

International PhD course in Structural Biology

1. Students attending the PhD course in Structural Biology are expected to be physically present at CERM for the whole duration of the PhD course to perform their research activity, except when on leave at other research labs, provided the leave is approved by the tutor and the Board of the Teachers as part of their training activity. Stages outside CERM are encouraged when framed within the research activities foreseen by the research project of the student. Periods of absence for any other reason are allowed provided they are agreed with the tutor. Normally these periods should not exceed a total of 4 weeks/year.
2. Students are entitled to attend schools or conferences, after agreeing with the tutor, using the budget made available to cover mobility expenses. The mobility budget should be used both for attending schools and conferences, and for covering accommodation and travel costs of research periods abroad. It is recommended that the student tries to obtain a grant to decrease the impact on the total budget.
3. Students have to obtain 60 credits (CFU) each year (180 in total). A total of 30 CFU have to be obtained in the first and in the second year from teaching activities. A total of 110 CFU in the three years have to be obtained from research activities, and 40 CFU from the writing of a research thesis.
4. CFU from teaching activities:
 - a. 1 CFU corresponds to 6 hours of lesson. Credits are granted upon achievement of a positive evaluation at the final examination and attendance to at least 75% of the hours of lessons.
 - b. 6 out of the 30 CFU have to be granted from the attendance of courses on the complementary skills.
 - c. A maximum of 6 of the 30 CFU can be granted from the attendance of research seminars.
 - d. At least 18 of the 30 CFU have to be granted from the attendance of courses organized in the frame of our doctorate or from attendance of courses organized by other doctorates of the University of Florence, according to the student teaching plan.
5. At the beginning of the PhD course, the students have to submit a research project on the proposed activities. At the beginning of each year, the students should also provide a plan of their teaching activities to be agreed by their tutor and approved by the Board of the Teachers.
6. Every month, the PhD students should upload on the web site of the doctorate a copy of their laboratory notebook. Protocols, procedures, manuals, etc. developed within the research projects, should also be uploaded by the students upon finalization.
7. After 6 and 18 months from the beginning of the PhD course, students are asked to provide a scientific report (in English) on the research activity performed in the last 6 months in an organized manner. The reports will be evaluated by the Board of the Teachers.
8. At the end of the first and second year, students are asked to
 - a. Provide a scientific report (in English) on the research activity performed in the year in an organized manner,
 - b. Provide a teaching report referring to the year (with indication of passed examinations and corresponding credits, and signatures of the lecturers of the attended seminars),
 - c. Give an oral presentation of the research activities performed in the year.A Committee will judge the written and oral presentations. A positive judgment of the scientific and teaching activities is necessary for admission to the following year.

9. At the end of the course, students should be co-authors of at least three publications on international scientific journals, or, if less, have produced results that will warrant such publications.

The PhD students are also invited to prepare and constantly update a PPT presentation to be used as a basis for:

- 1) Discussion of the work in progress with their tutor
- 2) Presentations of their research work
- 3) Discussion of their research with visiting professors
- 4) The annual reports of their research activity to the PhD Committee
- 5) The final thesis.

Final thesis

- 1) Within four months before the end of the third year, the PhD students must provide a report of the scientific and teaching activities performed in the three years of Doctorate, and in the following month they will be asked to give an oral presentation of their PhD research project in front of a Commission nominated by the Board of the Teachers. The Board of the Teachers will judge, from the written and the oral presentations, if the students are admitted to the final task, i.e. the preparation and dissertation of the PhD thesis.
- 2) The PhD thesis (in English) must consist of 20-50 pages (*) summarizing the research project of the PhD student in an organized manner (e.g. introduction, motivation for the work, state of the art, planning of the project, results, discussion, comparison of obtained vs. expected results, etc.). The original publications (including manuscripts accepted for publications) should follow and constitute an integral part of the thesis.
(*) The description of the research may exceed 50 pages if, depending on his/her tutor's advice, the information contained in the original publications is not qualitatively and/or quantitatively sufficient.
- 3) The PhD thesis must be submitted one and a half month before the end of the courses to two external evaluators selected by the Board of the Teachers and then to a Committee constituted by members of the University of Florence, Frankfurt and Utrecht. The Coordinator will communicate to the students the names of the external evaluators and of the members of the Committee.
- 4) The thesis, with full approval from the Committee, must be submitted to the University of Florence within the end of the courses. In the front page of the thesis it should be indicated that the thesis has been approved by the three Universities of Florence, Frankfurt and Utrecht.
- 5) The final dissertation will be provided by the PhD students in the next month in front of the Committee, upon full approval of their thesis by the two selected evaluators.