

Guidelines for the submission of doctoral thesis that consist of many smaller articles (article-based thesis)

Stipulated by Dean Arild Hovland on 11 May 2017 following discussions with the PhD Programme Committees

These guidelines apply to doctoral (PhD) thesis completed at the Faculty of Humanities, Sports and Educational Science at the University of South-Eastern Norway.

General requirements for doctoral thesis

In Section 3-9 (Requirements for doctoral thesis) of the statutory regulations governing doctoral degrees at the University of South-Eastern Norway, it states:

“(1) The thesis shall consist of an original work of research, or research and development, that meets international standards in relation to ethical requirements and the levels of academic content and methodology within the field in question.

(2) The thesis shall contribute towards the development of new technical knowledge and be of a standard that can be published or disclosed in an appropriate format as part of the relevant field’s international scientific literature.

(3) The PhD candidate undertakes to safeguard research data in accordance with the relevant guidelines stipulated by the institution.

(4) The thesis may be in the form of a single monograph, or made up of several scientific articles. If the thesis comprises several articles, an account shall be given of the context of said articles, together with a review of the literature in the relevant field.”

Specific requirements for article-based thesis

For thesis that comprise a collection of several scientific articles (article-based thesis), the following guidelines (1 to 5 below) apply.

1. Scope of the thesis/number of articles

Requirements regarding the scope of the thesis must not exceed what it is possible in terms of research work for a candidate to complete, together with relevant academic training, during a period equivalent to three years. At the Faculty of Humanities, Sports and Educational Science, an article-based thesis should comprise at least three component articles, together with an introductory synopsis, called a *kappe* in Norwegian (see item 4, above). At least one of the articles should be accepted for publication. The level of the candidate's co-authorship may mean that more than the minimum three stipulated articles should be included.

2. Languages

It is permitted to use different languages in different parts of an article-based thesis. As a general rule, articles may be written in Norwegian, Danish, Swedish or English. The candidate must apply for approval for the use of other languages.

3. Co-authorship

The candidate must be the sole author of the introductory synopsis.

The thesis, or those parts of it that have been written in collaboration with other authors or partners, shall comply with international standards and the norms for co-authorship that are universally accepted for the field in question. If the thesis consists mainly of a collection of articles, the PhD candidate shall normally be the main author of at least 50 percent of the articles.

In the case of co-authorship, the candidate's original contribution must be recognised and documented in the form of a declaration, or declarations, provided by the other co-authors (see item 4). It is prerequisite that the candidate is the main author of the majority of the articles that constitute the thesis.

As a rule, at the Faculty of Humanities, Sports and Educational Science, the candidate should be sole author of at least one of the component articles. However, in the light of wide variations in publication culture among different academic traditions and contexts (e.g. between free-standing PhD projects and those that form part of larger research projects), this is not an absolute requirement.

A determination of what is a reasonable level of co-authorship for a given PhD project should be made by the candidate and his/her tutor at an early stage in the preparation of the thesis.

4. Declaration of co-authorship

A declaration of co-authorship shall assist in establishing and assessing the candidate's scientific contribution in relation to meeting the requirements for a doctoral degree.

5. Guidelines for the introductory synopsis

In an article-based thesis, the candidate shall provide an introductory synopsis (summary) describing the context of, and links between, the component articles.

The synopsis should be completed towards the end of the doctorate work. However, it shall also function as a framework for the work in such a way that enables the establishment of a holistic perspective for the thesis at an early stage of the process. Early stage work on the synopsis may help to create awareness of the holistic perspective that the thesis intends to address. It is also reasonable to assume that the synopsis will be modified as work progresses in line with developments in the form and content of the component articles.

The candidate must be the sole author of the introductory synopsis, and the following guidelines apply to its content:

- A. The synopsis shall provide an aggregated summary of the issues and findings presented in the component articles, presented in such a way that the thesis appears as a single, integrated, entity. The synopsis shall present the findings of the individual articles in such a way that fully demonstrates the essential context that links them. In this way, the synopsis may contribute towards creating a connection between findings that may stimulate discussion on a more theory-driving level. The complexity and nuances of the findings shall be discussed in the light of methodological, scientific-theoretical and theoretical questions.
- B. The synopsis shall contain essential theoretical and methodological evaluations linked to the doctorate work. The synopsis shall also describe where terminological definitions or elaborations on relevant topics can be found in the thesis.
- C. The synopsis shall demonstrate, and provide a summary of, the contribution that the thesis is making to the research field in question.
- D. The synopsis shall highlight and discuss ethical issues linked to the work.

- E. If the thesis contains earlier published articles, the synopsis shall also contain technical updates that ensure that the thesis as a whole is fully updated. Alternatively, such updates may also be presented in each of the component articles.
- F. As a rule, the synopsis shall comprise between 50 and 80 pages.