

## **FINAL EXAM PROCEDURE**

### **Admission to the defense**

Admission to the PhD thesis defense can take place only after the positive assessment of the activities performed up to the 3rd year (or the 4th year in the case of 4 years agreements or Executive PhD) (PhD career). This assessment is performed starting from at least 45 days before the end of the PhD programme, by a committee nominated by the PhD Board, basing on the documentation provided in due time according to the forms available from the DEIB PhD Web site. No public presentation is due in this phase.

By considering the PhD career evaluation, the PhD Board decide about the admission to the final exam procedures. This decision should be taken at last 15 days before the end of the doctoral program (October 15 for the program ending on October 31 and April 15 for the program ending on April 30). Notice that in case of special needs, there is the possibility to anticipate these phases to make it possible to have the PhD defense taking place earlier.

Ministerial Decree 45/2013 states that, starting from the 29th PhD cycle, before the defense, the thesis is examined by two external evaluators, namely "two highly qualified teachers, also belonging to foreign institutions, external to individuals who have contributed to the release of the doctoral title" (i.e., researchers that collaborated and external correlators in the case of agreements are excluded). Once the admission to the defense is decided, the PhD Board nominate two external evaluators and set a deadline by which they must express their opinion (normally within 30 days from the appointment of external evaluators).

It is responsibility of the PhD candidate to send the thesis to the external evaluators so that they provide their evaluation to the PhD Secretariat in due time. Evaluations received after the deadline will not be accepted: the process will be stopped and the defense delayed to the next year.

If the opinion of the external evaluators is positive, it is possible to proceed with the formalities aimed at the defense of the thesis.

Ministerial Decree 45/2013 states that external evaluators may deem the thesis not enough to obtain a PhD degree and can invite the student to amend or supplement it by setting a maximum period of six months for the changes.

In case of further negative opinion, the student is still admitted to the defense of the thesis, and can proceed with the formalities set out below.

### **After the external evaluation**

With a positive evaluation from the external reviewers, the PhD Board can nominate the Committees for the defense, and assign candidates to Committees.

The PhD Regulations state that the final examination Committee is "composed of three members also belonging to institutions or public and private research centers, specifically trained in the disciplines relevant to the scientific areas referred to by the PhD program. At least two members must belong University or institutions or research centers, including foreign ones, are not participating in the Doctorate and must not be members of the PhD Board or advisors of the thesis. "

The date of the thesis defense should be after the official date of the end of the third year, but can be anticipated, up to 3 months, anticipating all the procedures.

The starting point for fixing the following deadlines is the DEFENSE DATE.

Deadlines that are determined according to the defense date are:

- creation / validation of the defense committee: at least 45 days before the defense date
- enrollment of the candidate to the final discussion: at least 30 days before the defense date. By enrolling to the final exam, done online, the candidate will have to pay for 2 tax stamps and any back taxes (via MAV or credit card). Registration is finalized with the payment: until this is done is not possible to deposit the thesis
- deposit of the thesis by the candidate: at least 20 days before the defense date, needed to give the Committee the possibility to read the thesis before the defense
- approval of the thesis by the advisor: at least 15 days before the defense date

Starting from the 29th cycle, if the student is rejected at the defense, he or she will be excluded from the doctorate.

## **Extensions**

The PhD Board can require to the candidate who has positively completed the third year of activity to extend her/his PhD period, to complete the thesis work.

The extension can only be granted upon a positive assessment of the activities of the 3rd year (or 4th year in the case of special agreements or executive PhD). If the assessment is negative, the extension is not granted and the PhD Board must approve the enrollment to the 3rd year as repeating student, or exclusion from the doctorate.

Admission to the final exam procedures and submission of the thesis to the external evaluators can only happen at the end of the extension period.

The extension should normally be either 6 or 12 months.

Extensions to 18 or 24 months can be obtained, but they are considered as very exceptional cases that should be approved by the PhD School.