



# Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University

## Supplementary guidelines for FSV

The supplementary guidelines for PhD in Sociology at the Faculty of Social Sciences are adopted by decision of the Faculty Dean 02.01.2023.

## Part I. Introductory provisions

### Section 1. Scope of the regulations

These regulations apply to all education culminating in the degree of philosophiae doctor (PhD) at Nord University. The regulations regulate admission to, execution and completion of PhD programmes, including joint degrees and cotutelle (joint supervision) agreements.

For other provisions that regulate matters related to PhD degrees, reference is made to the most recent version of the Norwegian Act relating to universities and university colleges, the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, the Regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment for the posts of *postdoktor* (post-doctoral fellow), *stipendiat* (PhD candidate), *vitenskapelig assistent* (research assistant) and *spesialistkandidat* (resident), the Regulations relating to degrees and protected titles, the Ministry of Education and Research's Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education, the Norwegian Agency of Quality Assurance and Education's (NOKUT) Regulations concerning supervision of the educational quality in higher education (Academic Supervision Regulations), the Norwegian Act on ethics and integrity in research, and the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, as well as the Regulations relating to studies and examinations at Nord University to the extent these are also relevant to exams in the training component of the PhD programme.

### Supplementary guidelines for FSV:

The supplementary guidelines for FSV apply to all education culminating in the degree of philosophiae doctor (PhD) in Sociology at FSV.

### Section 2. Terminology

The degree is hereinafter also referred to as *an academic PhD* or *doctoral degree*.

The terms *doctoral work* and *project* refer to the work undertaken by the candidate during the agreed period from start-up to completion, excluding the training component.

The term *academic thesis* or *thesis* refers to the results of the academic doctoral work; cf. Section 11-1.

The *agreement period* corresponds to the funding period, including any extensions for statutory leave and sick leave; cf. Section 7-2.

*Study period* is the period that the candidate is registered at the university and includes the period beyond the agreement period; cf. Section 7-2.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Study period is limited to six (6) years (maximum study period), of which the sixth year after application cf. Section 7-2.

**Section 3. The objective of doctoral education and conferral of a degree**

**Section 3-1. Objective, scope and content**

The objective of a doctoral education is to qualify candidates to conduct research of an international standard and perform other types of work requiring a high level of scientific insight and analytical thinking, in accordance with good academic practice and ethical standards.

A doctoral education shall provide the candidate with knowledge, skills and expertise in keeping with the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

A doctoral education has a nominal length of three (3) years of full-time study and includes a training component comprising a minimum scope of 30 ECTS credits. The faculties may decide that the training component shall comprise more than 30 ECTS credits.

The main component of a doctoral education is an independent research work that is carried out under active academic supervision.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Commencement, mid-term and final seminars form a part of the PhD in Sociology, cf. supplementary comments section 10, sub-section 2. Required coursework at FSV constitutes 30 credit points, cf. section 9, sub-section 1.

**Section 3-2. Conferral of an academic PhD**

A PhD degree is conferred on the basis of:

- an approved academic thesis; cf. Section 11-1
- approved completion of the training component; cf. Section 9-1
- an approved trial lecture on an assigned topic; cf. Section 18-1
- approved public defence of the academic thesis (disputation); cf. Section 18-2

**Section 4. Responsibility for doctoral education**

The Board of Nord University has overall responsibility for doctoral education.

The faculties have been delegated responsibility for the implementation of doctoral education within their respective disciplines. Faculties that manage PhD programmes are responsible for approving programme descriptions and course descriptions.

The rector may establish supplementary guidelines for the respective PhD programmes, provided they are not in conflict with these regulations.

PhD programme coordinators must possess a PhD in a relevant subject area.

### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The Dean is the head of doctoral education at FSV. The Committee for Doctoral Education at FSV (DU-FSV) is responsible for implementation of the PhD programme. The Dean nominates the programme director for the PhD in Sociology.

## **Section 5. Quality assurance**

Doctoral education is covered by Nord University's quality assurance system. The faculties are required to quality assure their doctoral education in line with this system.

## **Part II. Admission**

### **Section 6. Admission**

#### **Section 6-1. Admission criteria**

For admission to a PhD programme, applicants must normally have an academic master's degree of 120/300 ECTS credits; cf. Sections 3 and 4 of the Regulations concerning requirements for master's degrees and the descriptions in the second cycle of the qualifications framework. Applicants must normally have an average weighted grade of B or higher for their master's degree.

After special assessment, Nord University may approve other equivalent education as a basis for admission; cf. Section 3-5 (2) of the Act relating to universities and university colleges.

Private funding, such as own or family funds etc. is not normally accepted as funding for admission to organised research education; cf. Section 6-2.

Applicants must have a level of proficiency in English that will enable them to carry out their doctoral work.

The faculties may set additional requirements for qualifications based on criteria that are publicly available and in line with their current recruitment policy and academic profile.

#### **Section 6-2. Admission application requirements**

The application must include:

- documentation of the education and the qualifications on which admission is to be based
- a data management plan (DMP) for the project where this is relevant
- details of any legal or ethical issues that the project raises and how these can be addressed
- overview of relevant published material
- a project description that includes:
  - an academic outline of the project
  - details of any permission that must be sought from research ethics committees and/or other authorities to carry out the project
  - a progress plan
  - a funding plan for the project
  - description of any special needs for academic resources and materials
  - any plans for periods to be spent at another institution
  - plan for dissemination of results
  - information about any intellectual property restrictions to protect the rights of other parties

The project description must state whether the project is dependent on permission from research ethics committees or other authorities or private individuals (informants, patients, parents, etc.). If possible, confirmation of any such permission should be submitted with the application.

The application should include:

- a plan for the training component, including training aimed at general competencies in accordance with the qualifications framework
- a proposal for at least one academic supervisor and indication of any affiliation with an active research group
- a stipulation of what language the thesis is going to be written in; cf. Section 11-1

Nord University may set additional documentation requirements.

Candidates are subject to Nord University's requirement for residency at the institution.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Applications for admission to the PhD programme in Sociology shall be submitted to care of DU-FSV. Applications for admission are determined in scheduled meetings of the committee.

Admission to the PhD in Sociology requires a master's degree or equivalent education within the social sciences that, according to the assessment of DU-FSV satisfies the theoretical and research-related requirements for completion of doctoral education on sociology. Applicants must document broad knowledge of social science theories and analysis. The assessment of applicants for the PhD programme in sociology should be individual. Required social sciences methods should be 20 credit points on masters level, where 5 of those credit points are up for evaluation.

Applicants shall possess a weighted grade average within their master's degree or equivalent education corresponding to a B or better. Without prejudice to the foregoing, applicants with a lower grade average may be admitted to the programme if they are able to document their ability to complete doctoral education.

#### **Section 6-3. Infrastructure**

The candidate shall be given access to the infrastructure needed to carry out their research project.

The faculty decides what infrastructure is necessary for the execution of the project. For candidates with external funding or an external workplace, an agreement is entered into between Nord University and the external party in connection with the specific research project.

As a general rule, this kind of agreement must have been entered into before the candidate's admission is approved, or immediately afterwards.

#### **Section 6-4. Admission decision**

Applicants must normally apply for admission to the PhD programme within three (3) months of the start of the funding.

If less than one (1) year of full-time work remains on the project at the time of application, the application will be rejected.

Admission decisions are based on an overall assessment of the application and are contingent on the faculty's capacity to provide academic supervision. If the number of applicants exceeds the admission capacity, the faculty may set criteria for the ranking of qualified applicants.

The formal decision letter must include the appointment of at least one supervisor, assignment of responsibilities for dealing with other needs outlined in the application, and a specification of the start date and completion date of the agreement period. The start date is normally the same as the funding start date.

Admission can be denied if:

- the criteria in Section 6-1 are not met
- agreements with external third parties will prevent the doctoral thesis from being made available to the public and its public defence; cf. Section 6-2
- the project cannot be completed within the funding period
- agreements concerning intellectual property rights that have been entered into are so unreasonable that Nord University should not be involved in the project
- the applicant will not be able to meet the requirement for at least one year of the project to be carried out after admission to the PhD programme
- the funding is not sufficient to cover the project

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Applications for admission are determined by DU-FSV. DU-FSV shall reject applications for admission when the applicant is not qualified in accordance with section 6, sub-section 1. If DU-FSV believes the candidate would qualify for admission upon completion upon certain supplementary studies, this shall be made clear in the decision to deny admission.

DU-FSV may deny a formally qualified applicant admission if, given the topic or area of focus of the doctoral prospect, DU-FSV believes the university would not be able to offer satisfactory supervision. In cases where there is a strong argument for admitting the candidate to the institution, the institution may consider recruiting a main supervisor from another institution.

Under normal circumstances, the candidate should apply for admission to the programme within three (3) months of commencement of the funding period.

## **Section 7. The doctoral agreement**

### **Section 7-1. The parties to the agreement**

Admission to doctoral education at Nord University is formalised through the standard agreement for admissions adopted by Nord University. The agreement must be signed by the PhD candidate, the academic supervisor(s) and the faculty that the candidate is being admitted to. The agreement governs the parties' rights and obligations during the admission period and shall ensure that the candidate participates regularly in an active, relevant research environment.

The agreement shall also help ensure that the candidate completes their doctoral education within the agreed time frame.

For candidates with funding from, employment at or other financial assistance from an external party, a separate agreement must be entered into between the candidate, Nord University and the external party in accordance with stipulated guidelines.

In cases where the candidate is going to be affiliated with institutions outside Norway, Nord University's guidelines for this kind of collaboration must be complied with. This agreement must normally be appended to the admissions agreement.

### **Section 7-2. Agreement period**

The agreement period corresponds to the funding period and is normally three (3) years for full-time study, or four (4) years if the candidate has required duties that correspond to 25% of the total hours.

In the event of legally warranted interruptions, the agreement period will be extended by the corresponding length of time.

The faculty may extend the agreement period on the basis of a valid application. If an extension is granted, the faculty may set additional terms and conditions. Any extension of the agreement period must be related to the candidate's right as an employee or be specifically clarified in relation to the candidate's funding basis.

The parties' rights and obligations pursuant to the standard admission agreement cease upon expiry of the agreement period, such that the candidate may lose their right to academic supervision, to attend courses and to access all or parts of Nord University's infrastructure. The candidate may apply to have their thesis assessed for a PhD degree after the end of the agreement period and/or study period.

The maximum permitted length of study is six (6) years. Statutory leave of absence, extended sickness absence and required duties are not included in these six years. Stricter requirements for progression during the course of study may be set in supplementary regulations for the PhD programme.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The study period is prolonged in accordance with the agreement period.

After the agreement period is finished, the candidate can still access their email address, PC and the university building.

The candidate is automatically granted five years of study period (cf. section 2) from the date the agreement period starts. The candidate can apply to DU-FSV for a sixth (last) year, where the candidate must submit a realistic plan for completing the PhD work by the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> year (the full study period).

#### **Section 7-3. Voluntary termination before end of agreement**

The candidate and the faculty can agree to discontinue the candidate's participation in the PhD programme before the agreed date. In such an event, a written explanation must be given of how issues related to employment, funding, rights to results and data etc. are to be resolved.

If the candidate voluntarily terminates the agreement because they wish to change project or transfer to another programme, they must submit a new application for admission based on the new project in accordance with the requirements stipulated in Sections 6-1, 6-2 and 6-4.

A thesis prepared under organised academic supervision in a PhD programme at Nord University, or another institution in Norway, cannot be submitted for assessment as an independent doctoral degree (dr.philos.) at Nord University.

#### **Section 7-4. Enforced termination in the event of delays, lack of progress or termination of funding**

If one or more of the following apply, the faculty may decide to terminate the candidate's participation in the PhD programme:

- significant delay in the completion of the training component

- repeated or serious violations of the candidate's obligations to provide information, follow-up or reports, including failure to submit a progress report; cf. Section 10-1
- delay in the progress of the research project to such an extent that there is reasonable doubt as to whether the candidate will be able to complete the project within the agreed time frame
- discontinuation of the funding during the agreement period

Forced termination under these rules can only be approved if the lack of progress or delay is due to factors within the candidate's control.

If the candidate is employed as a research fellow at Nord University, the agreement can only be terminated subject to the conditions for termination of contract or dismissal laid down in the Civil Service Act.

Decisions pursuant to this paragraph are made by the faculty. Appeals are processed by Nord University's appeals committee.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The midterm seminar will be an evaluation of the project's progress, cf. Section 10, sub-section 2 regarding midterm evaluation. The midterm seminar/midterm evaluation must be carried out in the middle of the agreement period. In a study progress without extension (leave of absence or sick leave) this will be 18 months after the agreement period starts.

**Section 7-5. Enforced termination upon cheating in an examination or test**

If a PhD candidate is found to have cheated in an examination or test during their doctoral education, Nord University may annul the examinations or tests; cf. the Universities and University Colleges Act.

Decisions pursuant to this paragraph are made by Nord University's appeals committee. Appeals are dealt with by the Joint Appeals Committee for Student Affairs; cf. the Universities and University Colleges Act and the associated regulations.

If the matter is of such a serious nature that it can be regarded as academic misconduct; cf. the Universities and University Colleges Act and the Act on ethics and integrity in research, Nord University may decide to impose forced termination; cf. Section 7-6.

Violations of research ethical guidelines for the subject area may result in forced termination.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

PhD candidates must conform to the guidelines for ethical research within the fields of cultural studies and social sciences that apply at any given time (NESH).

**Section 7-6. Enforced termination in the event of academic misconduct**

If a candidate is guilty of academic misconduct; cf. the Universities and University Colleges Act and the Act on ethics and integrity in research, Nord University may decide to impose forced termination.

Decisions on forced termination on grounds of academic misconduct are made by the rector. Appeals against such decisions are dealt with by the Ministry or a special appeals committee appointed by the Ministry.

**Section 7-7. Termination and dismissal**

A research fellow's employment at Nord University can be terminated when there are valid grounds in the circumstances of the institution or the candidate; cf. Sections 19 and 20 of the Civil Servants Act. The candidate can be dismissed in accordance with Section 26 of the Act.

### **Part III. Execution**

#### **Section 8. Supervision**

##### **Section 8-1. Appointment of academic supervisors**

Candidates will receive individual supervision for their doctoral project work. The faculty and supervisors shall work together to ensure that the candidate participates in an active research environment.

As a general rule, the candidate shall have at least two academic supervisors, one of whom must be designated as the main supervisor. The main supervisor should be appointed upon admission. The candidate should also have an external supervisor.

The main supervisor has the primary responsibility for the candidate's academic development and execution of the doctoral project in accordance with the progress plan. If the main supervisor appointed by the faculty is external, a co-supervisor from Nord University must also be appointed.

Co-supervisors are experts in the field who share the academic responsibility for the candidate with the main supervisor.

The rules on impartiality in Chapter II of the Public Administration Act, Section 6: 'Concerning disqualification', apply to the supervisors.

All supervisors must be a professor or associate professor, or have the equivalent academic competence and a doctoral degree, and be active researchers in the field concerned.

At least one of the appointed supervisors must have previous experience of supervision or be trained as a supervisor of PhD candidates. A supervisor without such experience or training should have considerable experience as a supervisor at master's level.

Both the PhD candidate and the supervisor can ask the faculty to appoint a new supervisor. The supervisor must continue with their duties until a new supervisor has been appointed. Disputes regarding the academic rights and obligations of the supervisor and candidate can be brought before the faculty by either party for deliberation and settlement.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

PhD candidates has a right to individual supervision.

Supervision is normally provided for a period equivalent to three (3) years of full-time study, ie.:

- three (3) years for PhD candidates without work duty
- four (4) years for PhD candidates with 25 percent work duty
- three (3) – six (6) years for PhD candidates with alternative funding.

DU-FSV appoints main supervisors, and possibly the internal co-supervisor, at admission to the programme. External co-supervisor is appointed by DU-FSV after a justified application from the candidate and main supervisor. The fee is paid out after the candidate has submitted their thesis. In exceptional circumstances and upon application, the faculty may grant supervision beyond the normal period of supervision.

If the candidate and / or supervisor are of the opinion that their cooperation is not satisfactory, the party / parties should, at their earliest convenience, inform the programme director, administrative



coordinator or the faculty dean, who will assist in finding appropriate solutions for improving cooperation. If measures to improve cooperation between the candidate and supervisor are unsuccessful and the parties wish to terminate the supervisory arrangement, DU-FSV may appoint a new supervisor to the candidate, upon application from the parties.

### **Section 8-2. Content of the supervision**

Doctoral candidates and supervisors should have regular contact. The frequency of contact should be stated in the annual progress reporting; cf. Section 10-1.

The candidate and the main supervisor should, as soon as possible after start-up and within three (3) months of admission, review the project description together and consider whether any adjustments are needed. Amendments to the project description must be approved by the faculty.

Supervisors shall give advice on the delimitation of topics and research questions, and assess methods and results, including forms of documentation and presentation, and help to orientate the candidate in relation to relevant academic discourse. The candidate will receive guidance in ethical issues related to the doctoral work.

Supervisors have a duty to remain informed about the progress of the candidate's work and to assess it in relation to the progress plan in the project description; cf. Section 6-2.

Supervisors have a duty to follow up on academic issues that may result in a delay in the doctoral education, in order to ensure that it can be completed within the standard time frame.

## **Section 9. The training component**

### **Section 9-1. Purpose, scope and content**

The training component, together with the doctoral thesis, shall contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes in accordance with the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

The doctoral education must be designed so that it can be completed within the standard time frame.

The training component must correspond to at least 30 ECTS credits, at least 20 of which must be taken after admission. A more extensive training component may be stipulated in the supplementary guidelines for doctoral degree programmes; cf. the programme description.

On application and after academic assessment, courses completed before admission to the PhD programme may be incorporated into the training component. This only applies to courses taken no more than two (2) years prior to the admission date.

The faculty is responsible for ensuring that the training component and the work on the project combined provide education at a high academic level in accordance with international standards. The training component includes an introduction to ethics, theory and methodology.

The faculty should offer the candidate guidance on future career opportunities in and outside academia, including raising awareness of the competence that the candidate has acquired through the doctoral work. Training in the dissemination of results should also be included in the PhD programme.

If Nord University does not provide for the entire training component, measures must be taken to ensure that the candidate receives such training at another institution.

Training at doctoral level at another institution must be approved in accordance with the rules in the Universities and University Colleges Act.

In order for a master's course or parts of a master's course to be included in the training component, the candidate must have achieved a grade B as a minimum. Courses that formed part of a candidate's bachelor's or master's degree cannot also count towards a doctoral degree.

### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Conferral of the doctoral degree requires completion of a coursework component of a total scope of at least 30 credit points. The coursework component shall comprise scientific theory and ethics corresponding to at least 7.5 credits, and methods corresponding to at least 7.5 credits.

The candidate may undertake doctoral courses at Nord University, or at other educational institutions in Norway or abroad. Candidates should plan their coursework in consultation with the supervisor, to ensure that the chosen courses are recognized as part of the compulsory coursework. In case of doubt and with a recommendation from the supervisor, the candidate may apply to the Committee for Doctoral Education at FSV for pre-approval.

Upon completion of the coursework component, the candidate shall apply to DU-FSV for approval of completed compulsory coursework. The application shall contain documentation in the form of course certificates, or transcripts with course descriptions. The candidate must obtain recognition of the coursework component prior to applying to defend their thesis, and attach the documentation when applying for assessment.

### **PhD courses**

FSV offers regular doctoral courses, in scientific theory with ethics, and methods. In addition to the regular courses, there will be developed substance courses or theory courses based on initiative from the academic network or in cooperation with other universities.

DU-FSV approves doctoral courses provided by FSV in accordance with the following guidelines:

- The course shall maintain a high standard, with clearly defined and delimited content;
- The course shall have relevance for several faculty candidates;
- The lecturer shall hold a doctoral degree or equivalent qualification;
- The course shall have a scope corresponding to at least two (2) hours of lectures and 70 pages of core reading for each credit point;
- Award of credit points occurs on the grounds of passed assessment. Under normal circumstances, a grade of "passed" shall be equivalent to a B.
- An assessment item may be a compulsory practical exercise, written or oral test, or approved paper or essay.

For courses that conclude with a final essay, the total number of credit points shall be determined by the size of the essay as well as the degree to which other tasks, which provide documentation of acquired academic knowledge, are incorporated into the course.

FSV shall ensure that at least one examiner is external. Course certificates are issued to candidates who pass a given course. Diplomas will be given to the candidates that have passed the course, and registered in Felles studentsystem (FS).

### **Section 9-2. Affiliation with an academic community**

The candidate is required to contribute to the university's academic community, for example through academic activities such as seminars, workshops, research and dissemination. The faculty and supervisor must systematically follow up these activities to ensure that the candidate's contact with the academic community is planned and safeguarded.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

All candidates be joined in one of the faculty divisions at FSV. The faculty division has a responsibility to include the candidate in the academic community.

The candidate is also encouraged to also join one or more of the faculties' research groups.

### **Section 9-3. The candidate's leave of absence rights**

Candidates who take parental leave during the PhD programme may still follow teaching and sit exams in subjects and courses that form part of the training component during their period of leave, in accordance with Chapter 14, Section 14-10, fourth paragraph of the National Insurance Act and the circular from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) of 18 December 2006 (R14-00) on Section 14-10, fourth paragraph.

Candidates with an external employer have a duty to ensure that the faculty is informed of any leave of absence, the scope of any required duties, and anything else that is relevant to the progress of the doctoral work.

### **Section 9-4. Course examiners**

Examiners of courses in the training component of the PhD programme are required to have a doctoral degree or the equivalent.

Two examiners shall be used for the following, at least one of whom will be external:

- a) assessments of the candidate's independent research work
- b) re-assessments following an appeal due to procedural errors in connection with an examination; cf. Section 5-2 (2) of the Universities and University Colleges Act
- c) appeals against a grade; cf. Section 5-3 (4) of the Universities and University Colleges Act

## **Section 10. Reporting and midway evaluation**

### **Section 10-1. Reporting**

Nord University's quality assurance system for its educational provision must include measures that can identify insufficient progress in the project work and training component and shortcomings in the supervision. It must also have procedures for addressing any such shortcomings. The quality assurance system will normally include submission of individual annual reports from the PhD candidate and the supervisor, and shall be designed to prevent unnecessary double reporting.

The candidate and the supervisor have shared responsibility for reporting. Failure to submit a progress report or incomplete reporting by the candidate may result in forced termination before the end of the agreement period; cf. Section 7-4. Supervisors who fail to follow up on the reporting requirements may be relieved of their supervision duties vis-à-vis the candidate.

Significant changes to the approved project description must be submitted to the faculty for approval, and may require a new supervisor to be appointed. The faculty may, if necessary, require further reporting.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Candidates and main supervisors must hand in an annual report of progress by January 15<sup>th</sup> every year. The report is sent to administrative coordinator, who will read through the reports together with programme director. The reports is confidential, and the parties does not have access to the others report.

**Section 10-2. Midway evaluation**

A midway evaluation of the doctoral work should normally be carried out in the third or fourth semester. The candidate must present their work and will be evaluated by a group consisting of at least two persons appointed by the faculty. The evaluation group will consider the candidate's academic status, progress and research ethics issues, and whether the thesis is still within the scope of the subject area of the PhD programme. The evaluation group will give feedback to the candidate, the supervisor and the faculty.

If the evaluation group reports significant shortcomings in the doctoral work, corrective measures must be initiated to rectify the situation.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Supplementary guidelines for FSV Doctoral education in sociology comprises three compulsory milestones in the form of the commencement seminar, the midterm seminar and the final seminar. The main supervisor is responsible for overseeing the planning and completion of the seminars, in consultation with the candidate and any co-supervisors. The administrative programme coordinator shall be notified as early as possible in the planning stages of a seminar, and prior to a final agreement regarding a seminar.

The administrative coordinator is responsible for distributing information about the seminar, as well as other practical tasks related to its implementation.

***Commencement seminar***

The commencement seminar aims to introduce the candidate to the research community and to aid the candidate in the building an internal academic network. The candidate will also have the opportunity to discuss their project outline with the research community at FSV, and to discuss methodological and thematic issues in the start phase of the thesis work.

The commencement seminar shall:

- be based on the project description;
- provide the candidate the opportunity to give an oral presentation of their project (maximum 20 minutes);
- take place within the first six (6) months of the agreement term;
- provide the opportunity for questions, comments and good advice from colleagues;
- conform to the timeframe of one (1) hour.

The commencement seminar should normally be held within the first six (6) months after the agreement period starts.

If possible, several candidates may hold commencement seminars sequentially on the same day.

### ***Midterm seminar (midterm evaluation cf. section 10, subsection 2)***

The midterm seminar shall give the candidate the opportunity to present the status of their thesis work. The seminar should give the candidate the opportunity to present different aspects of the research work in an open discussion with the academic community at FSV. The candidate may choose to focus on specific issues, which have significance for their future work. The mid-term seminar shall include the following:

- an oral presentation of the thesis work by the candidate (approx. 30 minutes);
- a statement from an internal commentator, with an overview of their interpretation of the work (approx. 30 minutes);
- time for questions, comments and advice from those present.

In connection with announcement of the midterm seminar, the candidate is expected to submit a three-page document for distribution, which describes the thesis, with a focus on the analytical approach, problem and practical approach, as well as a preliminary table of contents. The description should aim to demonstrate a continuity in the thesis work, and function as an information sheet for seminar participants.

Following the mid-term seminar, cf. section 7, sub-section 4 and section 10, sub-section 2, the internal commentator shall submit a short, written statement (approx. 1 page). The internal commentator, and an appointed academic, present at the mid-term seminar, shall sign the statement. The statement shall be submitted to the administrative coordinator, who is responsible for distributing the statement to the candidate, the main supervisor and the PhD programme coordinator. If the programme coordinator is also a supervisor, the statement shall also be submitted to the Dean.

The midterm seminar/midterm report should be held in the middle of the agreement period. In a study progress without extension (leave of absence or sick leave) this will be 18 months after the agreement period starts, cf. section 7, sub-section 4.

### ***Final seminar***

The final seminar shall contribute to quality assurance of the work, and provide the candidate with advice for finalizing the thesis. All supervisors are encouraged to attend the final seminar and to carry out a supervisory consultation afterwards.

The candidate shall receive feedback from a competent, external researcher, who has read the first draft of the thesis. The feedback shall be constructive, with a focus on guidance regarding areas for improvement. The final seminar takes place three (3) to six (6) months prior to submission of the thesis.

The final seminar shall include the following:

- presentation of external commentator's interpretation and assessment of draft (maximum 30 minutes);
- discussion of the thesis between the candidate and external commentator (approx. 30 minutes);
- time for questions, comments and advice from those present (approx. 30 minutes).

The commentator shall receive a copy of the draft a reasonable amount of time before the seminar. In connection with announcement of the final seminar, the candidate shall submit a summary of the

thesis (5 – 7 pages). The summary shall function as an information sheet for seminar participants, with the aim of ensuring relevant questions.

Following the final seminar, the candidate, main supervisor and external commentator will usually hold a meeting to summarize feedback from the final seminar.

The final seminar should be held minimum three (3) months before planned submission of thesis.

## **Section 11. Requirements for the academic thesis**

### **Section 11-1. Thesis requirements**

The thesis must be an independent piece of research that meets international standards in terms of research ethics, academic level and methodologies within the subject area.

The thesis must generate new academic knowledge and be of a standard that merits publication or presentation to the public in an appropriate format as part of the research-based development of knowledge in the subject area.

The thesis can consist of a monograph or a compendium of several smaller works. If the thesis consists of several smaller works, an account must be provided of how they are related in an introductory summary section (known as the *kappe* in Norwegian).

An article-based thesis must normally consist of a minimum of three articles. Requirements for the number of articles, the introductory summary section and first author, and for listing authors in alphabetic order will be set in the supplementary guidelines for the relevant PhD programme.

The main component of the thesis can be a new product or a systematised compilation of data. It may also take a different form of presentation (e.g. audio, images, video, electronic forms of presentation) where its theoretical and methodological basis are not apparent from the product itself. In such cases, in addition to presenting the product itself, the thesis must also include an additional part that consists of a written account of the research question, the choice of theory and methods, and an assessment of the results in relation to international standards and the academic level within the field.

The thesis must be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English. If the candidate wants to submit their thesis in another language, they must apply for special permission to do so in the admissions application and the application for approval of the project description; cf. Section 6-2. The faculty responsible for the assessment will make the final decision on this. Regardless of which language the thesis is written in, it must include a summary in both Norwegian and English.

### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The work on the doctoral thesis constitutes the main part of the researcher education, normally two and a half (2.5) years of a normal duration of three (3) years. The doctoral thesis may be a monograph or it may be comprised of several lesser works (articles).

In addition to the demands from the university's Regulation, the following applies to theses submitted for evaluation to FSV:

Under normal circumstances, a monograph should be of a scope of 200-250 pages, while an article-based thesis is usually shorter.

Articles that are included in an article-based thesis shall be of a standard worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Under normal circumstances, the published works shall not be older than five

(5) years. The guidelines for co-authorship are contained in the university's PhD regulations. The number of articles that is considered appropriate for an article-based thesis will depend upon how the contributions as a whole explain the results of the study and provide an answer to the problem. Regardless of this subjective assessment, an article-based thesis should contain at least three (3) articles. The thesis should contain at least four (4) articles:

- if three articles, a minimum of two must be sole authored
- if there are four articles or more, at least one sole authored
- the candidate must be main author/first author in all co-authored articles

If the thesis is comprised of several lesser works, the candidate shall provide a statement explaining the relationship between the works, in an introductory summary ("kappe"). The introductory summary (kappen) shall explain the theoretical and methodological relationship between the articles. The required scope will depend upon the project's nature and the scope of the articles. Many journals set restrictions on article length, which limits the room for theoretical and methodological discussion, a fact for which an extensive introductory summary should aim to compensate. Under normal circumstances, the introductory summary shall have scope corresponding to 50-90 pages.

### **Section 11-2. Joint work**

The faculty decides whether a thesis produced by several people jointly can be submitted for assessment, on the condition that the individual contributions can be identified.

If the thesis or a part thereof has been created together with other authors or collaboration partners, the PhD candidate must follow the norms for crediting contributions and co-authorship that are generally accepted in the academic community, in accordance with international standards.

A thesis that includes contributions from co-authors must be accompanied by a signed declaration describing the candidate's input in each piece of work. The declaration, signed by all the contributors, must be submitted to the assessment committee along with the thesis.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

See supplementary guidelines section 11, subsection 1.

### **Section 11-3. Work not eligible for assessment**

Works or parts of a work that the candidate has had approved as the basis for previous examinations or degrees cannot be submitted for assessment unless they only constitute a minor part of the thesis. However, data, analyses and methodologies from previous degrees may be used as a basis for the work on the project.

Upon application, academic works published prior to admission to the PhD programme may be included in the thesis following an academic assessment. Works that were published more than five (5) years before the date of admission will not be approved for use. Upon application, the faculty may grant an exemption from this rule in extraordinary cases.

A thesis can only be submitted to one educational institution for assessment.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Papers that has been submitted in a credit awarding course cannot be used in the thesis, unless it has been considerably revised/developed.

## **Section 12. Rights to use of results**

### **Section 12-1. Use of the thesis in teaching and research**

Nord University is entitled, without payment, to use the parts of the doctoral thesis to which the candidate has sole copyright and other academic works that are the result of the work on the thesis and to which the candidate has sole copyright, in teaching and research activities at Nord University. A separate agreement on such use will be entered into with candidates who are not employed at Nord University. In the event of such use, the PhD candidate shall be credited in accordance with relevant legislation and standard academic practice.

### **Section 12-2. Duty to report results with potential for commercial exploitation**

The intellectual property rights of Nord University and any collaborating institutions must be regulated in a separate agreement. This also applies to agreements entered into at the faculty level.

For PhD candidates employed at Nord University, the university's prevailing regulations shall determine the scope of the duty to report research results with the potential for commercial exploitation that are produced during their period of employment; cf. Act no. 21 of 17 April 1970 respecting the right to employees' inventions.

For candidates with an external employer, the corresponding duty to report and rights to use results must be stipulated in an agreement between the relevant faculty at Nord University, the candidate and the external employer.

For PhD candidates without an employer, the corresponding duty to report must be stipulated in the admissions agreement between the relevant faculty at Nord University and the candidate.

### **Section 12-3. Copyright, patent rights and intellectual property rights (IPRs)**

The provisions in this section must not be interpreted in any way that conflicts with the Copyright Act of 15 June 2018 no. 40 or its regulations.

If the candidate is the sole author of the doctoral thesis, he or she alone holds the copyright to the work.

In cases where an article is written by more than one author and it is not possible to identify the individual contributions, the article will be regarded as a joint work. The authors of such articles will hold a joint copyright.

If the PhD candidate in the context of the doctoral project makes a patentable invention, the university must be notified about the invention in writing without undue delay, in accordance with Section 5 of the Act respecting the right to employees' inventions. Pursuant to Section 4; cf. Section 6, first and second paragraphs of the same Act, the university has the right to demand that the rights to the invention be transferred to the university. If the invention has come about in collaboration with a supervisor, the PhD candidate and the supervisor shall together determine their respective shares in the patentable invention.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the candidate has the right to publish the invention on the terms set out in Section 6, third paragraph of the Act respecting the right to employees' inventions in exceptional cases. The right to publish also applies to the candidate's supervisor where an invention



is produced jointly, and the rights of the candidate or any third party do not prevent such publication.

No restrictions can be imposed on public access to or publication of a PhD thesis, with the exception of a previously agreed postponement to allow the external party, if relevant, to settle questions regarding possible patents.

In connection with the publication of or public access to a PhD thesis, Nord University shall normally be credited if the institution has made a necessary and substantial contribution to or has provided the basis for the work being published or made publicly available. This also applies to external parties that have also made a necessary and substantial contribution. If the candidate is employed at Nord University or with the external party, this is considered to constitute a necessary and substantial contribution. Other institutions and/or businesses may also be deemed to have made such a contribution.

## **Part IV. Completion**

### **Section 13. Submission and application for assessment of thesis**

#### **Section 13-1. Basis for assessment of thesis**

The requirements for awarding an academic doctoral degree are set out in Section 3-2.

Applications for assessment are submitted along with the submission of the academic thesis; cf. Section 13-2.

Before assessment of the thesis, all prerequisites must be met and the training component approved.

The main supervisor is responsible for notifying the relevant unit at the faculty that submission or an application for assessment is imminent, so that the necessary preparations can be made.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The main supervisor is responsible for sending in a reasoned suggestion with a minimum of four (4) external members for the assessment committee for the candidates thesis to DU. After approvement from DU, the main supervisor is welcome to contact possible members to do a preliminary request. After this, the PhD-coordinator sends a formal request from the faculty. When external committee members have all agreed to join the committee , the internal member is asked to join. The committee should be appointed before the candidate applies for assessment of the thesis.

#### **Section 13-2. Application for assessment of the thesis**

Applications for assessment of a thesis can only be submitted after the training component has been approved.

A submitted thesis cannot be retracted until a final decision has been made as to whether it is worthy of defence for the PhD. The version of the thesis that is submitted will be the version that is assessed.

The application must include the following attachments:

- the thesis in Nord University's approved format
- documentation of any necessary permission; cf. Section 6-2
- declarations from co-authors where required in accordance with Section 11-2

- a statement specifying whether the thesis is being submitted for assessment for the first time or the second time
- a declaration that the thesis, or a part thereof, has not been submitted for assessment at another institution
- a revised data management plan (DMP)

The thesis shall be submitted electronically via Nord University's submissions portal.

The faculty must ensure that the public defence of the thesis is held as soon as possible after submission; normally no longer than five (5) months after approval.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

Applications for evaluation, with attachments, shall be submitted to FSV care of the administrative coordinator or Dean.

The thesis shall be submitted to the faculty in both paper and electronic (PDF) form. Both versions will be forwarded to the expert committee. The PDF file will be audited for plagiarism.

The thesis shall be printed in accordance with the university's profile. The faculty bears the cost of printing of the thesis, up to a total of 70 copies. The candidate is responsible for submitted the thesis manuscript to the print shop. The faculty also bears the cost of the five (5) copies attached to the application for evaluation.

### **Section 13-3. Processing of the application**

The faculty processes applications for the assessment of an academic thesis. Applications that do not meet the requirements defined in Section 13-2 will be rejected.

The faculty can, on an independent basis, reject an application for assessment of a thesis if it is obvious that the thesis is not of a high enough academic standard and will be rejected by an assessment committee. This decision can be appealed; cf. Section 22-3.

### **Section 14. Appointment of the assessment committee**

Once the faculty has approved an application for assessment of an academic thesis, an expert committee consisting of at least three members is appointed to assess the thesis, the trial lecture and the public defence (disputation), provided that the thesis is deemed worthy of public defence. The impartiality rules in Section 6, second paragraph of the Public Administration Act apply to the committee members.

The assessment committee must normally be composed in such a way that:

- both sexes are represented
- at least one of its members is not affiliated with Nord University
- at least one of its members does not have their main position at a Norwegian institution
- all members have a PhD or equivalent qualification in the relevant subject area
- the majority of the assessment committee are external members

If these criteria are departed from, an explanation must be provided stating the grounds for this.

The faculty determines the procedure for appointment. An explanation of the reasoning behind the composition of the committee must be provided, indicating how the committee as a whole covers

the field of the doctoral work. The faculty will appoint a coordinator, who can either be one of the committee members or someone else.

Appointed academic supervisors and others who have contributed to the thesis cannot be members of the assessment committee or involved in its coordination.

When required, the faculty may appoint an alternate to sit on the assessment committee.

The candidate must be notified of the proposed composition of the committee and be given the opportunity to submit written comments within one week of receiving the proposal.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The Dean appoints an expert committee of at least three (3) members, and a committee chair.

Appointment is based on justified recommendation from main supervisor given to DU-FSV. The recommendation should demonstrate how the individual members represent relevant competencies, and how the committee as a whole covers the field of study.

The candidate and main supervisor will be informed about the committee's composition before appointing, and will have the opportunity to make comments regarding the same. It is important that the faculty has investigated any possibility for incapacity or other circumstances that can have significance for the committee's impartiality and legitimacy, and that all individuals involved contribute to ensuring the committee's legitimacy. The committee should be appointed before the candidate submits the thesis for assessment.

The time between submission of the thesis and the point at which the candidate is informed of the committee's composition should be as brief as possible. Under normal circumstances, the committee's evaluation of the thesis, in the form of a recommendation with grounds, shall be available within three (3) months of the committee having received the thesis.

## **Section 15. The work of the assessment committee**

### **Section 15-1. Collection of supplementary information**

The assessment committee can request access to the candidate's underlying source material and additional information to supplement or clarify the doctoral work.

On request, the main supervisor must provide an account of the academic supervision and work on the thesis.

The assessment committee must be sent the university's PhD regulations with supplementary guidelines for the relevant doctoral degree, and any guidelines for the assessment of the degree.

### **Section 15-2. Correction of formal errors in the thesis**

After approval of the thesis, the candidate can apply to the faculty once for permission to correct formal errors in the version of the thesis that will be published.

The application must include a list (errata) showing the corrections that the candidate wishes to make in the thesis.

The deadline for applications to correct formal errors is one week after the candidate has received the recommendation. The list of errata is added as an insert to the thesis, which is publicly available before the public defence; cf. Section 17-2. The assessment committee must be informed about the approval and content of the errata before the public defence.

### **Section 15-3. The assessment committee's recommendation**

The assessment committee submits a recommendation stating whether the doctoral work is worthy of defence for the doctoral degree and explaining the reasoning behind its assessment. All parts of the submitted thesis or presented documentation must be discussed in relation to the criteria defined in Section 11-1. The recommendation should be discursive and end with a clear conclusion regarding whether or not the work should be approved. Any dissenting opinions or individual statements by committee members must be included and explained in the recommendation.

The assessment committee's recommendation must be ready within three (3) months of the committee receiving all the parts of the doctoral work for assessment. If the committee permits minor revisions to an academic thesis; cf. Section 15-4, a new deadline is set based on the date the thesis is re-submitted.

If the committee finds that extensive changes are needed to the theory, research question, hypothesis, material or methods in order for the work to be deemed worthy of public defence, the committee must reject the thesis; cf. Section 15-5.

The assessment committee's recommendation is submitted to the faculty, which then presents it to the candidate. The candidate is given ten (10) working days to submit written comments on the recommendation. If the candidate does not wish to make any comments, the faculty should be informed of this in writing as soon as possible.

The faculty makes the final decision on the matter; cf. Sections 16-1 and 16-2.

### **Section 15-4. Revision of a submitted thesis**

On the basis of the submitted thesis and any additional material, the assessment committee may recommend that the faculty permits the candidate to make minor revisions to the thesis before the committee submits its final report. The committee must provide a written list of the specific items that the candidate must revise.

If the institution permits minor revisions to the thesis, a deadline normally not exceeding three (3) months shall be set. A new deadline for submission of the committee's final recommendation must also be set. The candidate cannot appeal the faculty's decision in this matter.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

**When the thesis is submitted after a minor revision, the Faculty normally gives the committee six (6) weeks to assess the thesis. The committee can ask for more time if necessary**

### **Section 15-5. Resubmission**

An academic thesis that has been found not worthy of defence can be resubmitted for assessment in a revised form no earlier than six (6) months after the faculty has made its decision.

The faculty then appoints a new assessment committee, preferably including at least one of the members of the original committee. A doctoral work can only be resubmitted for assessment once.

A candidate who submits a new application for assessment must state that the work has previously been assessed and was found not worthy of defence; cf. Section 13-2.

## **Section 16. The faculty's processing of the assessment committee's recommendation**

### **Section 16-1. The faculty's processing of a unanimous recommendation**

If the committee submits a unanimous recommendation and the faculty adopts this as the basis for its assessment, the faculty will make a decision in accordance with the unanimous recommendation.

If the faculty finds that there are valid grounds to doubt whether the committee's unanimous recommendation should be used as the basis for its decision, the faculty must request further clarification from the assessment committee and/or appoint two new experts to make individual statements on the thesis. Such additional statements or individual statements must be presented to the candidate, who will be given ten (10) days to submit comments.

The faculty makes the final decision in the case on the basis of the assessment committee's recommendation and the statements obtained.

#### **Section 16-2. The faculty's processing of a non-unanimous recommendation**

If the committee's recommendation is not unanimous and the faculty chooses to adopt the majority's opinion as the basis for its decision, the faculty's decision will be in accordance with the majority's recommendation.

If the committee's recommendation is not unanimous and the faculty is considering adopting the minority's opinion as the basis for its assessment, the faculty may request further clarification from the assessment committee and, if necessary, appoint two new experts to make individual statements on the thesis. Such additional statements or individual statements must be presented to the candidate, who will be given the opportunity to submit comments. If both of the new experts concur with the majority of the assessment committee in the original recommendation, this recommendation must be followed.

In the event of disagreement or if both support the minority, the new experts shall resign. The faculty will then appoint a new committee that can approve or reject the thesis with a simple majority.

The requirements for competence and impartiality in the experts and the new committee are the same as for the appointment of an assessment committee; cf. Section 14.

The candidate shall be informed of the outcome after the statements from the new experts have been processed.

### **Section 17. Publication of the thesis**

#### **Section 17-1. Requirements regarding the printed thesis**

When a thesis is found worthy of public defence, the faculty will have the thesis printed in an approved format in accordance with Nord University's regulations. The thesis must be printed exactly as submitted, with the exception of permitted revisions; cf. Section 15-4, and any approved corrections of formal errors; cf. Section 15-2.

A list of errata, if any, is added as an insert.

The PhD candidate must prepare a brief summary (abstract) of the thesis in English and Norwegian, the purpose of which is to inform the Norwegian and international research community of the thesis and its results. The abstracts shall be included in the printed thesis.

If the thesis is written in a language other than English or Norwegian, an abstract must also be provided in the language of the thesis. This abstract must accompany the thesis and will, like the thesis itself, be made publicly available.

#### **Section 17-2. Public availability before the disputation**

The printed thesis; cf. Section 17-1, shall be publicly available no later than two (2) weeks prior to the date of the public defence.

### **Section 17-3. Publication of theses**

No restrictions can be imposed on the publication of the academic thesis, except in the event of a previously agreed postponement of the publication date.

Any pre-arranged postponement of publication must be limited to a maximum period of two (2) years after the public defence. The purpose of such postponements is to enable Nord University and any external party that has fully or partially funded the candidate's doctoral education to consider patenting, etc.; cf. Section 12-3.

External parties cannot demand that all or part of the doctoral thesis be withheld from the public domain; cf. Section 6-4.

As a main rule, published parts of a doctoral thesis from Nord University shall be made universally accessible, either through publication in an open access journal or via the Nord Open Research Archive.

Unpublished parts of the thesis shall be made universally accessible within four (4) years of the public defence. All parts of a thesis must be universally accessible within five (5) years of the public defence.

In connection with publication or public presentation, candidates must follow the applicable guidelines regarding the crediting of institutions. The main rule is that an institution must be cited if it has made a necessary and substantial contribution to or laid a foundation for the work being made publicly available. Other institutions must also be credited if they meet the requirements regarding participation in each case.

### **Section 18. The doctoral examination**

#### **Section 18-1. Trial lecture**

After the thesis has been submitted for assessment, the PhD candidate must hold a trial lecture. The trial lecture is an independent part of the doctoral examination and shall be on an assigned topic. The objective is to test the candidate's ability to acquire knowledge outside the topic of their thesis and their ability to convey this knowledge in a lecture situation.

The assessment committee decides the title of the trial lecture.

The PhD candidate is notified of the title of the trial lecture ten (10) working days before it is due to take place.

The topic of the lecture must not be directly related to the topic of the doctoral work and shall challenge the candidate to discuss aspects that go beyond the thesis.

The trial lecture shall be held in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English.

The assessment committee determines whether the trial lecture is approved or not approved. If the committee does not approve the trial lecture, it must explain the reasons for its decision.

The trial lecture must be approved before the public defence can be held.

#### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

**At FSV, the trial lecture is held on the same day as the thesis defence.**

## **Section 18-2. Public defence of the thesis (disputation)**

The public defence of the thesis must take place after the trial lecture has been held and approved, and within two (2) months of the faculty finding the work worthy of defence.

The time and location of the public defence must be announced at least ten (10) working days before it is due to be held.

The committee that assessed the thesis also assesses the public defence. The public defence takes place in the language of the thesis, unless the faculty, at the suggestion of the assessment committee, approves another language.

As a general rule, there must be two opponents. The two opponents must be members of the assessment committee and are appointed by the faculty.

The public defence is chaired by the dean or a person authorised by the dean. The chair of the defence gives a presentation of the submission and evaluation of the thesis and the result of the trial lecture. Thereafter, an account of the objectives and results of the doctoral work is given.

The first opponent starts the questioning of the candidate, and the second opponent concludes the questioning. The supplementary guidelines for the PhD programme may stipulate a different distribution of tasks between the opponents and between the doctoral candidate and the first opponent. Once both opponents have concluded their questioning, members of the audience will have the opportunity to comment *ex auditorio*. One of the opponents sums up the opposition, and the chair concludes the public defence.

The assessment committee submits a recommendation to the faculty, in which it details its assessment of the defence of the thesis. The recommendation culminates in a conclusion stating whether the defence should be approved or not. If the defence is not approved, the assessment committee must explain the reasons for its recommendation.

### **Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The first opponent explains the purpose and results of the scientific research presented in the thesis, after which the first opponent commences the debate. The thesis defense is an academic discussion between the opponents and the candidate regarding formulation of the problem, the methodological, empirical and theoretical bases of the thesis, documentation and form of presentation. The discussion should focus on testing the consistency and durability of important conclusions that the candidate has presented in their work.

The issues that the opponents choose to pursue need not be limited to those discussed in the recommendation of the committee. To the greatest possible extent, the opponents should strive to formulate the discussion in way that makes it comprehensible for those who have not read the thesis or are unfamiliar with the field.

The chair of the defense is responsible for allocating time to each of the parts of the defense appropriately, and ensuring that the defense as a whole is carried out within the stipulated timeframe. After any questions from the third opponent or questions *Ex. Auditorio*, the chair of the defense concludes the thesis defense.

## **Section 19. Approval of the doctoral examination**

The faculty makes the final decision on the approval of the doctoral examination on the basis of the assessment committee's recommendation.

If the assessment committee does not approve the trial lecture; cf. Section 18-1, a new trial lecture must be held. The new trial lecture must be on a new topic and must be held within six (6) months of the first attempt. Only one new trial lecture on an assigned topic can be held. As far as possible, the new examination will be assessed by the same committee that assessed the original examination, unless the faculty decides otherwise.

If the faculty decides not to approve the public defence, in accordance with the assessment committee's recommendation, the PhD candidate may defend the thesis one more time. A new defence can be held after six (6) months and must be assessed, if at all possible, by the same committee that assessed the first defence.

## **Section 20. Conferral of the degree and diploma**

### **Section 20-1. Conferral of the degree**

Based on the faculty's approval of the training component and all parts of the doctoral examination, the degree of philosophiae doctor (PhD) will be conferred on the candidate by the rector.

### **Section 20-2. Degree certificate and diploma**

Degree certificates are issued by Nord University. The certificate shall provide information on the content of the training component, the date and title of the trial lecture, the title of the thesis and the date of its public defence.

Nord University will also issue a diploma supplement in accordance with the applicable guidelines on diploma supplements.

In addition to the degree certificate issued by Nord University, a doctoral diploma signed by the rector and faculty dean is also issued.

## **Part V. Joint degrees and cotutelle agreements**

### **Section 21. Joint degrees and cotutelle agreements**

#### **Section 21-1. Joint degrees and cotutelle agreements**

The institution may enter into an agreement with one or more Norwegian or foreign institutions regarding a joint degree or cotutelle collaboration.

In agreements on joint degree or cotutelle collaborations, exceptions may be made to other provisions in these recommended guidelines if this is necessary under the regulations of the partner institutions. Such exceptions, both individually and as a whole, must be justifiable and not violate national provisions; cf. Section 21-4.

#### **Section 21-2. Joint degrees**

The term 'joint degree' is defined as a collaboration between two or more institutions, in which the partner institutions are jointly responsible for admission, academic supervision, the conferral of the degree, and other elements described in these regulations. The collaboration is normally organised in a consortium and is regulated in an agreement between the members of the consortium.

For a completed joint degree, a joint degree certificate is issued in the form of:

- a) a degree certificate issued by the consortium members as a group,
  - b) a degree certificate issued by each of the consortium members,
- or a combination of a) and b).



Joint degree collaborations are normally only entered into if there is already an established, stable academic collaboration between Nord University and at least one of the other consortium members. The Board is responsible for establishing detailed guidelines for collaboration on joint degrees, including templates for collaboration agreements.

### **Section 21-3. Cotutelle agreements**

The term 'cotutelle' is defined as the joint academic supervision of PhD candidates and collaboration on the training of PhD candidates. A cotutelle agreement must be entered into for each individual candidate and shall normally be based on a stable, academic collaboration between the institutions.

### **Section 21-4. Joint degree and cotutelle requirements**

The qualification requirements for admission, the requirement that the thesis must be made available to the public, and the requirement for a public defence assessed by an impartial assessment committee cannot be waived.

## **Part VI. Appeals, entry into force and transitional provisions**

### **Section 22. Appeals**

#### **Section 22-1. Appeal against rejection of an application for admission, a decision to terminate a candidate's right to study, or a rejection of an application for approval of elements in the training component**

Decisions to reject an application for admission, to terminate a candidate's right to study, or reject an application for approval of elements of the training component may be appealed under the provisions of the Public Administration Act concerning the appeal of individual decisions.

The appeal, including a description of the grounds for the appeal, must be sent to the faculty. If the appeal is not upheld, it must be sent, without undue delay, to the appeals committee at Nord University.

#### **Section 22-2. Appeal against examinations in the training component**

Appeals against examination grades in the training component are governed by the provisions on appeals against a student's grades in the Universities and University Colleges Act and the Regulations relating to studies and examinations at Nord University.

Appeals against procedural errors in examinations taken as part of the training component are governed by the provisions on appeals against procedural errors in connection with examinations in the Universities and University Colleges Act and the Regulations relating to studies and examinations at Nord University.

#### **Section 22-3. Appeals against a decision to reject an application for assessment, a thesis, a trial lecture or a public defence**

A decision to reject an application for assessment of a thesis, or to reject a thesis, a trial lecture or a public defence may be appealed under the provisions of the Public Administration Act concerning the appeal of individual decisions. The appeal, including a description of the grounds for the appeal, must be sent to the faculty.

In connection with an appeal against a decision not to approve a thesis, trial lecture or public defence, the faculty may, once the appeal has been presented to the assessment committee that

submitted the original recommendation; cf. section 18-2, annul or amend the decision if it finds sufficient grounds, If the faculty dismisses the appeal, the appeal is sent to the appeals committee at Nord University. The appeals committee can try all aspects of the appealed decision.

If the faculty or appeals committee finds it necessary, individuals or a committee may be appointed to appraise the assessment and the criteria on which it was based, or to undertake a new or supplementary expert assessment.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

An appeal for a rejected thesis, trial lecture or thesis defense, must be sent to the administrative coordinator, with a copy to the university central mailing system. The faculty will assess the appeal, and forward the appeal to the Committee for Student Affairs if the appeal is not taken into account. The Faculty Dean approves the case documents before they are sent to the Committee for Student Affairs. DU-FSV shall be informed about any appeals directed towards the programme.

**Section 23. Entry into force**

These Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University enter into force on 1 July 2022. The Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University adopted on 16 December 2020 no. 3215 are repealed from the same date.

**Section 24. Transitional provisions**

Candidates who have been granted admission and who began their studies in the period 1 January to 30 June 2022 retain the rights ensuing from the Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) at Nord University of 16 December 2020 no. 10 and appurtenant guidelines that applied to their course of study, until 30 June 2023. Thereafter, they must adhere to the Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University of 22 June 2022 no. X.

Candidates may opt to follow the new regulations before that date. The transition must be made within six (6) months of the Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University of 22 June 2022 no. X entering into force.

**Supplementary guidelines for FSV:**

The candidate is responsible for any changes, cf. section 24.