



UniSR

Università Vita-Salute
San Raffaele

Didactic Regulations

Bachelor's Degree in Biotechnology Research in Medicine

Applicable for students who enrol in academic year 2025-2026

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Where these Regulations use the masculine form in an over-extended manner, it is intended to refer inclusively to all persons, irrespective of their gender.

Article 1 – Course Admission

1.1 Knowledge required for admission

In order to be admitted to the Bachelor's Degree in Biotechnology Research in Medicine (BLM), candidates must have a secondary leaving certificate or another qualification obtained abroad and recognised as being suitable.

Candidates who have obtained an admission test score equal to or higher than the threshold established in the call for applications for the subjects mathematics and science with topic details similar to those offered in secondary schools will be admitted to the enrolment phase for the Bachelor's Degree in Biotechnology Research in Medicine. As well as having a selective function, the admission test also serves as an assessment test to ascertain the initial knowledge required for admission.

1.2 Admission procedure

The admission procedures are outlined in the call for applications, which also defines the number of places available at local level each year.

1.3 Definition of the Additional Learning Requirements (OFA)

The existence of additional learning requirements is determined by the result of the admission test in the subject areas defined by Italian Ministerial Decree 1648/2023, i.e. relating to the '*basic knowledge of mathematics and science as provided by secondary schools*'. The additional learning requirements are determined by a number of correct answers in the aforesaid areas, equal to less than 50% of the admission test questions.

The fulfilment of the additional learning requirements will be certified by a specific examination, for which the student will be issued with a certificate of compliance.

In order to facilitate the fulfilment of additional learning requirements, the degree course provides students with remedial courses, including online courses, which can be used by all enrolled students, regardless of whether or not they have an educational debt. Additional learning requirements must be fulfilled during the first year of the course.

Art. 2 – Study Plan

The teaching activity is structured according to the Study Plan specified in the attached Description of the training programme. During the annual teaching planning phase, a different fraction of the total commitment may be assigned to individual study, which shall not, in any case, be less than 50% of the total hourly commitment. This does not apply to the attendance of teaching and experimental laboratory courses, in which the individual study commitment is considerably lower than for conventional courses.

2.1 Individual Study Plans

Pursuant to Article 11(4-bis) of Italian Ministerial Decree no. 270/2004 (individual study plan), it is possible to obtain the degree in accordance with an individual study plan that also includes

training activities other than those provided for by the Didactic Regulations, on the condition that they are consistent with the Didactic System of the course for the academic year of enrolment.

To this end, students must present the Course Council with a request for approval of their individual study plan by the start of the current year. The individual study plan proposed by the student will be assessed by a special committee appointed by the President of the Course Council and, once it has been approved by the Course Council, it will be forwarded to the competent offices of the University, which will take care of its storage and monitor the student's compliance with it throughout the duration of the course.

Individual study plans may be modified during the course of the studies, subject to approval by the Course Council, in accordance with the timeframes provided for by the University Didactic Regulations.

2.2 International mobility and recognition of periods of study and learning spent abroad

The BLM Bachelor's degree, on the basis of inter-institutional agreements or within the context of European and international programmes, provides for the possibility of carrying out the sixth and last semester at foreign universities, by granting support and guidance through its administrative and academic functions, as provided for in Article 20 of the University Didactic Regulations.

Art. 3 – Restrictions

In compliance with the provisions of Articles 14 and 15 of the University Didactic Regulations, General Section, the Course Council does not identify mandatory exams required on an annual basis, or courses for which an annual certificate of attendance is necessary, or a minimum number of ECTS credits that students must acquire, as a requirement for passing to the next year of the course.

"Repeating student" status is given to students who, at the end of the third year of the course, have not passed all the examinations specified in the study plan by the dates set out in the academic year calendar for Graduation Sessions.

Art. 4 – Assessment

Assessments may take the form of examinations or any other form of assessment, such as an aptitude test, the nature of which will be defined once a year by the Course Supervisor/Coordinator in accordance with the Didactic System and the Dublin Descriptors it contains.

The Course Supervisor/Coordinator is under obligation to provide students with detailed information on the assessment processes when lessons start. These processes will also be published in the course teaching activity syllabuses. The assessment process may not be changed during the course.

Students will acquire the corresponding ECTS credits when they pass an assessment.

The exam committees are composed as specified in Article 24 of the University Didactic Regulations.

Assessment of the individual learning activities of the student's choice is expressed as a proficiency rating. Proficiency is certified, by the Course Supervisor, by assessing the objectives achieved at the end of the course.

The six yearly examination rounds provided for by the University Didactic Regulations, general section Article 21(10), are divided into winter, summer and autumn exam sessions, as well as a resit session.

The BLM Course Council President, by annual resolution, schedules the dates of the above-mentioned exam rounds at suitable intervals. Only students who have already acquired the required attendance, as specified below, are eligible for admission to examinations and any other forms of assessment.

Assessment of the single activities is individual and aims to confirm that the knowledge and any practical skills pertaining to the course provided have been acquired.

Compulsory courses

The achievement of the educational objectives can be facilitated also by means of interim tests that do not have an evaluation values, as they are merely intended for rating students' knowledge and skills regarding a part of the course as a whole and any fails do not affect admission to the final exam.

Exams for which the mark is expressed out of thirty must be formally certified by an Exam Committee presided over by the Course Supervisor and at least one other lecturer or subject matter expert. If it is based on an oral examination, this may be preceded by a written test with a result that is conditional to eligibility for the oral test.

Learning activities of the student's choice

Learning activities of the student's choice include the attendance of elective courses and placement/curricular internship activities.

Assessment of the individual learning activities of the student's choice is expressed as a proficiency rating. Proficiency is certified, by the Course Supervisor, by assessing the objectives achieved at the end of the course.

Placements (Curricular Internships)

Students will attend experimental workshop activities lasting a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of four that are not necessarily associated with the preparation of the final dissertation, both in laboratories on the University's campus and within IRCCS San Raffaele, Milan, and at other institutions in Italy or abroad. Placements are acknowledged in a student's curriculum by allocating 1 ECTS credits for two weeks, 2 ECTS credits for three weeks, and 3 ECTS credits for four weeks and will be included in the agenda of the first Course Council meeting after the end of the placement. It will be possible to carry out a placement from the end of the second semester of the first year of the degree course, for a total of no more than three placements over the three years of the course.

This activity can only be carried out during periods of the year when there are no scheduled teaching activities and is conditional to passing the Safety in the Laboratory course, which qualifies as an elective course (1 ECTS credit) of the student's choice.

Students may directly contact a laboratory supervisor, the year tutor or contact the President of the Course Council in order to ascertain whether there is a laboratory supervisor willing to host and supervise the placement.

The placement provides for active supervision by the laboratory supervisor, who can avail him/herself of other professional figures of his/her choice.

The placement application, together with the preliminary risk analysis form, must be handed in to the Training and Internship Service, which will submit it to the President of the Course Council for approval. At the end of placements, students and the supervisor of the hosting laboratory must complete and sign a questionnaire to be sent to the Training and Internship Service, which will officially notify the Academic Secretariat of the end of the placement.

Art. 5 – Final Exam

The final exam consists in the discussion of a dissertation on a topic that is consistent with the educational objectives of the class demonstrating a command of the topics studied and the acquisition of the relevant skills, as well as the ability to work independently. The final exam may be connected to a research project or to an internship activity or may be an individual review of literature searches.

5.1 Definition of the Roles associated with the Final Exam

Students enrolled in the third year of the course are invited to contact a potential dissertation Supervisor chosen from among permanent professors and Researchers, including those on a fixed-term contract, of Vita-Salute San Raffaele University's Faculty of Medicine and Surgery. The Lecturer identified as the Student's candidate Supervisor may also act as Assistant Supervisor; if the identified Lecturer is not available or the Student has difficulties identifying a Supervisor, he/she may contact the President of the Course Council.

The Supervisor is a member of the Committee of the final graduation exam for which the student is registered during the preparation of the final dissertation.

The Supervisor is responsible for following the development of the final dissertation by the student and guarantees its adequacy. To do this, the Supervisor may identify, from among UniSR lecturers or the Researchers of another institution, an Assistant Supervisor to accompany the student in as he/she prepares his/her final dissertation. For students who choose to spend the last semester abroad, the supervisor of the host university, or another person identified by him/her, may act as the Assistant Supervisor.

If the Assistant Supervisor observes problems in the planned development of the preparation of the final dissertation leading to significant delays in relation to the planned schedule, he/she must inform the Supervisor without delay. The Assistant Supervisor must be available to meet the Supervisor periodically and participate in the Committee of the final examination for which the student is enrolled during the preparation of the final dissertation.

The Supervisor checks with the student and the assistant supervisor regarding progress in the collection of information and the preparation of the final dissertation, supervises any corrections and is the guarantor of the planned schedule. If he/she encounters any delays or problems in the preparation of the Final Dissertation that might jeopardise its timely submission, he/she must promptly inform the Third Year Tutor and, for information purposes, the President of the Course Council in order to take any corrective and/or supportive action.

5.2 Preparation of the Final dissertation

The degree examination consists of the defence and subsequent discussion of a Final Dissertation prepared in the form of a written paper in Italian or English (with no preference or bonus for the choice of language). This dissertation is not only an administrative document required to obtain

the degree, but must have a scientific purpose that can be judged with regard to both its content and formal aspects.

Students are responsible, once they have identified a scientific topic of interest, for contacting a Lecturer from the Faculty of Medicine of this University in order to obtain qualified feedback on the scientific soundness of the topic proposed for the Final Dissertation and to ascertain the lecturer's willingness to act as Supervisor.

In order to guarantee the preparation of the Final Dissertation the greatest didactic importance, students will be assisted by the above-mentioned roles, who are responsible for guiding and assessing the research activity carried out.

Instructions regarding the contents of the Final Dissertation are provided below.

- **Introduction:** The introduction should summarise previous general background knowledge related to the subject of the final dissertation.
- **Body of the final dissertation:** this is the core part of the dissertation and should typically be a summary of the most recent literature on the subject considered, on the basis of one or more starting hypotheses regarding the subject matter. It typically includes graphs, images, tables and/or diagrams either taken from the cited scientific work (in which case the source must be explicitly indicated in the legend) or created by the candidate. This section of the dissertation should be broken down into sections, chapters, and paragraphs, so as to facilitate comprehension and the possibility of discussing individual aspects of the dissertation. It must also contain key bibliographical references, generally recent, relating to the individual aspects covered.
- **Final Discussion and Conclusion:** the Discussion should provide a critical summary of the body of the final dissertation and provide the candidate's own interpretation of the results in the light of the recent specific literature. In the Conclusions, which may be dealt with separately from the Discussion, the candidate is invited to formulate his/her own hypothesis for the development, theoretical or applicative, of the topic of the final dissertation and its implications.
- **References:** this section must list each of the scientific publications cited in the final dissertation, and may include congress presentations that are not yet the subject of formal scientific publication. Each bibliographic citation must be readily available in public databases such as PubMed (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>) or the like. Possible exceptions (conference abstracts, journals not listed in PubMed, monographs and textbook chapters) may be included to supplement the main references section, but only to a minor extent and not as a substitute for it.

The Final Dissertation must be written by the candidate under the guidance of the Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor with whom he/she previously defined the subject of the Dissertation. The Dissertation must include a statement of the terms of the problem addressed, describe the state of knowledge in the field of interest and formulate specific working hypotheses. The subject-matter of the Dissertation must be explicitly related to a topic covered in the Courses of the study plan, including the topics covered in the courses of the student's choice.

5.3 The Degree Examination

The Final Dissertation is presented and discussed in Italian before the Committee meeting in a public Degree Examination. If the dissertation is written in English, the Student may make a request to the Course Secretariat to discuss it in the same language, instead of in Italian.

After the oral presentation of the Final Dissertation by the candidate, the members of the Committee may ask questions regarding the hypothesis underlying the dissertation and the interpretation of the results discussed by the candidate.

Any use of multimedia material to support the presentation is exclusively reserved for the degree examination.

5.4 Calculation of Degree marks/GPA

At the end of the discussion, in a session restricted to its members, the Committee establishes the mark on the basis of the candidate's academic curriculum and the assessment of the final examination. The examination will be passed if an overall mark of 66/110 or higher is awarded.

The degree mark, expressed out of 110, is the result of the sum of two separate scores. The first is the average of the marks obtained in the individual assessment exams included in the study plan using the formula: weighted mean $\times 110/30$. Provision is made for honours in assessment exams by awarding an additional third of a point (30 *cum laude* = 30.33).

The second score is the mark obtained in the degree examination, which is the average of the marks awarded by the individual Committee members, on a scale of 0 to 8. It takes overall account of the quality of the dissertation, the candidate's own contribution to its preparation, based on what was stated by the Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor, and the scientific quality of the discussion.

Honours may be awarded to candidates who, on the basis of the above criteria, achieve a theoretical mark at least two points higher than 110. Honours may only be awarded with the unanimous agreement of the Committee.

A mention of honour may be awarded to candidates who have an average mark of 108 or higher, at least 3 honours marks and full marks for the presentation.

Mentions of honour may only be awarded with the unanimous agreement of the Committee.

5.5 Degree examination sessions calendar / Time limits and obligations for candidates

Degree examination sessions calendar

In each academic year there are three degree examination sessions, according to a calendar defined at the beginning of the academic year and posted on the Student Intranet and on the Student Noticeboards.

Submission of the Final Dissertation Application

Students must, within the prescribed time limits and in the prescribed manner, hand in the documents required by law and the regulations to the Student Center. It is the student's responsibility to check with the Student Center for the most up-to-date rules on the submission of the final dissertation application and any specific requirements of the degree course.

Students may promptly submit any variations that arise during the preparation of the Final Dissertation to the Supervisor, who will promptly inform the President of the Course Council.

For formal aspects, please refer to the guidance provided by the Student Center.

Time limits and obligations for candidates

Students must contact the Student Center and consult their intranet site.

5.6 Degree Exam Committee

The Examination Committees for the final dissertation are nominated by the Dean of the Faculty or the President of the Course Council, and are composed of at least five members, including the president of the committee, which shall include at least three permanent professors assigned as lecturers and/or fixed-term researchers.

Both the Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor of each student enrolled in the degree examination session will be part of the Committee.

Full professors, associate professors, contract professors, University Researchers (established and otherwise), permanent lecturers also from other Faculties of the University or other universities and experts with proven experience on the topics discussed in the paper presented are eligible for participation in Examination Committees.

Art. 6 – University and course transfers

Applications to transfer to the degree course will be subject to approval by the Course Council having consulted the Transfer Committee, which:

- a) assesses the possibility of acknowledging all or part of the academic career followed up to that point. If the individual integrated courses already passed are fully acknowledged, the Committee will validate the mark obtained at the other site.
- b) the Committee may also recognise the passing of only part of the integrated course, leaving the coordinating lecturer the task of defining the completion of the course and calculating the final mark.
- c) recognises the ECTS credits acquired up to the same number of credits of the same scientific disciplinary sector (or group of the same) provided for by the didactic regulations of the course. In all cases of student transfers between Bachelor's Degree Courses belonging to the same class, the number of ECTS credits for the same scientific disciplinary sector directly awarded to the student may not be below the limit provided for by applicable legislation;
- d) identifies the year of the course subsequent to the first in which the student can be enrolled;
- e) establishes in a structured manner any educational debt to be made up.

For all other aspects not covered by this Article, the provisions of Article 15 of the University Didactic Regulations shall apply.

Art. 7 – Admission to individual courses

- 1) Students in possession of a five-year secondary leaving certificate or other qualification obtained abroad and recognised as being suitable, may apply to enrol in individual educational activities and sit the relative examinations and obtain certification including the indication of the ECTS credits and mark obtained, on the basis of the procedures defined by the Faculty, within the scope of the criteria established by the Academic Senate.
- 2) Applications must be submitted according to the conditions and deadlines published on an annual basis by the Student Center on the University website.
- 3) Enrolment in individual Courses must be approved by the Course Council.

For all other aspects not covered herein, the provisions of Article 31 of the general section of the University Didactic Regulations shall apply.

Art. 8 – Recognition of degrees awarded by foreign universities

Within the scope of its tasks, the Course Council may deliberate on the equivalence of academic qualifications achieved abroad on the basis of cultural agreements and recognition of academic qualifications achieved abroad, as well as recognition of studies carried out abroad.

This task may be exercised in compliance with the legislation in force, without prejudice to the powers and any authorisations of Authorities provided for by the regulations in force.

Art. 9 – Committees established within the Course Council

The President may suggest to the Course Council the establishment of advisory committees. The type, composition and appointment and operative procedures of such committees shall be proposed by the Course Council and approved by the Faculty Council.

Teaching Committee

The Teaching Committee is an advisory body to the President of the Course Council that cooperates in the coordination and harmonisation of teaching activities. The President appoints between 3 and 5 Teaching Committee members from among the lecturers of the Course Council, including contract lecturers. Representatives of the students of the 3 years of the degree course also form part of the Teaching Committee.

It is, however, within the President's authority to restrict the composition of the Teaching Committee to lecturers for the discussion of specific topics. The Teaching Committee is convened by the President normally one week before the Course Council to prepare the topics to be discussed at the meeting.

Transfer Committee

The composition of the Transfer Committee is decided annually by the Course Council.

The Committee is responsible for examining transfer applications from students from other Italian or foreign universities, on the basis of available places.

Additional Committees

Other committees include the Lecturer-Student Joint Sub-Committee, the Review Group and the Quality Assurance Group, which are governed by the relevant Quality Assurance Regulations issued by Rector's Decree and available on the University's public website.

Art. 10 – Protection of health and safety

When carrying out internship or practical activities, with regard to health and safety regulations, students are considered equivalent to workers. Consequently, they are subject to the same protective measures and responsibilities and are therefore required to comply with the relevant legal requirements, with the restrictions and prohibitions enforced by occupational health and safety, radioprotection and accident prevention laws, and with any other regulations enforced by the Host Organisation with the same purposes.

The University has formalised and centralised a series of activities strictly related to the risk exposure profile of the individual study programme, with a view to implementing the applicable legal provisions.

In short, depending on the specific indications for each Course of study, students are under obligation to:

- participate in the initial information and educational initiatives and those included in the teaching activities calendar organised to ensure compliance with the provisions set forth in Articles 36 and 37 of Legislative Decree 81/08 “Information and training of workers and their representatives” and in Legislative Decree no. 101/2020 on radioprotection;
- take part in the initial and periodic health monitoring activities pursuant to Italian Legislative Decree 81/08 and, where applicable, Italian Legislative Decree 101/2020, for issuance of the compliance certification required before starting practical activities involving exposure to risks;
- use the collective and individual protective equipment provided in compliance with the instructions and training imparted;
- comply with the general safety measures and the safety specifications drawn up and made available from time to time.

The start of curricular and extracurricular activities involving exposure to a specific risk may therefore not be authorised until the provisions required to safeguard the health and safety of each student have been implemented and fulfilled.

Repeated failure to comply with the above obligations shall result in the suspension of the activities involving exposure to a specific risk until such time as the legal obligations have been fulfilled.

Art. 11 – Modifications

Modifications to these Didactic Regulations are decided on by the Faculty Council, upon proposal by the Course Council and an opinion issued by the Lecturer-Student Joint Committee for those aspects for which it is responsible.

Annexes

Description of the training programme and learning methods

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Description of the training programme and learning methods

Courses consist of integrated courses (compulsory) and courses of the student's choice.

Integrated courses

These are typically based on lectures, with the exception of teaching and experimental laboratory courses, and may cover different scientific disciplinary sectors in order to achieve a common educational objective.

Experimental laboratory teaching activities

These take place in the University's Teaching and Experimental Laboratory and are aimed at fully integrating theoretical teaching with experimental application. The activities carried out have the specific aim of leading the student to acquire skills and competence in the main experimental technologies that represent the milestones of a predefined logical pathway, including basic knowledge relating to safety and the organisation of experimental work.

The activities are carried out individually or in small groups. In the former case, their purpose is to put students in a position in which they are able to adopt a research protocol and analyse the results obtained. In the latter case, the aim is to enhance exchange with other students engaged in the same activity.

Supervising Lecturers may avail themselves of Assistants, in order to coordinate the scheduled activities.

In the case of SLDs/disabilities that make attendance of experimental laboratory teaching activities difficult and such difficulties are reported by the competent offices, the Course Council arranges personalised solutions or alternative learning programmes equivalent to the educational activity planned for the specific course organised in individual study plans.

Learning activities of the student's choice

These activities can be carried out by means of lectures, seminars, interactive courses in small groups, placement/internship activities, in respect of which students choose their own personal option, until the total number of ECTS credits envisaged by the study plan is achieved.

Students may choose educational activities from other degree courses of the University, subject to a justified request and approval by the relevant Course Councils, in line with attendance obligations.

At the start of the academic year, the Course Council will establish the minimum threshold of registered students required to activate activities of the student's choice, and based on special organisational requirements, the Course Council may define the maximum number of students who can register.

The aim of the educational activities of the student's choice is to acquire and improve knowledge of contexts associated with topics consistent with the overall educational project.

Students must demonstrate that they have acquired the following abilities:

- knowledge and understanding of the various parts of the educational activities in terms of their basic, theoretical and, where appropriate, experimental, practical or applicational aspects;

- understanding and knowledge of subject-specific language;
- ability to connect topics covered in the overall objectives of the academic record and to understand the relationship in terms of content with other educational activities;
- clear and effective communication and presentation;
- ability to independently and personally reprocess acquired content.

Lectures

Classroom teaching consists in a focus on a specific topic related to the Course in which they are delivered.

They are held by a lecturer, according to a predefined timetable, and delivered to students enrolled in a given course year.

Classroom teaching may also take the form of “Seminars”, teaching activities held by one or more speakers invited by the Course Supervisor on the basis of their specific expertise. However, the Course Supervisor must attend lessons in order to ensure didactic continuity. Lessons delivered in the form of a seminar must be logged in the lesson register.

Interactive teaching

The activities in this form of teaching contribute to the achievement of the educational objectives of the Course and are generally led by an Assistant, whose task is to facilitate the acquisition of skills and abilities. Student learning is acquired by means of practical and/or laboratory exercises to supplement the concepts and notions learned in the relevant Core Courses.

Each academic year, the Faculty Council appoints the Assistants who will be involved in the interactive teaching, upon the proposal of the Course Council for the Bachelor’s Degree in Biotechnology Research in Medicine. These roles may be recruited from amongst the Lecturers, as well as from university and non-university researchers, by means of annual contracts.

Individual study activities

These are achieved thanks to the time devoted to personal study or other individual learning activities, including tutoring activities, carried out by the student.

The time reserved for this type of learning must be devoted to:

- personal study, for the assimilation of concepts and notions and for preparation for exams.
- independent or tutor-led use of the teaching aids made available by the Faculty for self-learning and self-assessment;
- placement/curricular internship activities in affiliated national research facilities.

The portion of the total hourly commitment reserved for personal study or other individual learning activities must be at least 50% of the total hourly commitment.

The ECTS credits corresponding to each course are awarded to students when they pass the corresponding exam or, where provided for, by assessment certification (Pass) by the lecturer.

The Lecturer-Student Joint Committee certifies the consistency between the ECTS credits assigned to the learning activities and the specific educational objectives.

Preparatory courses

When specific preparatory courses are required for each teaching activity, they are indicated in the list of teaching activities appended to these Regulations.

The preparatory nature of the individual fundamental courses makes it impossible for students to register for the assessment exams of subsequent integrated courses if they have not passed the exam of the previous course; it does not, therefore, refer to the possibility of attending the lessons of the subsequent course.

Attendance

Students are required to attend all the teaching activities envisaged by the Bachelor's Degree in Biotechnology Research in Medicine study plan; attendance is recorded by accessing the personal page on the student's intranet. Attendance data are made available to both Course Supervisors and Students through the dedicated Intranet site.

Students who have attended at least 75% of the hours required for each compulsory or elective course (80% in the case of Experimental Laboratory Teaching Activities) automatically acquire the attendance certification required to take the examination.

Special situations regarding students' health must be reported without delay to the Year Tutor, who will inform the President of the Course Council, so that he/she can make the appropriate operational decisions.

Study Plan

During the annual teaching planning phase, a different fraction of the total commitment may be assigned to individual study, which shall not, in any case, be less than 50% of the total hourly commitment. An exception is made for cases in which the educational activities have a high experimental or practical content.

The Italian version of this Regulations is the only legal means of communication of the relative contents and in case of dispute, the Italian version shall prevail.