

Supplementary provisions to the regulations for the degree PhD at the UiT the Arctic University of Norway - PhD programme in natural and social sciences at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics

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This document is available in both Norwegian and English. Where the meaning of the English translation is in doubt, the original Norwegian version is to be taken as authoritative.

Chapter I. Preliminary provisions

Section 1. Applicability

The supplementary provisions apply to:

- PhD programme in natural sciences
- PhD programme in social sciences

at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics (BFE faculty).

Section 3. Objectives and requirements

The aim of the doctoral education at the Faculty of BFE is for the candidate to carry out independent research work leading to a scientific thesis at an appropriate international level.

Section 5. Responsibility for the PhD education

The Doctoral Degree Committee (DC) is responsible for programme management and has a mandate in the following matters:

- Admission to the PhD programmes
- Approval of the training component
- Appointment and change of academic supervisors
- Appointment of evaluation committee
- Distribution of mobility grants
- Approval of the PhD evaluation report when the decision is not unanimous or when the thesis is recommended revised or rejected. The DC has delegated this authority to the leader of the DC.
- Approval of instruction part. The DC delegates case management to the administration in uncomplicated cases. In cases with uncertainties, the cases are managed within the DC.
- Change in the supervisory committee. The DC delegates case management to the administration in uncomplicated cases. In cases with uncertainties, the cases are managed within the DC.

The department is responsible for academic supervision and follow-up of the candidate.

The department creates and closes PhD courses, and the DC must be informed about this.

Chapter II Admission

Section 8. Admission requirements

Education requirements

- Completed 3-year bachelor's (180 credits) and 2-year master's (120 credits), 5-year integrated master's (300 credits) or education of equivalent scope and duration. The master's degree must contain an independent master thesis.
- Applicants who have completed higher education abroad shall be considered in line with the Universities and Colleges Act, § 3-5 (3).
- Applicants who have completed a Norwegian experience-based master's degree of 90 credits can qualify for admission at 30 credits extension of the master's degree as follow:

- Written thesis (individual work) with a scope of 30 credits with a final exam.
- A scientific article/manuscript that has either been published, accepted or submitted to a scientifically recognized journal. The work will be assessed by the DC.
- Ordinary subjects at master's degree level.

Grade requirements

- Applicants must have achieved B or better on the master thesis and have an average grade of B or better on subjects included in the degree. The average must be at least 3,5 according to the conversion table in section 35 in the regulations for study and examinations at UiT (A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1.)
- For applicants with an abroad educational background where the assessment expression deviates from the Norwegian grading system, the grades must be assessed individually.

Section 9. The application

Research fellows who are employees at UiT must submit a final plan for the education, including project description and agreements, to the administration no later than 2 months after the starting date of the employment contract.

Applicants with an employer other than UiT must apply for admission directly to the DC at the BFE faculty.

The final project description must be prepared by the applicant in collaboration with the supervisors and is mutually binding between candidate and supervisors. The presentation of the research project must be 5-7 pages long and must be signed by the PhD candidate and all supervisors. The BFE faculty's template must be used in the preparation of the project description. The project description must be easy to understand and must contain:

- Introduction where the topic is explained in relation to the international research works.
- Main problem statement with sub-goals. Feel free to formulate the objective(s) in relation to planned publications.
- Description of methods, data base and source material to be used, and how this is collected and analysed (where this is relevant)
- Draft of data management plan in accordance with current guidelines at UiT cf. Section 9 (3) of the regulation.

- Assessment of the usefulness of the research, including the potential for innovation and commercialization of the research in the project.
- References to relevant academic literature.
- A preliminary time schedule for the completion of the doctoral degree programme. The schedule should indicate when the candidate plans to complete the training component, field and laboratory work, data analysis, the writing and submission of scientific articles, cover article (Norwegian “kappa”), presentations (lectures, poster presentations, etc) and stays abroad. Scheduled time for midway evaluation shall be established. If the fellow has compulsory work, a provisional plan for this must be included. The head of department must approve the plan for compulsory work and can revise the plan according to the department's requirements.
- Plan for supervision. Describe role clarification, division of work between the supervisors and frequency of the supervision.
- For research fellows at the BFE faculty, an annual allowance is paid from the institutes each year. The size of the annuum awarded is determined by the individual department, and the amount may vary from year to year. Annuum is awarded to the candidate and must be used for running the PhD project in consultation with the supervisor. The annuum can, for example, be used for what is needed to complete experiments, necessary equipment for fieldwork, conference participation, courses outside Tromsø and literature. The operating budget must be included in the project description. For externally funded research fellows, the funding depends on the project they are associated with, and the budget is drawn up in accordance with the budget of the external project.
- Affiliation to research groups and association to a research school, if any.
- Training component with PhD courses that are included (course code, course name and institution and time of planned examination in the courses).
- Information about any intellectual property restrictions to protect the rights of others. Examples may be IP rights.
- If the project contains issues of a research ethics nature, for example animal experiments and the collection of personal information, this must be described, and it must be mentioned which authority, if any, gives permission for the implementation of the research project. The national research ethics guidelines must be followed.
- Plan for professional communication. Academic communication can be internal seminars, meetings, conferences with posters/posts or other types of popular science communication.
- Description of career plan. The purpose of the career plan is to make the applicant aware of his career goal and to reflect on how the PhD education can be adapted to achieve this goal. Alternatives could be to become a researcher, get a job in business or start your own business. The choice of career path can have an impact on what are reasonable courses in the instruction part, whether a stay abroad should be carried out,

ambitions in relation to publication and disposition of compulsory work during the PhD project. Candidates considering a career in academia are strongly advised to take University Pedagogy for Fellows.

- In connection with the career plan, the applicant must provide information on individual and/or subject-specific learning outcomes. Although reference can be made to the general learning outcomes described below, the project description must specify which subject-specific and/or individual knowledge, skills, and general competence the candidate must have acquired on completion of the degree. These learning outcomes can, for example, be related to:
 - methodology (quantitative and/or qualitative)
 - field and laboratory work
 - sampling and experimental design
 - statistical analysis and programming
 - management, networking, and international understanding
 - communication and dissemination
 - educational competence
 - other areas that are typically subject-specific and/or individual
 - personal development
- Risk assessment where different degrees of risk in the work are explained (experimental uncertainty, feasibility). Has a plan B been devised?

Attachment to the application

- Certified copies of diplomas and transcripts for the education that is the basis for admission.
- Documentation of required English skills where it is applicable.
- Partial agreements A, B and if relevant C, see section 11.

The application with attachments is sent to the contact person in the administration. Updated contact information for the PhD education can be found on the faculty's PhD website.

An incomplete application will be returned to the supervisor with a message to the applicant.

Section 10. Decision on admission

The Appointments Committee (AC) decides on temporary admission to the PhD programme.

The Doctoral Degree Committee (DC) decides on final admission to the PhD programme. The head of the DC is authorized to make decisions in these matters.

In the decision on final admission, the candidate is admitted to the PhD programme, a supervisory committee is appointed, the instruction plan is approved and the time for the mid-term evaluation is set.

Section 11. Doctoral agreement

The BFE faculty has its own templates for agreements A, B and C.

All candidates must submit agreements A and B. Agreement C must be submitted if the applicant has an external employer.

The agreements must be completed, signed, and attached to the application for admission, cf. section 9.

The agreements must bear the following signatures:

- Agreement A: the faculty by chair of the doctoral committee and doctoral candidate.
- Agreement B: head of department, supervisors, and doctoral candidate.
- Agreement C: the faculty v/ chair of the doctoral committee, director of the faculty, external party, and doctoral candidate.
- Project description: the candidate and all supervisors.

Section 12. Admission to individual subjects at doctoral level

Registration and application for admission to PhD courses is done via the website Studentweb for UiT's PhD candidates and the application web for singular course students (i.e., all applicants other than UiT's PhD candidates).

Application deadlines vary from course to course but will be indicated in the course description as soon as the course catalogue is published; respectively on 1st of September for courses that run in the spring and 1st of March for courses that run in the autumn.

Doctoral candidates who wish to take courses that are not to be included in the training component must apply for ordinary admission as a singular course applicant or programme student within the applicable rules and deadlines.

Chapter III. Implementation

Section 13. Right to study

Provided that the head of department has been informed of deviations in the timetable and the candidate does not get to complete the education within one year beyond the normal time, the candidate can apply for an extended right to study. The application must contain a justification for the delay and a plan for completing the study. Both candidate and supervisors must sign the application.

PhD candidates who are employed by an external employer must report leaves of absence and a new end date, so that the right to study can be extended accordingly.

The candidate must also report termination of employment.

Section 14. The instruction part - purpose and content

Subjects to be included in the instruction section must normally be ordinary subjects at the institution or special curriculum. The subjects/courses must have an evaluation where the assessment term pass/fail, or graded scale (A-F) must be used. Subjects in the latter category must be passed with a grade of C or better to be approved in the instruction section.

Special curriculum

The special curriculum in the instruction section can amount to a maximum of 15 credits, but it is not recommended to have more than 10. The special curriculum can consist of the following:

- Literature-based curriculum. For subject books or articles in science subjects, approx. 40 pages per credit and in social studies approx. 70 pages per credit.
 - Literature-based syllabus ≤ 3 credits are assessed with an oral exam.
 - Literature-based syllabus 4 - 6 credits assessed with essay (4000 words) and oral exam.

- Literature-based syllabus 7 -15 credits are assessed with an essay (4000 words), a lecture preferably according to the title of the special syllabus (30 min) and an oral exam.
- Lectures at scientific conferences are approved with 3 credits. The lecture must be documented with a copy of the lecture and program for the conference.
- Preparation and presentation of records is approved with 2 points. Posters are documented with a copy of the poster and program from the conference.
- Popular science contribution, e.g., researcher blog, debate post, lecture at researcher grand prix/Saturday university and the like, can give up to 3 credits.
- Other relevant academic activity if this is recommended by the supervisor.

Lectures and posters can give a maximum of 5 credits, and you can only get one lecture and one poster approved.

Lectures at a conference, posters, participation in a seminar with a separate academic paper, a contribution to popular science or a PhD course in communication will cover the requirement for instruction in communication.

Research courses

National and international research courses evaluated by the relevant professional environment regarding level and scope can be approved in the instruction section. Applications for approval of research courses are addressed to the PhD administration. Approval requires:

- Supervisor's confirmation that the course is relevant.
- Documentation of teaching plans. Here, it must be stated which level the course is at. If the scope of the course is not specified in ECTS, it must be attached:
 - an overview of how many hours have been spent completing the course. One credit corresponds to 25-30 working hours.
 - documentation of the completion and passing of a knowledge test such as e.g. exam, essay, poster, lecture or similar.

The content of the training component must be such that, together with the thesis, it provides the necessary professional breadth and depth.

Changes to the training component must be recommended by the supervisors and approved by the PhD administration. In cases of doubt, the matter is processed by DC.

Section 15. Supervision

It is a prerequisite that the PhD candidate is linked to a professional community of researchers working on similar issues. The supervision committee has the main responsibility for facilitating the PhD candidate's active participation in relevant research environments together with senior researchers, postdocs and other PhD candidates. The PhD candidate should only exceptionally be linked to supervisors who are not part of a network of researchers working on similar issues.

The PhD candidate must have regular contact with their supervisors and must enter an active research environment. The PhD candidate should therefore stay at UiT Norway's Arctic University for part of the effective study period, unless very special circumstances dictate otherwise.

Section 15-1. Appointment of academic supervisors

For the PhD programs at the BFE faculty, it is recommended to appoint three supervisors for each doctoral candidate. A minimum requirement is two supervisors. One supervisor must be appointed as main supervisor and the others as co-supervisors. Although there is an external co-supervisor who takes care of the daily supervision of the candidate, it is the main supervisor at the BFE faculty who has the overall academic responsibility.

The main supervisor has administrative responsibility for the research education for the PhD candidate in question. Co-supervisors are professionals who provide supervision and share the professional responsibility for the PhD candidate. The supervisors agree between themselves on how the academic supervision is to be distributed.

Section 15-2. Content of academic supervision

All supervisors are obliged to keep in touch with the candidate and must keep informed of the candidate's progress. Deviations from the progress plan must be reported to the head of department. The main supervisor must have contact with the PhD candidate at least once a month.

The PhD candidate can expect approx. 40 contact hours (direct supervision or together with other candidates) with the supervisors per year.

Supervisors' responsibilities:

- Give advice on formulating and delimiting the theme and issue.
- Keep informed about the progress of the candidate's work and assess it in relation to the timetable.
- Approve the financing plan and ensure that it is followed.
- Ensure that the progress plan is concrete and realistic.
- Discuss and evaluate hypotheses and methods.
- Provide help with orientation in specialist literature and data bases.
- Discuss and give advice on how the thesis should be presented.
- Give the PhD candidate a professional group affiliation and help introduce the candidate into relevant professional environments.
- Discuss results and their interpretation.
- Give the candidate an introduction to the research ethics principles. The guidelines are handed out to both supervisor and candidate when an agreement has been concluded. The guidelines can also be downloaded from UiT's website.
- Guide the candidate in the preparation of the thesis so that it is at a level equivalent to that found in international scientific publications.
- Ensure that the midway evaluation is carried out.

There is an opportunity to change supervisors if the collaboration between PhD candidate and supervisor does not work. See agreement form B, section 7, for further information.

If a disagreement arises between supervisor and candidate, and it cannot be resolved between the parties, the head of department must guide the parties. If the matter cannot be resolved, the matter must be referred to the conflict board at the BFE faculty.

Section 16. Progress reporting

PhD candidate and supervisor must submit a written progress report every autumn for so long as the candidate is registered as an active candidate in FS platform (National student database), except for the year the mid-term evaluation is to be carried out. It is the individual department's responsibility to follow up its PhD candidates. Once a year, all PhD candidates must be offered an interview with the head of department, or the person appointed by the head of department. Both PhD candidate and supervisor are obliged to report significant deviations from the progress plan to the department.

The head of department, or the person appointed by the head of department, is obliged to follow up reported deviations.

Section 17. Midway evaluation

A midway evaluation in English must be carried out within two years of the candidate's course of study. At the mid-term evaluation, the candidate must give an oral account of the status of the research project as well as other matters that are important for completing the doctoral degree. The presentation can be given in the research group. The work and progression must be evaluated by at least two professionals outside the academic supervision committee. The evaluation must result in a written report according to a template prepared by the BFE faculty. The report must provide an assessment of the status of the work that has been carried out, and it must conclude whether the research method, subject matter, ethical aspects, finances, supervision, and progress are satisfactory or not. The report must also give concrete advice for further work and what is required to complete the project.

Academic supervisor(s) can participate in the conversation between candidate and evaluators as an observer.

The evaluators must have a doctorate or equivalent competence.

Section 18. Requirements relating to the thesis and the artistic doctoral work

Section 18-1. Further requirements relating to the thesis

PhD theses at the BFE Faculty must normally be written in English or Norwegian. If the PhD candidate wishes to write in another language, an application for this must be addressed to the DC.

The thesis must be of good scientific quality with clear and concise issues. Materials and methods must be adequate and appropriate. It is required that the results provide good and verifiable documentation. The use of figures, tables and illustrations must be appropriate, and the conclusions must be durable. The source material must be appropriate regarding critical selection and assessment. Literature references must be correct. Text must be presented clearly, concisely and be linguistically satisfactory.

The scope of the thesis must be such that the degree can be obtained through research effort equivalent to 2.5 full-time equivalents. Regardless of form, the thesis must be at a level that can be accepted in peer-reviewed international journals. The thesis can consist of a monograph or a compilation of several smaller scientific works (articles). Normally, the collection of articles for the PhD degree will consist of three articles, plus a cover article/summary (kappa in Norwegian).

For dissertations in the form of collections of articles, at least one article should be published, or accepted for publication. The articles can have several authors. The doctoral candidate must normally be the first author of at least two articles and must be the sole author of the cover article (kappa).

In some cases, the scope, quality, and the candidate's contribution to individual works may lead to fewer articles in the thesis. If fewer than three articles are included, the main supervisor in the academic supervision committee must justify why fewer articles are included with regard to the work's quality, scope, and the candidate's contribution. The explanation must be attached to the submission.

In addition to individual articles, the thesis must contain a cover article (kappa). The cover article must contain an introduction and an overall presentation of the scientific results with an in-depth summary discussion. The overall presentation must be an independent scientific and

up-to-date document where the candidate can elaborate and possibly correct aspects of the articles. It must show a scientific overview and maturity, as well as the ability to investigate deeply the specialized scientific issues.

The thesis must also contain a summary in both Norwegian and English.

The front page of the doctoral thesis must be designed in accordance with the template prepared by UiT Norway's Arctic University.

Section 18-3. Joint works

If several doctoral candidates write a dissertation together, it is a condition that the academic circles recommend this.

Section 19. Publication disclosure and availability

The thesis is normally publicly available in the Munin portal when the faculty has approved the thesis.

Section 21. Voluntary termination

The PhD administration must be informed if a doctoral candidate chooses voluntary termination so that the right to study can be terminated.

Section 22. Compulsory termination decision

The department may propose compulsory termination for the PhD candidate for reasons mentioned in the regulations.

Chapter IV. Completion

Section 23. Submission

Doctoral theses must be submitted through the university's submission portal Munin.

As soon as the thesis has been submitted in the portal, the following documents must be sent to the administration:

- Confirmation from the supervisor whether the thesis is recommended to be assessed for a doctorate.
- Copy of “Acknowledgments”
- Copy of the front page of each article included in the thesis.
- Co-author declarations according to the BFE Faculty’s template, see § 18-3 (1)
- Latest updated project description
- If the thesis is a collection of articles and contains fewer than three articles, an academic explanation for this decision must be attached.

Section 24. Appointment of evaluation committee

The DC appoints an evaluation committee based on a proposal from the institute. Proposals must normally be available when the thesis is submitted, and the appointment must take place no later than three weeks after submission. The main supervisor and head of department must confirm the members' competence on the form where the committee is proposed.

- Supervisors cannot be part of the evaluation committee for their own candidate
- If a proposed member is thanked in the acknowledgments, the person in question is considered ineligible. If the person concerned is mentioned in the "acknowledgements" as a journal-appointed referee, the DC must be made aware of this to assess the question of competence upon appointment.
- Collaboration between committee members and supervisors in the last three years, including joint publication, disqualifies the committee member from assessing the candidate's thesis.
- Co-publishing and other close professional collaboration between committee members and supervisors prior to the scholarship period can also result in the committee member being assessed as incompetent.
- Any joint publications, project collaboration or other interaction between committee members and supervisors must be accounted for when the proposal is put forward by the department.
- The committee members must confirm their impartiality before the appointment in the Doctoral degree committee

The committee leader is responsible for planning the defense date in consultation with the candidate, committee and the BFE Faculty. (See "Guidelines for successful administration of PhD defense")

Section 25. Correction of formal errors (errata)

At the BFE Faculty, an application can be made to have formal errors corrected no later than one week before the evaluation report is due.

Section 26. The evaluation committee's recommendation

The administration must receive the recommendation no later than four weeks before the defense date.

Section 26-1. The faculty's processing of the appointment

The BFE Faculty has decided in case FS BFE 14-09 that the DC have decision-making authority in matters concerning the administration of the PhD regulations, and this means that the authority to make decisions in these cases rests with the DC.

The head of the DC has the authority to approve the recommendation when the recommendation is unanimously negative, in the event of dissent and when the committee recommends that the candidate be allowed to do a minor rework.

Section 26-2. New submission following rejection of the doctoral work

In the event of a resubmission, the same procedure is followed as for an ordinary submission, cf. Section 23.

Section 27. Trial lecture for the PhD degree

The PhD candidate must give one trial lecture of 45 minutes on a given topic.

The lecture should be put on the same level as a (research-based) lecture for bachelor students in the subject.

In the assessment of the trial lecture, emphasis is placed on both academic content and ability to communicate.

The evaluation report and title of the trial lecture must be submitted to the PhD administration no later than 4 weeks before the defense. The administration forwards the title to the candidate 10 working days before the lecture.

The committee leader is responsible for introducing the candidate and rounding off the trial lecture.

The trial lecture can be individually adapted in special conditions.

The trial lecture is streamed and recorded. The candidate can reserve against the recording.

Section 28. Defense of the doctoral work (public defence)

The department proposes a committee leader for the defense. This is done at the same time as the evaluation committee is proposed. The committee leader can be the dissertation leader.

The candidate's presentation of the thesis should last a maximum of 45 minutes. Those present can submit questions in writing to the chair of the defense during the break.

After the candidate has finished the defense of his thesis, it is the first opponent who announces the result to the audience.

The disputation will normally take place at the BFE faculty. In particular cases, the dean can give consent for the defense to be held at an institution other than UiT.

The public defence can be individually adapted in special conditions.

The public defence is streamed and recorded, but the candidate can reserve against the recording.

Chapter VI. Appeals

Section 32. Appeals against rejections of applications for admission, decisions to terminate admission to a programme of study and rejection of approval of elements in the training component

The complaint is addressed to the PhD administration, which ensures further processing of the complaint.

Section 33. Appeals against grading or formal errors in examinations in the training component

Appeals against grading are submitted in the student web.

Section 34. Appeals against failed doctoral work, including the public defense

The appeal is addressed to the PhD administration, which ensures further processing of the appeal.

Chapter VII. Entry into force

Section 35. Entry into force

Revised supplementary provisions apply from 30th of June 2024.