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Giuseppe Alberigo European School for Advanced Religious Studies

Regulations and Policies

(Approved by the Foundation's Board of Trustees on 26 May 2022)

Art. 1 – Establishment and Purpose

The purpose of the Giuseppe Alberigo European School for Advanced Religious Studies – as per art. 1 section (d) of the Statute of the Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII named after Giuseppe Alberigo – is to develop, and to train in research, scholars in the fields of history, exegesis and theology through work within the Foundation's research groups and engagement with international experts and institutions.

The qualification awarded by the School is the Diploma di perfezionamento scientifico in Scienze Religiose, equivalent at the relevant party's request, pursuant to current regulations, to the PhD degree title awarded by Italian universities within the framework of the EHEA.

The Advanced Course in Religious Studies lasts a minimum of three years and entails full-time residential attendance at the educational, scientific, and seminar activities of the School, as well as participation in FSCIRE's scientific projects.

The School establishes agreements and affiliations with national and international universities and research institutes in order to implement specific programs of collaboration, study exchanges and research training; the School can promote and join national and international networks subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

The School has always implemented and continues to implement active policies of non-discrimination and gender equality.

Art. 2 – Collegial Bodies

The School, its students, and its functioning are evaluated and supervised by the Foundation's Scientific Committee in accordance with the Statute.

In compliance with the regulations of DM Mur 226/2021, the School habitates a Faculty Board composed of at least twelve members chosen from specialists in the relevant fields, including the Secretary of the Foundation.

The Faculty Board directs the activities of the School and approves the students' research topics, as well as the seminars, readings, research trips abroad and progress reviews; it elects the School's Coordinator whose appointment is made by the Foundation's Board of Trustees in accordance with the Statute.

In addition to the vote of the Faculty Board, the judgement of the Scientific Committee and of the Secretary of the Foundation are required for admission to years subsequent to the first year of the Advanced Course in Religious Studies, as well as for any extension of the fellowship beyond the three-year period.

The Coordinator is the School's representative and supervises its activities, institutional relations, and agreements, as well as student relations; s/he also arranges for the curricular documentation of the students and for the management of the School's records for the purpose – in particular – of degree equivalency procedures, thus carrying out the relevant compliances and maintaining relations with the relevant Ministry.

The Coordinator of the School can propose to the Board of Trustees the appointment of a Vice-Coordinator; both roles have the right to participate in the meetings of the Scientific Committee, assisting it in every way in performing its role as the jury for the School's final exams.

Art. 3 – Admission Requirements

Every year, the School offers a number of three-year study scholarships in line with the quotient set by the Ministero dell'università e della ricerca.

Application is open to both Italian citizens and to those of other nationalities who are in possession of either a Laurea Magistrale or an equivalent degree obtained outside Italy in a discipline that aligns with the objectives and characteristics of the Advanced Course in Religious Studies and who are also in possession of the specific curricular skills and language proficiency indicated in the call for admissions.

Application is also open to those who expect to obtain a degree satisfying the admissions criteria before the date of enrolment in the Advanced Course in Religious Studies, under penalty of forfeiture of admission should the required certification not be attained by the date of enrolment. The eligibility of foreign degrees is assessed by the Admission Committee of the Advanced Course.

The provisions that apply to University doctoral students concerning taxation, social and welfare insurance, as well as rules concerning leaves of absence and suspensions, apply also to the students of the School, insofar as is compatible. Irrespective of the regulations of Italian state law, maternity leave allows for the voluntary suspension of work and other obligations, but not for the suspension of scholarship monies.

Candidate admission to the School's Advanced Course in Religious Studies is evaluated by a specially designated Admission Committee composed of: (a) the Secretary of the Foundation; (b) the Coordinator of the School and, if appointed, the Vice-Coordinator of

the School; (c) by at least four external members, two designated by the Faculty Board and two designated by the Scientific Committee, who satisfy the minimum requisites for associate professorship established by Italian national law.

The Admission Committee's decision cannot be appealed and determines the ranking of successful candidates on the basis of the candidates' qualifications, educational backgrounds and specific skills and aptitudes, which are also evaluated through special seminars, interviews, exercises and selection tests as stated in the call of admissions.

Art. 4 – Student Obligations

Students must attend to their studies and to their training and research activities exclusively – save for exceptional provisions – for 44 weeks per year, full-time, during the Institute's opening hours.

They are also required to undertake periods of study and research in Italy and abroad to be agreed upon with the Secretary of the Foundation in consultation with the thesis supervisor for periods of not less than six months during the duration of the Advanced Course. For periods of study and research in Italy and abroad, the scholarship increases set forth in Ministerial Decree No. 226/2021, Article 9, paragraphs 3 and 4, shall apply.

Admission to the second and third years of the Advanced Course is subject to the evaluation of the Foundation's Faculty Board and Scientific Committee in keeping with the achievement of pre-set progress goals, the productive completion of bibliographical readings, the fruitful participation in seminar activities, and commitment to the Foundation's cultural projects.

The students are obliged to constantly and critically engage with the School's collegial bodies and with their respective thesis supervisors regarding their specific research topics, by means of meetings and periodic progress evaluations at the supervisor's place of work, fully acceding to all instructions and appraisal. Students may request eventual suspension of the course for well-founded reasons indicated in DM 226/2021, Art. 8, Paragraph 8.

Students have the right to withdraw from the course at any time with a written notice that must be presented to the governing bodies. In such case, they are not required to return any grant monies received.

Art. 5 – Bibliographical Readings and Seminars

Students are required to attend reading and research seminars and to participate in all scientific events held by the School.

Participation in at least two-thirds of the annually held seminars – following registration – is mandatory and subject to evaluation. Study and research periods spent abroad, as well as cases of absence for serious reasons that are authorised by the Secretary of the Foundation, are excluded from the sum of absences.

The appraisal of each student's seminar work is based, in particular, on the knowledge of preparatory readings and on the results of the active and reflective participation in discussion. The appraisal contributes to the evaluation of the student's progress for the purpose of subsequent advancement within the Course.

Seminar presenters will indicate essential preparatory readings – possibly also as part of a larger bibliography – taking into account the time available between the consignment of readings to the students and the holding of the seminar.

Art. 6 – Research Topic and Thesis Supervisor

During the first year of the Advanced Course in Religious Studies, the Faculty Board identifies a research topic for each student, with reference to the paths of research carried out by the Foundation and to the individual skills and inclinations of each student, as well as a to possible supervisors for the Tesi di perfezionamento scientifico.

The supervisor, as the scientific guarantor of the Tesi di perfezionamento scientifico, is obliged to continuously direct and verify the student's research work, defining its ongoing objectives and time frame.

The thesis advisor evaluates, within a deadline set at least 90 days before the date of the examination, whether the thesis may be admitted to the final defence and, if so, presents it along with a written report to the Faculty Board, personally participating – where possible – in the examination committee.

The Foundation may provide for the payment of a lump-sum fee for the completion of the supervisor's duties, to be defined and formalised, on a case-by-case basis, by the Secretary of the Foundation.

Art. 7 – Final Exam

Students must take, at the end of the three-year course, or at a later time in the cases provided for in this article, the final examination for obtaining the Diploma di perfezionamento scientifico in Scienze Religiose.

The examination consists of the public defence of a written dissertation, called Tesi di perfezionamento scientifico, on an assigned research topic, before the Foundation's Scientific Committee – in accordance with Article 7 of the Foundation's Statute – with a written presentation from the supervisor and an appraisal from at least two external readers (or evaluators), designated by the Coordinator of the Faculty Board in consultation with the Secretary of the Foundation.

At the end of the defence, the Scientific Committee either grants or refuses, by written and justified judgment, the Diploma di perfezionamento scientifico in Scienze Religiose.

The Scientific Committee, acting as an examining board, is convened in ordinary session once a year. In particular cases of necessity, extraordinary examination sessions may be arranged on an exceptional basis by the Secretary of the Foundation, in consultation with the Coordinator of the Faculty Board.

Admission of the final thesis to the defence is subject to the conclusive decision of the thesis supervisor, together with the approval of the Secretary of the Foundation, at least 90 days before the scheduled date of the final examination.

In the event that the thesis supervisor/reader(s) fail to grant admission of the thesis to the defence, the latter shall be postponed, while remaining subject to the same requirements, to the regular examination session the following year, or, in exceptional cases, to a dedicated extraordinary session.

The final thesis may be written in Italian or English, or in another language subject to approval by the Faculty Board, and shall be accompanied by a summary written in English and by a report on the activities undertaken during the Advanced Course, including any publications.

The final version of the thesis must be provided in hard copy and in pdf format to the School's Secretariat at least 60 days before the date of the examination, together with the thesis supervisor's declaration of admissibility and the approval of the Secretary of the Foundation. Within the same deadline, the thesis must be formally sent in electronic format by the student to the thesis supervisor – for the required presentation to the Scientific Committee – and to the external reader(s) for their required appraisal.

Art. 8 – Thesis Joint Supervision

The School institutes collaborative relationships with foreign universities and research institutions for the joint supervision of theses in the historical-religious, exegetical and theological disciplines for students enrolled in the Advanced Course in Religious Studies or in doctoral courses in partner institutions.

The joint supervision is governed by a specially nominated agreement between the School and the foreign institution, signed by the representative of the latter, by the Secretary of the Foundation and by the Coordinator of the Faculty Board.

The agreement shall contain provisions for: the topic of the thesis; the period of the partner student's stay at the School, or of the Advanced Course student at the partner institution, for at least one semester of study; the arrangements for the admission and attendance of the student at the partner institution; the appointment of two thesis supervisors, one from each of the agreement's partner institutions; the composition of the thesis defence committee, to be held at the student's home institution, with the participation of at least one member designated by the partner institution; and the writing of the thesis in the language indicated by the student's home institution.

Following the favourable report of the judging commission, the student is awarded the third-level degree (PhD equivalent) by the foreign university, and the Diploma di perfezionamento scientifico in Scienze Religiose, equivalent – at the request of the relevant party, in accordance with Ministerial Decree 19/10/1998 (Official Gazette n.252 of 28/10/1998) – to the title of Dottore di ricerca awarded by Italian universities.

Art. 9 – Quality Assurance (QA)

Quality Assurance (QA) is carried out by a specially designated Quality Presidium appointed by the Foundation's Board of Trustees. It consists of three external members, one of whom is indicated by the Scientific Committee, one by the Faculty Board and one by independent audit as the supervisory body.

Quality Assurance is based on the definition of objectives, monitoring actions and checks formed from the contribution of the Faculty Board, the Foundation's Board of Trustees, and the independent auditor.

Quality Assurance complies with the standards of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is articulated in the processes of Self-Assessment, Evaluation and Accreditation defined by ANVUR.