



## **Regulations for the degree Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos.) at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)**

Laid down by the Board of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences on 19.01.2017  
pursuant to the provisions of Act no. 15 of 1 April 2005 relating to Universities and  
University Colleges. Entry into force 01.03.2017.

(This is a translated version of the valid Norwegian regulation for the degree and slight deviations  
from the original text elements may occur.)

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## **Section 1 Scope**

These regulations apply to the degree Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos.), it regulates the right for a candidate to take the Dr. Philos. degree exam and the required activities associated with it.

## **Section 2 Description of the degree, content and objective**

(1) The degree of Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos.) is a non-supervised doctorate to be awarded to individuals who have completed a graduate degree, i.e. master's degree or equivalent. The research work and the process associated to the thesis may be undertaken without the formal affiliation to the university.

(2) A Dr. Philos. degree qualifies for research activities and other work that requires a high level of scientific insight, working methods and analytical thinking in accordance with good scientific practice and research ethics standards.

Dr. Philos. is awarded on the basis of:

- a. An approved doctoral thesis
- b. An approved doctoral exam
  - i Two trial lectures (one for a given subject, and one for a chosen subject)
  - ii Public defence of the doctoral thesis (disputation)

## **Section 3 Responsibility for the degree Dr. philos.**

(1) The university Board has the overall responsibility for the degree Dr. Philos. and stipulates the regulations for the degree. The thesis must address a topic that is relevant to one of NMBU's subject areas.

(2) The faculty will decide whether a submitted thesis is a topic that would be in the faculty's academic portfolio, if it is worthy of a defence for Dr. Philos., and if the doctoral examination is approved.

## **Section 4 The right to apply for a Dr. Philos.**

(1) In order to have the right to apply for the awarding of the Dr. Philos. one has to be the citizen of a Nordic country and have minimum 5 (five) years of higher education, including a master's degree or similar. The faculty may grant a candidate who can prove equivalent qualifications in one of its disciplines, the right to sit the doctoral examination. It is the candidate's responsibility to submit documentation of equivalent qualifications.

(2) The faculty can, on the basis of a well-grounded application and a recommendation from the relevant academic community, grant the right to apply for the Dr. Philos. exam to a non-Nordic citizen with satisfactory qualifications. The candidate must have a residence permit in Norway, or he/she must fulfil at least one of the following criteria:

- a. The thesis discusses a topic or is based on research directly related to Norway;
- b. The thesis has a strong association to Norwegian research in the respective area; or
- c. The doctoral work is pursued at a Norwegian university or research institute, or in close contact with Norwegian scientists.

## **Section 5 Application and the processing of the application**

(1) An application to have a thesis evaluated for the Dr. Philos. degree shall be submitted to the relevant NMBU faculty, based on subject area. The application may be sent to the rector if in doubt over which faculty the doctoral work belongs to.

(2) Together with the application, the candidate must hand in the following:

- a. One copy of the thesis

- b. Documentation of previous education or of equivalent qualifications
- c. A list of previous scientific works / publications (these must be available upon request); and if relevant
- d. Documentation of residence permit in Norway
- e. Documentation that the thesis has association to Norway (applies to non-Nordic citizens).

(3) The faculty decides if the doctoral work is connected to the faculty's research area(s), assesses the candidate's qualifications and determines the decision on basis of the candidate's documentation.

(4) The faculty may require that the candidate complete defined courses and / or passes a test before being allowed to have the doctoral work evaluated.

## **Section 6 The thesis**

### ***Section 6.1 Thesis requirements***

(1) The thesis must approach a subject with relevance to one of NMBU's fields of research.

(2) The thesis shall be an independent, scientific work that fulfils international standards and is of high academic quality in terms of the formulation of research questions, the specification of concepts, the methodological, theoretical and empirical basis, documentation, the use of literature and the form of presentation.

(3) The thesis must be on the same academic level as a PhD thesis, but the scope of the thesis must be considerably more extensive. The thesis shall contribute to the development of new scientific knowledge and must be of sufficiently high academic quality to merit publication as part of the scientific literature in the field.

(4) As a main rule works that are more than ten years old cannot be used as part of the thesis. In cases where such works are included an assessment of these sub-component(s) connection to the thesis, and how they have provided new knowledge to the subject area, shall be included in the request to have the work evaluated.

(5) The thesis may consists of several shorter pieces of work (manuscripts or papers) if there is a connection between the pieces of work and this connection is made clear.

(6) Theses that include co-authored pieces of work must be accompanied by co-declaration(s) describing the candidate's contribution to each piece of work.

(7) The NMBU guidelines for the use of authors' addresses must be used for co-authored pieces of work included in the doctoral degree work.

(8) A single thesis may be submitted by more than one candidate, for joint evaluation, provided that the contribution of each candidate can be clearly identified and the extent of each of the contributions equals one thesis.

(9) The thesis must be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English. A Dr. Philos. candidate who wishes to use another language must apply for permission to do so upon submission of the thesis. The decision is made by the faculty.

(10) The thesis must be publicly available.

### **Section 6.2 Work not eligible for evaluation**

(1) A work, or parts of a work, that has been approved as the basis for previous examinations or degrees will not be eligible for evaluation. Nevertheless, data, analyses or methods from previous degrees may be used as the basis for a Dr. Philos. thesis.

(2) A work, or parts of a work, that has been evaluated and accepted or found ineligible for defence for a degree at a Norwegian or foreign educational institution, is not eligible for evaluation even if the work is in a revised form.

(3) A work, or parts of a work, that is under evaluation for the doctoral degree at another Norwegian or foreign university may not simultaneously be submitted for evaluation at NMBU.

### **Section 7 Submission**

(1) When the faculty has allowed the candidate to prepare for a Dr. Philos. evaluation, the candidate will submit the following:

- a. Five bound copies or stapled copies of the thesis
- b. A confirmation receipt of the submission of thesis (PDF) in the NMBU open archive, Brage
- c. A statement describing whether the thesis is submitted for the first or second time
- d. A declaration that the thesis has not been submitted for evaluation at another institution
- e. A declaration that the whole thesis or parts of the thesis has not been evaluation at another Norwegian or foreign institution; and if relevant
- f. Documentation that all necessary authorizations have been gathered
- g. Declaration of co-authorship by all co-authors

(2) A submitted work may not be withdrawn before it has been evaluated if it is worthy of being defended for the doctoral degree. The only changes that can be made to a submitted work may be of formal character.

### **Section 8 Appointment of evaluation committee**

(1) Following the faculty approval of the application to submit the thesis for evaluation, the rector appoints an expert committee to evaluate the thesis, the trial lectures and the disputation. The evaluation committee must consist of minimum three members and is appointed on basis of a proposal from the faculty. The Public Administration Act section 6 on Partiality will apply to all committee members.

(2) The proposal must explain the reasoning behind the selection of members and indicate how the committee as a whole covers the subject area(s) addressed in the thesis.

(3) The evaluation committee must be composed so that:

- h. The members together have competence covering the subject area(s) addressed in the thesis
- i. Both genders are represented, if possible
- j. Two of the members have no association with NMBU, and at least one of these members should represent a prestigious foreign institution
- k. One of the members must be employed at NMBU in a permanent position, and will also act as the committee leader and coordinator
- l. All members hold a doctoral degree or equivalent academic qualifications.

(4) The Dr. Philos. candidate will be informed about the composition of the committee.

## **Section 9 The work of the evaluation committee**

### ***Section 9.1 Obtaining supplementary information***

The evaluation committee may request the candidate's source data and supplementary or clarifying information.

### ***Section 9.2 The evaluation committee's recommendation***

(1) Within three months after receiving the thesis, the evaluation committee reports a recommendation, with individual statements about whether the work is worthy of being defended for the Dr. Philos. degree. The recommendation and any dissenting opinions must be justified in the report.

(2) The recommendation and individual statements of the evaluation committee must be sent to the faculty. The faculty will inform the Dr. Philos. candidate about the recommendation and will grant him 10 working days to present written comments to the report. If the Dr. Philos. candidate does not wish to put forward comments, the faculty must be notified of this in writing as soon as possible. Any comments must be forwarded to the faculty. The faculty shall reach a decision on the case (cf. section 10).

(3) If the Dr. Philos. candidate's comments can have an impact on the question whether or not the thesis can be approved, the evaluation committee should receive the comments before the faculty makes their formal decision.

### ***Section 9.3 Correction of formal errors in the thesis***

(1) A submitted thesis cannot be withdrawn before a final decision has been made as to whether or not it merits a public defence.

(2) The Dr. Philos. candidate can after submission apply to the faculty for permission to correct formal errors in the thesis. The application must be accompanied by a complete list of the errors (errata) that he/she wishes to correct. An application to correct formal errors must be submitted no less than four (4) weeks before the disputation, and such an application can be made only once.

## **Section 10 Processing of the evaluation committee's recommendation by the faculty**

(1) The faculty decides, on the basis of the evaluation committee recommendation, if the doctoral thesis is worthy of a public defence.

(2) ) If the committee's recommendation is unanimous, the faculty will make its decision in accordance with the unanimous recommendation.

(3) If the committee's recommendation is splitted, the faculty will bring the dissent to rector, who may:

- a. Make a decision without further evaluation
- b. Seek further clarification from the evaluation committee
- c. Appoint two new experts to give individual statements about the thesis
- d. Decide that the two new experts will be part of an extended evaluation committee

Rector decides on the basis of the statement, comments from the Dr. Philos. candidate and comments from the two new experts.

(4) The candidate must be informed of the result of the process.

## **Section 11 Resubmission**

A thesis that once has been rejected may be evaluated in a new version, either as the only work or as one of several connected works, at the earliest six months after the faculty has rejected the thesis. A new evaluation can only take place once.

## **Section 12 Publicising the thesis**

### ***Section 12.1 Requirements for the printed thesis***

When the thesis merits a public defence it must be printed in the approved format. The printed thesis must be identical with the submitted version. However, *approved corrections of formal errors* (errata list) must be included at the end of the printed version, cf. section 9.3. The candidate must submit 8 copies of the printed version in the approved format to the university administration as well as the number set by the faculty to the faculty.

### ***Section 12.2 Publicising***

(1) The thesis must be made publicly available no later than 10 working days before the date set for public defence, and this is the responsibility of the faculty. The thesis must be made publicly available in the form in which it was submitted for evaluation, but with any errata rectified, cf. section 9.3.

(2) No restrictions may be placed on the publicising of the doctoral thesis, with the exception of a previously agreed postponement of the public release date. An external party is not entitled to demand that the whole or parts of the thesis be exempt from public access, cf. section 6.1.

(3) NMBU reserves a non-exclusive right to archive and publish the thesis via NMBU's open archive. The right means that the thesis must be filed and published in its entirety, as *one document* with all parts of the thesis included. NMBU shall not publish any parts of the thesis separated from the other parts. *The candidate may reserve the right to postpone the publication in the open archive for up to one year from the disputation date.*

(4) When publishing a Dr. Philos. thesis, candidates must comply with the prevailing guidelines on crediting the institutions, cf. section 6.

## **Section 13 Doctoral examination**

### ***Section 13.1 Trial lectures***

(1) If the thesis is found worthy of public defence, the candidate will give two public trial lectures, one with a chosen topic and one with a specified topic.

(2) The trial lectures are independent parts of the doctoral examination. The purpose is to test the candidate's ability to acquire knowledge beyond the thesis topic and the ability to convey the knowledge in a lecture situation.

(3) The title of the chosen topic will be announced to the faculty one month before the trial lecture.

(4) The title of the trial lecture will be proposed by the evaluation committee and announced to the candidate ten (10) working days prior to the trial lecture.

(5) The trial lectures must take place at NMBU, and will be held in the thesis language or another language that has been approved, cf. section 6.1 ninth paragraph.

(6) The evaluation committee evaluates the trial lectures. Both trial lectures must be evaluated as passed before the public defence can be held. Reasons must be specified if the evaluation committee recommend no pass for one of, or both of, the trial lectures.

### **Section 13.2 Defence of the doctoral thesis (disputation)**

(1) The public defence of the thesis, disputation, must be arranged within 6 months after the thesis is found worthy of defence.

(2) Time and place for the public defence must be announced a minimum of 10 working days prior to the defence.

(3) The public defence must take place at NMBU.

(4) The committee that evaluated the thesis also evaluates the public defence.

(5) The public defence will be conducted in the thesis language or another language that has been approved, cf. section 6.1 ninth paragraph.

(6) There should normally be two ordinary opponents who are also members of the evaluation committee. Only in special situations ordinary opponents who have not earlier been members of the committee, may be announced.

(7) The public defence is chaired by the dean or by the person appointed by the dean. The chair of the public defence provides a brief account of the submission and evaluation of the thesis, and the assessment of the trial lectures. Then the Dr. Philos. candidate explains the objectives and findings of the doctoral thesis.

(8) The first ordinary opponent initiates the discussion before the Dr. Philos. candidate is given the opportunity to defend the thesis. After both opponents have concluded, the audience will have an opportunity to comment *ex auditorio*. Ex auditorio opposition requests must be notified to the chair during the defence and within a time announced at the opening of the defence. One of the opponents concludes the questioning and the chair of the public defence concludes the defence proceedings.

(7) The evaluation committee submits a recommendation to the faculty regarding its assessment of the defence of the thesis. If the defence is not approved, reasons must be given. The recommendation shall conclude whether or not the Dr. Philos. Candidate has passed the doctoral examination.

(8) The doctoral examination must be judged as passed before a Diploma can be issued.

### **Section 14 Approval of the doctoral examination**

(1) The faculty makes the decision on approval of the trial lecture and the defence of the doctoral thesis on the basis of the recommendation of the evaluation committee.

(2) If the evaluation committee does not recommend that the trial lectures and public defence to be approved, a re-examination may be held once. The trial lecture on a specified topic must be given on a new topic and at the latest six (6) months after the first attempt. The re-examination should, if possible, be assessed by the original evaluation committee.

### **Section 15 Conferral of the degree and diploma**

(1) On the basis of the faculty's report that the thesis, the trial lectures and the public defence have been approved, the rector shall confer the degree of Dr. Philos. to the candidate.

(2) The diploma and the Diploma Supplement will be issued by NMBU, according to national guidelines for the design of diplomas and diploma supplements. The diploma must be signed by the rector and the director of research.

### **Section 16 Appeal**

(1) Rejection of an application for evaluation of a doctoral thesis and a decision of non-approval of a doctoral thesis, trial lectures or public defence may be appealed pursuant to the Act relating to universities and university colleges section 4-13 and following of the Public Administration Act section 28.

(2) If the faculty or the appeals body finds reasons for it, individual experts or a committee may be appointed to conduct an assessment of the evaluation that was carried out and of the criteria on which the evaluation was based, or to conduct a new or supplementary expert evaluation.

### **Section 17 Entry into force**

These regulations enter into force from and including 01.03.2017. Concurrently with this, the *Regulations for the degree Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos.) at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) of 12.12.14* are repealed.