

Article-based theses

The Law faculties at the University of Bergen, the University in Oslo, and UiT the Arctic University of Norway have developed a set of common guidelines for article-based PhD-dissertations. The guidelines take into consideration the common guidelines for the quality of legal theses previously developed by these three faculties.

1. General requirements for doctoral dissertations

The requirements for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor correspond to the three institutions' PhD regulations, respectively section 10.1 at UiO, section 10-1 for UiB, and section 19 for UiT. While there are some minor variations in phrasings, the contents of the regulations are the same:

The thesis must be an independent, academic work that meets international standards.

The thesis must be able to develop new knowledge in the chosen field and must be of a quality meriting publication as a part of the academic literature in the field.

The thesis can be a monograph or a compilation of several shorter papers. If the thesis is a compilation of several shorter papers, the relationship between them should be clearly explained.

The requirements for thesis quality apply regardless of whether it is structured as a monograph or as a compilation of several shorter papers (in the following referred to as 'articles').

2. General requirements for articles

Each article must independently develop new academic knowledge. The articles must be of a quality meriting publication in established academic journals with peer review.

Publication is not in and of itself a warrant that the articles hold a sufficient quality as to be eligible for the PhD degree.

Published articles are assessed on an independent basis, regardless of publication channel. Non-published articles may be included in the thesis, but these must be of an academic quality meriting publication.

3. Scope of articles

The formal requirements with regard to the scope of the thesis must leave it possible to submit the thesis and complete the training component with a research effort equal to three work-years.

An article-based PhD-thesis normally consists of 3-5 articles and an overarching summarising presentation ('kappe'). The appropriate number of articles should be determined based on wordcount, the scope and complexity of the research objective, co-authorship, and the degree of overlap between articles.

The candidate must be the sole author of minimum two articles.

The use of publications older than five (5) years at the time of admission will normally not be approved.

The thesis may include articles in different languages. Articles may be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, English, or any other language approved by the faculty in a given case.

4. Summarising presentation ('kappe')

The presentation introducing the complete thesis should not only summarise, but also compare and elaborate on the research questions, methods, and conclusions outlined in the articles, thus accounting for the thesis as a whole and documenting the thesis' inherent coherence. This requirement includes an account of the thesis' overall contribution to the research field.

The summarising presentation must also include accounts of current scholarship and significant new research within the research field so that the overall thesis comes across as academically updated. Alternatively, these accounts can be included in each of the articles.

The summarising presentation should normally be between 50 and 100 pages. More specific requirements must be considered in relation to the scope of the articles. If the articles come across as rather compact, and therefore less comprehensive in terms of methodology, scientific reflection, and academic positioning, the summarising presentation needs to compensate for this.

The candidate must be sole author of the summarising presentation.

5. Co-authorship

Rules on co-authorship can be found in the three universities' regulations for the PhD degree, in section 10.1 at UiO, section 10-2 at UiB, and in sections 19(3) and (4) at UiT. The regulations require individual contributions to be identifiable and documented by written declarations. Such declarations are to be collected from all co-authors, and they must explicate the extent of the co-authorship in the specific articles.

The regulations furthermore require adherence to the norms of the academic community and the university. The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH) provides [designated guidelines](#) for co-authorship and the relationship between student and supervisor, respectively in sections 25 and 32.

It is the supervisor's role as participant and contributor in the research project that must decide whether they may function as co-author in articles that will constitute a part of the candidate's thesis. In the case that co-authorship with the supervisor is under consideration, the issue should be settled with the candidate as early as possible.

Activities that are normally a part of the role as supervisor – such as providing feedback on drafts and input for article ideas – do not generally qualify for co-authorship. Gift authorship is prohibited, cf. the NESH guidelines. If any conflict occurs with regard to co-authorship, the candidate should contact the institute leadership, Dean of Research, or PhD coordinator.