

Practical information for PhD evaluation committee at Faculty of Science and technology (REALTEK), Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) (rev. August 2021)

This practical information is compiled

- to facilitate a common understanding of expectations to the PhD thesis (see point 1), and
- for helping the evaluation committee to prepare in a timely manner (see points 2-4).

If you have questions, please contact the Committee coordinator (NMBU's representative in the committee). Please note that all communication between evaluation committee and PhD candidate or supervisors, is to go through the Committee coordinator.

1. Thesis requirements

The NMBU PhD Regulation §10-1 states general requirements for the PhD thesis.

Section 10-1 Thesis requirements

(1) The thesis must be an independent research work or research and development work that meets international standards with respect to academic level, ethical requirements, and methods within the field.

(2) The thesis must contribute to the development of new scholarly knowledge and be of sufficiently high academic quality to merit publication as part of the literature in the field, or in an appropriate format as part of the research-based knowledge development in the field.

(3) The thesis may consist of a monograph or a compilation of several pieces of work in the form of scholarly manuscripts and/or articles. If the thesis consists of several part-works, the thesis must contain an introductory chapter (*kappe*) which from an overall perspective, summarises and collates the research questions and conclusions presented in them. The PhD candidate must be the sole author of this introductory chapter.

(4) The main component of the doctoral thesis may consist of a new product or a systematised collection of material, or it can be presented in a different way (for example, sound, images, video, electronic forms of presentation) where its theoretical and methodological basis is not apparent from the product itself. In such cases, in addition to presenting the product itself, the thesis must have an additional part. The additional part must consist of a written account of the research question, the choice of theory and methods, and an assessment of the result in relation to international standards and the academic level within the field.

(5) If the thesis consists of several scholarly works that have been produced in cooperation with other co-authors, the PhD candidate should normally be the first author of at least half the manuscripts/articles. The Vancouver Convention's standards for co-authorship must be complied with. Upon submission of the thesis, each scholarly work with several co-authors must be accompanied by a declaration describing the PhD candidates' contribution and the contributions of each co-author. The declaration must be signed by both the PhD candidate and the co-authors. The PhD candidate is responsible for obtaining such declarations of co-authorship.

(6) The thesis must be written in either English or Norwegian. In both cases, the thesis must contain a brief abstract in English and a brief abstract in Norwegian.

REALTEK recommends minimum 3 publications, with minimum one of them published/accepted for publication. The evaluation committee is to decide if the work is sufficient for a PhD degree within the given research field (also paying attention to the co-authorship declarations, following the PhD thesis).

REALTEK recommends the following components to be included in the "Introductory chapter"/"kappe" summarizing the contribution in several articles:

- Abstract in English and Norwegian
- Introduction, background and state of knowledge providing the scientific context
- Theoretical framework
- Methodology
- Coherence/integration of shorter papers, discussing their objectives/results in relation to each other, and if relevant, how conclusions merge into an overall conclusion
- Overall results and discussion of the contributions to the research area
- Conclusions – with recommendations for future work and/or practical implications

Note that these are recommendations. Research areas may have deviating traditions.

2. Timetable for Scientific work of the evaluation committee

When	What
6 weeks prior to the planned date of defence (providing time for the committee coordinator to merge comments, clarify any divergences and prepare the joint report)	The committee is expected to provide comments, and to conclude if the thesis is approved for public defence or not. We ask that external opponents fill in NMBU 4.4 Assessment of the thesis with their individual assessment, and send by e-mail to the committee coordinator. The committee coordinator will compile the joint report of Form 4.4.
At the latest 25 working days before defence	Committee coordinator to forward the committee's assessment (form 4.4) to the faculty administration/PhD candidate
3 weeks prior to the date of defence	Please provide proposal(s) for topic of trial lecture, giving sufficient time to discuss and agree the topic for trial lecture
10 working days before the date of the defence	The topic of the trial lecture is to be announced to the PhD candidate – usually by the faculty administration
On the day of the defence (See separate schedule for the defence, below)	The evaluation committee is expected to evaluate the trial lecture and the defence on NMBU 4.5c Evaluation of the trial lecture and public defence

3. Timetable for practical issues, flight and hotel bookings, reimbursements, etc

When	What
If/when the thesis is approved for public defence	Opponents are requested to book flight tickets: Please plan for arriving in the afternoon/evening the day before the defence, and stay till the day after. If you leave on the day of the defence, we ask that you book a flight from OSL at 20:00 or later
When you have your flight schedule, please let us know	NMBU will take care of hotel bookings (usually in Oslo, Ski or at the Oslo Airport Gardermoen)
Ahead of the defence (in the morning on the day of defence or the evening before)	The committee will prepare and discuss the share of work at the defence. Depending on arrivals, the committee will sometimes meet for dinner the evening before the defence
At the day of the defence	There is no strict dress code, but public defences in Norway are quite formal (jeans not recommended)
When/if defence is approved	If successful, a small celebration on spot. And sometimes, if the candidate so wishes, an evening party
After the defence	Please fill in forms attached (Fee form and Reimbursement form). Sign and scan, and return to phd-realttek@nmbu.no

4. Schedule for the defence (the regular way, variations/divergences may be agreed)

10:15 – 11:00	Trial lecture (45 minutes) on given topic.
11:00 – 11:30	Committee evaluates the trial lecture. As described in Procedure for trial lecture and public defence , the trial lecture must be approved before the public defence.
11:30 – 12:15	Lunch for committee, supervisors and chair of defence.
12:15 – ~15:00	Public defence: The candidate gives a +/- 30 minutes presentation of the thesis. First opponent discusses the thesis with the PhD candidate for approximately one hour. Next, second opponent confronts the PhD candidate.
~15:00 –	Committee convenes to evaluate the public defence, and to finish Statement from evaluation committee for the trial lecture and the public defence, Form 4.5c . Committee coordinator sends Form 4.5c to phd-realttek@nmbu.no . Committee presents conclusions to the candidate and audience, congratulations, etc.