

FAQ for PhD Students – DSPS

(last updated 15 March 2026)

This section collects the questions we receive most frequently from PhD students.

Where is the PhD students' study room located?

The PhD students' study room is located at **Palazzo Dusmet**: Via Dusmet 163 – 95131 Catania.

What are CAS credentials and how do I obtain them?

For PhD students at the **University of Catania**, CAS (Central Authentication Service) credentials are essential to access many online university services, including:

- Student portal and online services
- Institutional email account
- University Wi-Fi
- Network services and VPN
- The platform used to manage missions and reimbursements

To obtain your credentials, follow these steps: [INFO CREDENZIALI CAS](#)

How do I access the University Wi-Fi and where is it available?

Internet access on campus is provided through SWAN (Servizi Wireless d'Ateneo). More information is available at [this link](#).

How do I request a UNICT email account?

Please follow the instructions provided by the University: [POSTA ELETTRONICA UNICT](#)

When are my research funds available and how can I use them?

According to the PhD regulations, research funds should be available from the first semester of the first year. For further information, please contact the Department financial offices:

- dott. Filadelfio Zappalà
- dott.ssa Grazia La Zara

Emails: dsps.apicob@unict.it; dsps.apicob-spesa@unict.it

Research funds may be used for: mission reimbursements, conference participation, training courses.

They cannot be used to purchase inventoryable equipment!

Can I travel by car during a mission?

Yes, it is possible to use a private vehicle during a mission, but only under specific conditions.

In general, the use of a private vehicle is allowed only in exceptional cases, such as:

- absence of suitable public transport
- incompatible schedules

- specific operational needs

Prior authorization from your Department is required. For more information contact the administrative office: dsps.amm@unict.it (dott.ssa Laura Andronico – Phone: 095 7347227)

Can I take a taxi during a mission? Are meals reimbursed?

Yes, taxis may be used during a mission only in justified and exceptional cases, and reimbursement is not always guaranteed. Taxi use is allowed only when strictly necessary, for example:

- urgent travel not covered by public transport
- schedules incompatible with public transport (e.g. late-night return or early-morning departure)
- transport of bulky materials or heavy documentation
- reduced mobility or other specific needs

In these cases, a written justification must be attached to the mission report, providing an adequate explanation consistent with the official reasons indicated in the documentation.

Requirements for reimbursement

- taxi receipt or invoice
- when required by the regulations, the receipt must indicate the route and be issued appropriately
- Meals including breakfast are reimbursed. Expenses for snacks are not reimbursed.

Please note that **all expenses must be traceable** (paid with an electronic card or bank transfer) in order to be reimbursed in full. For more information consult:

- [Regolamento per la disciplina delle missioni](#)
- [Linee guida per il rimborso delle spese di missione](#)

Can I attend a paid online conference?

Requests for authorization to participate in paid online conferences must be:

- completed and signed by the applicant
- signed by the fund manager (the PhD Coordinator)

The relevant forms can be requested from the DSPS Administrative office: dsps.amm@unict.it

The completed and signed request (PDF) must be sent to the office at least one week before the conference, so that it can be signed by the Department Director.

After the conference, to request reimbursement you must send an email to the same office including the following documentation (in signed PDF format, using the official forms):

- authorization form (already registered)
- reimbursement request (available among the useful documents)
- certificate of participation in the conference
- payment receipt and bank payment statement

Visiting periods abroad: authorization and scholarship increase

To undertake a visiting period abroad, you must first request authorization from the PhD Board.

The PhD scholarship is automatically increased during periods spent abroad.

For stays of three months or longer, it is possible to request advance payment of the increase, according to the procedures indicated by the University PhD Office ([link](#)).

How can I request an extension for submitting my thesis?

An extension is not automatic and must be requested using the PhD programme template, available at the Department PhD Office and on the programme website. The request must be countersigned by the supervisor. The application must briefly indicate: the state of progress of the thesis, the reason for the extension, and a work plan for completion, following the programme template. According to the regulations, extensions can be granted only for 6 or 12 months; other durations are not permitted.

Code of Ethics and Conduct

The University of Catania promotes an environment based on integrity, mutual respect, transparency and responsibility. The University's [Code of Ethics](#) defines the principles and values guiding the conduct of students, academic staff, administrative staff and external collaborators. Behaviour inspired by fairness, equity and respect for the dignity of every person is encouraged, while any form of discrimination, violence or plagiarism is strongly condemned. Members of the academic community are expected to act honestly and responsibly in teaching, research and institutional life, promoting dialogue and cooperation in accordance with shared rules.

In cases of discrimination, harassment or gender-based violence, who can I contact?

In such cases, PhD students are encouraged to contact the Department Ombudsperson ([Garante di Dipartimento](#)) for advice and support.

Am I entitled to discounted public transport fares?

All students regularly enrolled at the University of Catania can subscribe to the annual urban transport pass for buses (AMTS) and metro (FCE) at the discounted price of €20. The remaining cost is covered by the University of Catania. For more information consult the dedicated page on the University website at this [link](#).

If I am a foreign student and want to learn Italian, what should I do?

The School of Italian Language and Culture for Foreigners (ITALSTRA) offers Italian language courses each semester for foreign citizens who wish to obtain a certified and qualified knowledge of the language. These courses are free for our PhD students. Check the calendar and registration procedures [here](#).

As a PhD student, can I attend courses in other languages (English, French, German, Spanish)?

Yes. Some language courses are specifically designed for PhD students. For more information visit the webpage of the University Language Centre ([Centro Linguistico di Ateneo](#)).

Where should I upload my publications?

All research outputs (articles, book chapters, conference papers, working papers, etc.) must be

uploaded to the institutional repository [IRIS – Institutional Research Archive of the University of Catania](#). In the annual progress report, it is necessary to include the link to the corresponding IRIS record.

Depositing research outputs in IRIS is required by the University as it ensures the traceability of the scientific production of researchers and PhD candidates and is used for research monitoring and evaluation procedures, as well as for institutional reporting activities.