



## **Guidelines for the start-up, midway and final seminar – PhD in Science of Professions**

Approved by the Dean 20 December 2021

### **Guidelines for the start-up seminar – PhD in Science of Professions**

The PhD in Science of Professions is a research training programme that leads to the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD). The programme has a nominal length of three years and consists of a training component worth 30 ECTS and an independent research work. For PhD candidates who have been admitted to the programme, the start-up seminar is a mandatory milestone in their studies.

The start-up seminar is held within four months after start-up, and seminars are hence arranged in January, May and September.

The seminar gathers all new candidates/research fellows for a one or two-day seminar on campus. The faculty covers travel and accommodation expenses for candidates whose place of work is not located near the venue of the start-up seminar.

#### **Objective**

The start-up seminar provides the PhD candidates with an opportunity to discuss their project and debate methodological and thematic issues in the initial phase of their work on the thesis. Moreover, the seminar will introduce the candidates to the programme and the university community and help them establish contacts with relevant research groups, including across the two faculties. Attendance at a seminar such as this facilitates contact between candidates who are at the same stage of work. The candidates' presentations will be based on their own project outline and position at the time in question.

#### **Target group**

All research fellows/candidates who have been appointed/admitted since the previous seminar.

#### **Attendance**

- Attendance at the start-up seminar is a mandatory activity in the study programme.

## **Programme for a one- to two-day seminar**

### **Part 1 The PhD project – presentation, questions and discussion**

- Candidates give an oral presentation of their project outline for a maximum of ten minutes. Thereafter, fifteen minutes are set aside for questions, comments and advice from supervisors, other candidates and the audience.
- Each candidate's project is reviewed within a time frame of 25 minutes.
- Participation is mandatory for candidates and relevant supervisors. Other members of the research community are invited and encouraged to attend.

### **Part 2 About the programme – information and questions**

- Information about the programme (structure, content, sources of information and contact persons).
- The candidates' obligations and rights.
- The supervisors' responsibilities and tasks.
- Internationalisation.
- Research ethics – input from the local data protection officer.
- The library presents its services for the PhD candidates.

## **Preparations**

### **The PhD candidate**

- Prepares a 10-minute presentation of their project:
  - o Background, method, research ethics challenges, expected results, publishing plan.
  - o Outline of some key questions in the project and associated challenges.
  - o A description of issues of uncertainty.

### **The Working Committee prepares and executes the seminar**

- Invites relevant candidates and their supervisors
- Invites lecturers to give presentations on research ethics/data protection and library services
- Sets a date/time and reserves a room.
- Announces the date well ahead of the seminar.

## **Guidelines for the midway seminar – PhD in Science of Professions**

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The PhD in Science of Professions is a research training programme that leads to the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD). The programme has a nominal length of three years and consists of a training component worth 30 ECTS and an independent research work. For PhD candidates who have been admitted to the programme, the midway seminar is a mandatory milestone in their studies. The midway seminar is held in the third/fourth or fourth/fifth semester (depending on whether the candidate has been admitted on the basis of a 3-year or 4-year agreement). The timing of the midway seminar can be adjusted to accommodate, for example, leave of absence, external assignments, etc.

### **Objective:**

The objective of the midway seminar is for candidates to get an outside perspective on the work they have done so far and on the project as a whole. After reading the submitted material and attending an oral presentation by the PhD candidate, an evaluation committee shall give the candidate (and the supervisor) constructive and scientific feedback on the material, as well as advice regarding how the quality of the PhD-thesis can be enhanced. This also applies to issues associated with research ethics and data protection.

The midway seminar will also assess the progress of the PhD work in terms of both the training component and the PhD project. The evaluation committee will provide the PhD candidate with concrete advice for further work, with the goal that the candidate should complete the public defence within the nominal period of study.

The midway seminar enables a structured follow-up of PhD candidates and help identify situations that require extra follow-up by the faculties.

### **Preparation:**

The PhD candidate must submit written material to the evaluation committee at least three weeks before the midway seminar. The material must be suitable for giving the opponents an understanding of the research project's objective, research questions, theoretical basis, methodological approach, research ethics and preliminary results, and include a discussion. The candidate can submit questions that they would like the evaluation committee to help clarify. The draft text (chapters, articles, research summary, etc.) should not exceed 20 000 words (40–50 pages).

It is recommended that PhD candidates who write an article-based thesis submit the following written material:

#### *1. Summary*

- A 2–3-page description of the thesis to be shared with the midway seminar participants.

#### *2. Content outline*

- A content outline for the research summary chapter that contains:
  - o The working title of the thesis.

- The revised research problem.
- Brief drafts or keywords for the introduction to the research summary, the theory chapter, previous research, theoretical basis, methodology, incipient analysis and a discussion, if relevant.

*4. Approvals and notifications regarding research ethics and data protection*

- See the candidate's report.

*5. Articles*

- Completed articles/draft articles.
- Summaries of articles that are not submitted as drafts, i.e. a brief account of the planned research problem, theory, data and methodology.

*5. Time schedule*

- A revised time schedule that provides a brief overview of what has been done so far (training courses, data collection, written texts/drafts, required duties etc.) and what remains to be done.

PhD candidates who write a monograph must submit the following written material to the evaluation committee:

*1. Summary*

- A 2–3-page description of the thesis to be shared with the midway seminar participants.

*2. Available draft chapters/summaries*

- A detailed outline of the content of the introduction.
- Revised research problem.
- Draft literature review and theory chapter.
- Draft methodology chapter, including research ethics considerations.
- Incipient analysis of the material.

*3. Approvals and notifications regarding research ethics and data protection*

- See the candidate's report.

*4. Time schedule*

- A revised time schedule that provides a brief overview of what has been done so far (training courses, data collection, written texts/drafts, required duties etc.) and what remains to be done.

**Evaluation committee:**

To assess the PhD candidate's work, an evaluation committee is appointed, consisting of two members proposed by the main supervisor in consultation with the candidate. Members must hold a PhD and are selected on their ability to provide academic input on the topic, the research problems and the challenges faced by the candidate. One committee member must have competence in philosophy of science issues and methodology relevant to the candidate's work. The members shall be recruited internally (Nord University staff members); one from the candidate's faculty and one from the other faculty that shares the responsibility for the programme. In special cases and in consultation with the dean, external members can be

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selected if their academic competence and capacity is needed. The main supervisor contacts the opponents, sets a date for the midway seminar, and informs the Working Committee.

### **Execution of the midway seminar:**

The midway seminar is chaired by the main supervisor, alternatively another research group member who has research competence can be appointed as deputy. The midway seminar is scheduled to last for up to three hours. The seminar can be held at the university's premises or digitally. The midway seminar can be held in a Scandinavian language or English.

- The midway seminar starts with the candidate giving a presentation of the work to date and raising issues for discussion, approximately 30 minutes.
- The second part of the midway seminar is set aside for comments and discussions between the candidate and the evaluation committee. Each committee member has 45 minutes for comments and discussion. There is a break between the two committee members' contributions.
- Finally, the floor is open to input and questions from the audience, for a period of up to 30 minutes.

### *Content of the presentation:*

The PhD candidate's presentation shall provide an account of the status of the research project. The candidate describes and elaborates on the written material that has been submitted. The midway seminar is an open event and announced on nord.no.

### **Assessment:**

The evaluation committee assesses the academic quality and progress of the project and provides oral feedback to the PhD candidate through the discussions in the midway seminar and in the subsequent conversation. The opponents summarise the results of the evaluation in a jointly written report, which is sent to the Working Committee, the supervisors and the candidate.

If the evaluation reveals substantial deficiencies in the work that are of such a nature that it represents a risk that the PhD work cannot be completed within the nominal period, the Working Committee shall initiate measures to rectify the situation.

### **Practical organisation:**

- The administration of the Working Committee is responsible for the practical facilitation of the midway seminar.
- The main supervisor informs the Working Committee about the date of the midway seminar, so that a room can be booked and the announcement posted. The information must include:
  - The candidate's name
  - The project title, with a brief description of the project

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- The opponents' names
- The date and time of the midway seminar
- The administration of the Working Committee reserves a room and ensures that the announcement is posted on the intranet and that information is sent to the PhD candidate, the supervisors and the evaluation committee as soon as the date and time have been set.
- Academic staff members at the Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences/Faculty of Education and Arts are credited with 20 hours for their work in the evaluation committee.
- The Working Committee is informed about the outcome of the midway seminar.

## **Guidelines for the final seminar – PhD in Science of Professions**

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The PhD in science of professions is a research training programme that leads to the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD). The programme has a nominal length of three years and consists of a training component worth 30 ECTS and an independent research work. For PhD candidates who have been admitted to the programme, the final seminar is a mandatory milestone in their studies. The final seminar must be held approximately three months before the planned submission date for the thesis. The final seminar is held internally in the candidate's research group, but is open to all interested parties.

### **Objective:**

The objective of the final seminar is to quality assure the draft thesis before submission and to provide feedback to the candidate with a view to enhancing the quality of the thesis.

### **Preparation:**

The candidate must submit a draft thesis to the evaluation committee at least three weeks before the final seminar. In addition, a brief summary (maximum 5–6 pages) of the thesis must be prepared and distributed to participants at the seminar.

### **Evaluation committee:**

To assess the PhD candidate's work, an evaluation committee is appointed, consisting of two members proposed by the main supervisor in consultation with the candidate. Members must hold a PhD, and are selected on their ability to provide academic input on the topic, the research problems and the chosen methodology. One of the members shall be recruited internally (Nord University staff member), and one member shall be recruited externally from another national or international research institution/university. The internal committee member must have supervised one or more candidates who have attained a PhD. The evaluation committee shall review the draft thesis with a view to its completion. The main supervisor contacts the opponents, sets a time for the final seminar and informs the Working Committee.

### **Execution of the final seminar:**

The final seminar is chaired by the main supervisor; alternatively another research group member who has research competence can be appointed as deputy. The final seminar is scheduled to last for up to 3 hours. The seminar can be held at the university's premises or digitally. The final seminar can be held in a Scandinavian language or English.

- The final seminar starts with the candidate giving a presentation of the thesis, approximately 30 minutes.
- The second part of the final seminar is set aside for comments and discussions between the candidate and the evaluation committee. Each committee member has 45 minutes for comments and discussion. There is a break between the two committee members' contributions.

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- Finally, the floor is open to input and questions from the audience, for a maximum of 30 minutes.

The co-supervisor should participate in the final seminar (digitally, if physical attendance is not feasible).

### **Assessment:**

The evaluation committee assesses the academic quality of the thesis and provides feedback to the candidate through the discussions at the final seminar. The assessments should be based on the programme description for the PhD in Science of Professions, the requirements stipulated by the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and the requirements for a thesis as defined by the university's and the faculties' regulations.

### **Practical organisation:**

- The main supervisor informs the faculty's PhD administration of the date of the final seminar, so that a room can be booked and the announcement posted. The information must include:
  - The candidate's name.
  - The project title, with a brief description of the project.
  - The opponents' names.
  - The date and time of the final seminar.
- The administration of the Working Committee reserves a room and ensures that the announcement is posted on the intranet and information is sent to the PhD candidate and the supervisors as soon as the date and time have been set.
- Academic staff members at the Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences/Faculty of Education and Arts are credited with 35 hours for their work in the evaluation committee. The external opponent is remunerated with NOK 9,000 for the work. The fee is not basis for holiday pay and are not pensionable.

### **Requirements for the thesis:**

Requirements for the thesis are found in the Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at Nord University, with supplementary guidelines for the PhD in Science of Professions.