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AI Master Degree in Artificial Intelligence for Science and Technology

Regulations for the selection of a Master's Degree thesis and stage assignment and development

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Art 1 Definitions and general provisions

"AI4ST" = Master's Degree in Artificial Intelligence for Science and Technology

"CCD" = members of the AI4ST Consiglio di Coordinamento Didattico (Teaching Coordination Council), together with all those with a teaching position according to its "Piano Didattico" (Teaching Plan).

"Committee" = "Rapporti con mondo del lavoro, stage e tesi esterne, e orientamento in uscita" (Relations with the world of work, stage and external theses, and leaving guidance) committee

"StageSelection" = The area of the "segreteria on-line" web service for the stage management

"stage" = curricular internship

"ThesisSelection" = The area of the "segreteria on-line" web service where students will be able to access the list of thesis opportunities

"University Consortium" = University of Milano – Bicocca, Milano Statale and Pavia

Where not explicitly laid out in this document, reference will be made to the legislation in force on the matter and, in particular, to the "Regolamento Didattico di Ateneo" (University Teaching Regulations), the "Regolamento degli Studenti dell'Università degli Studi di Milano – Bicocca" (Milano- Bicocca University Student Regulations), and the AI4ST "Regolamento didattico" (Teaching Regulations), which shall prevail in cases of doubts.

Art. 2 Structure of the Master's thesis

The educational pathway of the Master's Degree in Artificial Intelligence for Science and Technology ends with a Master's thesis, made up of a compulsory stage, related research activity and the preparation of the final thesis document.

The compulsory stage may take place at the University Consortium, or at companies, organizations, research centres, or other universities, including outside Italy.

The stage activity is associated with the thesis and shall be carried out under the guidance of a company tutor ("tutor aziendale" in Italian) and the supervision of a university tutor.

The company tutor shall be assigned for all types of stage: those taking place at the University Consortium, companies, organizations, research centres, or other universities.

The university tutor shall act as thesis supervisor, while the company tutor can serve as the thesis co-supervisor.

Art. 3 Eligibility Criteria

Students can start the thesis and the corresponding stage after satisfying all the following conditions of eligibility:

1. passing the exams for the courses of Advanced Foundations of Mathematics for AI, Advanced Foundations of Statistics for AI, Advanced Foundations of Physics for AI, and Advanced Foundations of Artificial Intelligence;
2. passing sufficient exams to accrue at least 42 ECTS (“CFU” in Italy);
3. subscribing to the second year of the Master’s programme.

Art. 4 Thesis Selection

There are two ways students can select a thesis proposal:

1. by selecting one of the thesis proposals available on the ThesisSelection. Students can access the database of thesis opportunities before meeting the eligibility conditions but cannot select any.
2. by selecting a stage proposal independently, or from among those available on the related platforms of the University Consortium, and directly contacting one of the members of the CCD or the Committee to evaluate the proposal. If the proposal is deemed adequate for the educational goals of the Master’s degree course, a thesis supervisor shall be appointed (the aforementioned member of the CCD if involved, or selected by the Committee otherwise), who will add the thesis proposal to ThesisSelection for the student to select it.

Art. 5 Start of the Master’s thesis, stage assignment and activation

Once a thesis has been selected by a student, both the student and the thesis supervisor will be informed by ThesisSelection via email. The thesis supervisor shall conduct an interview with the student to ensure their background is compatible with the thesis subject and they are ready to start work. If these conditions are met, the preliminary timeline of the thesis work shall be defined and the thesis supervisor shall approve the student’s thesis request in ThesisSelection.

The thesis supervisor shall then engage with the stage company tutor, who directly assigns the stage to the student. The student accepts the stage assignment in the StageSelection interface. The stage office appoints the thesis supervisor as the stage university tutor.

If the thesis supervisor and the student cannot agree, the student’s application for the thesis shall be cancelled by the supervisor and the student shall make another thesis selection.

Art. 6 Stage development

The thesis stage should involve at least 150 hours of work in order to accrue the corresponding 6 ECTS (“CFU” in Italy), which must be documented in the final stage report. During the stage, periodic evaluations shall be conducted by the university tutor, in accordance with Article 6 of this document. In the first evaluation, after 40 hours of work, the student, the company or the university tutor can ask the Committee to cancel the stage, in which case the thesis process will have to be restarted.

All along the stage duration, the university tutor shall check that the student's work at the host institution or company is conducted in line with the activities envisaged in the thesis project. The company tutor is responsible for overseeing the student during the stage and guaranteeing the educational nature of the activities carried out.

Art. 7 Stage evaluation

The stage evaluation will take place during and at the end of the activity, and is meant to guarantee the consistency of the work with the educational objectives of the Master's Degree course and the thesis project. The evaluation will take place on at least three different occasions: at 40 hours of the stage, at 75 hours of the stage and at the end of it. The evaluation criteria and schedule shall be agreed between the two tutors at the start of the stage.

At the end of the stage, the student shall upload a final report to the StageSelection platform, which must include the timesheet and a short summary of the activity.

The company tutor shall also upload a student evaluation report through the StageSelection platform.