it updated:

- a) Course didactic rules
- b) Ph.D. admission test methods
- c) envisaged didactic obligations, divided by year: number of courses, titles and programs, hours of class lectures, hours of course in laboratories, essays, access test to years following the first one
- d) structuring the research lines available for doctorate thesis
- e) procedure of choice of the supervisor and, if envisaged, to choose the thesis topic, even if not codified, at least as envisaged by practice
- f) publications from Ph.D. thesis, at least during the past three years
- g) alumni's current positions, if known

Art. 19

(Applicable law)

For matters not expressly mentioned in these regulations, please refer to the D.M. n.226 14/12/2021.

Annex 1

Method of submission, storage, and public consultation of the thesis referred to in Article 16 paragraph 5.

SISSA Digital Library (SDL) is the unique and official archive of SISSA doctoral thesis. The final version of the thesis in pdf format must be uploaded to SDL at least two days before the scheduled date of defense. The copy inserted in the digital archive will constitute the official version that remains on file, is not editable and will be made accessible according to the rules of legal deposit.

Subject to the authorization of the Teaching Board, parts of the thesis may be made unavailable in relation to the use of data protected under current legislation. At any time after the thesis discussion, the Ph.D. may add a revised edition of the thesis to the SDL and clearly marked as such. The insertion procedure takes place by sending by e-mail to the library (library@sisssa.it) which will proceed ex officio to the upload for the subsequent deposit of the thesis at the National central libraries of Rome and Florence.