

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 12 December 2014 pursuant to the provisions of Act no. 15 of 1 April 2005 relating to Universities and University Colleges

Section 1 Objectives

The degree of doctor philosophiae (Dr. Philos.) shall qualify the candidate for research activities and for other employment in society for which a high level of scientific insight and method is required.

Section 2 Right to apply

Those who have completed a higher degree have the right to apply for the doctoral degree exam.

The rector may grant the right to apply for entry to the doctoral degree exam to applicants who can prove equivalent qualifications in another discipline. The thesis shall not be evaluated until such entry has been granted. The department evaluates the applicant's prior qualifications and makes a recommendation based on documentation of previous studies and scientific works, cf. Section 5, paragraph 1. The rector takes the decision on the matter. In such cases, the rector may require applicants to follow additional special courses and/or to pass a special test before permission is granted for the thesis to be evaluated. The application shall be submitted together with the doctoral degree thesis.

Those who are not Norwegian citizens are entitled to take the examination if the rector grants permission for this after a justified application and recommendation from the department/academic community in question. Such entitlement is preferably granted if the thesis meets one or more of the following criteria:

- It addresses topics or is based on material that is directly connected to Norway, or
- It has a strong affiliation to Norwegian research in subject area, or
- It has been carried out during a stay at a Norwegian university or research institute or through specific contact with Norwegian researchers, or
- The applicant has a resident permit for Norway.

Section 3 Thesis

The thesis must address a topic that is relevant to one of NMBU's subject areas.

The thesis shall be an independent, scientific work of high academic standard with respect to the formulation of research questions, the specification of concepts, the methodological, theoretical and empirical basis, the documentation and form of presentation. The thesis shall be of the same standard as a PhD thesis but must be of considerably larger scope. It must also contribute to the development of new scientific knowledge and be of sufficiently high academic quality to merit publication as part of the scientific literature in the relevant field.

The thesis may be an independent piece of work or continuation of a thesis submitted for a master's degree or equivalent. The thesis may also be a continuation of previous academic work for other examinations in the programme of study.

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 that has previously been awarded a medal in a University prize competition, cannot be accepted for evaluation unless it constitutes a minor part of a thesis that consists of several interrelated pieces of work.

Several minor pieces of work may be approved as part of a doctoral thesis provided that the content of these works forms a whole. In such cases, the individual parts shall be accompanied by a summary that gives a more detailed account of the coherence of the thesis. Works that are more than ten years old cannot normally be used in the thesis. In cases where such works form part of the thesis, an assessment that specifically shows how a sub-component or sub-components that are older than ten years are connected 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 for the Dr. Philos. degree.

Joint publications may be approved for evaluation (also as one of several publications, cf. paragraph 4) provided that the contribution of the doctoral candidate represents an independent effort that can 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 work or parts of a work that is/are being evaluated for the applicant for a doctoral degree at another Norwegian university or a Norwegian university college cannot simultaneously be submitted for evaluation at NMBU.

A work or parts of a work previously evaluated and approved for the doctoral degree at a Norwegian or foreign university or university college cannot be accepted for evaluation, even if the work is submitted in a revised form by the applicant.

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

The thesis shall be available to the public.

A doctoral thesis that has not been accepted on previous evaluation may be re-evaluated in a revised form, either as a single piece of work or as one of several interrelated works, but not until at least six months after the department's decision to reject the thesis. A new evaluation can be made only once.

Section 4 Evaluation

The doctoral degree is awarded on the basis of:

1. A recognised scientific thesis and a satisfactory public defence thereof;
2. Two approved trial lectures.

Section 5 Submission of the thesis

The thesis and a request to have the thesis evaluated for the doctoral degree shall be submitted to the rector through the relevant university department. Certified copies of examination results and degree certificates should be enclosed with the application. The department's proposal regarding the evaluation committee shall be included with the application, cf. Section 6.

If special admission according to Section 2 is required, the applicant must document his/her studies and enclose previous scientific works. The application is submitted together with the thesis. Should the applicant wish to use a language for the thesis other than those stated in Section 3 of these regulations, an application for approval must be submitted along with the thesis.

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

The thesis is to be submitted in five bound copies or stapled copies.

If the thesis 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 thesis. The copies of the thesis shall be prepared and the thesis made available to the public at least one month before the defence.

A piece of work that has been submitted cannot be withdrawn until a final decision has been made as to whether it merits defence for the doctoral degree. After submission, the doctoral candidate can only make corrections of a formal nature provided that he/she submits a list of all corrections made to the submitted work (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. Section 8.

Section 6 Appointment of an evaluation committee

To evaluate the thesis, the trial lectures and the defence of the thesis, the rector appoints an evaluation committee of at least three members based on the proposal put forward by the relevant department. The rector appoints the chairperson of the committee. At least two members of the committee shall have no affiliation to the evaluating institution. At least one of the committee members should be affiliated to a recognised foreign institution. As far as possible both sexes should be represented on the committee. The members shall hold a doctoral degree or equivalent academic qualifications. The provisions pertaining to impartiality stated in the Public Administration Act, Section 6 ff, shall apply to the members

of the committee, cf. Section 10 of the said Act. The doctoral candidate shall be informed of the composition of the committee.

Section 7 The Committee's recommendation and the handling of the recommendation

Within three months the committee shall submit a justified recommendation, if relevant with individual statements, on whether the work is worthy of defence for the doctoral degree. Grounds for possible dissent must be given. The committee may require the candidate to submit source material and additional supplementary or clarifying information.

The recommendation of the evaluation committee, including statements of dissent and/or individual statements, shall be addressed to the department 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 recommendation.

Should the comments of the doctoral candidate be of significance with regard to whether the thesis can be approved, the comments should be submitted to the evaluation committee before the department reaches a formal decision on the matter.

If the recommendation of the evaluation committee is unanimous, the department takes a decision on the matter.

If there is dissent in the committee, the case will be submitted to the rector who can:

- make a decision without further evaluation
- request further clarification from the evaluation committee
- appoint two new experts to provide individual statements on the thesis
- decide that two new experts shall be included in an extended evaluation committee.

The rector makes a decision in the case on the basis of the report, any comments from the doctoral candidate and any statements submitted by the two new experts.

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

Section 8 Trial lectures and defence of the thesis

If the thesis is found worthy of defence for the doctoral degree, the doctoral candidate shall deliver two public trial lectures, one on a topic chosen by him/her and one on an assigned topic. The candidate shall submit the title of the trial lecture of his/her own choice to the university no later than one month before 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 of the submission of the thesis. The trial lectures shall be delivered prior to the defence.

The trial lectures and the defence of the thesis shall be in the language of the written thesis or in one of the languages stated in Section 3, paragraph 8.

The evaluation committee shall evaluate the trial lectures and deem them satisfactory. If the evaluation committee finds the trial lectures satisfactory, the doctoral candidate shall hold a public defence of the doctoral degree thesis.

The defence of the thesis shall be public. Normally there will be two ordinary opponents who shall be members of the evaluation committee and appointed by the committee itself. 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 submission and evaluation of the thesis and the trial lectures as well as the evaluation 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 notify the chairperson of this during the defence and within the time limit determined by the chairperson and announced at the opening of the defence proceedings.

After the defence, the evaluation committee submits a report to the department in which it gives an account of its evaluation of the trial lectures and the public defence of the thesis. In conclusion the report shall state whether the trial lectures and the defence of the thesis have overall been approved or not.

The department takes the decision on the approval of the trial lectures and the defence of the thesis.

If the trial lectures or the defence are not approved, new attempts may not be made until six months after the defence. If at all possible, these should be evaluated by the original evaluation committee.

Section 9 Conferral of the degree and diploma

On the basis of the department's report stating that the thesis, trial lectures and public defence of the thesis have been approved, the rector confers the degree of Dr. Philos. on the candidate.

Diplomas are issued by the institution on an ongoing basis in compliance with the national guidelines for the design of such certificates. The institution shall also issue certificate supplements in line with the prevailing guidelines for diploma supplements.

Section 10 Appeal

Rejection of an application to have the thesis evaluated and a decision not to approve the thesis, trial lectures or the defence of the thesis may be appealed pursuant to the provisions of Section 28 ff of the Public Administration Act.

A substantiated appeal must be submitted to the body that has made the decision, which can revoke or change the decision if it finds the appeal justified. If the appeal is not upheld, it will

be submitted to NMBU's Appeals Committee for a final ruling. The appeals body can review all aspects of the decision appealed.

If the body that has made the decision or the appeal authority finds it appropriate, individuals or a committee may be appointed to make an assessment of the evaluation and the underlying criteria or to make a new or supplementary expert assessment.