

Regulations for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at the University of South-Eastern Norway

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Statutory authority: Adopted by the board of the University College of Southeast Norway (now the University of South-Eastern Norway) on 14 December 2017 pursuant to the Act of 1 April 2005 no. 15 relating to universities and university colleges (Universities and University Colleges Act), sections 3-3, 3-9 and 4-13.

Amendments: Amended by the Regulations of 15 June 2018 No. 1072 (including title).

Chapter 1. Introductory provisions

Section 1-1. *Applicability*

These Regulations apply to all doctoral education at the institution. The Regulations deal with admission to doctoral programmes, as well as the goals, completion and termination of doctoral education and related responsibilities, including agreements on joint degrees and cotutelle (joint supervision).

Chapter 2. Admissions

Section 2-1. *Admission requirements*

(1) For admission to a PhD programme, an applicant must normally hold a five-year higher degree qualification (master's degree). After special consideration, the institution may approve another equivalent education as a basis for admission.

(2) Applicants are normally required to have a weighted average grade of B or better.

(3) An application for admission to a PhD programme must normally be submitted within three months of starting a research project. If less than one year of full-time work on the research project remains at the time of application, the applicant may be rejected.

Section 2-2. *Applications*

(1) Applications for admission must be submitted to the institution using the prescribed application form.

(2) An application must contain:

- a. documentation of the education that provides a basis for admission
- b. a description of the research project, which includes:
 - a schedule
 - a preliminary publication plan
- d. a plan for the educational component
- e. documentation of funding
- f. documentation of special needs for academic and material resources
- g. plans for stays at other institutions, including foreign institutions
- h. information about any intellectual property rights restrictions in order to protect others' rights
- i. the names of at least one proposed co-supervisor and a proposed principal supervisor, as well as a description of an active research environment

- j. an account of any legal or ethical issues raised by the project and how these shall be resolved. The application must indicate if the project is dependent on permissions from research ethics committees or other authorities or from private individuals (informants, patients, parents and so forth). If possible, such permissions should be obtained and attached to the application.

Section 2-3. *Infrastructure*

- (1) PhD candidates shall have access to the infrastructure they need to complete their research project. The infrastructure they need to complete their research project will be determined when the decision regarding admission is made.
- (2) For PhD candidates with an external place of work, an agreement concerning the infrastructure they need will be entered into between the institution and the external party for each research project. Such an agreement shall normally be entered into when the decision regarding the PhD candidate's admission is made, or immediately afterwards.

Section 2-4. Decisions regarding admission

- (1) Decisions regarding admission shall be made by the programme committee based on an overall assessment of the application.
- (2) A decision shall normally include the appointment of two supervisors, assign responsibility for dealing with other needs outlined in the application, and set the admission period with a starting date and end date. The starting date must be the same as the date funding commences or the date a PhD candidate who will be on staff takes up their post. Any extension of the admission period must be based on statutory employee rights or specifically clarified with respect to the candidate's basis for funding.
- (3) The educational component is approved by the programme committee. If there is a need to make significant changes to the educational component during the admission period, the revised educational component shall be sent to the programme committee for approval.
- (4) Applications for admission may be rejected if one or more of the following situations exist:
 - a. agreements with external third parties will hinder any publication and public defence of the thesis
 - b. the intellectual property rights agreements that have been signed will hinder what is regarded as normal implementation
 - c. funding has not been secured for the entire period

(5) Conditional admission may be granted if some of the conditions for admission have not been met on the date of admission. In such circumstances, the applicant shall be given a deadline of not more than three months to meet the conditions that have not been met.

(6) Admission may be granted with provisos concerning funding, programme capacity, additional education and intellectual property agreements.

(7) General criteria may be established for ranking qualified applicants when the number of applicants exceeds programme capacity.

Section 2-5. Final project description

(1) Where a final project description has not already been prepared, the PhD candidate must, as quickly as possible, and normally within three months after admission, prepare a final project description together with their supervisors and any co-researchers. This shall contain:

- a. a description of the research project
- b. a work plan for completion of the research project
- c. a publication plan
- d. plans for stays at other institutions

(2) Final project descriptions are approved by the programme committee.

Section 2-6. *PhD agreements*

(1) Admission to one of the institution's PhD programmes is formalised in a written agreement signed by the PhD candidate, supervisor(s) and institution. The agreement governs the parties' rights and obligations during the admission period. It shall ensure that a candidate regularly participates in an active research environment and lay the groundwork for completion of the PhD programme by the agreed deadline. The institution's template shall be used and it shall normally be signed no later than three weeks after admission.

(2) Where PhD candidates receive funding from or are employed by an external party, a separate agreement between the candidate, institution and external party must be entered into.

(3) Where PhD candidates will be affiliated with foreign institutions, such as in the case of joint degrees and cotutelle, guidelines for such collaboration must be followed and separate agreements must be entered into using the prescribed form. Agreements concerning joint degrees and cotutelle shall normally be entered into at the same time as the PhD agreement.

(4) If significant changes take place in relation to the agreed conditions, a new agreement must be drawn up.

Section 2-7. *Admission period*

(1) The standard length of PhD education is three years of full-time study. The maximum period of study is normally six years from the starting date to submission of the PhD thesis. Statutory leave, longer absences due to illness, duties and approved extensions are not included in these six years.

(2) Where an extension is granted, the programme committee may set additional conditions.

(3) Upon expiry of the admission period, the parties' rights and obligations under the PhD agreement cease to apply such that the PhD candidate may lose their rights to supervision, course participation and access to the institution's infrastructure. However, the PhD candidate can apply for permission to submit the thesis for evaluation for the PhD degree.

Section 2-8. *Voluntary premature termination*

(1) PhD education can be terminated before expiry of the admission period. Where PhD education is terminated in such a manner, the PhD agreement's provisions concerning termination of employment, funding, rights to results, etc. shall be followed.

(2) In the case of voluntary termination due to the candidate's desire to change project or transfer to a different programme, the PhD candidate must reapply for admission on the basis of the new project.

Section 2-9. *Involuntary termination due to delay or a lack of progress*

(1) Where one or more of the following criteria is met, the programme committee can decide to forcibly terminate the education:

- a. completion of the educational component is significantly delayed
- b. repeated or substantial breaches on the part of the candidate of their obligations to inform, follow up or report, including failure to submit a progress report, cf. section 10-1
- c. delay in the progress of the project that provides reasonable grounds for doubting whether the candidate will be able to complete the project by the agreed deadline

- d. involuntary termination pursuant to these rules may only be approved if the failure to make progress or the delay are due to circumstances over which the candidate has control

(2) Appeals concerning decisions made pursuant to this provision shall be considered by the institution's appeals committee.

Section 2-10. *Involuntary termination due to cheating in examinations or tests*

(1) In the event of cheating in examinations or tests during the education, the institution may approve annulment, ref. section 4-7 of the Universities and University Colleges Act. If the circumstances are serious enough to be regarded as misconduct, cf. section 4-13(1) of the same Act and section 8, second paragraph of the Act on Ethics and Integrity in Research, the institution may approve involuntary termination, cf. section 7-6 below.

(2) Resolutions pursuant to this paragraph shall be passed by the board itself or the institution's appeals committee. Appeals shall be considered by the Joint Appeals Committee for Student Matters, cf. section 5-1 of the Universities and University Colleges Act and associated Regulations.

§ 2-11. *Involuntary termination due to misconduct*

(1) If a candidate is guilty of misconduct, cf. section 4-13(1) of the Universities and University Colleges Act and section 8, second paragraph of the Act on Ethics and Integrity in Research, the institution can approve involuntary termination.

(2) Decisions concerning involuntary termination due to misconduct shall be taken by the body stipulated by the board. Appeals against such decisions shall be considered by the ministry or a special appeals committee appointed by the ministry.

Section 2-12. *Termination and dismissal*

A candidate may be terminated from their position as a PhD candidate where reasonable grounds exist that affect the situation of either the institution or the employee, cf. sections 19 and 20 of the Civil Service Act, or dismissed pursuant to section 26.

Chapter 3. Implementation

Section 3-1. *Supervision*

Work on a PhD thesis shall be conducted under individual supervision. The institution and supervisors shall together ensure that the PhD candidate participates in an active research environment.

Section 3-2. Appointment of supervisors

(1) A PhD candidate shall have at least two supervisors, one of which will be appointed their principal supervisor. A principal supervisor shall normally be appointed at the time of admission and shall normally be employed at the institution.

(2) The principal supervisor has the main academic responsibility for the candidate.

(3) Co-supervisors are experts who supervise and share academic responsibility for the candidate with the principal supervisor.

(4) The rules on impartiality in sections 6 to 10 of the Public Administration Act apply to the supervisors.

(5) All supervisors shall hold PhD degrees or equivalent qualifications in the discipline and shall be active researchers. Supervisors without a PhD degree must undergo formal approval before they can provide supervision. At least one of the appointed supervisors should have previous experience and/or training in supervising PhD candidates.

(6) Changes in the supervisor group shall be approved by the programme committee. A PhD candidate and supervisor may ask the programme committee to appoint a new supervisor for the candidate. A supervisor may not resign until a new supervisor has been appointed. A new supervisor shall be appointed within a reasonable period of time. The programme committee is also responsible for immediately appointing a new supervisor or supervisors in the event of long-term illness, leave or similar.

Section 3-3. Content and scope of supervision

(1) The principal supervisor and the candidate are responsible for ensuring that the candidate is in regular contact with their supervisors. The candidate must be part of an active research environment.

(2) The supervisors shall provide advice and supervise the candidate in every phase of the research project and ensure good dialogue with co-researchers. A detailed description of the supervisors' duties is provided in supplementary provisions.

(3) Supervisors have a duty to stay informed of the progress of the PhD candidate's work and to assess this in relation to the candidate's work plan.

(4) Supervisors have a duty to follow up academic matters that may delay completion of the organised research training, so that this can be completed within the standard time.

Section 3-4. *Purpose, content and scope of the educational component*

- (1) PhD education must be organised such that it can be completed within the standard time.
- (2) The programme committee is responsible for ensuring the educational component, along with the thesis work, provides education of a high academic standard and is in accordance with international standards by conducting research work, training in academic dissemination and providing an introduction to research ethics, philosophy of science and the scientific method.
- (3) The educational component shall correspond to at least 30 credits, of which at least 20 must be earned after admission. Courses that will be included in the educational component should not be older than two years on the date of admission. Sufficient time shall be set aside for the research component of the education. If the institution does not offer all of the educational component, arrangements shall be made for the PhD candidate to receive equivalent instruction at another institution.
- (4) For subjects included in the educational component where course provision is not available, an individually adapted course (elective course), with prepared literature lists, will be approved.
- (5) Credits shall be given for subjects and courses at the PhD level at another institution in accordance with the rules in section 3-5, first paragraph of the Universities and University Colleges Act.

Section 3-5. *PhD candidates' right to leave*

PhD candidates who are on parental leave from a PhD programme are entitled to follow the instruction and take examinations during the period of leave.

Section 3-6. *Residency requirement*

- (1) PhD programmes are organised researcher education and PhD candidates must normally spend at least one year at the institution.
- (2) The residency requirement may be split into two periods and may be reduced if it can be documented that the PhD candidate is participating in an active research environment and that the academic requirements concerning supervision are being met.

Section 3-7. *Reporting*

- (1) PhD candidates and supervisors are equally responsible for annually reporting on the PhD candidate's work and progress.
- (2) Any failure to submit reports or inadequate reporting on the part of the PhD candidate may result in the involuntary termination of PhD education before the end of the admission period.
- (3) Supervisors who fail to comply with their reporting duties may be relieved of their supervisory responsibilities.

Section 3-8. *Midway assessment*

- (1) A midway assessment of the PhD work shall be conducted, normally in the third or fourth semester. The PhD candidate shall present their work and be assessed by a group of at least two people appointed by the programme committee. The evaluation shall assess the academic status and progress of the PhD work and provide feedback to the PhD candidate, supervisor and programme committee.
- (2) The primary purpose of the midway assessment, like the annual reporting, is to help PhD candidates identify factors that entail a risk to the project in the form of obstacles or delays, as well as to provide input which may improve the quality of the work. The programme committee, supervisors and PhD candidate have a duty to actively follow up circumstances that may result in delay or failure to complete the PhD programme so that, to the extent possible, the programme can be completed within the standard time frame.
- (3) If the midway assessment identifies significant weaknesses in the research work, measures shall be taken to remedy the situation.

Section 3-9. *Requirements for PhD theses*

- (1) The thesis shall be an independent piece of research work or research and development work that meets international standards with respect to ethical requirements, academic standards and method within the discipline.
- (2) The thesis shall contribute to developing new academic knowledge and shall be of such a standard that it can be published or made public in a suitable format as a part of the discipline's international, scientific literature.
- (3) The PhD candidate has a duty to store research data in accordance with the institution's guidelines for this.

(4) The thesis may consist of a compilation of multiple scientific works (articles) or a monograph. If the thesis consists of multiple works, an account of the relationship between them shall be provided, as shall a review of the literature in the discipline.

(5) The main component of the thesis may consist of a new product, a systematised collection of materials or be in another form of presentation (for example, audio, image, video, electronic forms of presentation) where its theoretical and methodological bases are not evident from the product itself. In such cases, the thesis shall have a supplement, in addition to presenting the product itself. The supplement shall be a written account of the problem, choice of theory and method, and assessment of the results in accordance with international standards and academic standards within the discipline.

(6) A thesis, or parts thereof, that has been produced in collaboration with other authors or collaborators shall comply with the norms for co-authorship generally accepted in the research community and in accordance with international standards. If the thesis primarily consists of articles, the PhD candidate shall normally be the primary author of at least half of the articles.

(7) Where a thesis includes works with multiple authors or collaborators, the PhD candidate's contribution and the allocation of rights among authors shall be agreed in advance.

(8) A PhD thesis shall normally be submitted in the language of where the research frontier is located. It will primarily be English or Norwegian. If, for academic reasons, another language must be used, this must have been applied for at the time of admission.

Section 3-10. *Work not eligible for evaluation*

(1) Works, or parts of a work, that have been accepted as a basis for previously completed examinations or degrees may not be submitted for evaluation unless the work is included as a minor part of a thesis consisting of multiple related works. However, data, analyses or methods used in previous degrees may be used as a basis for work on the PhD project.

(2) Where published works are used, these cannot be accepted as a part of a thesis if they were published more than five years before the date of admission. The programme committee can grant a dispensation from this requirement if extraordinary circumstances suggest this is appropriate. evaluation unless the work is included as a minor part of a thesis consisting of multiple related works. However, data, analyses or methods used in previous degrees may be used as a basis for work on the PhD project.

(3) Where published works are used, these cannot be accepted as a part of a thesis if they were published more than five years before the date of admission. The programme committee can grant a dispensation from this requirement if extraordinary circumstances suggest this is appropriate.

Section 3-11. *Rights to use results and notification requirement*

(1) A PhD candidate's rights to use their results, patentable compounds, copyrights, etc. are governed by the institution's guidelines and by the rules laid down in the Act respecting the Right to Employees' Inventions.

(2) For those parts of a PhD candidate's thesis to which only the candidate holds the copyright, and other works that are the result of work on the thesis to which only the candidate holds the copyright, the institution has a non-exclusive right of use for instructional and research purposes. The PhD candidate shall be named as stipulated by the law and good practice.

(3) The regulation of rights between collaborating institutions shall be stipulated in an agreement between the parties.

(4) A PhD candidate has a duty to provide notification of work results with the potential for commercial exploitation.

(5) The institution's guidelines shall act as the starting point for the duty to provide notification that PhD candidates employed at the institution have with respect to work results with the potential for commercial exploitation.

(6) Where a PhD candidate has an external employer, the notification requirement shall be stipulated in a separate agreement between the institution, PhD candidate and external employer.

(7) Where a PhD candidate does not have an employer, the scope of the notification obligation shall be stipulated in the PhD agreement.

Chapter 4. Completion

Section 4-1. Basis for assessment

A PhD degree is conferred on the basis of the following mandatory and approved elements:

- a. a doctoral thesis
- b. completion of the programme's educational component

- c. a doctoral degree examination, consisting of a trial lecture on a specified subject and a public defence of the thesis

Section 4-2. *Period between submission and disputation*

- (1) The institution shall ensure that the period between submission and disputation is as short as possible. Normally, no more than five months shall pass from submission to disputation.
- (2) The principal supervisor is responsible for informing the dean of the host faculty and the programme committee at the time of submission such that a start can be made on the necessary preparations.

Section 4-3. Application for assessment of the PhD thesis

- (1) An application for assessment of the thesis may not be submitted until the educational component has been approved.
- (2) The application shall be accompanied by the following attachments:
 - a. the thesis in an approved format and in accordance with the institution's regulations, in the form and with the number of copies the institution has stipulated
 - b. documentation of required permissions
 - c. documentation of the completed and approved educational component
 - d. co-author declarations where this is required
 - e. declaration concerning whether the PhD work is being submitted for assessment for the first or second time
 - f. declaration that the PhD work has not been submitted for assessment at another institution
 - g. declaration with a description of the PhD candidate's contribution to the thesis
 - h. declaration regarding completed check for plagiarism
 - i. declaration that the thesis will be placed in the institution's electronic research archive

Section 4-4. *Processing applications*

- (1) The programme committee considers applications for assessments of theses. Applications that do not satisfy the requirements in section 4-3 shall be rejected.

(2) The programme committee can reject an application for assessment of a thesis if it is obvious that the thesis is not of a sufficiently high scientific standard and would not be approved by a committee.

Section 4-5. Appointment of the assessment committee

(1) When the programme committee has approved an application for assessment of a thesis, an expert committee with at least three members will be appointed to assess the thesis and the disputation. The rules on impartiality in section 6 of the Public Administration Act apply to the committee's members. The committee's composition should normally have been determined at the time of submission.

(2) The assessment committee shall normally be composed in such a way that:

- a. both genders are represented
- b. at least two of the members have no affiliation with the institution
- c. at least one of the members should come from a foreign institution
- d. at least one of the members is a member of the institution's permanent staff
- e. all of the members have a doctoral degree or equivalent competence.
- f. the majority of the assessment committee are external members

(3) The specific grounds for any departures from the requirements must be provided.

(4) The committee's composition must be explained and this must show how, as a whole, it covers the subject area of the thesis. The programme committee will appoint a chair from among the committee's members or in addition to the committee's members. The member of the committee who is on the institution's permanent staff shall be the committee's administrator.

(5) Appointed supervisors, co-researchers and others who have contributed to the thesis may not be a member of the assessment committee or administer it.

(6) The PhD candidate shall be informed of the proposed composition of the committee and shall have an opportunity to submit written comments on its composition within one week after the candidate has been informed of the proposed committee.

Section 4-6. *Obtaining supplementary information*

(1) The assessment committee may require submission of a PhD candidate's source material and supplementary additional information.

(2) The assessment committee may ask the supervisor to give an account of the supervision and the work done on a PhD thesis.

Section 4-7. *Revision of submitted theses*

(1) The assessment committee may recommend, based on the submitted PhD thesis and any additional material, that the programme committee grant permission for minor revision before a final recommendation is made. The committee shall provide a written summary of what the candidate must revise.

(2) If the programme committee permits a minor revision of a thesis, a deadline shall be provided for such revision which normally should not exceed three months. A new deadline shall also be set for submission of the committee's final recommendation. Decisions on setting deadlines may not be appealed.

(3) If the committee finds that comprehensive changes concerning theories, hypotheses, materials or methodologies are necessary before a thesis can be recommended for disputation, the PhD thesis shall not be approved.

Section 4-8. *Recommendation of the assessment committee*

(1) The assessment committee shall recommend whether or not a PhD thesis should be approved for disputation. The reasons for the recommendation and any dissent shall be provided.

(2) The programme committee can set a deadline for the assessment committee's recommendation. The assessment committee's recommendation shall in any case be made within three months after the committee has received a thesis. If the committee allows revision of a thesis, a new deadline will apply from the date the PhD thesis is resubmitted.

(3) The assessment committee's recommendation will be submitted to the programme committee, which will present it to the PhD candidate. The PhD candidate will be given a deadline of ten working days to present written comments on the recommendation. If the PhD candidate does not wish to submit comments, the programme committee shall be notified of this in writing as soon as possible.

Section 4-9. *Withdrawal and correction of formal errors in PhD theses*

(1) A submitted thesis may not be withdrawn before a final decision has been made about whether or not it can be approved for disputation.

(2) A PhD candidate may apply for permission to correct formal errors in a thesis after submission. The application must be accompanied by a complete list of the errors (errata) the candidate wishes to correct. An application to correct formal errors must be submitted

no later than four weeks before the committee's deadline for delivering its recommendation. Such an application may only be submitted once.

Section 4-10. *The institution's consideration of the assessment committee's recommendation*

(1) The programme committee will decide, based on the assessment committee's recommendation, whether the PhD thesis shall be approved for disputation.

(2) If the programme committee finds that reasonable doubt exists as to whether the committee's unanimous recommendation should be endorsed, the programme committee shall itself seek further clarification from the assessment committee and/or appoint two new experts who will render individual opinions on the thesis. Such additional opinions or individual opinions shall be presented to the PhD candidate, who will be given an opportunity to respond with comments.

(3) If the committee renders a split recommendation and the programme committee decides to endorse the majority's opinion, the programme committee will make a decision in accordance with the majority's recommendation. If the committee renders a split recommendation and the programme committee is considering endorsing the minority's opinion, the programme committee may seek further clarification from the assessment committee and/or appoint two new experts who will render individual opinions on the thesis. Such additional opinions or individual opinions shall be presented to the PhD candidate, who will be given an opportunity to respond with comments. If both the new experts concur with the majority's recommendation in the original committee recommendation, this recommendation shall be followed. The PhD candidate shall be informed of the opinions from the new experts.

Section 4-11. *Resubmission*

(1) A PhD thesis that has not been approved for disputation (rejected) may not be assessed in its revised form until six months after the institution has made its decision. In such circumstances the programme committee will appoint a new assessment committee. At least one of the members from the original committee should be reappointed. A thesis may only be reassessed once.

Section 4-12. *Requirements for printed PhD theses*

(1) When a thesis has been approved for disputation, the candidate shall submit the thesis to the institution in an approved format and in accordance with institution's regulations.

(2) The PhD candidate shall submit a brief summary of the thesis in Norwegian or English. If the thesis is not written in Norwegian or English, a summary shall also be submitted in the language used in the thesis.

Section 4-14. *Trial lectures*

(1) A trial lecture is an independent component of a doctoral examination and shall be on a given subject. The purpose is to test a PhD candidate's ability to acquire knowledge beyond the scope of the topic of their thesis and their ability to impart this in the context of a lecture.

(2) PhD candidates will be told the title of the trial lecture ten working days before the lecture. The subject of the lecture will be provided by the assessment committee and shall not be directly related to the topic of the thesis.

(3) The trial lecture shall be given in the language used in the thesis, unless the programme committee approves another language at the suggestion of the assessment committee.

(4) The trial lecture shall last 45 minutes.

(5) The trial lecture is approved by the assessment committee. If a trial lecture is not approved, the grounds for not approving it must be provided.

(6) The trial lecture must be approved before a disputation may be conducted.

Section 4-15. *Disputations (public defences of theses)*

(1) A public defence of the thesis shall take place after the trial lecture has been approved and within two months after a thesis has been found to merit being defended. The time and place for the public defence shall be announced at least ten working days before it is held. The committee which originally assessed the thesis will also assess the public defence.

(2) The public defence must take place in the language used in the thesis, unless the programme committee approves another language at the suggestion of the assessment committee.

(3) There shall normally be two opponents who are appointed by the programme committee. The two opponents shall be external members of the assessment committee.

(4) Disputations are chaired by the dean of the host faculty or a person authorised by the dean. The person who chairs the disputation will provide an account of the submission

and assessment of the thesis and the trial lecture. Thereafter, the PhD candidate shall normally be given 20 to 30 minutes to present the PhD thesis.

(5) The opponents will decide how to divide up their tasks between them. After both opponents have concluded their opposition, the other people present will be given an opportunity to comment *ex auditorio*. One of the opponents will conclude the opposition, and the chair will conclude the disputation.

(6) If the trial lecture and disputation are assessed separately, the programme committee may, in consultation with the assessment committee, appoint a committee to assess the trial lecture. In these circumstances, at least one of the assessment committee members shall be appointed to the lecture committee.

(7) After the trial lecture and the disputation, the assessment committee will submit a recommendation to the programme committee in which it will explain its assessment of the public defence of the thesis. The recommendation shall contain:

- a. the committee's assessment of the PhD thesis
- b. the committee's assessment of the trial lecture
- c. the committee's assessment of the public defence of the PhD thesis
- d. the committee's assessment of the standard of the PhD thesis in an international context

(8) The recommendation shall conclude with whether or not the disputation has been approved. A recommendation not to approve a disputation must be explained.

Section 4-15. Disputation (public defence of the thesis)

(1) A public defence of the thesis shall take place after the trial lecture has been approved and within two months after a thesis has been found to merit being defended. The time and place for the public defence shall be announced at least ten working days before it is held. The committee which originally assessed the thesis will also assess the public defence.

(2) The public defence must take place in the language used in the thesis, unless the programme committee approves another language at the suggestion of the assessment committee.

(3) There shall normally be two opponents who are appointed by the programme committee. The two opponents shall be external members of the assessment committee.

(4) Disputations are chaired by the dean of the host faculty or a person authorised by the dean. The person who chairs the disputation will provide an account of the submission and

assessment of the thesis and the trial lecture. Thereafter, the PhD candidate shall normally be given 20 to 30 minutes to present the PhD thesis.

(5) The opponents will decide how to divide up their tasks between them. After both opponents have concluded their opposition, the other people present will be given an opportunity to comment *ex auditorio*. One of the opponents will conclude the opposition, and the chair will conclude the disputation.

(6) If the trial lecture and disputation are assessed separately, the programme committee may, in consultation with the assessment committee, appoint a committee to assess the trial lecture. In these circumstances, at least one of the assessment committee members shall be appointed to the lecture committee.

(7) After the trial lecture and the disputation, the assessment committee will submit a recommendation to the programme committee in which it will explain its assessment of the public defence of the thesis. The recommendation shall contain:

- a. the committee's assessment of the PhD thesis
- b. the committee's assessment of the trial lecture
- c. the committee's assessment of the public defence of the PhD thesis
- d. the committee's assessment of the standard of the PhD thesis in an international context

(8) The recommendation shall conclude with whether or not the disputation has been approved. A recommendation not to approve a disputation must be explained.

Section 4-16. *Approval of trial lectures and disputations*

(1) The programme committee shall base its decision regarding approval of the doctoral examination on the assessment committee's recommendation.

(2) If the assessment committee does not approve the trial lecture, a new trial lecture must be held. A new trial lecture must be held on a new topic and not later than six months after the first attempt.

(3) Only one new trial lecture may be held. Insofar as it is possible, the lecture shall be assessed by the same committee as the original.

(4) If the assessment committee does not approve the disputation, the PhD candidate may defend the thesis one more time. The new disputation may, at the earliest, be held after six months and will, insofar as it is possible, be assessed by the same committee as the original.

Section 4-17. *Conferring of degrees and certificates*

(1) On the basis of the programme committee's approval of the educational component, the PhD thesis, the trial lecture and the disputation, the rector will confer the degree of Philosophiae Doctor on the PhD candidate.

(2) Certificates are issued by the institution. Certificates shall contain information regarding the title of the degree, topic of the trial lecture, approved courses in the educational component, supervisors and the members of the assessment committee.

(3) The institution shall issue a diploma supplement as a supplement to the certificate.

Chapter 5. Joint degrees and cotutelle agreements

Section 5-1. Joint degrees and cotutelle agreements

(1) The institution may enter into a partnership with one or more Norwegian or foreign institutions on collaboration in the form of an agreement regarding joint degrees or cotutelle agreements. If such an agreement means that one or more of the provisions in these regulations must be departed from, the agreement shall be submitted to the rector for final approval. Joint degrees shall normally only be entered into if an established, stable academic collaboration already exists between the institution and at least one of the other consortium participants. Such degrees must be accredited by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

(2) Joint degrees mean a collaboration between multiple institutions which are all jointly responsible for admissions, supervision, conferring degrees and other matters. The collaboration will normally be organised as a consortium and governed by an agreement between the consortium participants. Joint certificates are issued for completed joint degrees in the form of:

- a. a certificate document issued by all of the consortium members
- b. a certificate from each of the consortium participants
- c. a combination of a) and b)

(3) Cotutelle agreements mean joint supervision of PhD candidates and collaboration on the education of PhD candidates. A cotutelle agreement is entered into for each individual candidate and must be based on a stable, academic institutional collaboration.

(4) The requirement for a disputation involving an impartial assessment committee may not be departed from.

Chapter 6. Appeals, transitional provisions and entry into force

Section 6-1. *Appeals against rejections of applications for admission, decisions regarding loss of admission and rejections of applications for the approval of elements of the educational component*

(1) A rejection of an application for admission, a decision regarding loss of admission and a rejection of an application for the approval of elements of the educational component can be appealed pursuant to the rules in the Universities and University Colleges Act.

(2) Appeals against decisions must be submitted in writing to the programme committee and contain the grounds for the appeal. The programme committee's recommendation shall accompany the appeal as the presentation of the case for appeals committee.

Section 6-2. *Appeals against examinations in the educational component*

(1) Examinations taken as part of the educational component may be appealed against pursuant to sections 5-2 and 5-3 of the Universities and University Colleges Act.

(2) The procedures for dealing with suspected cheating or attempted cheating shall comply with the provisions of the Universities and University Colleges Act.

Section 6-3. *Appeals against rejections of applications for assessment or recommendations not to approve PhD theses, trial lectures or disputations*

(1) Rejections of applications to have PhD theses assessed and decisions not to approve theses, trial lectures or disputations may be appealed against in accordance with the rules in the Public Administration Act.

(2) Appeals against decisions must be submitted in writing to the institution. The appeals committee shall examine all aspects of the case. If the appeals committee deems it necessary for clarification of the case, individuals or a committee shall be appointed to assess the decision that was taken and the criteria on which it was based or to make a new or supplementary expert assessment.

Section 6-4. *Transitional provisions*

Those who were granted admission pursuant to the repealed Regulations of 9 May 2014 no. 868 for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at Buskerud and Vestfold University College, repealed Regulations of 11 June 2015 no. 1075 for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at Telemark University College, or repealed Regulations of 18 December 2015 no. 1893 for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at the University College of

Southeast Norway shall retain their rights pursuant to these Regulations in those cases where they to the benefit of the candidate.

Section 6-5. *Entry into force*

(1) These Regulations enter into force immediately.

(2) From the same date, the Regulations of 18 December 2015 no. 1893 for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at the University College of Southeast Norway shall be repealed.