

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

*Established by the Board of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences on 16 June 2005 pursuant to the provisions of the University and College Act of 12 May 1995 no.22.*

## **§ 1 Objectives**

The degree of doctor philosophiae (dr.philos.) shall qualify the candidate for research activities and employment where a high level of scientific insight and method is required.

## **§ 2 The right to apply**

The right to apply for the doctoral degree exam is given to those who have completed a higher degree.

Applicants who can prove equivalent qualifications in another discipline may be allowed to apply for admission to the doctoral degree exam subject to approval by the UMB University Board. The dissertation shall not be evaluated until admission has been granted. The University Board evaluates the applicant's qualifications and reaches a decision based on the documentation of previous studies and scientific works, cf. § 5, section 1. In such cases, the University Board may require that the applicant follow additional specific courses and/or pass a test before admission is granted in order to have the dissertation evaluated. The application shall be submitted together with the doctoral degree dissertation.

## **§ 3 Dissertation**

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

The dissertation may be a self-contained piece of work or a continuation of a thesis submitted for a previous higher degree. The dissertation may also be a continuation of previous academic work for higher degree examination.

Work previously accepted as a thesis towards a higher degree e.g. a Master's degree, or towards the 'licenciate'/dr. scient/PhD degree, or work which has previously been awarded a medal in a University prize competition, cannot be accepted for evaluation unless it constitutes a minor part of a dissertation that consists of several conjoined pieces of work.

Several minor pieces of work may be approved as part of a doctoral dissertation, provided that the content of these works form a whole. In such cases, the individual parts shall be accompanied by a summary, giving a detailed account of the integration of the minor works.

Joint publications may be approved for evaluation (also as one of several publications, cf section 4), provided that the contribution of the doctoral candidate represents an independent effort, and that it can easily be identified if this is necessary for the evaluation. In such cases the co-authors and other persons who have been involved in or supervised the work will be asked to submit a declaration to identify the contribution of the doctoral candidate.

A publication or parts of a publication that is/are being evaluated for the doctoral degree at another Norwegian university or a Norwegian university college cannot at the same time be submitted for evaluation at UMB.

A publication previously accepted for the doctoral degree at a Norwegian or foreign institution cannot be accepted for evaluation, even if the work is submitted in a revised form.

The dissertation shall be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, or English. Should the candidate wish to use another language, an application for permission should be submitted together with the dissertation to the University Board who will reach a decision on the matter.

The dissertation shall be available to the public.

A doctoral dissertation that has previously been rejected after evaluation may be re-evaluated in a revised form, either as a single piece of work or as one of several conjoined works, at least six months after the University Board's decision to reject the dissertation. A new evaluation can be made only once.

#### **§ 4 Evaluation**

The doctoral degree is awarded on the basis of:

1. a recognised scientific dissertation and a satisfactory public defence thereof;
2. two approved trial lectures.

#### **§ 5 Submission of work/dissertation**

The dissertation, and an application for evaluation of the dissertation, shall be submitted to the University Board, through the relevant university department. Certified copies of examinations and degree certificates should be enclosed with the application. The department's proposal regarding the evaluation committee shall be included with the application, cf. § 6.

If special admission according to § 2 is required, the applicant must document his/her studies and enclose previous scientific works. The application is submitted together with the dissertation. Non-Nordic citizens shall at the time of submission enclose a justified application for admission to be evaluated for the degree. Should the applicant wish to use a language for the dissertation other than those stated in § 3 of these regulations, an application for approval must be submitted together with the dissertation.

Together with the dissertation, the doctoral candidate shall submit a written statement that the dissertation, or parts of the dissertation, has not been submitted for evaluation for the doctoral degree at any other Norwegian or foreign institution.

The dissertation is to be submitted in 5 bound copies.

If the dissertation is approved for defence, 50 additional copies are required to be submitted. A brief summary that can serve as a press release should accompany the dissertation. The dissertation shall be available to the public at least one month prior to the defence.

A piece of work that has been submitted cannot be withdrawn until a final decision is reached as to whether it may be approved for defence for the doctoral degree. After submission, the doctoral candidate can make corrections of a formal nature only, provided that he/she submits an overview of all corrections made (errata sheet). The errata sheet must be handed in at the same time as the submission of the chosen topic for the trial lecture, cf § 8.

### **§ 6 Appointment of an evaluation committee**

To evaluate the trial lecture(s), the dissertation and the defence thereof, the University Board shall appoint an evaluation committee of at least three members, based on the proposal put forth by the relevant department board. The University Board shall appoint the chairperson of the committee. At least two members of the committee shall not be affiliated to the evaluating institution. At least one of the committee members should be affiliated with a recognised foreign institution. Preferably both sexes should be represented on the committee. The members shall hold a doctoral degree or equivalent scientific expertise. The provisions pertaining to disqualification in the Public Administration Act, § 6 ff, shall apply to the members of the committee, cf § 10 of the same Act. The doctoral candidate shall be informed of the composition of the committee.

### **§ 7 Committee report and follow-up**

Before the deadline determined by the University Board, the committee shall submit a commented report on whether the work is worthy of defence for the doctoral degree. Grounds for possible dissent must be given. The committee may require that the candidate submit source material and additional supplementary and clarifying information.

The report of the evaluation committee, including individual statements and/or statements of dissent, shall be addressed to the University Board and forwarded to the doctoral candidate as soon as possible. The candidate may submit written comments no later than one week following receipt of the report.

Should the comments of the doctoral candidate be of significance as to whether the dissertation is recognised, the evaluation committee shall consider these comments before the University Board reaches a formal decision on the matter.

The University Board assesses the report of the evaluation committee together with any additional comments. The rector may nevertheless be authorised to approve a committee report when it unanimously concludes that the thesis is worthy of being publicly defended for the doctoral degree.

The University Board cannot, without the support of an expert opinion, approve a dissertation that has been unanimously deemed unsatisfactory by the evaluation committee, nor can it reject a dissertation unanimously approved by the evaluation committee. A unanimous report from the evaluation committee shall be accepted provided that more than 1/3 of the University Board members present vote in favour of it. Should at least 2/3 of the University Board members present - in spite of a unanimous report from the evaluation committee - find that there is reasonable doubt as to whether the dissertation can be approved, the University Board shall seek further clarification from the evaluation committee. If such contact has not resulted in, or will not result in, the necessary clarification, the University Board shall appoint two new experts to give independent opinions on the dissertation. The University Board may in this case pose specific questions to the experts. Should both experts agree with the conclusion of the original report, the report shall be accepted. If the conclusion of the original report is

supported by only one of the new experts, the report shall be accepted provided that 1/3 of the University Board votes in favour of it. If both experts disagree with a unanimous report from the evaluation committee, the University Board can reach a decision based on a 2/3 majority.

Should there be any dissent within the evaluation committee, the University Board may, without further evaluation, reach a decision by qualified majority. If a qualified majority is not attained, the University Board shall seek further clarification from the evaluation committee and obtain the independent opinion from two new experts before a final decision is reached. The University Board may also obtain statements from two newly enlisted experts in cases where there is doubt as to whether or not a dissertation can be approved. If both new experts agree with the conclusion of the majority of the original committee, the report shall be accepted provided that 1/3 of the present members of the University Board vote in favour of this. Should the conclusion of the minority gain support from one or both of the newly enlisted experts, the matter can be decided by the University Board with a qualified majority.

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

### **§ 8 Trial lectures and defence of the dissertation**

If the dissertation is found worthy for the defence of the doctoral degree, the doctoral candidate shall deliver two public trial lectures, one on a chosen topic and one on an assigned topic. The candidate shall submit the title of the trial lecture of his/her own choice no later than one month prior to the defence. The topic for the trial lecture on the assigned topic is determined by the evaluation committee and shall be announced to the candidate 14 days prior to the lecture. The defence shall normally be held within six months after the dissertation has been submitted. Trial lectures shall be delivered before the defence.

The trial lectures and the defence shall be in the language of the written dissertation, or in one of the languages stated in § 3, section 8.

The evaluation committee shall evaluate the trial lectures, and find them satisfactory.

If the evaluation committee finds the trial lectures satisfactory, the doctoral candidate shall hold a public defence of the doctoral degree dissertation.

There shall normally be two ordinary opponents. The two ordinary opponents shall be members of the evaluation committee, and they shall be appointed by the committee. In special cases, ordinary opponents who have not been members of the committee may be appointed.

The proceedings in the public defence are chaired by the head of department who gives a brief account of the submitted dissertation and the trial lectures as well as the assessments these have received. Thereafter, the first ordinary opponent reviews the objective and the results of the scientific research. The first ordinary opponent opens the discussion, and the second ordinary opponent concludes the proceedings. Other persons present who wish to participate in the discussion, must give notice of this to the chairperson within the time limit determined by the chairperson.

After the defence, the evaluation committee submits a report to the University Board in which it gives an account of its evaluation of the public defence of the dissertation. The report shall conclude whether the tests have been deemed satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

If the trial lectures or the defence are deemed unsatisfactory, a new defence may be held six months after the last defence. If possible, new tests should be evaluated by the original evaluation committee.

### **§ 9 Conferment of the Degree and Diploma**

Upon approval by the University Board of the dissertation, trial lectures and public defence of the dissertation, the degree dr. philos. is awarded.

Certificates are issued from the institution on an ongoing basis. The certificate shall contain information about the title of the dissertation and the topics of the trial lectures. In addition, a doctoral degree diploma is issued, which is signed by the UMB rector.

### **§ 10 Appeal**

Upon rejection of an application for evaluation according to § 2, or rejection of the dissertation, the trial lectures or the defence of the dissertation according to §§ 7 and 8, the candidate may appeal pursuant to § 28 ff of the Public Administration Act. A reasoned appeal shall be sent to the University Board.

The University Board can invalidate or change the decision if it finds sufficient grounds for doing so. If the University Board does not find a reason to reverse the decision, the complaint is forwarded to UMB's central appeals committee for a final ruling. The appeal authority can assess all sides of an appealed decision. If the University Board or the appeal authority finds reasons to do so, individuals or a committee may be appointed to undertake an evaluation of the decision and the underlying criteria, or a new or supplementary expert evaluation may be undertaken.