

Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi

PhD Programs: Academic Rules and Regulations

Pursuant to MIUR decree no.45, 8th February 2013 and
Ministerial guidelines, 1st February 2019

Issued with Rectoral Decree no. 72, 8 September 2020

Art. 1 Scope of present Rules and Regulations

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 of PhD programs

Bocconi PhD programs are full-time programs aimed at providing the knowledge and the skills required to be top researchers.

PhD programs are designed for highly qualified and motivated students who aspire to become scholars (academic career) or highly skilled professionals for public and private institutions.

Art. 3 Accreditation and activation of PhD programs

The establishment and activation of a PhD program 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 (1 February 2019).

The internal decision process, including both the establishment proposals and the annual activation, conforms with the deadlines of the annual Academic Planning.

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

- fields of study of the PhD program;
- 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;
- complementary activities for PhD students.

The initial accreditation is subject to annual confirmation which is granted on condition of continuity in the fulfilment of the above-mentioned requirements; confirmation is based on the results of monitoring activities performed by the University Evaluation Unit.

The proposal of a new program includes:

- name of the program, curricula (if any) and fields;
- PhD Program Director's name;
- duration of the program, which cannot be less than three years;
- scope of research related to wide, structured and clearly defined disciplinary fields;
- qualifying goals of the program;
- career opportunities;
- PhD curriculum, including both study and research activities;
- detailed composition of the Faculty Board and their research output;
- number of places offered;
- 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 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;
- 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 ministerial fellowship value;
- other potential funding made available to the PhD program or the whole PhD School by external donors;
- admission criteria;
- PhD students' assessment criteria during the studies and admission requirements for the following academic years;
- facilities and equipment PhD students can use for their activities;
- details about "in consortium" or partner institutions;
- any other element required to verify that the accreditation standards are met.

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

Admission procedures and degree requirements for "in consortium" or partnership PhDs will be agreed upon by the parties (parties to the consortium/partner institutions) in compliance with the law.

Art. 4 Management of PhD Programs: Program Director and Faculty Board

The Program Director, a permanent contract Bocconi Professor (full or associate), heads the Faculty Board and is appointed by the Academic Council in compliance with the procedures set in the General University Rules.

The Faculty Board is composed of at least sixteen members (of whom at least 12 Bocconi full professors and associate professors); Faculty Board members have to cover at least the 80% of disciplinary fields of the program. They are asked to provide, in good time for the assessment of the requirements, documents showing research results of high international standards.

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, organization, placement).

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

Art. 5 Admission to PhD Programs

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

The criteria to figure out the number of available places are annually set by the University Board on the proposal of the Academic Council.

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 within 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; in this case, they have to be specified in the call.

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.

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.

The Admission Board ranks the candidates, who will then be admitted to a program according to their ranking (ranking criteria are set in the official call).

PhD programs' Admission Boards are appointed by the Rector after consulting the Faculty Board and are composed of at least three members of the Faculty Board itself.

Art. 6 Enrollment

Candidates admitted to a PhD program must enroll or decline the offer as instructed in the call.

In compliance with the law, students enrolled in a PhD program are forbidden to enroll in other university programs, unless they suspend their studies in one of the two programs (see art. 8 Attendance and progress evaluation).

Within 8 days from arrival, all non-EU students who hold a study visa for Italy must apply for a permit of stay for study purposes (*permesso di soggiorno per motivi di studio*).

Non-EU students enrolled in the first year of the program who do not send the copy of permit of stay to the PhD Administrative Center (PhD-AC) by the end of June, will not be admitted to the second year of the program, even if they have met all the “academic” requirements (as per art 8).

Art. 7 Financial conditions (fellowship, tuition waiver, tuition fees)

Students can be enrolled (according to their ranking position):

- with Bocconi fellowship (merit-based or based on merit and financial conditions¹);
- with merit-based tuition waiver up to 100%;
- with payment of tuition fees.

Students can be financed also by external donors (private or public institution)²:

- if the donor signs an ad hoc agreement with Bocconi, then the student (“external fellowship recipient”) pays no tuition fees and he/she is added to the group of students “with fellowship” (the agreement must be signed before the publication of admission results); the fellowship cannot be lower than Bocconi fellowships;
- in the other case the student (“paying recipient”) pays the tuition fees (therefore he/she belongs to the group “with tuition fees”) and receives the financial support (any amount) directly from the external donor.

Bocconi fellowships are awarded to the best ranked students; they 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 8 Attendance and progress evaluation).

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

As provided for by the Italian law:

- Compulsory Italian pension contributions (INPS “gestione separata”) are deducted from the amount of each fellowship, as per current laws;
- Income from the fellowship is tax free;
- Fellowships cannot be added on to other fellowships of any kind except those granted to students who are required to spend time abroad by domestic or foreign institutions;
- Each student can be awarded just one full fellowship for Italian PhD programs; therefore, if a student was given a fellowship for an Italian PhD program and, after degree, he/she enrolls in another Italian PhD program, he/she cannot be assigned a second fellowship; moreover, if a PhD student withdraws from an Italian PhD program and then he/she enrolls in another Italian PhD program, the new fellowship will not cover the full duration of the new program but just a part of it (depending on how long he/she benefited from the first fellowship).

The amount of Bocconi fellowships and of tuition fees is annually set by the University Board.

¹ Fellowships based on merit and financial conditions are managed by ISU Bocconi (Student Assistance and Financial Aid Center as provided by regional law no. 33, 13 December 2004.

² E.g., Government of the Country of origin of the candidate, or Foundations.

All PhD students (with and without fellowship) are required to pay regional fees, as per existing regulations.

Art. 8 Attendance and Progress Evaluation

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.

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

The results can be as follows:

- admitted - PhD pass;
- not admitted - MPhil pass (for PhD programs that award MPhil);
- not admitted -fail.

Students must be notified about their result.

Only admitted students can enroll on the next year of the PhD program.

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 enrollment has been paid out.

As per art 6, besides "academic" requirements, admission to the second year is subject to the submission of a copy of the permit of stay.

Students who get an MPhil pass can be awarded the MPhil provided that they submit official application within two months (starting from notification of non-admission). After such deadline, the status of student is automatically revoked³ and the MPhil cannot be awarded any more.

The status of student is immediately and automatically revoked for students who get a fail.

The Faculty Board can remove a student from the program during the year if that 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.

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

- 1) Enrollment in another program:
If a student is enrolled in another program, he or she can enroll in a PhD program after suspending the other program. A student already enrolled in a PhD program

³ "decadenza"

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 (art 9)
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.

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;
- work as teaching assistants/teachers and research assistants in conformity with national and internal rules.

Art. 9 PhD program attendance and other activities – Compatibility

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 8.

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 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.

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 promises to significantly qualify the PhD student.

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 8 sets suspension rules).

Art. 10 Withdrawing from the program

Students can withdraw from the program by submitting an ad hoc form (duly filled in). Withdrawal can be motivated by personal reasons.

Withdrawal entails the annulment of the PhD academic curriculum (even if first-year curricular activities can be recognized and the student can be awarded an MPhil (as per art 8 and 16)).

Art. 11 PhD “positions”

PhD positions over the years are as follows:

DR (= PhD student) FROM enrollment TO Aug 31, year X₄

PDC (= PhD candidate): FROM Aug 31, year X TO PhD conferral

PDF (= PhD fellow): FROM PhD conferral TO Aug 31, year X+2

This means that 2 years (after the official end of the program) is the time span that Bocconi grants to its PhD students/graduates to be placed on the job market. During this period they officially appear as part of Bocconi.

Art. 12 Financial support

According to Ministerial rules, in the last two years of the program, each PhD student (with and without fellowship) 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 cannot be less than 10% of the amount of the ministerial fellowship.

Other types of financial support are as follows:

- part-time work as teaching assistant / teacher or research assistant ;
- standard financial support during the “extra year” (All PhD candidates, with or without fellowship, who have successfully completed the last year of the Program and who do not have any other non-temporary/full time contract receive a research assistantship contract for at most one year).
- special financial support for PhD candidates and PhD fellows (PhD candidates and PhD fellows of 4-y programs deemed most promising in terms of top level placement - research activities in Academia or other institutions- are eligible to receive a special financial support);
- financial support for job market placement (the University covers the expenses for conferences to present papers and participate in job market events; moreover the University offers training and procedural support).

Rules and procedures concerning the above-mentioned types of financial support are set in the Annual Academic Planning and are included in the PhD Programs Handbook.

⁴ X=last official year of the program (3rd year for the PhD in Legal Studies and 4th year for other PhD programs).

Art. 13 Thesis Writing and Submission

Procedural steps and timing regarding thesis writing and submission are set in the Annual Academic Planning (in compliance with ministerial provisions).

Students choose their advisor, to be approved by the Faculty Board, among the Bocconi Core Faculty members (including Senior Professors or Emeritus Professors) or among Core Faculty of other Universities, provided that they are part of the PhD Faculty Board.

If the advisor is a member of Bocconi Core Faculty, then he/she may propose to the Faculty Board a co-advisor, who can also be chosen from outside the University; if the advisor is not part of Bocconi Core Faculty, then the co-advisor is mandatory and he/she has to be a member of Bocconi Core Faculty, appointed by the PhD Faculty Board.

In the case of double degree programs, theses are 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.

The thesis has to be submitted to the Faculty Board (or to a Board acting on behalf of it, comprised of at least three members) in order to get the approval for submission to External Reviewers.

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).

Each Reviewer will issue a separate detailed assessment report of the thesis and recommend admission to the public defence or ask for postponement, for a maximum of six months, if significant 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 favorable.

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

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; the Board includes the advisor and at least two members of the Bocconi Core Faculty.

If the advisor is a Senior Professor or a Professor Emeritus, the Thesis Board is comprised of at least three members of the Core Faculty, in addition to the advisor.

Exceptionally, the final examination can be open for External Reviewers, but they cannot be appointed as Thesis Board members.

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.

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.

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 “Thesis co-tutorship agreement” (double doctoral degree) and programs within international training networks

Exceptionally, PhD students can be conferred a double doctoral degree (one from Bocconi University and the other from a foreign partner University).

Requirements are as follows:

- an ad hoc agreement has to be signed by the partner universities (a single agreement is required for each student involved);
- the agreement has to meet both the Italian and the foreign country rules and regulations regarding PhD programs;
- the student has to fulfill all the study plan requirements of the home university as well as those of the partner university (in particular exams and other compulsory activities);
- the student writes a single thesis (supervised by two advisors, one of the home university and the other of the partner university); the dissertation takes place in one of the partner universities with a mixed Thesis Board.

Moreover, Bocconi University can participate in Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Innovative Training Network (ITN) projects in partnership with other Universities that offer Early Stage Researchers the opportunity to join multidisciplinary networks of universities and non-academic institutions, improve their research skills and enhance their career prospects.

Applicants who choose to enroll in a PhD program combined with an ITN project have to meet specific eligibility criteria in addition to the standard Bocconi requirements.

Just one PhD degree is conferred.

Successful candidates receive funding for up to 3 years.

Art. 16 MPhil (Master of Philosophy) Programs

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.

Students registered in the corresponding PhD (any year) and “special students” can be admitted to an MPhil program if they have passed the curricular exams of the first year and:

- have obtained an “MPhil pass” at the end of the year ;
- have obtained a “PhD pass” at the end of the year and voluntary withdraw from the program (art 10).

For students who enrolled for more than one year in a PhD program only the first year curricular activities will be recognized.

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 Students

Special students are students who are not enrolled in a PhD program at Bocconi, but:

- 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;
- or applied for a PhD in another University, were admitted and then realized 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.

Special students can attend all courses and sit the exams of the first year of the PhD program they were admitted to.

Special students are managed as follows:

in PhDs allowing to obtain an MPhil degree:

If students are not enrolled in a doctorate in another University, they are first enrolled in 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 for the next year: if they are selected, they are first admitted to the first year; after admission, and if they fulfil the requirements for a PhD pass, 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 in 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 fulfil the requirements for a PhD pass, 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.

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

Art. 18 Visiting Students

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, students with Bocconi merit-based fellowship benefit from a fellowship supplement (50% of the ministerial fellowship for a period not exceeding 18 months).

All students (with and without Bocconi merit-based fellowship) may benefit from external fellowship by Italian or foreign institutions to finance a study /research period abroad. If they are Bocconi merit-based fellowship recipients, such fellowship can be combined with Bocconi fellowship (this being the only case of overlapping fellowships).

The PhD Program Director will decide which exams passed abroad by a student can be validated (no cap is set for exams taken abroad).

Incoming students are students enrolled in PhD programs at other Universities who only wish to attend Bocconi lectures or take 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 take 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 formal agreement had been previously reached between the Program Director of their University and the Bocconi PhD Program Director about the qualitative standing of the student and the duration of the stay.

In case of mutual student exchange between Universities over the same academic year, no fees are charged to incoming visiting students.

In other cases, incoming visiting students shall pay the fees established by the University Board; current fees:

- A fixed amount if they only attend lectures (regardless of the number of courses attended)
- A variable amount if they attend lectures and take exams.

Art. 19 Auditing Students

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

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.

Fees are the same as those charged to free movers hosted by BSc and MSc programs.

Auditing students shall pay a variable fee related to the number of hours of lesson attended and a fixed fee in case they want to take the exams (irrespective of the number)

Art. 20 Code of conduct

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

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.

For more details on Students' conduct, the rules of the Code of Academic Integrity for Bocconi Students, published on Bocconi University web site, shall apply.

Art. 21 Final rules and regulations

The above rules and regulations apply to students enrolled as from a.y. 2013-14 (when Ministerial Decree 45; February 8th entered into force).

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances (eg. a health emergency), the School Deans may decide on matters concerning Annual Academic Planning, subject to notification to or ratification by the competent University body.

For all aspects not expressly mentioned or governed in this document, the rules of the PhD Programs Handbook published in the University web site shall apply.

This document is issued in English and in Italian language, for any doubts, questions of interpretation, conflicts of any kind the Italian version shall prevail.