



REGULATION OF THE DOCTORAL COURSE IN COGNITIVE SCIENCE

Important notice: this document in English is a translation of the original regulations written in Italian and is furnished for information only. In all matters of interpretation, the original Italian version is the sole version to have legal value.



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Art. 1 – Subject of Regulation

1. In accordance with current regulations, this Regulation governs the management of the Doctoral Course in Cognitive Science (hereinafter referred to as “Course”).

Art. 2 - The Doctoral Programme

1. As per Articles 1 and 2 of the Agreement between the University of Trento (Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science) and the Fondazione Bruno Kessler and as per Article 8, paragraph 2, of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes, starting from the 33 cycle, Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science and Fondazione Bruno Kessler shall adopt the Regulation of the Course aimed at regulating its specific objectives, its internal organization and the Code of Conduct for doctoral students.

Art. 3 – Objectives and Scope

1. As an integration to the general objectives of each Doctoral Course as per Article no. 3 of the Regulation of the Doctoral Courses, as agreed with the Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science and Bruno Kessler Foundation, the Course aims at training high-level professional and autonomous figures, able to be in a position of responsibility in activities of:
 - a) Basic Research on cognitive processes as:
 - typical and atypical cognitive development and communication processes;
 - speech production, language comprehension and learning;
 - categorization processes;
 - learning processes;
 - communication skills;
 - social cognition;
 - decision-making processes, deductive reasoning and probabilistic logic;
 - b) Research applied to:
 - Economics (consumers' behavior and managers' business decision-making capacity);
 - Health (reasoning and decision-making processes in medical divisions; evaluation of professional risks and contraction of infections and illnesses; cognitive process evaluation; design and monitoring of neuropsychological interventions and rehabilitation procedures)
 - Clinical Practice (skills in diagnosis and rehabilitation therapy for patients with typical and atypical development)
 - Ergonomic Design Technology (creation and evaluation of multimedia interface and human-machine interactive systems; experimentation with advanced and supporting systems for decision-making processes)



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- Education (training, designing, implementation and evaluation processes in adults' education and social policy; autonomous research concerning new paths of knowledge and identity construction; intercultural relations; professional update of students; design and implementation of e-learning system and multimedia education)
- Work and Organization (analysis and management of careers; transition to work and in the workplace; accident prevention; learning and training in the workplace)
- Society (prejudice and social discrimination, analysis and management of interactions between groups);
- Cognitive ergonomics (design and evaluation of multimedia interfaces and human machine interaction systems, testing of expert systems and support systems for decision-making);
- Automatic analysis of language and human behavior (automatic systems analysis based on cognitive models and empirical data);
- Automatic analysis of social behavior (starting from analysis of experimental data and socio-cognitive models);
- Design and evaluation of socio-technical systems.

Art. 4 – Areas of Study

1. The macro-area of study are:
 - 11th – History, Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology;
 - 9th - Computer Science and Engineering

Art. 5 – General Features

1. The duration of the Course is three years. Every year Calls for Public Application are issued which specify the number of possible applications and grants.
2. The University of Trento publishes the Call for Application in Italian and in English. If discrepancies occur, the Italian version published in the Official Journal shall prevail.
3. Applications to the Doctoral Course are welcome from students who have achieved their higher qualification, independently from their gender, age, nationality, ethnic group or social class.
4. The official languages of the Course are Italian and English.
5. Foreign students are required to reach the elementary level minimum in Italian language at least within the end of the second year.
6. The admission selections are held in Italian or in or English according to the discretion of the Doctoral Course Admission Committee, if the applicant formally demanded and justified this request. The applicant is supposed to show an adequate knowledge of English.
7. Applicants may write their Doctoral thesis in Italian or in English, as agreed with the Director.



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Art. 6 – Bodies of the Doctoral Programme

1. The Bodies of the Doctoral Programme are:
 - a) The Doctoral Programme Committee (Art.12 of the University Regulation for Doctoral Programmes)
 - b) The Coordinator of the Doctoral Programme (Art.13 of the University Regulation for Doctoral Programmes)
 - c) The Executive Committee (Art. 14 of the University Regulation for Doctoral Programmes)

Art. 7 – The Doctoral Programme Committee

1. Without prejudice to the provisions of the national legislation in force and of Articles 6 and 12 of the University Regulation for Doctoral Programmes, the following may participate with voting rights in the Doctoral Programme Committee:
 - a) full or associate professors (for at least half the components) and academic researchers (assistant professors). At least eight of them must be tenured at this University;
 - b) high-level researchers and research managers, or professionals with equivalent positions, in public research organizations, in Italy or abroad;
 - c) Italian or foreign selected experts with proven qualifications.
2. The formal request for participation in the Doctoral Programme Committee shall be forwarded to the Coordinator. Each candidate shall submit the following documents:
 - a) their curriculum vitae;
 - b) a list of the last five (5) years publications: the candidate is supposed to indicate the five publications which she/he considers the most important;
 - c) a declaration of no accreditation in Doctoral Programme Committees of other Universities;
 - d) if the professor/researcher belongs to another University, she/he has to provide the authorization of this University.
3. Further, other people who may participate in the activities of the Committee, without having the right to vote, upon invitation of the Coordinator and only for the discussion of specific items on the agenda, are: people whose contribution is expected to be useful due to their scientific, teaching, technical or financial support to the activities of the Course. In particular:
 - a) the administrative personnel, whose duties are the management of the Course, assistance and written reporting.
 - b) two representatives of the doctoral students with a consulting function and only for issues regarding the general progress of the Programme and the training courses.
4. The Committee meets at least twice a year upon call of the Coordinator.
5. The Doctoral Programme Committee is also called upon request of at least 1/3 of its members.
6. The call is sent with a notice of at least seven days before the meeting. All communicative channels are allowed, provided that the notice is successfully received. The agenda is normally sent out with the call.



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7. Participation in the meetings of the Committee, when not in person, may take place in the following ways:
 - a) individual remote participation: one or more members (except the Director and the Secretary) participate in the meeting by connecting via video/audio-conference from a physical location other than the one where the meeting is actually held, indicated as the meeting location in the convocation;
 - b) remote session: all the members participate remotely, connecting from a physical place other than the one where the Director is located;
 - c) telematic meeting: the members of the Committee cast their vote on one or more specific resolution proposals via institutional e-mail, within a time window defined in the convocation. Recourse to this method is allowed when the Board must deliberate urgently or within a set deadline and it is not possible to convene the members in physical or remote session in time.
8. Remote participation by video/audio-conference is aimed at guaranteeing the widest collegiality of decisions, when for contingent reasons the members are unable to participate in person. It presupposes the possession of the necessary equipment, the responsibility for its failure or defective functioning, as well as the use of telematic technologies that enable, in compliance with the principles of collegiality, good faith and equal treatment: (a) the visual and auditory perception of each participant in relation to the others; (b) the identification of each of them by the Director, assisted by the Secretary; (c) simultaneous connection between the participants on an equal footing; (d) the viewing of the meeting proceedings and the exchange of documents by means of email and/or computer file-sharing systems; (e) the intervention and the expression of open voting in real time on the topics addressed in the discussion and simultaneous decision-making; (f) confidentiality of the meeting and security of data and information.
9. Members are allowed to connect from any place that ensures compliance with the requirements of these Rules, provided that it is neither public nor open to the public.
10. Seats are valid if the majority of the Committee members of full or associate professors and researchers (assistant professors) and high-level researchers are present, net of the justified absent members.
11. Decisions are made through the approval of the majority of the present members. If the votes in favour and against the decision are equally distributed, the vote of the Director make the decision.
12. The minutes of the Committee seats are drafted by the professor with the shortest academic career, who will be assisted by the present administrative personnel. The minutes will be published on the Department Board.
13. The Committee shall carry out all tasks as outlined in the Regulation of Doctoral Courses, to which this Regulation integrally refers.
14. The Doctoral Programme Committee may delegate its duties or part of them to the Executive Committee.

Art. 8 – The Director

1. The Director of the Doctoral Programme Committee shall carry out his/her duties as per Article no. 13 par. 5 of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes.
2. The Director appoints a Vice-Director who replace her/him in case of absence or disease.



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3. The Director is elected for three years and can be re-elected once only, after the end of the first mandate.

Art. 9 – Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee is set up by the Committee of the Doctoral Programme Committee. The Executive Committee is made of four (4) professors or researchers and the Director, who chairs the seats.
2. The Executive Committee follows the regulations of the Doctoral Programme Committee as regards organization and drafting the minutes.
3. The Executive Committee supports the Director as regards the duties per Art. 16 of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes and makes decisions about issues delegated by the Doctoral Programme Committee. The Executive Committee constantly reports the activities to the Doctoral Programme Committee.
4. The Director may delegate specific tasks to the members of the Executive Committee, if these are necessary for the progress of the Course.
5. The Executive Committee serves until the end of the Director's mandate.
6. If a member of the Executive Committee resigns, interrupts the collaboration or is hindered from collaborating, the Director will allow the election of a substitute. The member's mandate is valid until the end of the Executive Committee's mandate.

Art. 10 – Supervisor and Supervisory Committee

1. For each PhD student, the Doctoral Programme Committee appoints a Supervisory Committee (SC) composed of the supervisor, the co-supervisor (according to art. 12, par. 8, lett. h of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes) and a third member who may be internal or external to the Doctoral Programme Committee. At least one of the supervisor and co-supervisor must be a lecturer of the University of Trento and a member of the Doctoral Programme Committee.
2. The supervisor and other members of the Supervisory Committee support and guide the doctoral student in identifying the training requirements that will characterise her/his individual study programme and in the overall definition of the research project, thus supervising the study and research activities and editing the doctoral thesis and ensuring its quality.
3. The Supervisor gives his authorization for expenses on mobility according to the assigned student's budget. If the Supervisor is not a member of the Doctoral Programme Committee, the authorization shall be approved by the Director.
4. The Doctoral Programme Committee may replace the Supervisor who does not respect his/her duties and expel him/her from the Doctoral Programme Committee if they are managers, or professionals.

Art. 11 – Requirements and Admission exam



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1. The requirements for the admission to the Course are regulated by the Art. 18 of the University Regulation for Doctoral Courses. Deadlines are clearly indicated in the Call for Application.

Art. 12 – Institutional training activities

1. The Course is organized in a series of training activities, submitted at the beginning of each academic year in the Study Programme, describing how they will be organized.
2. During the year, the Course organizes seminars, meetings and other events: the PhD student is supposed to take part in these activities and those initiatives promoted by the Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, the Fondazione Bruno Kessler and/or other structures of the University of Trento. The activities have to benefit the cultural training and the research project of the PhD student. The participation to seminars is certified by the signature of attendance and it is part of the evaluation of the PhD student's activity.
3. Before the beginning of the academic year, the Doctoral Programme Committee ratifies the Study Programme and then publishes it on the official Course website.
4. The Study Programme includes:
 - a) list and duration of the courses which shall be activated and relevant calendar, conduct and attendance procedures;
 - b) deadlines for the presentation of individual study programmes and relative approval by the Doctoral Programme Committee.
5. The doctoral student must submit a study plan that that must be previously approved by the Supervisory Committee and then by the Doctoral Programme Committee.
6. Any activity that allows the obtaining of credits is subject to evaluation by the Director of the Course.

Art. 13 – Study and Research Abroad Programme

1. During the second year of the Programme, PhD students are required to spend a period abroad, to carry out research at foreign institutions. The minimum overall time spent abroad is 6 months: this period normally should be continuative in a single location.
2. If the stay is longer than six months, the regulations of the Art. 12, par. 8 (i) of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes are applied.
3. Only in exceptional cases the Doctoral Programme Committee may authorize exceeding the limit of 12 months after having verified the functionality for the research project.

Art. 14 – Admission to the 2nd and 3rd Year and to the Final Examination

1. The admission to the second year is approved by the Doctoral Programme Committee based on the assessment of the Supervisory Committee. The assessment is based on the following requisites:
 - have regularly attended and passed the Doctoral Course first year activities stated in the Study Manifesto;



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- assessment of the research Report based on the description of the research project, on the carried out activities and on an interview with the PhD student;
- assessment form drawn up by the Supervisor on the achievement of the learning objectives;
- number and quality of publications, carrying out of presentations at Conferences or Workshops;
- carrying out of activities not planned in the Study Plan.

The SC can propose:

- admission to the second year;
- admission to the second year under condition;
- non-admission to the second year.

2. The admission to the third year is approved by the Doctoral Programme Committee based on the assessment of the Supervisory Committee. The assessment is based on the following requisites:

- have regularly attended and passed the Doctoral Course second year activities stated in the Manifesto of Studies;
- assessment of the progress of the research project based on its presentation in a public seminar and on a subsequent interview with the PhD student, in which strengths and weaknesses of the research project will be discussed. In the interview will also be a discussion on the action plan, with relative timing, to be conducted in the third year and any expected products/results. These actions may concern the research activity in the strict sense, but also other activities that respond to the educational objectives of the doctorate;
- number and quality of publications, carrying out of presentations at Conferences or Workshops;
- carrying out of activities not planned in the Study Plan;
- assessment form drawn up by the Supervisor on the achievement of the learning objectives.

The SC can propose:

- admission to the third year;
- admission to the third year under condition;
- non-admission to the third year.

3. In order to be admitted to the final examination, PhD students submit the application before the end of the last year.

4. The doctoral thesis has to be presented to the Supervisor within the end of August of the last year.

5. After receiving a recommendation of the Supervisor for the PhD student's thesis admission to final examination, the Doctoral Programme Committee writes its own judgment at this regard and appoints two or more evaluators choosing among professors and researchers at Italian or foreign institution with high profile, not belonging to the University or to other institutions collaborating with the Doctoral Programme, of which at least one must be an academic.

6. The Director sends to the referees the doctoral thesis accompanied by a report on the activities carried out by the student and the list of publications.

7. Referees have responsibility to express an analytical written judgment on the thesis and to propose the admission to public discussion or referral for a period not exceeding six months if significant additions or corrections are necessary.



Art. 15 – Extension

1. 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.
2. An extension to the deadline for presenting the request for admission to the thesis review does not entitle the student to additional scholarship payments. The Doctoral Programme Committee can decide to extend the distribution of a scholarship beyond the end of the final academic year and up to the final examination, for deserving Doctoral students and/or to conclude high-value scientific activities, using the resources indicated in Art. 10, par. 3 of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes.
3. The Doctoral Programme Committee can also approve, considering the financial resources of the Doctoral Programme, for demonstrated scientific need, an extension of the duration of the Doctoral Programme for a period not exceeding 12 months, in which case, the extension of the scholarship is also assured.

Art. 16 – Final Examination and Doctoral title conferral

1. The final examination, that must be held within 6 months as from the official end of the programme unless an extension is granted pursuant to Article 15 above, consist of the public defence of the thesis in front of the Examination Committee.
2. The six-month deadline shall be extended if incompatible with the postponement indicated by the external evaluators.
3. The Doctoral Programme Committee or upon proxy, the Executive Committee, will appoint an Evaluation Committee for the title conferral, for each candidate, as per Chapter VII of the University Regulation for Doctoral Programmes.
4. If some members of the Committee are unable to attend, the final defense session may be held by videoconference. In this case, at least two members (President and Secretary) shall be present.

Art. 17 – Rights and Duties of PhD students

1. Rights and duties of PhD students are established by Article no. 25 of the University Regulation for Doctoral Programmes.

In addition to the provisions of Art. 25 co. 1 and 2 it is established that the place of study and research activity is the Department of Psychology and Cognitive Sciences, unless otherwise requested by the PhD student for reasons related to the research project, subject to authorization by the Supervisor and the Coordinator.

2. In addition to the provisions of Art. 25 co. 3 each PhD student shall:
 - plan the meetings with their Supervisor;
 - agree with the Supervisor on a work plan and the training and research objectives that should be achieved at the beginning of each year, as defined by the Doctoral Programme;



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- follow the scientific training program, as defined by the Doctoral Programme and planned with the Supervisor;
- develop the research project and its objectives and regularly relate this development according to the deadlines;
- discuss problems and difficulties with the Supervisor or the Coordinator, if necessary.

Art. 18 – Financial support for PhD students

1. The University, or the funding body in the case of funded grants, allocates individual financial resources corresponding to 10% of PhD students' grant.
2. Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, according to the availability of budget, will allocate a budget to the PhD students without scholarships.
3. Students may use the financial support for research activity in Italy or abroad.
4. By the end of each academic year, the residual financing are assigned to PhD students to increase their budget for the following year. Students may use their residual financing within the end of the third academic year.

Art. 19 – Activities compatible with the Doctoral Programme

1. As per Art. 26 of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes, PhD students may carry out, as an integral part of their study programme and subject to the authorisation of the Doctoral Course Committee, tutoring activities for undergraduate and graduate students, including paid tutoring, as well as additional training activities, provided they are compatible with attendance of the doctoral course and its training activities. Any additional training activities shall be assigned to doctoral students for a maximum of 40 hours per year.
2. Upon approval of the Doctoral Course Committee and in consultation with the Supervisor, without prejudice to the full-time commitment of the doctorate, PhD students may also carry out limited occasional work activities related to the training framework of the doctorate and/or professional practical traineeship, even if paid.

Art. 20 – Amendments to the Regulation of the Doctoral Programme

1. Amendments to the Regulation of the Doctoral Programme shall be preliminarily approved by Doctoral Programme Committee and by the Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science as per Art.8 of the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes.

Art. 21 – Reference provisions

1. This Regulation completes, for what has been expressly decided, what is established by the current national laws and the University Regulations for Doctoral Programmes, which are anyway directly and fully applicable.