



Doctoral Course in Chemical, Geological and Environmental Sciences



Cycle 39th
a.y. 2023/2024



*Handbook for Ph.D.
Students @ DISAT*

Introduction

This Handbook aims to collect, organize, and forward information useful for each Ph.D. student at DISAT (information about how applying for a Ph.D. position is not included here). The content, as well as the structure of this handbook, are updated and amended whenever required. All the deadlines that are reported refer to Ph.D. courses that start in November. The timelines for ITN Marie Skłodowska Curie Ph.D. programs depend on the starting date.

The Ph.D. Course in Chemical, Geological, and Environmental Sciences is organized in three Curricula:

- Chemical Sciences
- Geological Sciences
- Terrestrial and Marine Environmental Sciences

Each student will be part of a curriculum. He/she will be followed by a Tutor + one or more Supervisors. The Tutor monitors the student activities and acts as a referent in the Teacher Board. The supervisor follows the research activity of the student, including the thesis. The Tutor must be part of the Teacher Board but not necessarily working on the thesis subject.

The official language of the Course is English.

The teachers of the curricula in Geological Sciences and Terrestrial and Marine Environmental Sciences are part of the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences (DISAT). The teachers of the curriculum in Chemical Sciences belong to DISAT and the Departments of Biotechnologies and Biosciences (BtBs) and Material Sciences (MATER).

Coordinator: Prof. Marco Giovanni Malusà (marco.malusa@unimib.it)

Responsible for the Curriculum in Chemical Sciences (and deputy director):

Prof. Davide Ballabio (davide.ballabio@unimib.it)

Responsible for the Curriculum in Geological Sciences:

Prof. Federico Agliardi (federico.agliardi@unimib.it)

Responsible for the Curriculum in Terrestrial and Marine Environmental Sciences:

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Secretary: Matilde Giberti (matilde.giberti@unimib.it)

Websites

<https://www.disat.unimib.it/en/research/phd-course>

<https://en.unimib.it/education/doctoral-research-phd-programmes>

Didactic deadlines and duties

Deadlines of the Ph.D. Course are usually annual.

- **Presentation of projects (1 year):** within one month after starting the activities, each Ph.D. student must submit the research project in agreement with the supervisor(s) and tutor. The project (3-5 pages) must be sent to the Coordinator and the Responsible for the specific curriculum in order to obtain the Teaching Board approval. The project must contain the research activity's primary objectives, without describing details that may change during the development.

Within one month after starting the activities, each PhD student should fill the PhD student booklet by indicating the courses chosen from the teaching plan (see description below).

- **Course attendance:** The teaching plan for the PhD Course in Chemical, Geological and Environmental Sciences includes intercurricular courses and specific courses for the different curricula. Starting from the 38th cycle, each PhD student must attend at least 100 hours of teaching for a total of at least 11 ECTS, including:

- at least 3 ECTS of interdisciplinary courses to be acquired within the end of the second year (<https://elearning.unimib.it/course/index.php?categoryid=6324>) and

- at least 8 ECTS of intercurricular and/or curricular courses offered by the teaching plan of the doctoral Course in Chemical, Geological and Environmental Sciences, to be acquired within the end of the first year

(<https://elearning.unimib.it/course/index.php?categoryid=1732>).

Additional courses, seminars (e.g., Climate Journal Club etc.) and summer schools can be chosen within the University of Milano-Bicocca courses and any other universities or specialist schools. At the end of each course, it is good to have a certificate of attendance, indicating the courses duration (in hours), signed by the teacher.

Laboratory and field security courses are compulsory although they do not count as didactic activity.

Ph.D. students in the 2nd year should also hold a seminar on scientific topics indicated by the Teachers Board aimed at high school students.

- **Training period abroad:** Each Ph.D. student must spend a period of at least 6 months abroad (12 months in case of collaboration agreements on a double Ph.D. degree), upon authorization of the Teacher Board (the Coordinator must approve all the documents and forms at least 20 days before leaving). Scholarship holders can apply for a 50% increase in the scholarship for the entire duration of their stay abroad. The maximum allowed period of stay abroad is 12 months (18 months in case of collaboration agreements on a double Ph.D. degree). During the stay abroad, the student must send (by e-mail) the certificate of attendance, signed by the foreigner tutor, to the appropriate office indicated on the form. You can find all related forms at the link:

<https://www.unimib.it/didattica/offerta-formativa/dottorato-ricerca/carriera/modulistica-dottorandi>

Additional funding can be provided by the Erasmus Funding Opportunities: Erasmus Traineeship (EU) or Exchange Extra-EU. To apply for these funds, you must have already obtained authorization for the period abroad from the Teachers Board. So, make sure you request authorization well in advance. For information on the Erasmus Funding Opportunities, mail to prof. Sandra Citterio (sandra.citterio@unimib.it).

- **Teaching activities:** Ph.D. students can participate in a range of teaching activities, including laboratory assistance and tutoring. Before undertaking any teaching activities, Ph.D. students submit an 'approval to teach' request to the Coordinator. You can find the form at the link:

<https://www.unimib.it/didattica/offerta-formativa/dottorato-ricerca/carriera/modulistica-dottorandi>

The teacher board approves teaching activities to a maximum of 40 hours per academic year. Tutoring activities do not contribute towards reaching the 40 hours.

- **Public engagement:** Ph.D. students can perform public engagement activities (Terza Missione) up to 8 hours per academic year.

- **Annual report (I & II years):** admission to the II and III years of the course requires evaluation of didactic and scientific activities. Approximately at the end of the academic year, each Ph.D. student must write a report (in English) on his/her research activities. The report's structure is defined by the Doctoral School.

It is also requested that an additional extended scientific report is presented to the Teaching Board (we will provide you with a template to prepare your extended scientific report). Besides a chapter summarizing the scientific results, the report requires listing all the teachings followed (courses, seminars, etc.), periods abroad, expenses on doctoral funds, third mission activities, scientific publications (poster or oral presentations, papers, proceedings, and so on, and their link to BOA - Bicocca Open Archive).

The deadline for submission is usually the beginning of September.

- **Scientific seminar (I & II years):** At the end of the academic year, each Ph.D. student must give an oral presentation (in English), even by videoconference, illustrating the activities carried out to the Teaching Board and the other Ph.D. students. The presentation should last about 15 minutes with time for discussion. The scientific seminar is a form of examination, which the Teaching Board evaluates to decide whether the student can progress to the following year or not, also based on the input provided by the supervisors at the end of the presentations. The presence of all the PhD students at any seminar is made compulsory by the internal regulations. It is extremely desirable to form an active group of Ph.D. students. Scientific seminars are usually given in September.

- **Scientific seminar (III year):** same as above, but the presentation is not subject of evaluation by the Teaching Board.

- **Publications (III year):** During the Ph.D. program, the Ph.D. student will have to publish the results of their research. To be authorized at the final examination, the Ph.D. student must present at least 1 paper (in press, or accepted, or published) in a peer-reviewed ISI scientific journal. Remember to always include your ORCID to your publications.

- **Submission of the thesis to be sent to the evaluators (III year):** At the end of the cycle, the thesis must be uploaded online to be sent to two different external evaluators. Based on their comments, the evaluators may propose the admission of the thesis to the public defense, or 6 months postponing if relevant corrections and amendments are deemed necessary. In this last case, the amended thesis must be resubmitted to the evaluators.

Note that the PhD student status and the associated benefits expire at the end of the third year

In general terms:

1st year

Most of didactic ECTS should be acquired
(including all the 8 ECTS provided by intercurricular and/or curricular courses, and at least part of the 3 ECTS of interdisciplinary courses)

2nd year

Training period abroad (at least 6 months)

3rd year

Writing of scientific articles and Thesis

- ***Submission of the thesis to the commissioners (III year):*** following acceptance by the evaluators, a hard copy of the thesis must be sent to each of the components of the final exam Commission. The Coordinator will communicate the names of the members of the Commission.
- ***Final examination (III year):*** The Final exam consists of a 45-minute presentation of the thesis, including a short report of the activities carried out during the entire Ph.D., followed by discussion (usually around 30-60 minutes).

Safety duties

- Compulsory medical examination
- General training course on worker safety
- Specific training course on the safety of workers in experimental research laboratories
- Specific training course on safety during field activities

Administrative deadlines and duties

All the forms necessary to fulfill deadlines and duties are available at:
<https://www.unimib.it/didattica/dottorato-ricerca/carriera/modulistica-dottorandi>
For info: dottorati@unimib.it

- ***Enrolment renewal:*** the enrolment renewal is fixed each year, generally, on September 30th. The procedure for the renewal can be found online for both scholarship holders and non-scholarship holders:
<https://www.unimib.it/didattica/offerta-formativa/dottorato-ricerca/carriera/tasse>
- ***Payment of the II installment:*** the deadline for the II installment payment (non-scholarship holders only) is usually around 16 May of each year. The amount due depends on the ISEE from a minimum of 0 euros to a maximum of 1.200 euro.
- ***Final doctoral exam request:*** the form must be sent to Segreteria online, usually during the first two or three weeks of October
<https://www.unimib.it/didattica/offerta-formativa/dottorato-ricerca/carriera/conseguimento-del-titolo>

Rights of the Ph.D. students

- **Drop-out:** students who wish to drop out of the doctoral program must fill out and send the form to the Doctoral School Office one month before leaving. Students can drop out at any time. The doctoral scholarship will be paid up until the student leaves the program.
- **Suspension:** Ph.D. students may suspend their doctoral program in the following circumstances: maternity; a serious, documented illness; special situations; hiring under a temporary contract in the public administration during the trial period. The request to suspend the doctoral program must be sent to the Doctoral School Office at dottorati@unimib.it. If the student is a scholarship holder, the scholarship will be suspended until reintegration in the program. Students must make up for time lost because of the suspension before submitting the final doctoral exam request.
- **Delegates:** any doctoral cycle (year) at the DISAT has the right/duty to elect a representative in the Department Council and in the Teaching Board of the Doctorate. PhD student delegates should collect any idea, question, and remark from other colleagues and bring them to the Council. Delegates can vote for all issues discussed in the Department council, except those of teachers' unique interest.
- **Departmental Car:** any Ph.D. student can use the Department car by handing in the appropriate request.
- **Funds availability:** Any student (both with or without scholarship) will be attributed 4860 euro as three slots of ca 1620 euro each year (scientific research funds).
To use funding through the Depot portal, students must send a request to the Coordinator to be associated with a specific fund.
To use funding through the U-Web mission portal, students must indicate the Coordinator as responsible for funding, who will indicate the appropriate fund during the authorization phase of the mission.

Funds can be in principle used for:

- Travel expenses (without kilometeric limitation)
- Accommodation costs (hotels up to the 2nd category – 3 stars)
- Refund for enrolment of meetings, courses or

Funds might also be used in principle for:

- Buying consumable materials, services, instruments maintenance, chemicals reagents, electronic components, lab animals, use of calculators etc.
- Refund for travel expenses (to be documented), if related to the thesis activities.
- Refund for open access license for publications as first authors related to the thesis.
- Refund for meetings enrolment if related to the thesis activities
- General costs: administration, telephone, mail, stationery

With research funds it is not possible to:

- Invest (instruments, furniture etc.) in materials subject to inventory
- Buy books or journals
- Print any publication

It is recommended that students keep track of the expenses on these funds to answer to any potential enquires by the Coordinator

- In addition, any student is allowed for free analyses in the DISAT laboratories to a maximum of 300 E per year (request to be sent to the Director of the Department, with the Coordinator in cc, after the arrangement with the responsible of the lab).
- A general doctoral fund of about 4000 € per cycle also exists, which is used for general expenses

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