



UNIVERSITÀ
DI TRENTO

DOCTORATE IN COGNITIVE AND BRAIN SCIENCES EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS

DOCTORATE IN COGNITIVE AND BRAIN SCIENCES
EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS



DOCTORATE IN COGNITIVE AND BRAIN SCIENCES EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS

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DOCTORATE IN COGNITIVE AND BRAIN SCIENCES EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS

Art. 1 – Executive Regulations of the Doctoral Program in Cognitive and Brain Sciences

The CIMeC Council adopts the Executive Regulations in order to regulate the activity of the Doctorate in Cognitive and Brain Sciences, hereinafter referred to as the "Doctoral Regulations", indicating its specific objectives, internal organization and rules of conduct for PhD students who attend it.

For anything not expressly regulated in these Doctoral Regulations, full reference is made to the University Regulations on Research Doctorates issued with D.R. 250 of 11.03.2022 and subsequent amendments, as well as the current legislation.

Art. 2 – Establishment of the program

The Doctorate Program in Cognitive and Brain Sciences is established, proposed by the Center for Mind/Brain Sciences.

Art. 3 – Main objectives

In addition to the general objectives of every Doctoral Program, as mentioned in Art. 3 of the Doctoral Regulations, the Program specifically aims at training highly professional and independent individuals, able to take on direct responsibility for the following activities:

1. **Basic research** on cognitive processes and their respective neural bases in humans and other animal species, and development of computational models that can be used for the study of neural and cognitive processes.
2. **Applied research** on the translational aspects of neuro-cognitive research, evaluation and rehabilitation of cognitive functions also through advanced techniques of neuroimaging and neurostimulation, on the ethical implications of neuroscientific research, on human and animal well-being, on the creation and validation of expert systems and to support human decisions, to the design of software applications for the evaluation of cognitive processes and their rehabilitation.

Art. 4 – Scientific macro-areas

The macro-areas of reference are 11/E - Psychology, 06/D - Specialized surgical clinic, 02/D - Applied physics, 05/D - Physiology, 9/H - Computer engineering.



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Art. 5 – General characteristics

1. The PhD program lasts four years. Every year one or more calls are issued in Italian and English for the public selection of the candidates, where the number of positions and grants offered is specified.
2. The candidates showing the best qualifications are admitted to the Program regardless of their gender, age, nationality, religion, ethnicity and social class

Art. 6 – Language

1. The official language of the Program is English.
2. PhD students who are not English native speakers are required to provide proper certification of their level of English within the third year, which must not be below level B2 in all skills. The absence of suitable certification will prevent admission to the fourth year, until the same is obtained.
3. The call for admission is published on the University website both in Italian and in English. In the event of interpretational differences of the provisions contained therein, the Italian version published in the Official Journal shall prevail.
4. Selection procedures are conducted in English.
5. The doctoral thesis must be written in English and accompanied by a summary in English.

Art. 7 – Bodies of the Doctorate Program

The bodies of the PhD Program are:

1. Doctoral Program Committee (DPC)
2. PhD Director
3. Executive Committee (EC)



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Art. 8 – Doctoral Program Committee

1. The following are members of the Doctoral Program Committee (DPC) of the Program in Cognitive and Brain Sciences:
 - a. Researchers (art. 24 c.3-b L. 240/10) and associate professors with at least two ASN threshold values relative to the second professor level;
 - b. Full professors with at least two ASN threshold levels relative to the first professor level;
 - c. Representatives with high scientific qualification of public and private funders of PhD scholarships.
2. Members of the DPC from points c) and d) must not exceed 1/3 rounded down of the total number of members of the Program.
3. Non-members without voting rights may also assist in DPC meetings or discussions of specific matters if invited by the PhD Director and in case their scientific, educational, technical or financial contribution is considered useful, particularly:
 - a. The Program Administrator and CIMeC's Head of Administration also with the task of supporting the Committee with meeting minutes;
 - b. Two student representatives enrolled at the Cognitive and Brain Sciences Doctoral Program, for matters limited to doctoral students and educational offerings.
 - c. Italian and foreign experts and faculty involved in the training of the students of the Program.
4. Membership to the DPC from the parties listed in comma 1 must be requested to the PhD Director, accompanied by a curriculum vitae with publications, and a declaration of non-membership/affiliation to Doctoral Program Committees in other Italian universities. In case of belonging to another University/Doctoral Program, the request ought to be accompanied also by the permit issued by that University for belonging to a DPC of another University, and a statement on behalf of the applicant declaring to have the number of scientific publications necessary to become member of a Doctoral Program Committee, according to the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Doctorates n. 301 dated 22 March, 2022.



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5. The DPC is summoned by the PhD Director, or upon request of at least 1/3 of the members of the Committee.
6. The convening of the DPC is communicated at least three days prior to the meeting in the manner considered most efficient to ensure its receipt. The agenda is sent along with the announcement of the meeting.
7. The Doctoral Program Committee convenes at least twice a year and only in exceptional situations may convene remotely.
8. In order for the sessions to be considered valid an absolute majority of the members, not including justified absentees, is necessary from subsection 1, letters a)-c).
9. The unjustified absence of a member of the Doctoral Program Committee for more than 50% of academic yearly meetings will be discussed in the DPC and may result in his or her removal from it, and may also implicate the possibility of future PhD supervision.
10. Deliberations are validated by a favorable vote from the majority of those present and are immediately executive, unless the body differs its execution. If, for any reason, the result of the votes is even, the vote of the Program Director prevails.
11. For the meetings of the Doctoral Program Committee the minutes are recorded by the vice-Program Director or by the faculty member with the most junior full professor position. The minutes are approved and made visible to the members of the DPC within the second following session.
12. Should the DPC need to act urgently or by a certain day, and is impossible for its members to meet in time, the Head of the Program may summon an electronic-based session, during which each member sends e-mails expressing their opinions and votes on a specific proposed resolution. The decisions made electronically with the involvement of all members are ratified at the next meeting of the DPC.
13. With its own resolution the DPC can delegate the Executive Committee (EC) to carry out all or part of some of its functions. The specific delegated functions to the EC are:
 - I. Final exam
 - Admission to the final exam and thesis review procedures (except in critical cases for which the DPC will be consulted)
 - Approval of PhD thesis reviewers



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- Proposals for the appointment (to the Rector) of the final exam commissioners
- II. Passage to the following year
 - Appointment of the evaluation committee
 - Admissions to subsequent years (except in critical cases for which the DPC will be consulted).
- III. Miscellaneous
 - Evaluation of authorization requests for external work, in accordance with the provisions of art. 26, paragraph 2 of the University Regulations
 - Selection of applications for additional mobility funds for PhD students in the last year
 - Selection and possible approval of applications for extension requests (Article 29 paragraph 6 of the University Regulations)
 - Requests for supervision and change of supervision
 - Approval of requests for research periods abroad
- IV. Selection Announcement
 - Approval of the announcement
- V. Student Handbook
 - Review of student assessments
 - Proposed changes



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Art. 9 – PhD Director

1. The PhD Director of the Doctoral Program performs the duties established by Art. 13 of the Doctoral Program Regulations (see full text for reference).
2. The PhD Director remains in office for three years and may be re-elected once more.

Art. 10 – Executive Committee

1. The Doctoral Program can set up an Executive Committee, composed of at least 4 members elected by the DPC, as well as by the PhD Director, who is a member by right and chairs it. Notwithstanding a total size of at least 4 members, the DPC can arrange for a different breakdown of members by academic component (first and second level professors, researchers, and experts), to ensure proportionality in the representation on the Executive Committee with respect to the composition of the DPC, subject to the minimum limit of 1 representative per component. For the functioning of the Executive Committee and for the minutes of the sessions, the same rules for the DPC are applied.
2. An absolute majority of the members is required for the validity of the sessions. In case of particular issues, a remote meeting may be summoned and valid.
3. The EC assists the Program Director in fulfilling the obligations to which it is required pursuant to art. 13 of the Doctoral Regulations and deliberates on the subjects delegated to it by the DPC, to which it constantly reports on the activity carried out.
4. The Program Director can assign specific functions deemed necessary for the pursuit of the management and organizational objectives of the Program to the individual members of the Executive Committee.
5. The Executive Committee can revoke the post of supervisor, co-supervisor, mentor and OC member to anyone who does not comply with the obligations associated with this role, and can propose their forfeiture from the DPC. This decision must be approved by the DPC by an absolute majority of those present.
6. The Executive Committee remains in office for the duration of the mandate of the PhD Director.
7. In the event of resignation, termination or impediment of a member of the Executive Committee for a period of more than three months, the PhD Director calls an election for his/her replacement. The mandate of the new member expires with the mandate of the Executive Committee.



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Art. 11 – Supervisor and Co-supervisor

1. From the beginning of the PhD program, each PhD student is supported by a supervisor, chosen from among a) the members of the DPC, b) the CIMeC members not belonging to the DPC, whose research is conducted at the CIMeC for more than 50%, c) the researchers or professors with an adequate scientific profile who finance a scholarship consistent with the themes of the doctorate. Each PhD student is also assigned a co-supervisor chosen from among the members of the Oversight Committee.
2. The supervisor or co-supervisor belongs to academia, in the role of researcher referred to in art. 24, paragraph 3, letter b) of the law 240/2010, or second level professor, or first level professor, and must be part of the DPC.
3. The role of supervisor and co-supervisor is assigned by the Executive Committee taking into account, where possible, the doctoral student's proposal.
4. The supervisor assists the doctoral student in defining the specific research topic of the doctoral thesis and it is his/her duty to assist the doctoral student in the research project in order to ensure that the work performed is scientifically valid.
5. The supervisor supports the doctoral student in the proposal and planning of the individual study plan, including his/her participation in conferences, summer/winter schools and external seminars.
6. The supervisor/co-supervisor assists the doctoral student, verifying his/her activity and compliance with the rules, including behavioral ones, considered fundamental for the value of the Program and for the scientific and professional growth of his/her doctoral students.
7. The possibility of a change of supervisor is envisaged following a resolution of the Executive Committee, which must be informed by written communication from both parties. If the outcome of the discussion is favorable to a change of supervision, the Executive Committee appoints the new supervisor.



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Art. 12 – Oversight Committee

1. PhD students are required to periodically submit their work to an Oversight Committee (OC) composed of the supervisor and two other experts (one of whom is the the Co-supervisor).
2. The OC is appointed by the supervisor in agreement with the doctoral student, and then confirmed by the Executive Committee.
3. Upon completion of the presentation or written report of a graduate student, the OC provides him/her with feedback (both written and oral).
4. The OC members assigned to each PhD student remain the same for the entire four-year period.

Art. 13 – Mentor

1. The mentor is a senior researcher, generally a full professor or associate professor who has been at CMEC for at least three years and who will be present throughout the Ph.D. of the PhD student. It is the mentor's obligation to meet the student a couple of times a year (or more), and he/she is not involved in the research of the student. Their role is mainly to support the PhD student on topics other than the research project. Mentors are chosen by the PhD students, typically from among the members of the College, but they can also be faculty of another doctorate, for at least three years (senior researcher, generally a full professor or associate professor) and with the authorization of the Executive Committee.
2. The choice of the mentor is at the total discretion of the PhD student, and in the absence of a request, one is appointed ex officio among the members of the Executive Committee.

Art. 14 – Evaluation Committee

1. The Evaluation Committee, which takes the name of the Year-End Evaluation Committee (EYE-C), is composed of a minimum of 2 members of the DPC, appointed by the Executive Committee. The offices of each member last two years so that each member receives the assignment in a year different from the other. One of the two members is part of the Executive Committee.
2. At the end of each academic year, the College delegates to the Evaluation Committee the task of reviewing all feedback, evaluations and end-of-year reports and providing a summary-recommendation to the DPC regarding the admission of students for the admission to the following year.



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3. In order to make a comprehensive recommendation, the Evaluation Committee is empowered to collect additional information from supervisors, graduate students or other sources deemed relevant to perform this task.

Art. 15 – Student Handbook

1. Before the beginning of the academic year, the DPC approves the Student Handbook, which is published on the Program's website.
2. The Student Handbook contains:
 - the provisions relating to training, preparatory and / or supplementary activities of the courses;
 - indications on how lab-work, internships and apprenticeships are carried out;
 - information on the exams and other assessment tests;
 - information on credit recognition, including the rules for the correspondence between educational credits required by the course and credits that can be acquired at other national and foreign university institutions (including summer schools);
 - possibility to present individual curricula;
 - the calendar of the main deadlines for the PhD students enrolled in the Course, with the indication of the deadlines for the presentation of the study plan and its approval by the Executive Committee.
3. The PhD student is required to submit a study plan, choosing from the courses outlined in the Handbook. This plan must be approved first by the supervisor, and subsequently by the Executive Committee.



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Art. 16 – Educational activities

The Program offers educational activities presented at the beginning of each academic year in the Program's Student Handbook, along with a description of how the Program is carried out.

1. For the duration of the academic year the student is required to attend seminars, workshops and symposia proposed by CIMeC and by external partners, chosen on the basis of cultural affinity to their education, but also taking into account the importance of a broader preparation. Seminar participation serves as a means for evaluating the activity carried out by the doctoral student.
2. For any periods abroad lasting four weeks or longer a request must be made by the Tutor to the Head of the Program. The request should underline the scientific and educational objectives of the activities that will be carried out abroad.
3. All details related to the number of credits to be earned are set out in the Student Handbook.

Art. 17 – Selection

Access to the Program takes place through a selective procedure with comparative evaluation based on qualifications and interview.

Art. 18 – Suspensions and absences

1. Any suspension of the PhD program may be granted to the PhD student by the DPC for serious and substantiate illness or personal reasons, and upon presenting a motivated request.
2. At the end of the suspension period, the student will resume the course subject to a declaration of return signed by the PhD Director.
3. Any absences not agreed upon in advance and not promptly reported in writing to the supervisor may be a reason for exclusion from the Program.

Art. 19 – Assessment process for admission to the following year

The assessment process for admission to the following year is detailed in the Student Handbook.



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Art. 20 - Conferral of the doctorate

1. The DPC, or, by delegation, the Executive Committee, shall appoint the Final Exam Committee for PhD students, noting in this regard the provisions of Title VII of the current University of Trento Doctoral Regulations.
2. If exceptional circumstances arise, the Program allows for the possibility that a Final Exam Committee member participate remotely.

Art. 21 – Doctoral students: rights and obligations

1. In addition to the rights and duties of the PhD students indicated in art. 25 of the current PhD Regulations, each PhD student is required to:
 - a. monitor the progress of his/her PhD project, planning regular meetings with the supervisor (at least bi-monthly) in which to agree on work plans, and discuss the theoretical and practical aspects of ongoing projects;
 - b. ensure timely communication with the supervisor and the administrator of the PhD Program, demonstrating availability by replying promptly to e-mail messages;
 - c. ensure the development of the research project based on the agreed objectives and submit written reports according to the agreed upon deadlines;
 - d. show up at planned meetings;
 - e. promptly notify the PhD administrator, the mentor and/or the PhD Director of any problems or difficulties that may arise with the supervisor.
 - f. respond truthfully and accurately to the questionnaires submitted by the Program regarding the progress of the doctorate, the relationship with the supervisor, the Oversight Committee and/or mentor. False statements may lead to exclusion from the doctorate.
2. In addition to the rights and duties of the PhD students indicated in art. 25 of the current PhD Regulations, the role of the representatives of the PhD student body consists in:
 - a. representing the requests and needs of the PhD student body;
 - b. collaborating with the DPC and the Program Administrator as well as providing and transmitting information to all the members of the Program.



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3. The PhD students must also comply with the procedures published in the Student Handbook related to educational activities and use the documentation governing the Program which can be downloaded from the "PhD Resources" page of the site "<https://wiki.cimec.unitn.it/>".
4. PhD students are required to carefully read and sign the Code of Conduct of the PhD Program in Cognitive and Brain Sciences.
5. The reference standards of the University to supplement this article are:
 - a. Code of Ethics of the University of Trento
 - b. Student Regulations of the University of Trento
 - c. Student Code of Honor of the University of Trento

Art. 22 –Supervisors and Co-supervisors: rights and obligations

The supervisor and co-supervisor are required to:

1. Supervisor
 - a. define and monitor the progress of the doctoral project, planning together with the doctoral student / at regular meetings (at least bi-monthly) in which to agree work plans, discuss the theoretical and practical aspects of ongoing projects;
 - b. ensure timely communication with the PhD student and the PhD Program secretariat, making themselves available in case of urgent need for face-to-face or virtual meetings, and through a quick reply to e-mail messages;
 - c. ensure the PhD student the necessary equipment to carry out the research project;
 - d. show up at established meetings;
 - e. provide the doctoral student with clear indications on the progress or difficulties related to the doctoral project;
 - f. respond truthfully to the questionnaires submitted by the Program on the progress of the doctoral student, the relationship with the doctoral student, under penalty of exclusion from the DPC and forfeiture of the role.
2. Co-supervisor
 - a. monitor the progress of the doctoral project.



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Art. 23 - Patent rights

The attribution of the right to obtain the patent and copyright for inventions created as a result of scientific research, carried out using the structures and financial means provided by the University of Trento, is generally governed by the Patent Regulations of the University.

Art. 24 - Personal endowment

1. The Program provides each student with an annual personal endowment, defined as “Budget for research activity”, which cannot be less than 10% of the PhD scholarship.
2. This endowment can be used by the student over the course of the doctorate in order to finance:
 - a. participation in conferences and seminars or other scientifically interesting events,
 - b. the purchase of scientific-computer equipment,
 - c. payment of subjects for their own research experimentsagreed and approved in advance by your supervisor.



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Art. 25 - Auxiliary and supplementary activities

1. As required by Art. 26 of the Doctoral Regulations, the DPC and the Executive Committee may expressly authorize the student to conduct educational, ancillary and supplementary activities compatible with the PhD course to attend, with the PhD activity itself and its training activities.
2. For the activities of supplementary teaching there is a total limit of 40 hours for students per year for the entire duration of the doctorate.
3. For tutoring undergraduate and master's degree students.

Art. 26 – Postponed beginning

Any delay in the beginning of the academic year by the graduate student is tolerated only in justified cases, in case of force majeure of the graduate student and if considered valid by the Faculty Board.

Art. 27 – Amendments to the Executive Regulations

According to Art. 8, paragraph. 3, of the Doctoral Regulations and successively to the onset of the Program, any change to the Internal Regulations must be approved by the CIMEC Council, upon hearing the opinion of the DPC. The Regulations, as modified, shall be effective from the date of publication on the Program's website.

Art. 28 – Final regulations and cross references

1. For cycles already active on the date of enforcement of the University Regulations on PhD programs, the Executive Regulations of the Doctoral Course in Cognitive and Brain Sciences approved by the CIMEC Council on 21 July 2016 (from the XXXIII cycle), and of 3 April 2019 (from the XXXV cycle), notwithstanding the provisions of art. 35 of the University Regulations (regarding graduation), continue to apply.
2. This regulation integrates, as expressly provided for by it, what is established by current national legislation and by the University Regulations on PhD programs, which in any case find full and direct application.