

Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi

***PhD Programs: Academic Rules and Regulations***

Pursuant to MIUR decree no.45, 8th February 2013 and  
Ministerial guidelines, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014

Issued with Rectoral Decree no. 151 of 23 December 2015

## **Art. 1 Scope of present Rules and Regulations**

**1.1** The following Rules and Regulations are in pursuance of the General University Rules of the University Academic Regulations and are applied to Bocconi University PhD programs.

In this regard, the Rules and Regulations identify and define, among others:

- aims of the PhD programs;
- accreditation and activation of each new cycle of PhD programs;
- admission to the PhD programs;
- timing and duration of the PhD programs;
- PhD award;
- financial conditions and financial aid options available to PhD students;
- other general rules about the PhD programs and the different types of PhD students.

## **Art. 2 Aims**

**2.1** Bocconi PhD programs are aimed at providing students with the expertise and competence required to conduct high quality research for public bodies and private entities or to become highly skilled professionals.

## **Art. 3 Accreditation**

Pursuant to DM (ministerial decree) no. 45, 8th February 2013 and ministerial guidelines (March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014):

**3.1** PhD programs are established by the University after accreditation by MIUR (Ministry of University) and favourable opinion expressed by ANVUR (National Agency for Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes). After the initial accreditation, the permanence of the required academic standards will be periodically verified, in compliance with the law.

**3.2** Bocconi University can apply for accreditation:

- as a sole promoter;
- with other universities or highly reputable public or private research centres as per art. 2 of the above decree;
- with companies conducting research and development activities, as per art. 2 of the above-mentioned decree.

## **Art. 4 Establishment and annual Activation of PhD Programs**

**4.1** The establishment and activation of a PhD Cycle involve:

- an internal decision process, in accordance with the Statute of Bocconi University (art. 7.3);

- an external accreditation process, pursuant to DM no. 45/2013 and ministerial guidelines (March 24th, 2014).

**4.2** The internal decision process, including both the establishment proposals and the annual activation, shall respect the deadlines of the annual Academic Planning.

**4.3** The initial ministerial accreditation is granted when all minimum requirements are met; requirements concern:

- subjects of the PhD;
- number of members of the Faculty Board and qualifications (academic position and standards of internationally recognized research);
- average number of fellowships calculated on the total of PhDs and number of fellowships for each PhD program;
- availability of adequate and sustainable funding;
- availability of specific and adequate research facilities;
- disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching.

The duration of accreditation is three cycles of the PhD program; it is subject to the annual ANVUR's assessment of the above-mentioned requirements and is also based on the results of monitoring activities performed by the University Evaluation Unit.

**4.4** The proposals for the establishment of a program, which shall receive the final approval of the University Board, shall include, for each program:

- a. name of the program, curricula (if any) and subjects;
- b. PhD Program Director's name;
- c. duration of the program, which cannot be less than three years;
- d. scientific themes related to wide, structured and clearly defined disciplinary fields;
- e. learning objectives;
- f. career opportunities;
- g. PhD curriculum, including planned educational activities;
- h. detailed composition of the Faculty Board;
- i. number of places offered;
- j. maximum number and amount of available fellowships (the number cannot be inferior to four for the first year of each PhD program, and, on average, to six, for the first year of the programs offered by the School), tuition waivers, if any, amount of admission and tuition fees for the program, fellowship increase for periods of study / research abroad;
- k. budget allocated to PhD students for their research activities in Italy and abroad in the last two years of the PhD program, whose value cannot be less than 10% of fellowship value;
- l. other potential funding made available to the PhD program or the whole PhD School;
- m. admission criteria;
- n. PhD students' assessment criteria during the studies and admission requirements for the following academic years;

- o. facilities and equipment PhD students can use for their activities;
- p. details about “in consortium” or partner institutions;
- q. any other element required to verify that the accreditation standards are met.

**4.5** Proposals for the activation of subsequent cycles shall include all the information provided in the establishment proposals, and specify any variations from the previous year.

## **Art. 5 Management of PhD Programs: Program Director and Faculty Board**

**5.1** The Program Director, a full time Bocconi Professor, heads the Faculty Board and is appointed by the Academic Council in compliance with the procedures set in the the General University Rules.

**5.2** The Faculty Board is composed of at least sixteen members (of whom at least 12 Bocconi full professors and associate professors) belonging to the core fields of the program. The members of the Faculty Council shall provide, in good time for the assessment of the requirements, documents showing research results of high international standards, in particular with reference to the preceding five years. The minimum requirements about scientific productivity are decided by the Academic Council, and can be updated according to the University’s strategic objectives for the PhD School and according to new external circumstances.

**5.3** The Faculty Board plans and manages the PhD program. The Faculty Board coordinates curricular activities and supervises research activities aimed at contributing to the advancement of research methodology and knowledge in a specific field.  
The PhD School coordinates the programs and is in charge of common processes (e.g. selection, organisation, placement).

## **Art. 6 Admission to PhD Programs**

**6.1** Admission to the programs is regulated by a public selection process decreed by the Rector as per art. 8 of D.M. (ministerial decree) 45/2013.

**6.2** Admission is subject to the fulfilment of specific requirements, namely:

- an Italian graduate degree or a foreign qualification suitable for admission. The above-mentioned qualifications must be obtained before 31st October of the year when the program begins;
- a B2 (or higher) level of competence (CEFR) in the vehicular language of the program.

Further curricular qualifications may be included in the proposal for the activation of the program and will be specified in the call.

- 6.3** The suitability of foreign qualifications is verified by the Admission Board in conformity with the applicable Italian and foreign rules, or in conformity with international treaties or agreements on the validity of qualifications for post-graduate education.
- 6.4** Admission takes place after the selection of applicants. The prerequisites and the qualifications are evaluated and each candidate is ranked according to the assessment criteria specified in the call.
- 6.5** The Admission Board shall rank the candidates, who will then be admitted to a program according to their ranking (ranking criteria are set in the official call).

#### **Art. 7 Appointment of Admission Boards**

- 7.1** PhD programs' Admission Boards are appointed by the Rector after hearing the opinion of the Faculty Board and are composed of at least three members of the Faculty Board itself.
- 7.2** As far as "in consortium" or partnership PhDs are concerned, the Boards are appointed in conformity with the terms of the agreement and with the law.

#### **Art. 8 Enrolment**

- 8.1** Candidates admitted to a PhD program must enrol or decline the offer in the manner and schedule stated in the call.
- 8.2** In compliance with the law, students enrolled in a PhD program are forbidden to enrol in other university programs, unless they suspend their studies in one of the two programs, as per art.10.4.

#### **Art. 9 Fellowships and Tuition Fees**

- 9.1** Students can be admitted to each year of the program:
- with fellowship (merit-based or based on merit and financial conditions);
  - without fellowship and with merit-based tuition waiver up to 100%.
  - without fellowship and with payment of tuition fees;

Note that PhD students are always required to pay regional fees, as per existing regulations.

- 9.2** A fellowship can be granted by the University or by non-university institutions and its amount cannot be lower than the amount stated by the Italian Ministry.

Fellowships are annual and are paid out by monthly, deferred instalments. Fellowships can be renewed in the following years if the necessary requirements are met, as per art. 10 of this document.

Compulsory Italian pension contributions (INPS “gestione separata”) will be deducted from the amount of each fellowship, as per current laws.

**9.3** For study and research activities abroad authorized by the PhD Program Director, the amount of the fellowship can be increased up to 50% (calculated on the amount of the ministerial fellowship) and for a maximum total period of 18 months.

**9.4** The PhD School Council will advise the University Board on the PhD requirements, and the University Board will then state the number of merit-based fellowships, the amount of registration fees, and the number and amount of tuition waivers granted.

#### **Art. 10 Attendance and Progress Evaluation**

**10.1** Study plan’s requirements are set by the Faculty Board of each program and are included in the Annual Academic Planning.

For programs that are divided into specialization areas (field, tracks, ...) the rules to activate specialization areas and their respective elective courses are set in the Annual Academic Planning.

**10.2** At the end of each year and before enrolment on the next year, the Faculty Board verifies whether the student has met all the requirements as decreed by the Faculty Board itself and published on the University website.

The results can be positive or negative as follows:

- PhD pass. The student can enrol on the next year;
- MPhil pass (for PhD programs that award MPhil). The student may apply for an MPhil;
- fail. The student must leave the program, unless he has already formally asked to withdraw from the program.

**10.3** Students cannot enrol on the next year before being notified about the results of their evaluation.

If a student is not admitted to the next academic year, the payment of the fellowship is suspended immediately after the last instalment of the last year of regular enrolment has been paid out.

**10.4** The Faculty Board can remove from the program during the year if a student repeatedly fails to comply with academic duties and obligations. If a student is removed he or she will have to forfeit the fellowship and repay it for the year.

**10.5** The Faculty Board can grant a leave in the following cases:

1) Enrolment in another program:

If a student is enrolled in another program, he or she can enrol in a PhD program after suspending the other program. A student already enrolled in a PhD program can ask for and obtain a leave in order to attend another university program (e.g. a Law Specialization School).

2) Documented evidence of extenuating circumstances:

A student can ask for and obtain a leave by producing documented evidence of extenuating circumstances of personal nature, such as paternal/maternity leave or serious illness.

3) Professional training, remunerated work or internship as per art. 11.3 and art. 11.4.

Leave interrupts all the PhD program activities and financial support. Financial arrangements will be reinstated at the end of the leave, for a period of time as long as the leave itself, unless the PhD student withdraws from the program or is removed before the end of the program.

At the end of the leave, the Faculty Board will outline the requirements which must be satisfied in order to complete the program.

**10.6** PhD students can be authorized by the Program Director to:

- temporarily study and do research in other Italian or foreign Universities and organizations;
- take part in meetings and seminars and other short-term projects related to their studies and research activities;
- take part in research projects funded by external bodies (e.g. the EU);
- work as teaching assistants and research assistants for the University in conformity with national and internal rules.

**Art. 11 PhD program attendance and other activities – Compatibility.**

**11.1** Being enrolled in a PhD program involves, in compliance with the law, an exclusive full time commitment. PhD students must actively and regularly take part in the University's academic activities and in all the study activities included in the program structure.

The PhD Program Director can authorize activities included in art.10.6.

**11.2** The Faculty Board, after evaluating the PhD student's request, may authorize him or her to do professional training, undertake remunerated work activity or do an internship provided that the activity does not hinder the regular and constant attendance to the program (**compatibility**). Authorization can be granted on condition that the activity is aimed to acquire competencies coherent with a student's PhD program (**coherence**). However, in the case of PhD students without fellowship, the Faculty Board

will also take into account the fact that these students may need financial means for continuing their studies.

- 11.3** Under special circumstances the Faculty Board may grant a leave when professional training, remunerated work activities or internships hinder the regular and constant attendance to the PhD program (**non-compatibility**). In case of remunerated work and internships, a leave can only be granted if the activity is prestigious and aims to significantly qualify the PhD student. Art. 11.4 sets forth the procedure for submitting the student's leave request.
- 11.4** In case of professional training, remunerated work and internships, the PhD student can request a leave for a period of six to twelve months, which can be renewed for a period of six to twelve months; however, the total period of the leave cannot exceed 24 months. The Faculty Board will decide the start date and duration of the leave taking into consideration the PhD student's needs. Art. 10.4 sets forth suspension rules.

## **Art. 12 PhD Financial Aid**

- 12.1** Regulations state that, in the last two years of the program, each PhD student is provided with a budget - within the limits of the financial resources allocated annually to the PhD School by the University Board - for his or her studies and research activities in Italy and abroad. The amount of the budget may vary according to the field of the PhD program and cannot be less than 10% of the amount of the ministerial fellowship. The Program Director must always authorize expenses in advance. The University directly covers the expenses on behalf of the student (e.g. cost of fares) or refunds the student's out-of-pocket expenses according to the type of activity involved. In any case the student must comply with the "travel policy" of the University.
- 12.2** All PhD students who are previously authorized by the Program Director can work part-time for the University, in particular as research assistants and teaching assistants, and can be remunerated for their work, within the limits and the rules stated by national and internal regulations. They can also be remunerated for participating in research projects funded by external bodies and organizations.

## **Art. 13 Thesis Writing and Submission**

- 13.1** Each PhD program establishes the program requirements in terms of the timing, the involved parties and the activities related to thesis writing.



- 13.2** Students choose their advisor among the Bocconi Permanent Faculty and should begin work on their thesis research projects approximately half-way through the program.

Their advisor may select a co-advisor, who can be chosen outside the University.

In the case of double degree programs, theses can be written under the supervision of two advisors, one from Bocconi University and one from a foreign University. For each PhD student a specific, separate formal agreement must be reached between the Rector and the foreign University.

- 13.3** The timing of the steps regarding thesis writing and submission are set in the Annual Academic Planning in pursuance of Ministerial Decree 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

- 13.4** The thesis is assessed by the Faculty Board or by a Board, acting on behalf of it, composed of at least three members.

- 13.5** The thesis (with an attached report on the activities performed during the program and on research papers, if any) has to be submitted to two qualified Professors, chosen by the Faculty Board, who are not part of Bocconi Faculty (External Reviewers).

- 13.6** Each Reviewer will issue a separate detailed written assessment report of the thesis and recommend admission to the public defence or ask for postponement, for a maximum of six months, if relevant additions or changes are required.

After receiving and giving due consideration to the assessments, the Program Director will admit/not admit the candidate to the public defence. In particular, a candidate will only be admitted if both assessments are favourable.

After a postponement period, theses are always admitted to public defence, without exception. Reviewers will issue new separate detailed written assessment reports.

#### **Art. 14 Final Examination**

- 14.1** Candidates admitted to the defence of their thesis are assessed, at times set in the annual Academic Planning, by a Thesis Board which is appointed by the Rector and in which the advisor and at least two members are part of the Permanent Faculty.

- 14.2** The date of the defence is established by the Thesis Board and cannot be changed. However, the candidate who, for serious reasons, such as illness and/or unforeseeable or extreme circumstances, cannot participate in the

defence on that date can ask the Board to change the date, and can be allowed by the President of the Board to defend the thesis on a different day.

**14.3** After the discussion of the defence, the Board will issue a collective reasoned resolution in writing. The thesis will be approved or rejected; if it is rejected, it cannot be submitted a second time and the resolution cannot be appealed.

**14.4** The University will deposit the thesis in the institutional registry, which is open to the public and is managed by the Central Library of the University. The registry is responsible for the conservation and the availability to the public of the thesis.

The University will also give copies of the final thesis to the Italian National Libraries in Rome and Florence.

#### **Art. 15 “In Consortium” and Partnership PhDs**

**15.1** In the case of “in consortium” or partnership PhDs, admission procedures and PhD graduation procedures will be agreed upon by the parts, in conformity with the law.

#### **Art. 16 MPhil (Master of Philosophy) Programs**

**16.1** MPhil (Master of Philosophy) programs can be activated, as proposed by the PhD Program Director. The didactic activity is the same as in the first year of the corresponding PhD program and it carries a minimum of 60 credits, involving about 1,500 hours of study.

In the case of MPhil programs, the Master Program Director is also the PhD Program Director who has proposed the program.

**16.2** Students already registered in the corresponding PhD and “special students” can be admitted to an MPhil program if they:

- have passed the curricular exams of the first year;
- have obtained an “MPhil pass” at the end of the year ;
- have applied for withdrawal from the PhD program and have asked to be awarded an MPhil degree.

**16.3** Students enrolled on any year of the PhD program can apply for a MPhil degree before enrolling on the next academic year, but only the first year curricular activities will be recognized.

**16.4** The final grade of an MPhil is the GPA (graded point average) of the first year exams, to which a maximum of 5/110 can be added for the research activities carried out in the years attended after the first, if any. However, the maximum grade obtainable is 100/110.

## **Art. 17 Special Student**

### **17.1** Special students are students who:

- were eligible for a specific PhD program, but were unable to take part in the selection at the time of the call for serious and justified reasons;
- applied for a PhD in another University, were admitted and then realised that the program they were attending did not suit their goals. Students who applied for a Bocconi PhD and were not admitted cannot be admitted as special students.

### **17.2** Special students are managed as follows:

#### in PhDs allowing to obtain an MPhil degree:

If students are not enrolled on a doctorate in another University, they are first enrolled on a Bocconi MPhil program. If the quality of their academic performance does not allow them to be subsequently admitted to a Bocconi PhD program, they can obtain an MPhil degree.

Outstanding students can take part in the public competition the next year: if they are selected, they are first admitted to the first year; after admission, and if they pass the general exam, they are directly admitted to the second year of the PhD program and can be granted a fellowship starting from the second year and in each following year, until regular completion of the PhD program.

#### in all PhDs:

If students are enrolled on a PhD in another University in any given academic year, they can start attending lectures in the same year without being enrolled, and then take part in the Bocconi public competition in the next academic year. If they are selected, they are first admitted to the first year; after admission, and if they pass the general exam, they are directly admitted to the second year of the PhD program and can receive a fellowship starting from the second year and in each following year, until regular completion of the PhD program.

Students can only be admitted until the second year, and no admissions are allowed in the third year.

### **17.3** Special students shall pay tuition fees for the amount paid by the students without PhD fellowship.

## **Art. 18 Visiting Students**

### **18.1** Outgoing students are students enrolled as Bocconi PhDs who attend lectures and/or do research abroad for a period of time. During their stay abroad they can be funded for a maximum of up to 50% of the ministerial fellowship, and for a period not exceeding 18 months. If outgoing students are externally remunerated, they will still receive their Bocconi fellowship (as fellowship cannot be combined only with other

fellowships). The maximum number of exams a student can take abroad is not stated. The PhD Program Director will decide which exams passed abroad by a student can be validated.

**18.2** Incoming students are students enrolled in PhD programs at other Universities who only wish to attend Bocconi lectures or sit the related examinations. These students, admitted in compliance with the annual Academic Planning, may be enrolled in any year of the program in the other University, including the first year. The PhD Program Director will evaluate the student's performance and establish if his or her preparation is adequate.

The maximum visiting period is two semesters in a three-year PhD and three semesters in a four-year PhD, not necessarily in sequence.

Visiting students may sit a total of six Bocconi exams in a three-year PhD and a total of nine exams in a four-year PhD.

Students from Italian or foreign Universities will be given a document signed by the PhD Program Director, with a list of the subjects attended and the grades obtained, only if a previous formal agreement had been previously reached between the Program Director of their University and the Bocconi PhD Program Director about the student's stay at Bocconi University and the duration of the stay.

Incoming visiting students shall pay the fees established by the University Board.

- a registration fee for each semester
- a program fee for each subject whose lessons they wish to attend and/or whose exam they intend to take.

## **Art. 19 Auditing Students**

**19.1** Auditing students are persons, usually working at or for other institutions, who wish to attend some PhD lessons in order to broaden their knowledge.

**19.2** Auditing students are allowed to attend a maximum of three subjects. However, the PhD Program Director, in agreement with the Dean, may make exceptions.

Auditing students may wish to take exams, in which case they will be registered for one or more single subjects and shall pay a fixed fee, not related to the number of the exams, and a fee related to the number of hours of lesson attended, as stated for single subjects in Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Specialized Master programs.

## **Art. 20 Code of Conduct**

**20.1** All registered students shall adopt a code of conduct respectful of didactic activities, research and the University. Disorderly or inappropriate

behaviour and offences causing any serious interference with the University functioning, or causing substantive damage to the University activities or image shall be sanctioned, and further sanctions may be also imposed by law.

**20.2** All students of the University are subject to the jurisdiction of the Rector and the Academic Council in respect both of their studies and their conduct, as per art. 16 R.D.L. (Legislative Decree) 20th June 1935, no. 1071 conv. with L. 2nd January 1936, no. 73, subsequently complemented and modified.

**20.3** The sanctions which can be imposed, in compliance with the law, are the following:

- a) verbal admonition, by the Rector or a Delegate Rector, after hearing the student;
- b) temporary ban from one or more courses;
- c) suspension from one or more examinations for one or more exam periods;
- d) temporary suspension from any University activity, including examinations, for a period not exceeding three years.

**20.4** The Rector will refer the case to the Academic Council, which is first responsible for the implementation of sanctions at b), c), and d). All the sanctions are finally implemented by the Rector, who will notify the student. Since a Bocconi Academic Senate has not been established, any disciplinary action is final but can be contested. This procedure falls under administrative jurisdiction, in compliance with the law. The Rector may decide to appoint a special Board which will be responsible for conducting the preliminary investigation and will provide advice on the disciplinary action to be taken.

**20.5** The student shall be notified of the disciplinary action against him or her at least ten days before the day when the Academic Council is to meet. He or she can present a written defence and ask to be heard by the Council. Sanctions shall be commensurate with the seriousness of the offence and shall be reasonable and equitable with regard to the nature of the offence, the unfolding of the facts and the evidence gathered.

**20.6** Disciplinary measures are recorded upon the student's personal academic file and are also transcribed and entered into transfer forms and other academic documents.

## **Art. 21 Final Rules and Regulations**

**21.1** The above rules and regulations apply to students enrolled as from a.y. 2013-14, except for art 6.2 that applies to students enrolled as from a.y. 2015-16.

For cohorts 2013-14 and 2014-15 art. 6.2 is as follows:  
Candidates with an Italian graduate degree or a foreign qualification suitable for admission are eligible to apply for a PhD program. The above-mentioned qualifications must be obtained before 31st October of the year when the program begins. Further curricular qualifications may be included in the proposal for the activation of the program and will be specified in the call.  
Candidates are expected to apply only if their English language proficiency is at least level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

- 21.2 DM 224 (30<sup>th</sup> April, 1999), previous “PhD Programs Academic Rules and Regulations” (D.R. 4820, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1999) and additional resolutions of PhD School Council apply to cohorts enrolled before a.y. 2013-14.