

Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at the University of Agder

Adopted by the Board of Agder University College on 24 October 2002 pursuant to section 50 of the Act of 12 May 1955 no 22 relating to Universities and Colleges, as amended on 22 October 2003 no 1310 (i.a. title).

Last updated 2007.11.21.

§ 1 *Scope and extent*

These regulations apply to programmes at doctoral level that lead to the degree of philosophiae doctor (PhD). The regulations provide for admission, doctoral work and completion of the PhD degree at the University of Agder.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§1a. *Objectives of the course of study leading to the doctoral degree*

The course of study leading to the doctoral degree shall qualify for research activities at a high academic level and for other work in society where a high level of scientific insight is required.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310, previously § 1.

§ 2 *Admission*

2.1 *Applicants' formal qualifications*

Applicants to a doctoral degree programme must normally hold a five-year Master's Degree or equivalent qualification approved by the faculty as the basis for admission to the relevant doctoral degree programme.

2.2 *Plan for the doctoral degree programme*

Applications shall include:

- a description of the research project
- a progress plan for completion of the programme
- a funding plan
- details concerning required infrastructure
- an account of the need for supervision and proposals for supervisors
- plans, if any, for periods at other research institutions or enterprises, including institutions or enterprises abroad
- a plan for dissemination of research results
- documentary evidence of the educational qualifications on which admission is to be based
- details on any restrictions resulting from intellectual property rights to protect the rights of others

The plan, including the description of the research project, shall specify theme, the issues to be considered, theory and methodology. When applying for admission, the applicant may submit a summary of a project description provided that a complete project description is

prepared no later than 12 months after admission. A shorter time limit may be stipulated by supplementary provisions. The project description shall normally be prepared in cooperation with the principal supervisor.

If the applicant plans to write his or her dissertation in a language other than those approved according to section 5.1 herein, an application for approval of language must accompany the PhD plan.

Application forms shall be adopted by the faculty.

2.3 Decisions concerning admission

Decisions concerning admission are to be based on an overall evaluation of the project description, the applicant's formal qualifications and the plan for the doctoral degree programme, including schedule, funding plan, approved supervisor(s) and the applicant's access to other necessary scientific and material resources at the research institution with which the applicant will be affiliated. Admission may be granted subject to funding, supervision capacity and preparation of an individual training plan, additional training and agreements relating to intellectual property rights.

A decision to grant admission shall include the appointment of a supervisor, the assignment of responsibility for meeting other needs mentioned in the application, and the determination of the date of commencement as well as the duration of the agreement. Any extension of the contract period must be related to the rights of employees, or be specially agreed.

Admission may be denied if:

- copyright agreements are an obstacle to publication and open disputation
- the immaterial property right agreements that have been entered into are so unreasonable that the university should refrain from being involved in the project.

2.4 Admission procedure

An application for admission should be submitted to the relevant faculty which in accordance with supplementary provisions will decide on admission, approve the applicant's plan for the programme and appoint supervisor(s). Applications will be decided on the basis of a recommendation from the department concerned. The criteria for ranking qualified applicants in cases where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available shall be established by the faculty.

If the applicant's project indicates that interdisciplinary cooperation may be required, a recommendation from the relevant disciplines should be obtained prior to admission.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 3. Agreement

A written agreement is to be made to formalise admission to an organised doctoral degree programme. The agreement is to be entered into by and between the doctoral candidate, the supervisor(s) and the faculty with which the candidate will be affiliated, and shall stipulate the mutual rights and obligations of the parties. The agreement shall specify the theme for the dissertation, the duration of the agreement and the relationship between the supervisor(s) and

the candidate, and in addition include details on funding, workplace and organised training. The agreement shall ensure that the doctoral candidate will participate on a regular basis in an active research community, and that the candidate will be able to complete his or her PhD programme within the agreed period of time.

Major changes in the provisions of this agreement shall be submitted to the faculty for approval.

In the event of material breach of this agreement, the faculty may decide that a doctoral candidate shall terminate his or her doctoral degree training prior to completion.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 4. *Doctoral degree programme*

4.1 Normal duration

The doctoral degree programme shall be organised so that it can be completed within a three-year research education period. The programme period shall include at least one semester of organised training (courses, etc). The organised training must be completed before submission of the dissertation.

Under special circumstances related to the research work the faculty may approve another time limit for completion. In any event, the programme shall lead to the same academic level.

4.2 Organised academic training

The organised academic training in the PhD programme shall comprise at least 30 credits and include training in ethics and the philosophy of science. No bachelor level courses may be included in the training.

The faculty is responsible for offering all doctoral candidates training at a high academic level. If the unit responsible for the doctoral degree programme is unable to provide the whole training, the faculty shall arrange for the candidate's participation in equivalent training at another unit or institution which provides approved doctoral degree training.

The organised training may be provided partly as regular lectures/seminars, partly as shorter, intensive gatherings or in another form approved by the faculty. In subjects where no relevant courses are available, individual syllabuses may be approved as part of the programme.

All candidates admitted to a doctoral degree programme shall follow the organised academic training. Documentary evidence that the candidate has acquired the necessary knowledge will be required. Such documentation may be given through obligatory practical exercises, written or oral tests, lectures, seminars, or in the form of scientific and/or popular science articles, conference contributions or in other forms approved by the faculty.

As part of the training, the doctoral candidate may hold seminars or lectures and in such a way be trained and provided with assistance in dissemination of research results. Contributions to popular science which require approximately the same amount of work may be approved as equivalent to training in dissemination of results.

The faculty may grant an exemption from participation in parts of the training programme if equivalent requirements have been met at another institution which provides approved training. In special cases, an exemption from participation may be granted, in whole or in part, provided that documentation of other training or research experience leading to the same qualifications is provided.

4.3 Supervision

The work on the doctoral dissertation shall be carried out under individual supervision by a member of the relevant faculty, by another person with required expertise or several such persons in cooperation.

Normally, one of the supervisors shall hold a position at the faculty to which the doctoral candidate has been admitted. If an external supervisor has been appointed, an internal supervisor shall also be appointed. In cases where the doctoral candidate has several supervisors, one of them shall be appointed principal supervisor. The principal supervisor shall hold a doctoral degree or be a full professor. Other supervisor(s) shall hold a doctoral degree or equivalent qualifications. The doctoral candidate and the supervisor(s) are expected to maintain regular contact in accordance with the guidelines stipulated in the agreement concerning supervision during the doctoral degree programme, cf clause 3. Normally, the doctoral candidate should be given the opportunity to discuss his or her dissertation work at a seminar.

4.4 Quality assurance

The faculty shall have a system in place for quality assurance of the doctoral degree training. The system shall include measures for discovering failure to comply with the progress plan for the dissertation work and deficiencies with respect to the organised training or supervision as well as routines for following up any deficiencies which have been discovered. The system shall include annual and individual reporting from the doctoral candidate and the supervisor, and shall be so designed that double reporting is avoided.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 5. *Dissertation*

5.1 Requirements which the dissertation must meet

The dissertation shall be an independent piece of scientific work that meets international standards within the relevant subject area. The dissertation shall contribute to the development of new knowledge within the subject area and represent such an academic level that it can be publicised as part of the academic literature in the subject area.

Parts of a piece of joint work may be approved as a dissertation provided that the doctoral candidate's own independent contribution can be identified and documented.

Collections of several minor works may be approved as a dissertation when they in content constitute a totality. A summary must then be prepared to give an overall perspective.

The dissertation shall be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, English, German or French. If the candidate wants to use a language other than the ones mentioned, an application to do so is to have been made by the time of admission, cf section 2.2.

5.2 Work that will not be approved

Any work that has been approved as a basis for examinations previously taken will not be accepted for evaluation unless the work is included as a minor part of a dissertation which comprises several interconnected works.

A piece of work that has already been approved, in whole or in part, for the PhD degree at a Norwegian or foreign institution will not be accepted for evaluation even if it has been reworked before submission.

5.3 New submission

A doctoral dissertation that has previously been rejected may not be evaluated in revised form before six months after the time when the institution made its decision to reject the dissertation. Evaluation of a revised dissertation can only be made once.

5.4 Public access

The dissertation shall be available to the public no later than two weeks prior to the date of the disputation.

No restrictions may be imposed on the publication of a doctoral dissertation, except an extension, agreed in advance, of the deadline for publication. Such extensions may be accepted when the doctoral degree programme is funded, in whole or in part, by an external party so that the external party may be able to decide on patenting/commercialisation. An external party cannot require that a dissertation or parts of a dissertation be exempted from publication.

5.5 The right to use results

The candidate's rights with respect to the use of results, utilisation of patentable inventions, immaterial property rights, etc, are regulated by the university's general rules and regulations in this area and the provisions of the Act relating to the Right to Employee's Inventions (arbeidstakeroppfinnerloven).

Those parts of the doctoral dissertation to which the candidate holds the sole intellectual property rights, and any other academic or creative work resulting from the candidate's work on the dissertation and to which the candidate holds the sole intellectual property rights, may be reproduced by the university for use, free of charge, in its teaching and research activities. In the event of such use, the candidate's name shall be disclosed.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 6. Evaluation

The PhD degree is awarded on the basis of:

- (a) approved doctoral degree dissertation and a satisfactory defence in a public disputation
- (b) approved completion of the organised training component, possibly other approved training or qualifications
- (c) approved trial lecture

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 7. *Submission*

Applications for evaluation of the dissertation shall be submitted to the relevant faculty, with the number of copies of the dissertation enclosed as specified by the faculty. In addition, the application shall be accompanied by documentary evidence of completed organised training. If the dissertation is accepted for public defence, additional copies must be submitted as required according to supplementary provisions. The dissertation is to be accompanied by an abstract which may be used as a press release.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 8. *Appointment of an evaluation committee*

The faculty shall appoint an evaluation committee of at least three members, on the basis of proposals from the relevant unit/academic staff, to evaluate the trial lecture(s), the dissertation and the defence of the dissertation. The chairperson of the committee shall be nominated by the faculty. At least one member of the committee shall be from outside the University of Agder. If possible, at least one member should be from a foreign institution. Both sexes should, if possible, be represented on the committee. The members must hold a doctoral degree or be full professors. The provisions relating to legal competence in sections 6 and following sections of the Norwegian Public Administration Act apply to the members of the committee, cf section 10 of the same Act. An appointed supervisor cannot be a member of the evaluation committee, but may be requested to attend committee meetings to give an account of the supervision and the work on the dissertation. The doctoral candidate shall be informed about the composition of the committee.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 9. *Committee report and further procedure*

9.1 Withdrawal and reworking

A piece of work that has been submitted may not be withdrawn before it has been finally decided whether it is worthy of being defended for the doctoral degree. The doctoral candidate may nevertheless correct formal errors after submission, provided that he or she submits a list of all corrections made after the dissertation was submitted. Such a list shall be submitted no later than one month prior to the disputation.

Without prejudice to the foregoing, the faculty may allow a revision of the dissertation on the basis of provisional comments from the evaluation committee. A deadline shall be fixed for such revision, and the deadline shall normally not exceed 6 months.

9.2 *Report*

The committee will submit a report, possibly with individual opinions attached, giving the grounds for its conclusions and stating whether the work is worthy to be defended for the doctoral degree. In the event of dissent, reasons shall be given. The committee may require to be provided with the candidate's source material and supplementary or clarifying information.

The evaluation committee report, including any statements of dissent and individual opinions, should be addressed to the relevant faculty and as soon as possible be forwarded to the doctoral candidate who may submit comments on the report in writing within 14 days.

If the candidate's comments are likely to affect the approval of the dissertation, the comments should be submitted to the evaluation committee before the faculty makes its decision in the matter.

9.3 *Deadlines*

The committee's report shall be available no later than three months after receipt of the dissertation by the committee. The faculty may under special circumstances extend this deadline. If the committee allows a revision of the dissertation a new deadline shall be fixed on the basis of the submission date of the revised dissertation.

9.4 *Procedure for the committee report*

The evaluation committee report, including comments, if any, shall be considered by the faculty. The Dean may accept a committee report when an unanimous committee has concluded that the doctoral candidate should be allowed to defend his or her dissertation in public.

The doctoral candidate shall be informed about the faculty's decision.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 10 *Trial lecture and public defence*

Once the dissertation has been found worthy of defence, the doctoral degree programme will be concluded with

- (a) a public trial lecture
and
- (b) a public defence

The trial lecture shall be on a prescribed topic. The topic of the trial lecture shall be decided by the evaluation committee and be announced to the doctoral candidate 14 days prior to the date of the lecture. Normally, the disputation shall be held within six months after submission of the dissertation for evaluation. The trial lecture shall be held before the disputation.

Both the lecture and the disputation shall be in the same language as the dissertation, or in another language approved in accordance with these regulations.

The evaluation committee will evaluate the trial lecture, which must be considered satisfactory.

When the trial lecture has been found to be satisfactory, the doctoral candidate shall defend his or her dissertation at a disputation.

The disputation shall be in public. There shall normally be two opponents. The two opponents shall be members of the evaluation committee and be nominated by the faculty or by the committee itself. Under special circumstances, opponents outside the committee may be nominated.

The disputation shall be chaired by the Dean or by a person authorised by the Dean. The chairperson shall give a brief account of the submission and evaluation of the dissertation and of the trial lecture(s) as well as the evaluation of it/them. Then the first ordinary opponent will give an account of the purpose and results of the scientific investigation. The faculty may decide that such an account shall be given by the doctoral candidate. The first ordinary opponent will then open the discussion, and the second ordinary opponent conclude the disputation. Other persons present who wish to participate in the discussion must give notice of this to the chairperson under the disputation within a time limit fixed by the chairperson and announced at the opening of the disputation.

After the disputation, the evaluation committee will submit a report to the faculty in which it will give an account of its evaluation of the trial lecture and the defence of the dissertation. The report shall conclude with a statement of whether the defence is deemed satisfactory/unsatisfactory. The faculty will report satisfactory results to the board of the university.

If the trial lecture and/or the defence are found to be unsatisfactory, a new public defence may be held, but no earlier than six months from the date of the original defence.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 11. *Creation and certificate*

On the basis of the report from the evaluation committee and the faculty that the trial lecture and the defence have been approved, the candidate will be created Philosophiae Doctor by the Board.

The doctoral degree certificate will be issued by the university. The certificate shall include the title of the dissertation and details on the organised training programme which the candidate has completed.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 12. *Appeals*

12.1 Appeals relating to admission/processing of application

Appeals against a rejection of an application for admission under section 2 herein may be made in accordance with section 28 and following sections of the Norwegian Public

Administration Act. A detailed account of the grounds of such an appeal shall be sent to the relevant faculty. If the faculty finds no reason to reverse its rejection, the appeal shall be forwarded, without undue delay, to the Board for a final ruling.

12.2 Appeals relating to approval of the training programme

Appeals relating to refusal to approve a course or other parts of the training programme, cf section 4.2 herein, are subject to section 12.1 herein. Appeals relating to the results of a particular examination or test are subject to sections 51 and 52 of the Act relating to Universities and Colleges.

12.3 Appeals relating to rejection of an application for evaluation or refusal to approve a dissertation, trial lecture or defence

Appeals against a refusal to approve a dissertation, trial lecture or defence may be made in accordance with sections 28 and following sections of the Public Administration Act. A detailed account of the grounds of such an appeal shall be submitted to the relevant faculty. If the decision has been made by the faculty, the faculty board may reverse or modify the decision if it finds the appeal substantiated. If, on the other hand, the appeal is upheld by the board of the faculty, it will be forwarded to the university board. If the board made the decision against which the appeal was lodged, and the board finds no reason to reverse or modify its decision, the appeal will be forwarded to the Ministry for a final ruling. The appeal body may try all aspects of the decision against which the appeal was lodged. If deemed necessary by the lower instance or the appeal body, a committee or individual persons may be nominated to assess the evaluation made and the criteria on which it is based or undertake a new or supplementary expert assessment.

12.4 Appeals relating to decisions concerning enforced termination of the doctoral degree training

Appeals relating to decisions concerning enforced termination of the doctoral degree training, cf section 3, paragraph 3, are subject to section 12.1 herein.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 13. *Supplementary provisions*

The board shall stipulate supplementary provisions to these regulations in accordance with proposals from the relevant faculty.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310.

§ 14. *Entry into force*

These regulations enter into force immediately.

0 Amended by regulations of 22 November 2003 no 1310, previously section 15.

