

**STANDARD REGULATIONS FOR DOCTORAL DEGREES
INCORPORATING AN ORGANISED RESEARCH PROGRAMME**

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DR. ODONT., DR. OECON., DR. POLIT., DR. PSYCHOL., DR.
SCIENT. AND DR. THEOL.)**

Recommendation of the Norwegian Council of Universities as of 09.12.96
(Replaces the Council's recommendation of 23–24.10.91)

§ 1 Aim of the doctoral degree programme

The aim of the doctoral degree programme is to qualify the candidate for research activities and other kinds of work requiring a high level of scientific insight. The programme centres around an original research project in a particular field resulting in a thesis of a high academic standard. In addition, the programme furnishes the doctoral candidate with advanced theoretical and methodological instruction, providing depth and breadth in his/her discipline, while placing that particular discipline in a wider frame of reference. The programme is also intended to train the candidate in the dissemination of academic work within his/her field.

§ 2 Admission

§ 2.1 Formal qualifications

To be admitted to a doctoral degree programme, applicants must have obtained a higher degree within the discipline to which they are seeking admission, or they must satisfy the eligibility criteria through other qualifications approved by the Faculty.

The Faculty may require that a special course be followed or a special test passed prior to admission to the programme.

§ 2.2 Plan for the doctoral degree programme

Applications for admission must include an outline of the proposed research topic, including a description of the research project, a plan for the organised training programme, a schedule, details of how the programme is to be funded and proposed supervisor(s).

The description of the research project must specify topic, research issues and choice of methodology. The description should include tentative milestones for the various components of the research project.

Should the applicant wish to submit the thesis in a language other than one of those listed in § 5, section 8 of these regulations, an application to this effect must be submitted with the outline of the proposed research topic.

§ 2.3 Conditions for admission

Decisions regarding admission are based on an overall assessment of the project description, the applicant's formal qualifications and the outline of the proposed doctoral research programme, complete with schedule, plan for funding, approved supervisor(s) and the availability of the necessary academic and physical resources and facilities at the research institution which the candidate hopes to attend.

Approval of the programme's organised training components will be granted in accordance with the supplementary provisions and the requirements pertaining to this section of the programme.

§ 2.4 Admission process

Application for admission should be sent to the Faculty. The application will be processed there in accordance with the supplementary provisions, and if the application is successful the Faculty will appoint one or more supervisors. Applications are accepted/rejected on the recommendation of the academic staff in the discipline concerned. Should the number of applicants exceed the admission capacity, the Faculty is responsible for establishing criteria for ranking qualified applicants.

If the applicant's research project is likely to depend on contact with several academic research groups, statements should be obtained from the relevant group(s) before the outcome of the application is decided.

In cases where the Research Council of Norway has already approved a project for funding, the recipient institutions are not obliged to reassess the application.

§ 3 Contract

Admission to the organised doctoral degree programme is formalised in a written contract entered into by the doctoral candidate, the supervisor(s) and the Faculty to which the candidate will be affiliated. The contract states the rights and duties of the parties involved, the topic of the thesis and the duration of the contract as well as setting out details of the plan for funding, matters concerning supervision, the agreed place of work and the organised training programme.

Any significant changes to the content of the contract will be subject to the approval of the Faculty.

§ 4 Organisation of the doctoral degree programme

§ 4.1 Specified duration of the programme

The doctoral degree programme must be planned so that the candidate can complete it within a three-year period of effective research. At least one semester must be devoted to organised training (courses etc). The organised training programme must be completed prior to submission of the doctoral thesis.

The Faculty may give permission for a different schedule if this is dictated by special academic circumstances. The programme must nevertheless attain the same level of academic prowess.

§ 4.2 Organised training programme

The organised training aspect of the doctoral degree programme must include the necessary academic and methodological training to enable the doctoral candidate to work on the thesis and to qualify the candidate for professions requiring in-depth scientific knowledge. The organised training programme must also include a course in the theory of science.

The Faculty is responsible for providing doctoral candidates with scientific training at an advanced level. If the research unit responsible for the doctoral degree programme cannot organise the entire organised training programme, the Faculty must arrange for the candidate to participate in corresponding training at another unit or another institution offering recognised doctoral degree training.

The training may consist partly of regular lectures/seminars, and partly of short intensive courses, or any other type of organised training approved by the Faculty. In those subjects where no organised training is available, an individual syllabus may be approved as part of the training programme.

All applicants admitted to the doctoral degree programme must complete the organised training programme. The candidate must prove that he/she has acquired the necessary knowledge – by means of obligatory practical exercises, written or oral tests, giving lectures, teaching seminars or writing scientific and/or popular scientific articles, or through any other method approved by the Faculty.

As part of the organised training the doctoral candidate may arrange seminars or give lectures in order to gain experience and training in the dissemination of scientific knowledge. A popular scientific article requiring approximately the same effort as teaching may be deemed equivalent with respect to the dissemination of scientific knowledge.

The Faculty may grant exemption from participation in parts of the training programme if equivalent requirements have been fulfilled at another institution providing recognised doctoral degree training. In special cases in which previous training or research experience is deemed to give the equivalent qualification, full or partial exemption may be granted.

§ 4.3 Supervision

Work on the doctoral thesis must be carried out under the individual supervision of a member of the Faculty's academic staff, or an external supervisor with the necessary expertise. Supervision may also be carried out by several cooperating supervisors.

Normally there is one supervisor from the Faculty to which the doctoral candidate was admitted. If an external supervisor is appointed, an internal supervisor must also be appointed. If a candidate has two or more supervisors, one of them must be appointed principal supervisor. The supervisor(s) must hold a doctoral degree or other academic qualification equivalent to a doctoral degree. Doctoral candidates and supervisors are required to maintain regular contact in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the contract governing academic supervision, cf. § 3. A doctoral candidate should be given the opportunity to have his/her thesis work discussed at a seminar.

§ 5 Thesis

The thesis must be an independent scientific piece of work of a high academic standard with respect to the formulation of the issues raised, precision of concepts, methodological, theoretical and empirical basis, documentation and form of presentation. The thesis must thus contribute to the development of new knowledge and be of an academic standard appropriate for publication as part of the literature of the relevant field.

The thesis may be a self-contained piece of work or the continuation of a thesis previously submitted towards a higher degree. The thesis may also be a continuation of previous academic work towards a higher degree.

Work previously accepted as a thesis towards a higher degree or towards the 'magister' or 'licenciate' degree, or work previously awarded a medal in a University prize competition is not

admissible for evaluation as an individual piece of work towards the doctoral degree, unless it constitutes only a minor part of a thesis which consists of several conjoined pieces of work.

Several minor pieces of work may be accepted as part of a doctoral thesis, provided that the content of these forms a whole. In such cases, the individual parts must be accompanied by a summary giving a detailed account of their interrelationship.

Work published in the course of the five years prior to submission of the thesis may normally be included as part of the thesis.

Part of a joint publication may be approved for evaluation (also one of several works, cf. section 4), provided that it represents an independent, identifiable contribution. In such cases the co-authors and other persons who have been monitoring the work will be asked to submit a declaration identifying the specific contribution of the doctoral candidate.

A piece of work previously accepted for a doctoral degree at a foreign institution cannot be submitted for evaluation, even if the work is submitted in a revised version.

The thesis should be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, English, German or French. Should the candidate wish to use another language, an application for permission must be submitted together with the thesis, cf. § 2.2, section 3.

The thesis must be made available to the public.

A doctoral thesis that has previously been rejected after evaluation may be re-evaluated in a revised version, either as a single piece of work or as one of several conjoined works, at least six months after the Faculty's decision to reject the thesis. Re-evaluation may only take place once.

§ 6 Evaluation

The doctoral degree is awarded on the basis of:

- a) a recognised scientific thesis and a satisfactory public defence thereof,
- b) approved completion of the organised training programme, or any other approved academic training or qualification, and
- c) at least one approved trial lecture.

§ 7 Submission of the thesis

The thesis (and an application for evaluation of the thesis) must be submitted to the body stated in the supplementary provisions, in the number of copies specified by the Faculty. Proof of completion of the organised training programme must also be enclosed. If the thesis is accepted for defence, additional copies must be submitted as stated in the supplementary provisions. The thesis must be accompanied by an abstract which may serve as a press release. The thesis must be made available to the public at least one month before the public defence.

Once submitted, a thesis cannot be withdrawn until a final decision has been reached as to whether it may be approved for defence for the doctoral degree. After submission the doctoral candidate may make corrections of a formal nature only, and an errata sheet detailing all such corrections must be submitted no later than the date of submission of the title of the trial lecture on a chosen topic, cf. § 10.

§ 8 Appointment of an evaluation committee

To evaluate the trial lecture(s), the thesis and the public defence thereof, the Faculty appoints an evaluation committee consisting of at least three members, based on the proposal of the relevant academic staff. The Faculty appoints a chairman of the committee. At least one member should be appointed from outside the evaluating institution. As far as possible, the committee should have at least one foreign member, and both sexes should be represented. The members of the evaluation committee must hold a doctoral degree or academic qualification equivalent to a doctoral degree. The provisions pertaining to legal competence in the Norwegian Public Administration Act, §§ 6 ff., apply to the members of the committee, cf. § 10 of the same Act. An appointed supervisor cannot be a member of the committee, but may be requested to attend meetings of the committee to give an account of the supervision and the candidate's work on the thesis. The doctoral candidate must be informed of the composition of the committee.

§ 9 Procedure for the committee's report

Within a deadline determined by the Faculty, the committee must submit a detailed report recommending whether or not the thesis is worthy of being defended for the doctoral degree. The report may be accompanied by individual statements. Details must be given of any dissent among the members of the committee. The committee may require that the doctoral candidate submit source material as well as supplementary and clarifying information.

The report of the evaluation committee, complete with any individual statements and/or statements of dissent, must be submitted to the Faculty and forwarded to the doctoral candidate as soon as possible. The candidate may submit written comments no later than one week after receipt of the report.

Should the comments from the doctoral candidate be of significance as to whether the thesis can be approved, these comments must be considered by the evaluation committee before the Faculty reaches a formal decision in the matter.

The report of the evaluation committee, together with any additional comments, is dealt with by the board of governors, or the body the board has delegated this authority to. The Dean of the Faculty may approve the report alone if the evaluation committee is unanimous in its recommendation that the doctoral candidate be given permission to defend his/her thesis.

The doctoral candidate must be informed of the results of the proceedings.

§ 10 Trial lecture(s) and public defence

If the thesis is found worthy of being defended for the doctoral degree, the degree programme is concluded with:

- a) at least one public trial lecture, and
- b) a public defence.

At least one trial lecture on a prescribed topic must be given. If two trial lectures are required, the second lecture may be on a topic of the candidate's own choice. The candidate must submit the title of this trial lecture no later than one month before the public defence. The subject of the trial lecture on a prescribed topic is determined by the evaluation committee and the candidate must receive notification of the topic two weeks prior to the lecture. The public defence should normally be held within six months of submission of the thesis. The trial lecture(s) must be held prior to the public defence.

The trial lecture(s) and the defence must be conducted in the same language as the thesis, or in one of the languages stated in these regulations.

The evaluation committee evaluates the trial lecture(s). The lectures must be found satisfactory in order for the candidate to defend his/her doctoral thesis publicly.

If the evaluation committee deems the trial lecture(s) satisfactory, the candidate will subsequently be called upon to defend his/her doctoral thesis publicly.

The proceedings are open to members of the public. There are normally two opponents. The opponents are members of the evaluation committee, appointed by the Faculty or by the committee itself. In special cases, opponents who have not been members of the committee may be appointed.

The proceedings are opened by the Dean or by the person to whom this task has been assigned. The chairman of the public defence gives an account of the submitted thesis, the trial lecture(s) and their evaluation. Thereafter, the first opponent and the doctoral candidate review the objective and results of the scientific research. The discussion is opened by the first opponent, and concluded by the second opponent. Other persons present who wish to participate in the discussion must give notice of this to Dean/leader of the proceedings before the expiry of the time limit determined by the Dean/leader and announced at the start of the proceedings.

After the defence, the evaluation committee submits a report to the Faculty, in which it gives an account of its evaluation of the trial lecture(s) and the defence of the thesis. The report must conclude whether the tests have been deemed satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

If the trial lecture(s) and/or the public defence are deemed unsatisfactory, a new trial lecture/public defence may not be held until six months have elapsed since the original defence.

§ 11 Conferment and diploma

On the basis of the report from the evaluation committee confirming that the trial lecture(s) and the public defence have been deemed satisfactory, the highest governing body of the institution, or the body it has delegated this responsibility to, confers the doctoral degree on the candidate.

A doctoral degree diploma is issued by the institution. The diploma must state the title of the thesis together with details of the academic training programme which the doctoral candidate has undergone.

§ 12 Appeal

§ 12.1 Appeal relating to admission/application process

Rejection of an application for admission in accordance with § 2 of these regulations may be appealed pursuant to §§ 28 ff. of the Norwegian Public Administration Act. In such cases, a

detailed appeal must be sent to the Faculty concerned. Should the rejection be upheld, the appeal must be forwarded without undue delay to the Central Board of Appeals.

§ 12.2 Appeal relating to approval of the organised training programme

For an appeal concerning approval of courses or other components of the organised training programme (cf. § 4.2), § 12.1 applies. However, if a special examination or test has been taken, §§ 51 and 52 of the Act on Universities and Colleges apply.

§ 12.3 Appeal relating to rejection of the thesis, trial lecture(s) or public defence

Rejection of the thesis, trial lecture(s) or public defence may be appealed pursuant to §§ 28 ff. of the Norwegian Public Administration Act. In such cases, a detailed appeal must be sent to the Faculty concerned. If the decision subject to appeal was made by the Faculty, the Faculty board may set aside or alter the decision should the appeal be found reasonable. If not, the appeal is forwarded to the institution's board of governors. If the decision subject to appeal was made by the board of governors, and no reason can be found for setting aside or altering the decision, the appeal must be forwarded to the Ministry of Education. All aspects of the appealed decision may be tried. Should the board dealing with the appeal see fit, it may appoint individuals or a committee to undertake an evaluation of the decision made and the criteria underlying it, as well as deciding whether a new or supplementary expert evaluation should be undertaken.

§ 13 Supplementary provisions

The board of the institution may delegate responsibility for drawing up supplementary provisions to these regulations to the individual faculties. The faculties' supplementary provisions must be submitted to the board for approval.

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