

Application for admission to the final examination

PhD students submit a request for admission to the final examination to the Academic Board during the final year of the course, and in any case at least one month before the end of the formative activities. The request is accompanied by a report on the activities carried out during the doctoral programme and any publications countersigned by the supervisor for his/her favourable opinion. The Academic Board shall decide on the individual request, subject to the favourable opinion of the supervisor. **Futhermore, the PhD student must fill in the AmaLaurea questionnaire and send the receipt the coordinator of the PhD course ([see instructions](#)).**

Doctoral thesis

The dissertation is written in Italian or English or in another language (in this case subject to authorization by the Academic Board). The dissertation must comprise an abstract in Italian or English (in English for Pegaso scholarship holders).

The dissertation must be submitted by the end of the course (in general 31 October).

For proven reasons that do not allow the presentation of the dissertation within the time limits imposed by the duration of the course, the PhD student can request an extension of a maximum of twelve months, without additional financial charges. The request, countersigned by the supervisor, must be submitted to the coordinator of the course at least one month before the end of the course, accompanied by a report on the activities carried out during the doctoral programme and any publications countersigned by the supervisor.

Thesis evaluators

Two evaluators, not belonging to the body that issues the doctoral degree and possessing a highly qualified experience, at least one of which a university professor, are designate by the Academic Board in the shortest possible period. Evaluators may belong to foreign or international institutions.

The evaluators express a written analytical opinion and:

- recommend admission to the final public defence;
- recommend revision and resubmission, within six months, if they believe significant additions or corrections are required; after this period, the dissertation, accompanied by a new written opinion by the evaluators, is in any case admitted to the defence.

Evaluation committee

The evaluation committee is nominated by the Rector, upon proposal of the Academic Board who designates the members at least 30 days before the date of the final examination. It is composed of a minimum of three to a maximum of seven members, at least two-thirds of whom must be from outside the course's administrative headquarters and no more than one-third of whom may belong to the doctoral participating institutions. At least two-thirds of the members must be from academic institutions. The Academic Board can propose a different committee for each individual candidate.

Final examination

If the evaluators express a positive opinion, the Academic Board admits the PhD candidate to the final examination, proposing the composition of the examination committee and the date of the public dissertation. If the evaluators recommend revision of the thesis, the final examination can be postponed up to six months. The Academic Board fixes the final examination session after submission of the revised version of the thesis.

At the end of the defence, the committee expresses a written collective and reasoned opinion on the dissertation (insufficient, sufficient, good, very good, excellent). If the dissertation is judged insufficient, it can no longer be discussed. The committee, with a unanimous vote, may award honours (excellent cum laude) in the presence of particularly important scientific results.

Electronic submission of doctoral thesis

A tutorial and forms are available on web page: <https://www.unisi.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/informazioni-dottorandi-e-dottori-di-ricerca/esame-finale-final>.

Once the doctoral student has received a positive evaluation of the thesis from the evaluators and at least 10 days before the date of the final examination, he/she must submit an electronic copy of the doctoral thesis **in PDF/A format** (suitable for digital preservation) **digitally signed** by accessing the Institutional University Research Archive USiena Air (<https://usiena-air.unisi.it>) with his/her University credentials. If the PhD student does not have a digital signature, he/she must first acquire one.

To access and self-archive his/her thesis, the doctoral student must register through the procedure indicated in the above tutorial. Once the thesis is self-archived in USiena Air, the system sends the doctoral student a confirmation email in which **the identification number of the deposited document (handle)** is indicated. The PhD Office will receive notification of the filing and carry out the compliance check. If there are anomalies, it will report them and ask to carry out the necessary modifications, "rejecting" the registration, so that the author can upload the modified document. If the registration does not present any problem, the registration will be validated and the system will send an email confirmation of validation. The PhD student must forward this email of validation to ufficiodottorato@unisi.it attaching the declaration of release (available on web page <https://www.unisi.it/ricerca/dottorati-di-ricerca/informazioni-dottorandi-e-dottori-di-ricerca/esame-finale-final>), together with a copy of a valid identity document (unless the declaration is digitally signed). If an embargo is requested (see next paragraph), the embargo letter countersigned by the tutor/supervisor must also be attached.

The copy of the thesis thus deposited will automatically be acquired by the National Libraries of Rome and Florence for legal deposit - mandatory by law. Therefore, no changes can be made after the electronic deposit.

Limited accessibility of the doctoral thesis

Accessibility to the doctoral theses present in the institutional archive of the University may be limited for the following reasons:

- a) parts of the thesis submitted to a publisher or awaiting publication;
- b) thesis financed by external bodies, which claim rights to them and their publication;
- c) public safety;
- d) privacy.

In such cases, the PhD student and the tutor/supervisor must submit a motivated request for an embargo, for a period up to 12 months, to the Academic Board. The embargo end date must be indicated in the appropriate session on the USiena Air repository during the electronic filing of the thesis and must coincide with the date indicated on the request. If there is a need to extend the embargo, for up to a maximum of 6 more months, the PhD candidate must request authorization, through the coordinator of the PhD, to the Academic Board. Once permission is obtained, the PhD office updates the expiry date of the embargo on the repository.

As long as the thesis is under embargo, its contents are not publicly available, but can be requested from the author. When the embargo period expires, the thesis is made freely available.

Dissertations subject to patent

Doctoral dissertations may contain elements of innovation for which a protection procedure has been or shall be activated. In this case, accessibility can be limited as outlined in the previous point.

The patent application must be submitted before any communication to the public, thus before the dissertation defence. By the time of the dissertation defence, all the procedures for patent protection application must have been completed.

The embargo request must be reported at the time of electronic submission of the thesis.

Parchment issue

Parchment issue is automatic. Area servizio allo studente, [Sportello rilascio diplomi](#) will contact the PhD students by email for the delivery of the diploma.