

# HANDBOOK

## PHD PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

### YEARS 2023-2026

THIS VERSION APPLIES FROM 1 NOVEMBER 2023 TO THE PHD STUDENTS  
ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24 (39<sup>TH</sup> COHORT)

THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE UPDATED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR  
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## Welcome to the PhD Programme in International Studies

BY PROF. STEFANO SCHIAVO, DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The contemporary world is in **dynamic evolution and thus full of uncertainty, challenges, and opportunities**. The conventional reference points that policy-makers and academics had used to understand the international system no longer provide the certainty they once did. The international system is still dominated by States as main actors but they must contend with a range of other actors that can now influence processes and outcomes, from organizations such as the European Union to individuals and associations making their voices heard in civil society. With its PhD Programme, the School of International Studies seeks **to address these challenges** and the consequently and rapidly increasing demand for internationally oriented professionals and academics who are **capable of transcending disciplinary boundaries**.

The School of International Studies at the University of Trento is in many ways an ideal setting for such a Programme. It is interdisciplinary in nature – drawing from law, economics, political science, sociology and history so that students can pursue advanced research in a broad variety of the issues characterising the contemporary international system and cutting across academic boundaries. Moreover, the University of Trento is among the most internationally oriented universities in Italy. The School's international vocation is reflected not only in its course offerings but also in its wide range of activities (e.g., seminars, workshops, conferences) and agreements with international partners (e.g. exchange programmes, joint research activities, internship programmes). The international dimension is also characteristic of the diverse composition of its past and current student body. The School of International Studies at the University of Trento is in many ways an ideal setting for such a Programme. It is interdisciplinary in nature – drawing from law, economics, political science, sociology, philosophy and history so that students can pursue advanced research in a broad variety of the issues characterising the contemporary international system and cutting across academic boundaries. This is reflected in the activities and events organised by the School's different research clusters, which aim at bridging disciplinary divides and bringing Master students, PhD students and Faculty members together.

Moreover, the University of Trento is among **the most internationally oriented universities in Italy**. The School's international vocation is reflected not only in its course offerings but also in its wide range of activities (e.g., seminars, workshops, conferences) and **agreements with international partners** (e.g. exchange programmes, joint research activities, internship programmes). The international dimension is also characteristic of the diverse composition of its past and current student body.

Besides the PhD Programme, the School offers three **Master's Degree Programmes**: the Master's in European and International Studies (MEIS), a joint Master's Degree in International Security Studies (MISS) with the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa, both taught entirely in English, and the International Master in Security, Intelligence and Strategic Studies, a 24 month Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree awarded by a consortium of four universities: University of Glasgow (UK), City Dublin University (Ireland), Charles University in Prague (Czech Republic), University of Trento. Our **alumni have begun to assume important positions in the academic and policy-making worlds**, drawing on the skills they acquired while at the School. After more than ten years of PhD and Master's programmes and with over 500 graduates, the School set up an Alumni Network that allows keeping track of their achievements and exchange with them. We are proud of what they have achieved and we look forward to helping you develop your understanding of the contemporary world.

I am very pleased that you have chosen the School of International Studies at the University of Trento as the venue for your doctoral studies, and I am confident will find your stay an enriching experience, as many before you did.

Welcome to the School and good luck!

## 1. Presentation

The Graduate School of International Studies was founded in June 2001 with the objective of creating a centre at the University of Trento to study some of the most pressing issues facing the contemporary world. The PhD Programme in International Studies, launched in 2004, aims to provide highly qualified young scholars with the opportunity to **develop analytical and research skills that will lead to successful academic and policy-oriented careers.**

The Programme's mission is to prepare PhDs for competition in the international academic job market as well as to pursue careers in international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Admission to the Programme is highly competitive and is open to citizens of any country in possession of a graduate degree in disciplines related to International Studies.

The PhD Programme **combines both structured coursework and individual research.** In the first year, the PhD students take a range of classes and participate in a series of seminars. Students choose their own research projects, taking into consideration the resources available in the School.

The University of Trento has a broad range of international agreements with other universities, research institutes, and international organisations that facilitate research periods abroad. In addition, the School makes funds available for field research and travel to conferences.

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### WHO IS WHO

The Programme Bodies are the PhD Programme Committee (Faculty), the Programme Coordinator, and the Vice-Coordinator.

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### COORDINATOR

The Programme Coordinator is elected for a term of three years and can only be re-elected once for a consecutive term.

**Paolo ROSA**, a Professor of Political Science, has been serving as the Programme Coordinator since April 2018. He started his second term in April 2021.

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### VICE-COORDINATOR

The Vice-Coordinator is nominated by the Coordinator from the members of the Programme Committee.

**Stefano BENATI**, who is a Professor of Quantitative Methods, currently holds the position.

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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<b>Name SURNAME</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Research Area</b>
Pejman ABDOLMOHAMMADI	p.abdolmohammadi@unitn.it	Modern History and Politics of the Middle East - Iranian politics
Antonino ALÌ	antonino.ali@unitn.it	EU Law, Protection of Fundamental Rights in Europe, Terrorism
Luisa ANTONIOLLI	luisa.antoniolli@unitn.it	Comparative Law, EU Law, Private Law
Stefano BENATI	stefano.benati@unitn.it	Voting Games and Power Indexes, Statistic Methods for Clustering and Ranking, Portfolio Models and Applications
Luigi BONATTI	luigi.bonatti@unitn.it	Growth Theory and Theory of Sustainable Development, Macroeconomics and International Economics, Rationality and Public Choices
Matteo BORZAGA	matteo.borzaga@unitn.it	International Labour Law, EC Labour Law and Comparative Labour Law with particular regard to the German Law system
Manuela BRAGAGNOLO	manuela.bragagnolo@unitn.it	History of knowledge, Legal History, History of political thought, Early Morden history
Paolo CARTA	paolo.carta@unitn.it	Political Theory, History of Political Thought, Political Philosophy
Anna CASAGLIA	anna.casaglia@unitn.it	Political and Economic Geography, Border Studies and Bordering Processes, Urban Geography
Mauro CASELLI	mauro.caselli@unitn.it	International Economics, Development Economics, Applied Econometrics
Andrea CRESCENZI*	andrea.crescenzi@cnr.it	International and European Law; Human Rights; International Disarmament Law; Environmental Law.
Andrea DI NICOLA	andrea.dinicola@unitn.it	Criminology, Global Criminology, Study of Transnational Organised Crime, Crime Prevention

<b>Name SURNAME</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Research Area</b>
Sofia GRAZIANI	sofia.graziani@unitn.it	History of contemporary China, China's Communist Youth League; China-Italy relations during the Cold War, China-Africa relations, China's soft power strategies, Chinese political language and terminology
Sondra FACCIO	sondra.faccio@unitn.it	International law, International economic law, International investment law and arbitration, Private international law
Michela FACCIOLO	michela.faccioli-1@unitn.it	Economic valuation of non-market (mostly environmental) goods and services; environmental policy; social preferences; public economics; economics of food, health and the environment
Paolo FORADORI	paolo.foradori@unitn.it	International Politics, International Security, Non-proliferation
Andrea FRACASSO	andrea.fracasso@unitn.it	International Economics, European Economics, Monetary Economics
Emanuela FRONZA Joining the GSC from outside the University of Trento	emanuela.fronza@unibo.it	Criminal law. International and European criminal law. Comparative criminal law. Internationalisation of criminal systems.
Sara LORENZINI	sara.lorenzini@unitn.it	Cold War History, Decolonization, North-South relations, and Environmental History
Emanuele MASSETTI	emanuele.massetti@unitn.it	Political parties; ethno-territorial politics; the politics of institutional reforms; the politics of European (dis) integration; populism; the politics of immigration
Stefano PALESTINI	stefano.palestini@unitn.it	International Relations Theory, Democratization and Autocratization, Comparative Transnational and Regional Governance, Latin American and Inter-American Politics
Giacomo PALLANTE	giacomo.pallante@unitn.it	Environmental and Climate Change Economics, Development Economics, International Governance of the Environment and Climate Finance, Evaluation of Environmental goods and services, Applied microeconomics

Name SURNAME	Email	Research Area
Louisa PARKS	<a href="mailto:louisa.parks@unitn.it">louisa.parks@unitn.it</a>	Transnational Social Movements, Civil Society, European Union Politics, European Parliament, Global Environmental Politics, Political Ecology
Marco PERTILE	<a href="mailto:marco.pertile@unitn.it">marco.pertile@unitn.it</a>	The Law of Armed Conflicts, International Law and Natural Resources, Human Rights Protection
Arlo POLETTI	<a href="mailto:arlo.poletti@unitn.it">arlo.poletti@unitn.it</a>	Political economy of trade, Political economy of international regulation, Global governance
Paolo ROSA	<a href="mailto:paolo.rosa@unitn.it">paolo.rosa@unitn.it</a>	Foreign Policy Analysis, Italy's Foreign and Military Behaviour, Chinese Politics, Strategic Cultures, Non-proliferation, Quantitative Analysis of Conflicts, Peace Research
Alessandra RUSSO	<a href="mailto:alessandra.russo@unitn.it">alessandra.russo@unitn.it</a>	Political and social sciences
Stefano SCHIAVO	<a href="mailto:stefano.schiavo@unitn.it">stefano.schiavo@unitn.it</a>	International Economics, Network Analysis, International Trade, Food Security
Jens WOELK	<a href="mailto:jens.woelk@unitn.it">jens.woelk@unitn.it</a>	Comparative Constitutional Law, Federalism/Regionalism, Minority-protection

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## REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PHD STUDENTS

The elections for PhD Representatives are conducted online in December and the vote is kept confidential. The PhD Representatives participate in the following activities:

- They attend the Programme Committee meetings only to discuss issues related to the overall progress of the PhD Programme and the courses. Before the meeting, they may gather inputs from all PhD students. The representatives are also encouraged to take additional initiatives like conducting surveys among PhD students and collecting ideas, questions, and suggestions.
- They attend the School's Council meetings, held once a month, where they discuss topics related to teaching and services for the students.
- They also attend the University Committee of PhD Students and Research Fellows ([www.unitn.it/en/ateneo/51090/committee-of-phd-students-and-grant-holders](http://www.unitn.it/en/ateneo/51090/committee-of-phd-students-and-grant-holders)).

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## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Silvia TOMASELLI ([silvia.tomaselli@unitn.it](mailto:silvia.tomaselli@unitn.it)) - Assistant to the SIS Director

Galina KAMBUROVA ([galina.kamburova@unitn.it](mailto:galina.kamburova@unitn.it), [phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it)) - PhD Programme Office

UniTrento PhD office – humanities area ([phd.office-cssh@unitn.it](mailto:phd.office-cssh@unitn.it))

## 2. Academic Year Calendar - 2023-24

### ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Fall Courses 01.11.2023 – 31.01.2024

Winter Break 22.12.2023 – 07.01.2024

Exams / Papers 01.02.2024 – 29.02.2024

Spring Courses 01.03.2024 – 31.05.2024

Spring Break 29.03.2024 – 02.04.2024

Exams / Papers 01.06.2024 – 31.07.2024

Welcome Meeting – 8 November 2023

Guest Lectures / Seminars – October 2023 - June 2024

Proposal Submissions due (39° cohort) – September 2024

Graduate Student Conference (39° cohort) – October 2024

### HOLIDAYS

1.11.2023 - All Saint's Day / Ognissanti

8.12.2023 - Immaculate Conception

25.12.2023 - Christmas Day / Natale

26.12.2023 - Saint Stephan's Day / Santo Stefano

01.01.2024 - New Year's' Day / Capodanno

06.01.2024 – Epiphany / Befana

31.03.2024 - Easter Sunday / Pasqua

01.04.2024 - Easter Monday / La Pasquetta,

25.04.2024 - Liberation Day / Festa della Liberazione

01.05.2024 - Labor Day / Festa del Lavoro

02.06.2024 - Republic Day / Festa della Repubblica

26.06.2024 - Saint Vigilius of Trent / San Vigilio

15.08.2024 - Assumption Day / Ferragosto



### 3. Overview of The Programme

The PhD Programme is interdisciplinary and includes structured coursework, a research period outside of Italy, and the development of a research dissertation. In addition to these requirements, students are expected to actively participate in guest lectures and seminars organized by the School of International Studies, as well as engage in autonomous study.

For a detailed description of the courses, please visit the Doctoral Programme website.

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#### ROAD MAP

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##### 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

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###### 1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER

###### Courses:

Research safety and ethics

Major Issues in International Affairs 1

Assessment: Research essay (see § 4)

Quantitative Methods

Assessment: Exam

Qualitative Research Methods in International Studies

Assessment: Exam

Academic Writing for International Studies and the Social Sciences

Assessment: Class participation and completion of assignments

###### Guest Lectures

Participation in Guest Lectures and seminars organised by SIS and other Departments (min. 10 hrs)<sup>1</sup>

Assessment: Critical response (see § 4)

To Do: Submit a list of the Guest Lectures attended to the PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it))

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###### 2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER

###### Courses:

Major Issues in International Affairs 2

Assessment: Research essay (see § 4)

Proposal Writing for International Studies

Assessment: Class participation and completion of assignments

###### Guest Lectures

Participation in Guest Lectures and seminars organized by SIS and other Departments (min. 10 hrs)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Counted 2 hours each

Assessment: Critical response (see § 4)

To Do: Submit a list of the Guest Lectures attended to the PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it))

### **Organization of research**

Two meetings with the Supervisor

*Assessment:* Supervision Record

**Choose your supervisor** (see § 7)

**Research and Preparation of Research Proposal**

**Graduate Student Conference** (see § 5)

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## 2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

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### 3<sup>RD</sup> SEMESTER

#### **Courses**

Dissertation Writing for International Studies - 1

*Assessment:* Class participation and completion of assignments

#### **Organization of research and elaboration of the Thesis**

**Regular meetings with the Supervisors and Co-Supervisors<sup>2</sup>**

*Assessment:* Supervision Record

#### **Draft Review of the Relevant literature**

Deadline: end January 2025

#### **Guest Lectures**

Participation in Guest Lectures and seminars organized by SIS and other Departments

*Assessment:* Submit a list of Guest Lectures attended to the PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it))

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### 4<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER

During this semester, PhD students often travel abroad to conduct research, gain experience in research institutions, archives, and international organizations, and collect vital information to begin writing their dissertation. This period is critical for students to expand their knowledge, broaden their perspectives, and develop their research skills. By travelling abroad, students can explore different cultures, network with other researchers in their field, and access resources that may not be available in their home country. Overall, this semester is an essential opportunity for PhD students to enhance their academic and professional development and prepare themselves for their future careers.

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<sup>2</sup> Starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester PhD students are required to have two meetings per semester with their Supervisor, and document them using a Supervision Record.

**Research (abroad) and elaboration of thesis**

**Meetings with supervisor**

*Assessment:* Supervision record

**Draft chapter of Thesis**

*Assessment:* Evaluation by the Supervisor

*Deadline:* end of September

**Report of the second-year research activities**, in particular those performed abroad

*Deadline:* September 2025

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3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

5<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER

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**Organization of research and elaboration of the thesis**

**Meetings with supervisor**

*Assessment:* Supervision Record

**Research and elaboration of the thesis**

**Tutoring, Teaching assistantship, Vocational training, Soft Skills training,  
Writing papers and Projects**

6<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER

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**Courses:**

Dissertation Writing - 2

*Assessment:* class participation and completion of assignments

**Elaboration of thesis**

**Meetings with supervisor**

*Assessment:* Supervision Record

**Presentations of Thesis Chapter at the School**

As part of their preparations for the final examination, doctoral students are required to deliver presentations on portions of their research work in seminars hosted by the institution. During these seminars, external examiners will evaluate the outcomes of the dissertation that the students are expected to defend. The Dissertation Writing Workshop and presentations serve as a platform for students to receive feedback during the development of their dissertation.

**Request** to supervisor/PhD Programme Committee **for admission to the thesis review procedure** in order to be awarded the degree of “Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)”.

Deadline: September 2026

**Thesis submission**

**PhD Completion Report submission**

#### 4. Guideline for 1<sup>st</sup> Year Papers

##### CRITICAL RESPONSE

As part of the coursework, it is required of you to produce a critical response to one of the Guest Lectures that you attended during the First and Second Semester Terms. The aim of this essay is to critically analyse the issues raised during the lecture, rather than to provide a summary of the lecture. The essay should be approximately 1000 words, with a tolerance of 10% either way, and should exclude references. Submissions should be made by the following deadlines:

- Tuesday **6 February 2024** - for the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester Term
- Friday **18 June 2024** - for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Term

Please note that late submissions will result in a deduction of marks. We advise you to start working on your essay well in advance of the deadline to ensure that you have enough time to produce a high-quality, well-researched essay.

##### PROCEDURE

- Please send your essay to The PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it)) in both .doc and .pdf formats. Once the essay has been reviewed, the PhD Programme
- Office will notify you of the grade you received (using the A, B, C grading system) and provide any comments made by the reviewer.

##### RESEARCH ESSAY

In accordance with the Interdisciplinary Seminar, it is required to produce a Research Essay on a specific topic that has been mutually agreed with the instructor. The essay must be at least 5000 words, with a tolerance of plus or minus ten percent, and you must undertake extensive additional reading beyond what has been assigned to you during the seminar. The essay should adhere to the stylistic conventions of the field, such as in-text citations for the social sciences and footnotes for law. You are expected to submit the essay by the following deadlines:

- Tuesday **20 February 2024** for the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester Term;
- Friday **27 June 2024** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Term.

Kindly take note that any late submissions will be subjected to a penalty.

We trust that you will approach this task with the level of professionalism and expertise that is expected of you in an academic setting.

#### PROCEDURE

- To submit your essay for evaluation in the PhD Programme, send it in both .doc and .pdf formats to the PhD Programme Office (phd@sis.unitn.it).
- Your essay will be graded using the A, B, C system by the instructor assigned to it. Sometimes, instructors may prefer to meet with students to discuss their essays.
- After the lecturer reviews your essay, the PhD Programme Office will inform you of your grade and forward any comments made by the instructor.

### 5. Graduate Student Conference

PhD students are expected to prepare their dissertation proposal **by the conclusion of the second semester** and present it to the Graduate Student Conference (GSC). This conference is the initial opportunity for the students to present an outline of their work in public.

By the end of their first year, students should possess a clear comprehension of their specific research question(s), how to address them, and how their work will eventually contribute to their dissertation. To achieve this, students must have a comprehensive understanding of the literature, the ability to identify gaps in the existing research, and to suggest how their work will fill those gaps. The proposal should also discuss the primary methodological approaches employed and how they will aid in answering the research questions. It is also essential to discuss the data and its availability.

The GSC marks a pivotal milestone and determines admission to the second year of the PhD programme.

#### PROCEDURE

- To submit your dissertation proposal, please send it in .pdf format along with the abstract in .doc and .pdf formats to the PhD Programme Office at phd@sis.unitn.it.
- One week prior to the Conference, the abstracts will be published on the website, allowing both the Faculty members and the PhD students to actively participate. During the conference, the audience will ask questions, and students will receive feedback from their supervisors on their presentation.
- A board of professors will evaluate each presentation and assign a grade using the A, B, C system.

### 6. Attendance and Exams

PhD students are expected to fully engage in a rigorous course schedule right from the start. Attendance is mandatory for all courses, including the SIS Guest Lecture Series and other seminars and activities.

Any absence must be justified, except for approved periods abroad or participation in conferences or similar events. You should notify the SIS PhD Programme Office (phd@sis.unitn.it) of any absence.

In case of failure, you will be allowed only one re-sit in an exam or re-submission of the paper.

## 7. Supervisor, Co-Supervisor and Advisor

The PhD Programme Committee is responsible for assigning a supervisor and one or more co-supervisors to each doctoral student<sup>3</sup>.

The appointed supervisor and co-supervisor are tasked with overseeing the research progress of the PhD student, supervising the dissertation writing, approving research budget expenses, research periods abroad, conference participation, and summer/winter school attendance. In addition, they are expected to provide guidance and support in the pursuit of the candidate's academic or professional career.

The continuation of the programme is contingent upon regular progress reports submitted by the supervisors and co-supervisors. Students are advised to maintain regular communication with their supervisors and co-supervisors and to keep them informed of their research progress.

During the first academic year, by June, every PhD student is required to submit a formal request to the PhD Programme Committee for the appointment of a supervisor and co-supervisor. The student may also suggest the name of a potential advisor from a different discipline. It is important for the student to confirm the willingness of the proposed supervisors to accept them as a PhD student before submitting their request. All requests should be directed to the Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it)).

The Committee will approve the request or provide an alternative after consultation with the PhD student if the request cannot be approved. If a PhD student fails to submit a request, the PhD Programme Committee may appoint a supervisor and co-supervisor on their behalf.

## 8. Admission to the Subsequent Year

### ADMISSION TO THE 2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

In order to gain admission to the second year of the PhD program, students must satisfy specific requirements. First and foremost, they are expected to **attend all the courses, lectures, and seminars** scheduled for their first year, and they must **pass the first- and second-semester seminar exams or successfully complete the assigned papers**. Additionally, students are required to **defend their research proposal during the Graduate Student Conference** presentation.

In October, the PhD Programme Committee formally approves admission to the second year. Once this approval is granted, the Central PhD Office of the University ([phd.office-cssh@unitn.it](mailto:phd.office-cssh@unitn.it)) will notify students of their registration for the following year.

We recommend that students thoroughly review these guidelines and ensure they are fully compliant in order to progress to the second year of the program.

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<sup>3</sup> See also the Art. 8 of The Regulations of the PhD Programme in International Studies

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## ADMISSION TO THE 3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

To be eligible for admission to the third year of the PhD program, students are required to meet certain criteria. These criteria include:

- submission of a review of the relevant literature to their supervisor by the end of the third semester, which falls in January.
- submission of at least one draft chapter of their dissertation to their supervisor by the end of the fourth semester.
- receipt of a positive evaluation from their supervisor based on their research activities during the second year, particularly those conducted abroad.

In the event that the Supervisor raises concerns about the quality and quantity of work produced, a board of professors can be convened to review the matter at hand. The panel shall make a determination regarding the student's progress in the program based on a thorough examination of the evidence presented.

In October, the PhD Programme Committee grants formal approval for admission to the third year. Upon approval, students will be notified by the Central PhD Office of the University ([phd.office-cssh@unitn.it](mailto:phd.office-cssh@unitn.it)) regarding their registration for the following year.

## 9. Dissertation

A dissertation is a scholarly work that showcases an individual's ability to conduct original research and provide a novel perspective on the research topic by engaging in academic discourse with a critical understanding and effectively communicating research findings. This self-directed and independent research project is an essential requirement in academia that contributes significantly to one's research credentials. The dissertation must be an autonomous and individual piece of research that demonstrates the candidate's research skills, including the ability to design and execute a research plan, analyze and interpret data, and communicate research findings effectively.

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## STEPS TOWARDS A DISSERTATION

Commencing post-graduate research from the outset is an imperative undertaking. The first academic year provides a plethora of opportunities, such as courses, conferences, discussions, and multidisciplinary and methodological classes, that foster an environment of intellectual stimulation and assistance for students to formulate their initial research question(s).

At the culmination of the first year, students are required to present a research proposal at the Graduate Student Conference, which serves as a blueprint for the development of the research project across the following semesters.

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## FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

Dissertations in International Studies, while not adhering to any set length, are commonly observed to span between 80,000 to 100,000 words, exclusive of footnotes, bibliography, and appendices. The manuscript must be double-spaced with reasonable margins on all sides.

The title page must feature the University logo, the dissertation title, the candidate's full name, the name of the School and the University, the Supervisor and Advisor(s) name(s), if any, the name of the PhD Programme, and the submission date.

Following the title page, the abstract must be presented and should not extend beyond 300 words.

While there is no prescribed citation style, students must ensure accuracy and consistency in the citation of their research sources by adopting one of the most commonly used citation styles within their research field, such as Chicago, Harvard, or Blue Book.

Depending on the discipline, dissertations can be structured as a monograph, which is typically observed in Law and Political Science, or as a series of articles/collection of papers, which is common in Economics. The final structure of the dissertation must be agreed upon with the supervisor in accordance with the standards of the respective discipline.

## 10. Final Examination

### EVALUATION OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

Upon completion of the Programme, the PhD student is required to apply for admission to the thesis review procedure before the end of the final academic year. This is a necessary step in order to be conferred with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)<sup>4</sup>.

In the event that a student's results are deemed to have attained a sufficient level of scientific merit, the Doctoral Programme Committee shall delegate the responsibility of evaluation to two or more appointed referees.

### DOCTORAL PROGRAMME EXTENSION

If there are proven reasons why the thesis cannot be presented by the deadline, and a request detailing these reasons is received from the Doctoral student, the Doctoral Programme Committee can extend the deadline for the request to be admitted to the thesis review procedure, by a period not exceeding 12 months longer than the usual duration of the Doctoral Programme. The candidate wishing to ask for the extension must present their request, detailing the reasons, to the Doctoral Programme Director at least 30 days before the end date of the final academic year. An extension to the deadline for presenting the request for admission to the thesis review does not entitle the student to additional scholarship payments.

In cases where a doctoral student is unable to present their thesis by the deadline, they may apply for an extension from the Doctoral Programme Committee, provided that valid reasons for the delay can be established. The extension period granted by the Committee cannot exceed 12 months beyond the usual duration of the Doctoral Programme. To request an extension, the candidate must submit a detailed application outlining the reasons for the delay to the Doctoral Programme Coordinator at least 30 days before the end of the final academic year. It is important to note that any extension granted for the submission of the request for admission to the thesis review procedure does not entitle the student to additional scholarship payments.

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<sup>4</sup> See Art. 29 of The University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes



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## ADMISSION TO THE FINAL EXAMINATION

The referees are tasked with providing a rigorous written analysis of the thesis, including a comprehensive evaluation of its content and structure. Following their assessment, they may recommend either the admission of the thesis to public defence or a six-month postponement, should major revisions be required. It should be noted that the referees' evaluations are a critical element in the thesis review process and play a vital role in determining the thesis's overall quality. Their evaluations are considered expert opinions and should be taken seriously by all parties involved.

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## DOCTOR EUROPÆUS

The School of International Studies provides an exclusive opportunity for Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students to acquire the "Doctor Europæus" distinction, in conjunction with the award of a PhD degree. The PhD Program in International Studies has a structured approach that makes it easy for students to fulfill the requirements for this accolade. To express their interest in obtaining this label, PhD students must inform the PhD Programme Committee when applying for admission to the thesis review procedure.

The criteria for earning the "European Doctor" label, as outlined in the 1991 Salamanca Congress declaration by the Confederation of European Union's Rector's Conferences, are as follows:

1. The PhD thesis defense should involve assessments from at least two professors representing higher education institutions in two European countries other than where the thesis will be defended.

*N.B. Given that the External Referees of the Examination Committee are obligated to produce a report, this criterion is fulfilled if they are affiliated with an EU university outside Italy.*

2. At least one member of the jury must be from a higher education institution in a European country different from where the PhD thesis is defended.

3. A portion of the defense must be conducted in one of the official languages, which should differ from the language(s) of the country where the PhD thesis is defended.

*N.B. As all Dissertation Defenses at the School of International Studies are held in English, this requirement is met by all PhD students.*

4. The PhD Thesis must have been partially developed during a research period lasting a minimum of one trimester in another European country.

In coordination with their Supervisor, students must select the location for their research period abroad based on their thesis subject. Opting for another European country fulfils the fourth criterion for obtaining the European Doctor label. PhD candidates are expected to provide a certificate from the institute where the research was conducted, verifying the duration and nature of their stay.

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## PROCEDURE <sup>5</sup>

Prior to commencing the application process, it is imperative that students seek the guidance of their thesis supervisor to assess the status of their thesis.

To initiate the application for admission to the thesis review procedure, students are required to complete an online application process via the **Esse3** system. Elaborate instructions on the online application process can be found at <https://www.unitn.it/en/ateneo/1932/final-examination>.

PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it)) shall furnish the PhD students with comprehensive information about their designated referees and guidelines on electronic submission of necessary documents. These documents include the thesis in PDF format and a report summarizing their activities throughout the Program (PhD Completion Report).

Referees shall evaluate the student's thesis and propose one of the following outcomes:

- Admitted without Revisions;
- Minor Revision: This indicates the student's admission to the final examination/PhD defense;
- Major Revision: In this case, the student is required to resubmit a revised version of the thesis along with a rebuttal letter within six months. After the postponement period elapses, the doctoral candidate will be eligible for the final examination regardless. Referees will provide a second written evaluation, taking into account the suggested adjustments or additions.

Upon conclusion of the evaluation process by both referees, the PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it)) will forward the reviews to each PhD student via email.

The PhD Programme Committee shall put forth a proposal for the composition of the Final Examination Commission to the Rector, which may include the designated referees. Subsequently, PhD candidates shall receive an official notification letter from the Central PhD Office of the University ([phd.office-cssh@unitn.it](mailto:phd.office-cssh@unitn.it)). This letter shall specify the Commission's composition, the examination date, and the examination location.

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## PUBLICATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The Central PhD Office at the University of Trento hereby notifies all PhD candidates that they will receive information on the procedure for uploading their dissertations in the Research Registry of the University of Trento (IRIS). This registry is designed to facilitate the collection, management, dissemination, and preservation of research production data. For additional information, kindly visit <https://iris.unitn.it>.

It is required that all theses submitted be in electronic format, along with the related disclaimer, must be uploaded at least 10 days prior to the scheduled final examination date.

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<sup>5</sup> See Art 15 of The Regulations of the PhD in International Studies

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## FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE EXAMINATION

Dissertations are publicly defended, and some members of the Commission can participate remotely through video conferencing. Final Examinations are individualised and candidate-specific, with a substantive and rigorous approach that lasts between 90 minutes and 3 hours. These examinations are conducted exclusively in English.

During the Examination, the candidate is required to defend their work and demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the academic literature in their field of research. The Examination Commission closely scrutinizes the originality of the candidate's work and its contribution to the existing academic literature. The Commission evaluates the candidate's ability to explain and discuss their research and its outcomes in a clear and concise manner.

### 11. Rights and Duties of PhD Students

The rights and obligations of doctorate studies are governed by two fundamental documents, namely the **University Regulations for Doctoral Courses** and the **Regulations of the PhD Programme in International Studies**. It is imperative for PhD students to acquaint themselves with the contents of both documents, which are accessible on the School's website ([www.unitn.it/drsis/134/handbook-and-regulations](http://www.unitn.it/drsis/134/handbook-and-regulations)). Familiarizing oneself with these guidelines is essential to ensure that students uphold their responsibilities and exercise their rights as doctoral candidates.

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## EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

The doctoral program is considered tantamount to a full-time employment engagement. Authorization for external collaborations will only be granted if they are compatible with the doctoral program in terms of subject matter, which must be in alignment with the student's research, and time commitment, which must be part-time. Students are required to accord priority to all classes and other activities at SIS.

Moreover, doctoral students are expected to undertake Teaching Assistant or Tutor positions in the MEIS or MISS Masters programs during their third year of study to acquire teaching experience, with a maximum commitment of 40 hours. Additionally, students should be cognizant that the doctoral program includes a period of study outside the institution, typically lasting for one semester. It is essential to adhere to the strict three-year time limit.

Requests for external collaborations will be evaluated based on the above considerations, with specific attention given to the subject, contract type, and proposed tasks. Collaboration requests will be authorized only if they meet the following conditions:

- they should be of a relatively short duration;
- they should not exceed one day per week;
- they must align with the student's research in terms of content and tasks, which should focus on research rather than administrative or managerial duties;
- progress should be regularly verifiable;
- collaborations should commence after the first year of the PhD program;

- each student can engage in a maximum of two collaborations.

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#### RESEARCH BUDGET

Each student is allocated a budget for research activities, which may only be utilised for participating in scientific events such as conferences, seminars, and other short-duration events of scientific interest. The use of the budget is subject to the approval of both the supervisor or advisor and the Coordinator. Additional information on the reimbursement of travel expenses utilizing the research budget can be found on the university website.

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#### SCHOLARSHIP INCREASE FOR PERIODS ABROAD

Students who have been awarded a scholarship for a PhD program are eligible to receive a 50% increase in their scholarship if they stay abroad for reasons related to their doctoral research and studies. Detailed information on how to apply for the scholarship increase is available on the website. Please note that this increase is only applicable to those who have been granted a PhD scholarship and have a legitimate reason to be abroad for their research activities.

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#### RESIDENCY

PhD students are encouraged to establish their residence in Trento or its nearby areas by the end of October to become acquainted with the town and the university. Coursework is scheduled to commence at the beginning of November. It's important to note that being present in Trento takes precedence over all other supplementary and individual activities, such as Summer Schools or Conferences. While there are no designated vacation periods, it's worth mentioning that teaching or other academic activities are generally not scheduled in August.

Should PhD students need to change their address, it is essential to notify both the Central PhD Office of the University ([phd.office-cssh@unitn.it](mailto:phd.office-cssh@unitn.it)) and the PhD Programme Office ([phd@sis.unitn.it](mailto:phd@sis.unitn.it)).

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#### INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION

It is a commendable practice that during any public event in which students participate, whether it involves attending a conference or workshop, publishing an article in a newspaper or blog, or providing an interview, they should explicitly state their institutional affiliation as **"PhD Student/Candidate at the School of International Studies, University of Trento."**

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#### PHD ROOM

The dedicated PhD Room, situated on the 4th floor of Via T. Gar 14 (Room n. 406), offers a professional environment. It is fully equipped with computers, a printer, copier, and scanner. You can also enjoy seamless Wi-Fi access throughout the building.

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## ITALIAN AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

International students are strongly recommended to attain a proficient command of Italian. The University's Language Centre (CLA) provides comprehensive Italian language courses, catering to non-native speakers across various proficiency levels.

For additional details, kindly visit the CLA's official website at [www.cla.unitn.it/en](http://www.cla.unitn.it/en).

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## ATTENDANCE, LEAVE AND SANCTIONS

The following selected issues hold particular significance:

**Academic Engagement:** PhD students are required to attend courses, participate in academic activities organized by the PhD Programme, maintain an ongoing commitment to research and study activities, and provide regular progress updates to their respective supervisor.

**Leave of Absence:** Within the standard three-year timeframe, PhD students have the provision to request a leave of absence in circumstances such as maternity or severe documented illness. In all other scenarios, they must obtain express written permission from the PhD Programme Committee. Should a leave of absence extend beyond 30 days, scholarship disbursements will be temporarily suspended.

**Expulsion from the Programme:** The PhD Programme Committee reserves the right to expel PhD students under the following conditions:

- The Committee expresses a negative opinion regarding the PhD student's admission to the subsequent academic year;
- a PhD student undertakes employment, whether part-time or self-employed, without the prior express permission of the PhD Programme Committee;
- unjustified and extended absences.

Please note that scholarships will be automatically terminated should a student be expelled from the Programme.