

TEMPUS Project

Embedding Quality Assurance in Doctoral Education

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UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PALERMO



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UNIPA numbers

The University of Palermo (UNIPA) is a scientific and teaching higher education institution in central-western Sicily with about **55,000 students** in 2010/2011 (12,000 first-year students). It was founded in 1806.

Its **12 Faculties** and **31 Departments** cover the most important domains of contemporary scientific and technological knowledge.

About **130 courses** (first and second cycle) are offered annually as well as **33 master** and specialisation and **39 PhD courses** in 2011/2012.

The University General Hospital is a local health corporation that works in synergy with the Faculty of Medicine. It provides 600 beds, 300 day-hospital beds, and a first-aid service.

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Among recent UNIPA strategic policies, the development of **international relationships**, particularly addressed to the Mediterranean area, plays an essential role: student and professor *mobility* has been **increased** and a large number of agreements for research and/or creation of **international research groups** have been signed.

University Doctoral Education System

78 Doctoral programs in 2010/2011 (Start 01.01.2011 - End 31.12.2013)

404 enrolled students

225 grants funded by the University or other Institutions

183 Without grant

39 doctoral programs (7 of which are **international programs**), including 25 divided into two or more curricula in **2011/2012** (Start 01.01.2012 - End 31.12.2014 - Selection procedures still ongoing)

The available positions are:

162 with a **grant** (**16** are reserved for **foreign students**)

162 without a grant (**4** are reserved for **foreign students**)

The number of Doctoral programs has been reduced according to a simultaneous reduction policy in the number of departments in compliance with ministerial dispositions.

They are all **three years full-time programs**.

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Doctoral programs

The education of PhD students aims at the acquisition of the specific competences they need to carry out highly qualified research activities.

The educational objectives and educational programmes of each PhD course are defined by a **Board** composed by at least 12 Professors.

The **Board of Professors**, after having evaluated the individual research projects, appoints a **tutor** for each doctoral student, based upon specific competences. The tutor has to supervise and guide the educational activities of the doctoral student.

At the end of each course year, Doctoral **students must submit** to the Board a **report** about the advancement of their research. The board, after having evaluated doctoral students' research activities and certified their attendance to courses, will decide their **admission to or exclusion from** the next course year.

During the three-years, doctoral students should spend a **research and study period abroad**, for a minimum of three months.



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PhD evaluation

Doctoral courses are **evaluated each year** by the University Evaluation Unit, in accordance to a procedure set forth by the **CNVSU** (National Committee for the Evaluation of the University System)

CNVSU asks for particular attention:

- to the **monitoring of the quality** of educational offer and of students' **opinions** (opinion survey through specific anonymous questionnaires, filled in at the end of each course year);
- to initiatives aiming at **increasing** the **attractiveness** of doctoral programmes to other foreign students or to students from other Universities;
- to the tools needed to enable **international relations**;
- to the co-operation with public and private, Italian and foreign subjects, enabling doctoral students to **experience professional activities**;
- to the monitoring of professional opportunities;
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