



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

Handbook

**THIS HANDBOOK COVERS ONLY PhD PROGRAMMES
STARTING FROM THE 38TH CYCLE**

PhD



SUMMARY

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. BEFORE ARRIVING | 5 |
| The entry VISA | 5 |
| Collecting Documents..... | 5 |
| 2. AFTER ARRIVING | 6 |
| The Residence Permit..... | 6 |
| The Tax Code | 7 |
| Documents relating to the qualifications | 7 |
| Health Care..... | 8 |
| Further obligations | 8 |
| 3. EXPERIENCING THE UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA | 9 |
| Bank account | 9 |
| Accommodation | 9 |
| Transport..... | 10 |
| Personal services | 11 |
| 4. DURING THE PhD PROGRAMME | 13 |
| PhD Programme Outline..... | 13 |
| Project assignment, Supervisor, Co-supervisor and SSD (Settore Scientifico Disciplinare) | 13 |
| Progression and admission to the following years | 14 |
| Compatibility PhD-Work..... | 14 |
| Compatibility with Medical Specialization Schools | 14 |
| Compatibility with other university programmes | 15 |
| 24 ETCS (CFU) | 15 |
| Tutoring and teaching..... | 15 |
| 5. SCHOLARSHIPS AND RESEARCH FUNDS | 16 |
| Social Security Administration (Gestione separata INPS) | 16 |
| 10% Budget | 16 |
| Positions with Research Grants | 16 |
| Unfunded positions | 16 |
| Executive PhD | 17 |
| Apprenticeship PhD..... | 17 |
| 6. INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES | 18 |
| “Marco Polo” Programme | 18 |
| Scholarship increases for periods spent abroad..... | 18 |
| Cotutelle agreements | 18 |
| Erasmus+ Mobility..... | 18 |
| 7. MANAGING YOUR PhD CAREER | 19 |
| Career Suspension and Extensions..... | 19 |
| Exclusion from the PhD programme..... | 20 |
| Withdrawal from the PhD programme..... | 20 |
| 8. FINISHING YOUR CAREER | 21 |
| Awarding of the PhD degree | 21 |
| After the PhD: unemployment benefits | 21 |
| 9. USEFUL LINKS | 22 |
| 10. HOW TO CONTACT US | 22 |



BEFORE ARRIVING

The entry VISA

Do you come from a country that does not belong to the European Union? You must apply for an entry VISA at the competent Italian Embassy or Consulate and, upon your arrival in Italy, for the residence permit. The procedure for applying for a VISA is different according to the type of VISA required (e.g., for study, research or business purposes).

Click [here](#) for more detailed information. If the assigned position concerns a scholarship, you must apply for a study VISA. In this case, after completing the enrolment procedure it is necessary to register on the [University](#) webpage and apply for “pre-enrolment” for the relevant PhD programme.

In the case of a research grant, we remind you that it is necessary to apply for a research VISA (and NOT for a study one) and you will have to sign a reception agreement with the host Department.

If your position requires a VISA application for business purposes (for example, Apprenticeship position), or for any questions regarding the various procedures, you can contact the DIRI – International Relations Area International Desk and the Italian Embassy/Consulate in your country of origin.

Collecting documents

Before leaving, we recommend you get ready for the obligations to be carried out as soon as you arrive in Italy.

As required by the Call for Applications, for candidates applying for a VISA it is necessary to promptly send a copy of the residence permit to the PhD Unit (or the receipt of the application within 8 days from your arrival, see next chapter). Furthermore, if you have a qualification obtained in non-UE countries, remember to bring with you the original certificates regarding the title detailed in the following section.

AFTER ARRIVING

The Residence Permit

If you come from non-EU countries, upon your arrival in Italy you must apply for a residence permit. On the [University webpage](#), you can find a Vademecum with the necessary information on this topic. Before applying for your residence permit you must:

- have completed your enrolment at the University of Bologna;
- have paid for registration with the National Health Service or have an equivalent insurance (more information [here](#)).

The application for your residence permit must be submitted within 8 working days from your arrival in Italy while the renewal can be requested at least 60 days before the expiration date. The procedure for making the request and the list of the necessary documents is shown [here](#). When you complete the application, it is important to enter an address where you can receive any communications from the Questura.

If necessary, you can request support from the International Desk (diri.visiting@unibo.it) in Bologna or the International Relations Offices of the Campuses of Forlì, Cesena, Ravenna and Rimini.

After applying, promptly send to the PhD Unit (aform.udottricerca@unibo.it):

1. the valid residence permit or the insured receipt issued by the Questura;
2. the Italian tax code issued by the Agenzia delle Entrate (the Italian Revenue Agency, see the next paragraph).

These documents are essential to activate the payment of your scholarship and must reach the PhD Unit no later than the 6th day of the first month of the Programme.

For more information see also:

[The website of the Agenzia delle Entrate](#)

[The website of the Ministry of the Interior](#)

[The website of Poste Italiane](#)

The Tax Code

The Tax Code is a 16-digit alphanumeric code that uniquely identifies natural persons within the Italian territory, for tax and administrative purposes. If you do not have Italian citizenship, for the payment of the scholarship you must send the tax code issued by the Italian Revenue Agency (Agenzia delle Entrate) to the PhD Unit (aform.udottricerca@unibo.it) within the starting date of the PhD programme.

If you do not have a tax code, you must request it in advance by following the instructions on the [University webpage](#).

Documents relating to the qualifications

After the enrolment, within two months from the arrival to Italy, PhD candidates with a degree issued by non-EU institutions must provide a document attesting the validity of the qualification awarded (e.g., **Diploma Supplement, Declaration of Value - Dichiarazione di Valore in loco** - of the **second-cycle degree** issued by the Italian Diplomatic authorities located in the country in which the qualification was awarded, recognition of foreign qualifications carried out by agencies like the ones of ENIC-NARIC network). For more information, please check the [University website](#).

The University reserves the right to request the documents attesting the validity of the awarded qualifications also for those issued in EU countries.

Please note that you could be excluded from the PhD programme (check the Call for Applications for more details) if you fail providing the requested documents or if the documents do not meet the admission requirements.

EXPERIENCING THE UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA

Health Care

The registration with the National Health Service (SSN) usually lasts as long as the Residence Permit. As soon as you register with the National Health Service, the AUSL (the local Health Care provider) issues a new health-care blue card (as seen in the example above) through the Agenzia delle Entrate. The card lasts as long as your Residence Permit and is sent to the fiscal residence registered in the Agenzia delle Entrate database). If you have changed your address, before going to AUSL to register with the National Health Service you must communicate the new one to the Agenzia delle Entrate. (Click [here](#) for more information about the card). Information on how to register with the SSN can be found in the following [webpage](#).

You can choose a general practitioner in the city where your Campus is located (find out how by clicking [here](#)). There you can also find information regarding health care for students off-site, what to do if you need medical attention and the numbers to call in case of an emergency.



If you are an international student, you can consult [the dedicated page](#) of the University website.

When the expiry date approaches, before renewing the residence permit, you must contact the AUSL again to renew the registration and request the issue of a new health card. For more information visit also [the Emilia-Romagna Region website](#).

Further obligations

In case you receive a form of funding other than the PhD scholarship, e.g., Research Grants, High Apprenticeship contracts, etc. it may be necessary to carry out additional administrative formalities. Check your specific situation in the communications received by the PhD unit and follow the instructions you find within.

Bank account

In order to correctly enable the payment of your scholarship, you must enter the details of your bank account (IBAN) on which you wish to receive the payment.

Remember that the account must be in your name (joint accounts are allowed). Foreign accounts are also accepted, but kindly check the transaction's costs and timing with your bank.



Accommodation

Bologna hosts many students, and it can be quite difficult to find accommodation. Start looking for accommodation well in advance in order to book it before your arrival.

Please note, those with non-EU citizenship must prove that they have accommodation in Italy to apply for residence permit.

The University and the Region provide various services that can help you find accommodation:

ER.GO Housing Services

The Regional Agency for the Right to Higher Education (ER.GO) manages the university residences that you can access at a reduced rate whether specific requirements are met. To access the discounted rates, you must have certain merit and income requirements, and you must submit a separate online application.

Consult the call on the [ER.GO website](#) to find out the requirements and deadlines for submitting the application. The call is not open to exchange students.

Accommodation Showcase

[Accommodation Showcase](#) is a virtual bulletin board on which you can find advertisements for properties for rent to students.

SAIS (Student Accommodation and Information Service)

The SAIS provides support in finding accommodation in university residences, colleges, short-term guesthouses, and apartments in the private rental market. The [services](#) include:

- accommodation Declaration to obtain a VISA issued by the Italian Embassy;
- information on the [types of contracts](#);
- booking of an accommodation, among the ones listed in their database;
- [contractual advice](#);
- language assistance between users looking for accommodation and landlords;
- mediation to solve difficulties between landlords and international user;
- individual assistance to search for accommodation.

In every advertisement of the offers' database, it is mentioned whether the apartments have access for disabled users or not.

More information is available on the [SAIS website](#), and on their [FAQ page](#).

Other resources for finding accommodation

On the University website you will find [pages](#) dedicated to finding accommodation in Bologna managed by private operators. The University of Bologna is not responsible for the activities they carry out and the content conveyed on the websites or services offered.

Registering your tenancy agreement

It is recommended to register your tenancy agreement. Having a regular rental contract serves to protect your rights and is also necessary to obtain a residence permit if you are a non-EU citizen. For more info click [here](#).

Accommodation in Romagna

If you are looking for accommodation in other university locations in Romagna, the website provides further information dedicated to each Campus: [Cesena](#), [Forlì](#), [Ravenna](#) and [Rimini](#).

Transport

Also consult the webpage of the [TPER](#) public transport service, to find out about discounted rates on monthly and annual passes.

Personal services

Psychological support

The service is aimed at young people with emotional and relational problems, affective and behavioural disorders, difficulties in university and/or work life and is free for students at the University of Bologna and for all young people aged between 20 and 28 years registered at the AUSL of Bologna.

It entails some interviews that aim to investigate the reasons behind the request of consultation. In case of need, a short-term individual or group therapeutic path, with weekly sessions may be proposed.

For more information see the [dedicated webpage](#).

Health Care

The University of Bologna has signed agreements with various entities to provide health care to students. Information on services for off-site students, on the choice of a general practitioner and on who to contact in case of health problems is available on the dedicated [University website](#).

Insurance coverage, accidents and civil liability

If you are up to date with the payment of the fees due each academic year, you benefit from an insurance guarantee against the risk of accidents, as well as for third party liability. For more information see the dedicated page of the [University Intranet](#), which you can access using your @unibo.it credentials.

Disability

The [Service for Students with Disabilities and SLD](#), as part of the Right to Education Unit, carries out support activities for students with disabilities and SLD – Specific Learning Disorders, from the admission to the University and for the whole PhD programme.

The Service guarantees equal learning opportunities, identifying and planning with each person targeted actions that allow to study in the most effective way.

Gender transition

The University of Bologna pursues the psychophysical well-being of people belonging to its community, including those who have started a path towards gender transition. On the [University website](#) you can find more information about the gender affirming services provided by Unibo.

DURING THE PhD PROGRAMME

The Student Ombudsman (Garante degli Studenti)

In case you experience infringements or restrictions of your rights, you can address the Student Ombudsman. It is an independent body that acts on behalf of the students. It does not respond to the University Bodies and is exclusively required to comply with current legislation. On the [University website](#) you will find the contacts.

Sport [CUSB Bologna](#) is an amateur sports association that offers a wide range of competitive and non-competitive sports. People enrolled at the University of Bologna can benefit from discounted prices to access the courses.

ADI - Associazione Dottorandi e Dottori di Ricerca in Italia

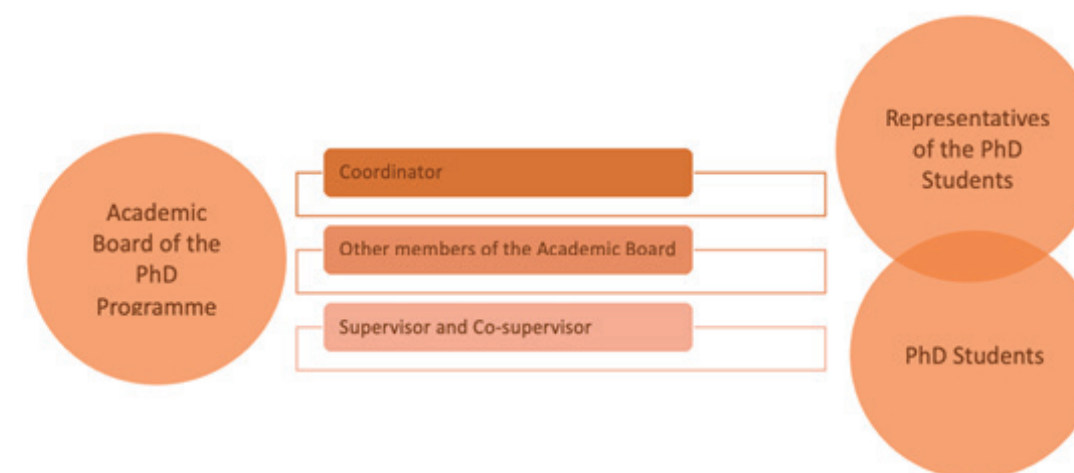
ADI is the Italian association for those attending a PhD programme in Italy. ADI has also an office in Bologna. Visit their [website](#) to find more information.

We invite you to consult the [Guide](#) on the University website in order to take advantage of all that Bologna has to offer.

PhD Programme Outline

Each PhD programme is chaired by an Academic Board, which is responsible for its scientific, organizational, and didactic management. The Academic Board elects a Coordinator among its members, in charge of organizing and coordinating the activities of the Board itself. The Coordinator remains in office for three years.

In order to discuss didactic and organizational issues, the composition of the Academic Board can be integrated with the presence of a maximum of two representatives of the enrolled PhD students. These representatives do not have the right to vote in the meetings of the Board.



Project assignment, Supervisor, Co-supervisor and SSD (Settore Scientifico Disciplinare)

Before the start of the Academic year, the Academic Board holds a meeting to plan and organize activities for the new PhD Cycle (every cycle lasts 3 or 4 years).

In that occasion:

- a Research Project will be assigned to you, with its related Scientific Disciplinary Area (in Italian SSD). The Academic Board will also appoint a Supervisor and at least one Co-supervisor who will guide you, tutoring your research activities and the drafting of your doctoral thesis;
- the Board defines the didactic and training activities that you should carry out during the program;
- you will receive the authorizations for carrying out work activities compatible with the attendance of the PhD programme (see next section).

Progression and admission to the following years

At least once per academic year, the Academic Board will evaluate your research and training activities and, if successful, they will authorize your admission to the next year of the PhD programme. After having received the authorization of the Board, you can enrol in the following academic year. You will also receive a communication from the PhD Office with the instructions to pay the enrolment fee which is € 157.04. After passing the last year of the programme, you will be admitted to the final exam. For more information regarding the admission to the following years, you can access the website of your programme or contact the Supervisor/s and the Coordinator of the programme.

Compatibility PhD-Work

During the period of the legal duration of the PhD programme there are restrictions of compatibility and incompatibility between the PhD and outside work activities. Furthermore, for some work activities even if compatible with the attendance to the programme, you cannot receive a salary while receiving a scholarship.

To find out the list of compatible and incompatible activities and non-accumulation rules, you can consult articles 15 and 16 of the [PhD Regulation](#).

To carry out activities compatible with the attendance of a PhD programme (e.g.: paid work in the private sector) it is always necessary to request the authorization to the Academic Board. You can find the forms necessary for the authorization request and more information on the dedicated page of the University Intranet: [Compatibility, incompatibility and cumulation prohibitions](#).

If you want to request authorization to carry out an activity already in progress before the start of the PhD programme, we advise you to send the authorization request before the first meeting of the Academic Board, which takes place approximately in the month of October.

Compatibility with Medical Specialization Schools

If you are enrolled in a Medical Specialization School, your career as a resident is compatible with your career as a PhD student, **only subject to the approval by the Council of the Specialization School and the Academic Board of the PhD programme to which you are enrolled.**

It is necessary to communicate your enrolment to the Specialization School at the time of your PhD enrolment by writing to the PhD Unit (aform.udottricerca@unibo.it).

It will be particularly important to indicate which Specialization School you are enrolled in, at which University and the end date of your career as a resident. We will therefore ask you to send the Training Plan of the Medical Specialization School signed both by you and the Director of the School. This will allow to request both the Academic Board and the Specialization School authorizations (Nulla Osta) necessary to permit the joint attendance. If the authorizations are granted, during the overlapping period between the two careers, your PhD scholarship will be suspended in favour of the specialization scholarship. When the specialization is completed, you will automatically start receiving your PhD scholarship. However, it will not be possible to recover the previously suspended scholarship instalments.

Compatibility with other university programmes

The enrolment in a PhD programme is compatible with the simultaneous enrolment in a first or second cycle degree programme (Bachelor and Master's degree) or a non-medical specialization programme. Since the attendance of a PhD programme is an exclusive full-time commitment, in order to be able to attend another programme at the same time, you will need to request the authorization from the Academic Board.

24 ECTS (CFU)

If you are attending a PhD programme, you can enrol in the 24 ECTS Training Path activated by the University of Bologna without paying tuition. To register, you need to request the authorization from the Academic Board, using the suitable form available on the [University intranet](#). You can find more information about the 24 ECTS Training Path on the [University webpage](#).

Tutoring and teaching

You can tutor undergraduate and graduate students as part of your doctoral training plan, provided that you are authorized by the Academic Board. This type of activity does not have a limit of hours, it can be paid but not through an increase of your scholarship. With the approval of the Academic Board, you can also carry out paid tutoring activities outside your doctoral training plan, within the maximum limit of 60 hours per academic year.

For each academic year you can carry out a maximum of 40 hours of teaching. The constraints mentioned in this subsection expire with the end of the legal duration of the doctoral programme.

To find the forms necessary for the authorization request, visit the dedicated page of the University Intranet: [Compatibility, incompatibility and cumulation prohibitions](#).

SCHOLARSHIPS AND RESEARCH FUNDS

If you have been awarded with a scholarship, you will receive your scholarship monthly, not before the 25th day of each month.

The yearly gross amount of the scholarship is €16,243. Some PhD programmes feature higher scholarship amounts: You can check for details on the PhD call for applications and on the relevant PhD programme table.

If your PhD is funded by an Institution other than the University of Bologna or funded through specific projects (e.g., NRRP, PON, or others), check if there is a collaboration agreement with its own specific regulations. Consider that in those agreements there might be additional requirements and restrictions.

If you are a non-EU citizen, in order to receive the payments, it is mandatory to send a copy of your VISA to the PhD Unit (aform.udottricerca@unibo.it). If you do not have a VISA yet, you will need to send a receipt of the VISA request to the office, together with the tax code issued by the Italian Revenue Agency (Agenzia delle Entrate).

Social Security Administration (Gestione separata INPS)

The scholarships are subject to the payment of the INPS social security contribution according to the relevant legislation into force. Such a contribution is paid as follows: two-thirds paid by the University and one-third paid by the scholarship holder. In 2022, the amount due by PhD candidates has been of 1897.20 euros per year. Please note that for PhD candidates with a scholarship, the registration to the Social Security Administration (Gestione separata INPS) is mandatory, starting on the day the programme begins. Please, refer to [INPS](#) for information about the registration procedure.

10% Budget

Starting on the first year of your PhD programme, you will have access to a budget that amounts to at least 10% of the scholarship. You can use it to fund your PhD research and training activities both in Italy and abroad. This budget is managed by the relevant Department and is due to all PhD candidates, including those who have not been awarded with a scholarship. To know what your relevant department is, ask your Supervisor or your Department Offices.

For more information, please, visit the dedicated page of the [University Intranet](#)

Positions with Research Grants

Positions funded by research grants have some specific regulations. Contracts concerning this kind of positions need to be signed with the relevant Department, which is also responsible for payments. Information about payments is available on the web app [CedoliniWeb](#), in the reserved area.

Unfunded positions

PhD candidates who do not receive scholarships, research grants or other funding for the right to higher education may apply for an ER.GO scholarship.

The call for applications usually opens around July. The application shall be submitted online using the [ER.GO website](#) (using SPID credentials - only for applicants holding an Italian ID - or using name.surname@studio.unibo.it), on the section "servizi online" - "dottorati di ricerca". For information, please contact ER.GO (tel. +39 051 19907580) or send a message via "Scrivici" on the ER.GO website.

Executive PhD

If you are enrolled in an Executive PhD:

- you will not be awarded a scholarship, but you will keep your work salary at the institution or company you work for;
- usually, Executive PhD candidates are provided with Supervisor at the University and a co-supervisor at the Institution or company where they work;
- while you are enrolled in the Executive PhD programme, you cannot change your job contract, otherwise you will be excluded from the PhD programme.

Please note: Make sure of asking for the programme's agreement with its own specific regulations and requirements!

Apprenticeship PhD

To be enrolled in an Apprenticeship PhD:

- you need to be less than 30 years old when applying;
- the company must have at least one branch operating in Emilia-Romagna Region;
- the contract between you and the enterprise must last at least 24 months and no more than 48 months. Moreover, it must last up to the end of the PhD programme;
- you will not be awarded a scholarship, but you will keep your apprenticeship salary at the institution or company you work for.

Are you a PhD candidate and you want to start Apprenticeship?

You can do that, together with your Supervisor. Consider that Apprenticeship contracts must last no less than 24 months. Such a contract should start at the programme's first year (3-year programmes), or at the programme's second year if you are enrolled in a 4-year programme. Apprenticeship PhD positions are regulated by the [Protocollo d'intesa relativo ai contratti di alto apprendistato finalizzati al conseguimento del titolo di Dottore di Ricerca](#) and by specific agreements between the enterprise or the institution and the University. Make sure of asking for the agreement to learn its own specific regulations and requirements!

For more information, please, visit the dedicated page of the [University website](#).

INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES

During your PhD career, you can choose among different international mobility programmes to conduct part of your research activities abroad.

“Marco Polo” Programme

This programme is an opportunity to promote international mobility across countries. This type of funding can cover a minimum of three months to a maximum of 6 months spent abroad. The monthly stipend is set by the Board of Governors and can vary depending on the chosen geographical area. Each Department manages these kinds of opportunities.

For more information, please check the [Regolamento per l'erogazione di incentivi alla mobilità per la ricerca – Programma Marco Polo](#), the dedicated page on the [University Intranet](#) or contact the administration office of the PhD Programme's Department.

Scholarship increases for periods spent abroad

For periods of study and research abroad you may receive a financial endowment amounting to 50% of the PhD scholarship, regardless how you are funding your PhD. This cannot be obtained for periods shorter than one continuous month or longer than 12 months (or 18 months if you are in a cotutelle agreement), and in any case not in your country of residence.

Kindly check art. 13 of the [Regolamento in materia di corsi di dottorato](#) for more information.

The procedure to follow in order to ask for this increase can be found on the dedicated page on the [University Intranet](#).

Cotutelle agreements

The cotutelle agreement is a bilateral agreement between two Universities from different countries that allows you, after a single thesis defence, to obtain a joint PhD degree. The procedure to initiate a cotutelle agreement must start within the first year of enrolment to your PhD programme.

For more information, please follow the steps as detailed in the dedicated intranet page of the [University Intranet](#).

Erasmus+ mobility

This is an EU-sponsored opportunity which provides funding to students (PhD candidates included) who spend a period studying or training abroad.

For more information, please check the Call for Applications for [study](#) and for [traineeship](#) purposes.

MANAGING YOUR PhD CAREER

Career Suspension and Extensions

The suspension pauses your doctoral career for 1 to 6 months. The legal duration of the programme will be postponed for a time equivalent to the suspension. During the suspension you will not receive the scholarship and you will not be able to progress in your PhD career.

The **suspension** can be requested in the following circumstances:

- civil national service (Servizio Civile Nazionale);
- serious illness duly attested by medical certificates;
- serious and documented personal and family reasons.

Your PhD career is compulsorily suspended in the event of:

- maternity/paternity, adoption, and custody. In this case, the suspension is regulated by Italian law;
- serious infirmity or illness, lasting more than 30 days.

The total duration of the suspension periods requested must not exceed the legal duration of the PhD programme.

The **extension** consists in a continuation of the PhD programme or a postponement of the deadlines for the submission of the PhD thesis.

There are two kinds of extensions:

- the extension of the duration of the PhD programme is granted by the Academic Board and is requested by the Supervisor for justified scientific needs. The extension can be applied for 1 to 12 months, and the scholarship is guaranteed;
- the extension of the deadlines for the submission of the PhD thesis can be requested by the PhD candidate for proven reasons and is granted by the Academic Board. This extension can have a maximum length of 12 months and does not include the scholarship extension.

The total duration of the suspension and extension periods requested must not exceed 18 months.

If you have a scholarship financed with regional or national funds (PON, PNRR, RER) this information may not be valid for you. Write to the PhD Unit (aform. udottricerca@unibo.it) to check your situation.

FINISHING YOUR CAREER

Exclusion from the PhD programme

The exclusion is decided by the Academic Board and may occur at any time during the year. The reasons that may lead to exclusion are mainly of three types:

- insufficient academic achievements (insufficient quantity/quality of the work carried out);
- serious violations of the University Regulation on PhD programmes (in particular, to carry out additional activities without the formal authorisation of the Academic Board);
- in case the employment has not started by the deadline indicated in the call for applications, for Apprenticeship PhD positions; in case of interruption of the employment contract with the institution with which the agreement was stipulated, for Executive PhD positions.

Under no circumstances, exclusion entails the return of scholarship money already received, except for scholarship instalments received in advance.

If your PhD scholarship is funded by an external body or through particular projects (e.g., NRRP, PON scholarships) this information may not apply to you. Write to the PhD Unit to verify your position.

Withdrawal from the PhD programme

At any moment of the academic year, you can:

- withdraw from the PhD programme (therefore also renouncing the scholarship);
- renounce the scholarship, without withdrawing from the PhD programme.

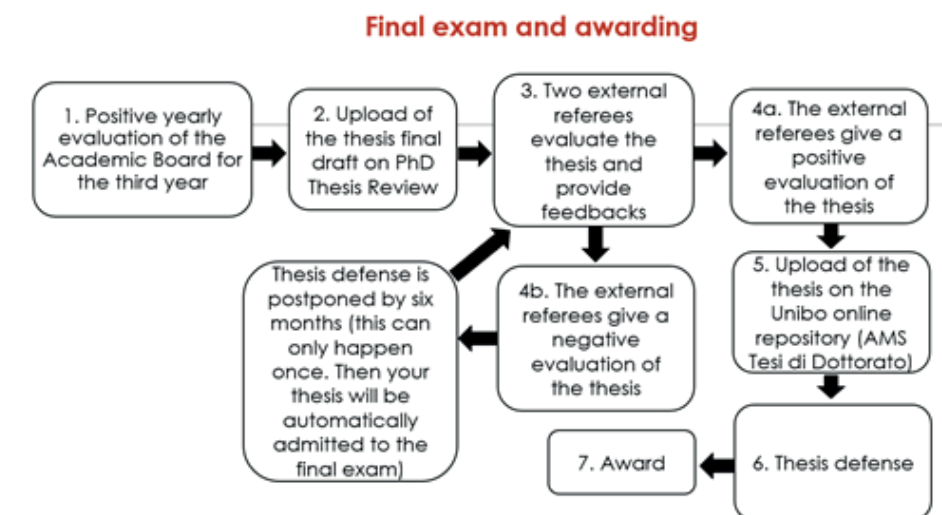
The withdrawal is irrevocable and does not entail the return of scholarship money already received, except for scholarship instalments received in advance. The withdrawal from the PhD programme entails the loss of the status as PhD candidate at the University of Bologna. Therefore, you are not subject to obligations towards the Academic Board and the University, as set out in the Regulation on PhD programmes.

If your PhD scholarship is funded by an external body or under particular projects (e.g., NRRP, PON scholarships) this information may not apply to you. Write to the PhD Unit to verify your position.

For more information, please check the [Intranet webpage](#).

Awarding of the PhD degree

The awarding of the PhD degree is outlined in the following flowchart:



The PhD thesis must be written in Italian or in English. If you wish to write your thesis in a different language, you need the Academic Board authorization.

The thesis must be submitted together with its abstract in English, a report on the activities carried out during your career and your publications (if present).

After the PhD: unemployment benefits

From 1st July 2017 the unemployment benefit ([DIS-COLL](#)) is due to those who received a scholarship and who do not have VAT number.

The duration of the unemployment benefit depends upon contributions already paid and, in any case, cannot last for more than 6 months.

For further information on this topic and to request the benefit, please contact the INPS offices.



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