

Regulations relating to the degree of Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos.) at the University of Agder

Part 1. Introductory provisions

Section 1. Applicability of regulations

These regulations apply to the degree of doctor philosophiae (Dr. philos.) at the University of Agder and present provisions concerning the right to apply for the degree, on submission and assessment of the thesis and on completing the doctoral examination.

Section 2. The aim and contents of the Dr.Philos degree

- (1) The Dr. Philos degree is a non-supervised doctoral degree that may be awarded to persons who have completed a higher-degree examination, i.e., a master's degree or equivalent. The research and the doctoral thesis have been conducted on an individual basis without formal affiliation with the university.
- (2) A Dr. Philos degree qualifies for research activities and other work in society, which put great demand on scientific insight, work methods and analytical thinking in accordance with accepted scientific practise and research-ethical standards.
- (3) The Dr. Philos degree at the University of Agder is awarded on the basis of a scientific thesis and a doctoral examination.
- (4) The doctoral examination comprises two trial lectures and public defence of the thesis, also termed disputation. One of the lectures should be on a given subject, the other on a subject chosen by the doctoral candidate.

Section 3. Responsibility for the degree

- (1) The university board has overall responsibility for the degree Dr. Philos and stipulates regulations for the degree.
- (2) The faculty decides whether a submitted thesis has a theme that belongs within the faculty's subject portfolio, whether it is worthy of being defended for the Dr. Philos degree and whether the doctoral examination should be approved.
- (3) The faculty's authority as set out in the regulations cannot be delegated to the department level.

Part II. Application for entry and thesis requirements

Section 4. The right to apply for entry

- (1) Applicants must have completed a five-year master's degree or equivalent education. The faculty may also grant the right to apply for entry to the Dr. Philos degree to applicants who can prove equivalent qualifications in the current discipline. It is the responsibility of the applicant to document equivalent qualifications.
- (2) The main rule is that applicants must be citizens of Norway or another Nordic country. Other applicants may be given the right to apply for entry if they have a residence permit for Norway or if the thesis
 - Addresses topics or is based on material that is directly connected to Norway, or
 - Has a strong affiliation to Norwegian research in the subject area, or
 - Has been completed during a stay at a Norwegian university or research institute or through specific contact with Norwegian researchers
- (3) Applicants who already hold a Norwegian or Nordic doctoral degree will not be granted entry to the Dr. Philos degree within the same subject area.

Section 5. The application and documentation requirements

- (1) The application for entry to the Dr. Philos degree should be submitted to the faculty which is academically responsible for the topic of the thesis.
- (2) With the application, the applicant should also submit:
 - A copy of the thesis
 - Documentation of previous education or equivalent qualifications
 - An overview of previous scientific works (these works must be made available upon request)
 - A co-authorship declaration, if this is required after section 7, sub-section 7.
 - A declaration concerning whether the thesis has previously been assessed at the University of Agder
 - A declaration stating that the thesis is or has not been assessed at another institution
 - A brief summary of the thesis in Norwegian and English
- (3) In addition, applicants who are not citizens of Norway or another Nordic country must submit documentation of their residence permit for Norway and/or other documentation of the thesis' affiliation with Norway, see section 4, subsection 2.

Section 6. The faculty's processing of the application.

- (1) Based on the applicant's submitted documentation, the faculty will decide:
 - Whether the thesis thematically belongs with the faculty
 - Whether the applicant is sufficiently qualified and
 - Whether the applicant should be granted entry to the Dr. Philos degree
- (2) On an independent basis, the faculty may reject the application if it is clear that the thesis' quality is not high enough and that it will not be approved by the assessment committee.

Section 7. Thesis requirements

- (1) The thesis should discuss themes that are connected to one or several of the academic subject areas at the University of Agder.
- (2) The thesis should be an independent scientific work that meets the international standards concerning ethical requirements, academic level, and method.
- (3) The thesis should contribute to developing new professional knowledge and be at a scholarly level which makes it publishable as part of the scientific literature of the academic field.
- (4) The thesis should be on the same academic level as a PhD thesis, but the scope should be broader. The requirement for a broader scope is intended to compensate for the fact that the Dr. Philos degree does not require, as in the organised doctoral programmes, an approved course and training component.
- (5) The thesis may be a monograph or a combination of several minor works. If the thesis consists of several minor works, the applicant must clarify the connection between them.
- (6) A thesis may be submitted for assessment jointly by several applicants if the individual contributions can be identified and the scope of each contribution is the equivalent of a thesis.
- (7) If a written work has been made in cooperation with other authors, the applicant should adhere to the norms of co-authorship that are generally accepted within the current academic field. In theses which includes the work of several authors, a co-authorship declaration must be attached which describes the applicant's and the other authors' contributions to each individual work (see section 5, subsection 2)
- (8) The thesis should be written in Norwegian, English, Swedish or Danish. If the applicant wishes that a thesis in another language should be assessed, a request for special permission must be included in the application. The faculty will decide if permission should be granted.
- (9) The thesis must be publicly available; see also section 16.

Section 8. Works that will not be accepted

- (1) A work, or parts of a work, which has been accepted as the basis for previously completed examinations or degrees, cannot be accepted for assessment. The same applies to works that have been rewarded with a medal in a university competition. However, data, analyses, or methods from previously completed degrees may still be used as a basis for the thesis.
- (2) A work, or parts of a work, that has previously been assessed and deemed worthy or not worthy of being defended for a doctoral degree at another Norwegian or foreign higher education institution may, as a main rule, not be accepted for assessment. This applies even if the work is submitted in a revised version.
- (3) A thesis may only be submitted for assessment at one institution. If the thesis is also submitted for assessment at another institution, the case processing at the University of Agder will be terminated.
- (4) As a main rule, a candidate cannot terminate an organised doctoral programme to apply for entry to the Dr. Philos degree. If a thesis wholly or partly has been developed within the framework of an organised doctoral programme at the University of Agder or another higher education institution, the applicant must provide specific reasons as to why the thesis should be assessed for a Dr.Philos degree and not for an organised doctoral degree (PhD).

Part III. Submission and assessment

Section 9. Submission

- (1) When the faculty has given its approval for entry to the Dr. Philos degree, the candidate must submit the thesis in an approved format in the number of copies required by the faculty.
- (2) A submitted thesis cannot be retracted until it is finally decided whether it is deemed worthy of being defended for the Dr. Philos degree. After submission, the candidate will only be allowed to correct formal errors; see section 12.

Section 10. Appointing an assessment committee

- (1) When the faculty has approved the application for the assessment of the thesis, the faculty appoints an expert assessment committee of at least three members who will then assess the thesis, the trial lectures, and the disputation. The requirements to impartiality in the Public Administration Act apply to the members of the committee.
- (2) The assessment committee should normally be composed of:
 - At least two members who are not affiliated with the University of Agder
 - At least one member with main employment with a foreign institution
 - Both genders
 - Only members with a doctoral degree or equivalent competence
- (3) In cases where it is necessary to deviate from the criteria above, the faculty must present specific reason(s) why.
- (4) It is the responsibility of the academic community to which the theme of the thesis belongs to propose members of the assessment committee. The academic environment must give reasons for its proposal and demonstrate how the committee as a whole will cover the thesis' discipline. The candidate will be informed about the proposal for the composition of the committee and also has the opportunity to submit written comments within five working days from receiving information about the proposal. The faculty decides whether possible comments from the candidate should be allowed.
- (5) The faculty appoints the committee administrator.
- (6) The faculty may when required to do so, appoint a deputy member of the assessment committee.
- (7) The faculty decides on a closing date for the completion of the assessment committee's recommendations.

Section 11. Obtaining supplementary information

The assessment committee may require that the candidate presents his/her basic data as well as additional or clarifying additional information.

Section 12. Correcting formal errors in the thesis

After the thesis has been submitted, the candidate may apply to the faculty for permission to correct formal errors. The application must include a complete overview of the errors that need correcting. An application to correct formal errors must be submitted to the faculty no later than four (4) weeks before the disputation.

Section 13. The committee's recommendations

- (1) The committee makes a recommendation whether the thesis is worthy of being defended for the Dr. Philos degree. Reasons must be stated for the recommendation and possible dissents.
- (2) The assessment committee submits its recommendation to the faculty. The faculty forwards the recommendation to the candidate, giving the candidate the opportunity to comment on the recommendation within ten working days. If the candidate does not wish to submit any comments, the faculty must be informed about this as soon as possible.
- (3) If the candidate's comments may impact the issue of whether the thesis can be approved, the comments must be submitted to the assessment committee before the faculty decides on the case.

Section 14. The faculty's processing of the assessment committee's recommendation

- (1) The faculty decides whether the thesis is worthy of being defended for the Dr. Philos degree.
- (2) If the faculty itself finds that there is reasoned doubt concerning the committee's recommendation or if the committee's recommendation is divided, the faculty itself may seek further explanation from the assessment committee and/or appoint two new experts who will give individual statements concerning the thesis.
- (3) The candidate will have the opportunity to comment on possible clarifications from the assessment committee or statements from new experts.
- (4) The faculty will inform the candidate about the result of the process.

Section 15. New submission of a revised thesis

- (1) If the faculty decides that a thesis is not worthy of being defended for the Dr. Philos degree, the candidate may send a revised version of the thesis for new assessment no earlier than six months after the faculty's decision. A new assessment can only take place once.
- (2) As a rule, a thesis that is submitted for a second time should be assessed at the same institution that assessed the thesis the first time.
- (3) The faculty appoints an assessment committee where at least one member from the original committee should be re-appointed.
- (4) In case of a new submission, the candidate must inform that the thesis previously has been assessed and that it has been deemed not worthy of being defended.

Section 16. Publication of the thesis

- (1) When the faculty has deemed the thesis to be worthy of a defence, the candidate will submit the thesis to the faculty in a standardised format and in accordance with the University of Agder's regulations. The faculty organises the printing of the thesis in an approved format.
- (2) With the thesis, the candidate must also submit a brief summary in Norwegian and English that may serve as part of a press release. The summary must be submitted in an approved format.
- (3) The faculty is responsible for making the thesis publicly available no later than two weeks before the date of the disputation. The thesis is made public in the form it was submitted for assessment, including possible corrections of formal errors, see section 12.
- (4) No restrictions may be imposed on the publication, including the publishing of a Dr. Philos thesis. Persons who are employed at the University of Agder when applying for entry to the Dr. Philos degree should, when publishing the Dr. Philos thesis, follow the general rules of address at the university and supply the University of Agder as address if the publication is a product of work done as a University of Agder employee. This also applies to works that wholly or partly are completed as parts of a Dr. Philos thesis but are published subsequent to the disputation.

Section 17. Trial lectures

- (1) After the faculty has deemed the thesis worthy of being defended, the candidate will give two public trial lectures; one on a topic chosen by the candidate based on his/her research and one on an assigned topic. The topic of the trial lecture on the assigned topic should not be directly related to the theme of the thesis.
- (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 theme of the thesis and the ability to disseminate this knowledge in a lecture setting.
- (3) The candidate should submit the title of the trial lecture of his/her own choice to the faculty no later than one month prior to the date of the public defence.
- (4) The assessment committee decides the topic of the assigned trial lecture and communicates the topic to the candidate ten (10) days before the lecture.
- (5) The trial lectures should be conducted at the University of Agder and in the language of the written thesis unless the assessment committee approves of another language.
- (6) The assessment committee will grade the trial lectures as passed or not passed. If one or both lectures is graded as not passed, the committee must submit a substantiated assessment.
- (7) Based on the recommendations of the assessment committee, the faculty makes a decision concerning the approval of the trial lectures.
- (8) If the faculty concludes that one or both lectures have not been passed, the candidate may register for one or two new trial lectures. New trial lectures must discuss new topics and be held as soon as possible. The trial lectures should be assessed by the original committee. New trial lectures can only be held once.
- (9) Both trial lectures must be passed before the public defence can be held.

Section 18. The public defence

- (1) The public defence of the thesis, the disputation, shall normally be held within six months after the thesis is deemed worthy of being defended.
- (2) The time and place for the public defence must be announced at least ten working days before the event. The public defence must be held at the University of Agder.
- (3) The committee which originally assessed the thesis, and the trial lectures should also assess the public defence.
- (4) The public defence must be conducted in the language of the written thesis unless the assessment committee proposes another language, and the faculty approves the proposal.
- (5) The public defence must include two opponents appointed by the faculty. As a rule, the opponents should be members of the assessment committee.
- (6) The public defence is led by the Dean, or a person authorised by the Dean. The person leading the public defence begins by giving a brief account of the submission and assessment of the thesis and the trial lectures. Thereafter, the candidate, possibly the first opponent, will explain the purpose of the research and its results.
- (7) The first opponent opens the discussion, and then the Dr. Philos candidate will have the opportunity to defend the thesis. After both opponents have completed their arguments, others who are present have the opportunity to comment ex. auditorio. Any requests to comment or appear ex. auditorio must be reported to the leader of the public defence no later than at the time announced at the beginning of the public defence. One of the opponents completes the opposition before the leader adjourns the public defence.
- (8) After the public defence, the assessment committee submits a report to the faculty where they recommend whether the public defence should be approved or not. The assessment committee needs to submit a reasoned report if they recommend that the public defence should not be approved.
- (9) Based on the assessment committee's report, the faculty comes to a decision concerning approval of the public defence
- (10) If the faculty decides not to approve the public defence, the candidate may defend the thesis one more time. A new defence must be organised within six months of the faculty's decision to not approve and should normally be assessed by the same committee as the first public defence.

Section 19. Conferral of the degree and diploma

- (1) Based on the faculty's approval of the thesis, trial lectures and the public defence, the Board of the University of Agder confers the degree of Dr. Philos on the candidate.
- (2) The diploma is issued by the University of Agder. The diploma shall include the title of the thesis and the topics of the trial lectures.
- (3) With the diploma, the University of Agder issues the standardised 'Diploma Supplement' in English.
- (4) The diploma and the diploma supplement will be issued only once. If the diploma or the supplement is lost, the university may, upon application, issue a duplicate.
- (5) The University of Agder also prepares a ceremonial doctoral diploma in addition to the ordinary diploma. The ceremonial diploma is usually handed out at the conferral ceremony.

Section 20. Appeal

- (1) Rejections of an application to have the thesis assessed or a decision not to approve the thesis, trial lectures or the public defence may be appealed pursuant to the Public Administration Act, section 28. A reasoned appeal should be submitted to the faculty.
- (2) If they allow the appeal, the Faculty Board may repeal or change the decision. If the Faculty Board does not allow the appeal, it will be forwarded to the University's Appeals Committee for a decision. The Appeals Committee may consider all aspects of the appealed decision.
- (3) If the faculty or the Appeals Committee finds reason to, a new committee or individuals may be appointed to consider the assessment that has been made and the criteria the assessment are based on or to conduct a new or supplementary expert assessment.

Section 21. Entry into force

These regulations enter into force from [date]

From the same date, regulations dated 23 February 2010, no. 305, relating to the degree of doctor philosophiae (Dr. Philos) at the University of Agder is repealed.

In case of discrepancies between the Norwegian and the English version of this document, the Norwegian version takes precedence.

The English translation is intended for information only. For legal purposes the original document in Norwegian is the authoritative version.