

Regulations relating to the Degree of Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos) at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

Adopted by the Board of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) on 3 February 2026, pursuant to [Section 13-1, fourth paragraph](#) of Act No. 9 of 8 March 2024 relating to Universities and University Colleges.

This English version of the Dr.Philos. regulations at NTNU adopted by the Board of NTNU on 3 February 2026 may differ from the authoritative version, which is in Norwegian. If so, the authoritative version is to be consulted: [Forskrift for graden doctor philosophiae \(dr.philos.\) ved Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet \(NTNU\)](#) fastsatt av NTNUs styre 3. februar 2026.

Section 1. Objective

The objective of the doctoral degree is to qualify candidates to engage in research activities and other work in society requiring a high level of academic insight and expertise in accordance with good academic practice and established standards for disciplinary and research ethics.

Section 2. Awarding of a doctoral degree

The Dr.Philos degree is awarded on the basis of:

- Approved academic thesis
- Approved trial lecture on an assigned topic
- Approved trial lecture on a self-chosen topic
- Approved public defence of the thesis

Section 3. The right to apply

The degree of Doctor Philosophiae (Dr. Philos) is a non-supervised doctoral degree that may be awarded to individuals who hold a master's degree or equivalent in a relevant field of study, cf. Level 7 of the Norwegian Qualifications Framework. Following a special review, the faculty may approve other equivalent education.

Following a special review, the faculty may grant applicants who have otherwise demonstrated equivalent qualifications in the relevant field the right to present for the doctoral examination. The faculty evaluates the applicant's prior qualifications and makes a decision based on the applicant's documentation of previous studies and academic work, cf. [Section 5](#). The faculty may require that applicants complete specific courses and/or pass a specific examination before their doctoral work is eligible for evaluation. The application must be submitted at the same time as the doctoral work. The thesis will not be evaluated until the faculty has granted the applicant the right to apply for entry to the degree.

The research work and doctoral thesis must be conducted independently, without any requirement for formal affiliation with the university.

Any person who is not a Norwegian citizen or a citizen of another Nordic country has the right to present for the doctoral examination if the relevant faculty grants permission to do so following a reasoned application and a recommendation from the applicable academic community. Such access may be granted if the thesis:

- addresses topics or is based on material directly related to Norway,
- has a strong connection to Norwegian research within the field,
- was completed during a stay at a Norwegian university or research institute or through close contact with Norwegian researchers.

Section 4. Thesis requirements

The thesis must be an independent piece of research that meets international standards in terms of ethical requirements, theory of science, academic standards and methodology in the field.

The thesis must contribute to the development of new academic knowledge, new theories and methodologies within the field, and must be of a level that merits publication or presentation to the public in an appropriate format as part of the research-based knowledge development in the field.

The thesis may be a standalone work or a continuation of a master's thesis or equivalent. The thesis may also be a continuation of academic work previously completed in connection with other examinations.

Works or parts of a work that have been approved as the basis for previous examinations or degrees may not be submitted for evaluation unless they are included as a minor part of the thesis. However, data, analyses and methodologies from previous degrees may still be used as a basis for the work on the project. Several shorter works may be approved as parts of the doctoral thesis when their content collectively constitutes a whole. In addition to the individual parts, an introductory chapter (kappa) must be prepared that provides a more detailed account of the thesis as a whole.

Parts of joint work may be approved for evaluation (including as one of multiple projects, cf. paragraph 4) provided that the candidate's contribution represents an identifiable independent effort. Theses that include works with multiple authors must be accompanied by a signed statement describing the candidate's and co-authors' contributions to each individual work, as well as consent from the co-author(s). The candidate's independent contribution to the work must be able to be identified.

In order for the thesis to meet the requirements for independent research, the candidate must demonstrate academic integrity and methodological independence. Among other things, this involves accounting for the tools and resources used in the research process, including any use of language models and other forms of artificial intelligence. Such use must be described and justified in a manner that is ethically sound and ensures reproducibility and academic transparency.

The submitted doctoral work may be subject to plagiarism checks. The Rector may establish specific guidelines for conducting plagiarism checks of doctoral work.

A work or parts of a work that is under consideration for a doctoral degree at another institution may not simultaneously be submitted for evaluation at NTNU.

A work, or parts of a work, that has previously been evaluated and found worthy or not worthy of being defended for a doctoral degree at another institution may not be accepted for evaluation even if the work is submitted in a revised form.

A thesis that has not been approved in a previous evaluation at NTNU may be evaluated in revised form, either as a standalone work or as one of multiple related works, no earlier than six months after the faculty has decided to reject the thesis, cf. [Section 9](#). A new evaluation can only take place once. This does not apply in the case of minor revisions pursuant to [Section 7-2](#).

The faculty shall determine which languages may be used.

Section 5. Submission

Submission of the thesis and request for evaluation for the doctoral degree must be addressed to the faculty and accompanied by a certified copy of transcripts documenting completed examinations and degrees. If the candidate is uncertain which faculty should evaluate the thesis, the enquiry may be addressed to the Rector. If special permission is required, the applicant must provide documentation of their studies and submit previous academic works. Such an application must be submitted simultaneously with the submission of the doctoral work. Non-Nordic citizens must, upon submission, submit a reasoned application for access to being evaluated for the degree.

Together with the thesis, the candidate must submit a written self-declaration stating that the thesis, or parts thereof, is not and has not been submitted for evaluation for a doctoral degree at any other Norwegian or foreign institution.

The faculty may, on its own initiative, reject an application for evaluation of the thesis if it is evident that the thesis is not of sufficient academic quality and would be rejected by a committee, or if the subject matter of the thesis clearly falls outside the faculty's research areas.

The thesis must be submitted in the format specified by the faculty.

A thesis that has been submitted may not be withdrawn until a final decision has been made on whether it can be approved for defence for the doctoral degree.

Section 6. Appointment of an evaluation committee

Once the faculty has approved an application for evaluation of a doctoral thesis, it shall appoint an expert committee of at least three members who will evaluate the thesis, the trial lectures, and the public defence. The rules of impartiality in [Sections 6 to 10](#) of the Public Administration Act apply to the committee members. Co-authorship with the candidate is always considered a conflict of interest.

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

- at least two genders are represented
- at least two of the members have no affiliation with NTNU
- at least one of the members holds a primary position at a foreign institution
- all members hold a doctoral degree or possess equivalent qualifications
- the majority of the evaluation committee consists of external members

If these criteria are to be deviated from, this must be specifically justified.

The department shall propose the composition of the evaluation committee. The composition of the committee must be justified in terms of how it collectively covers the specialist field of the thesis. The faculty appoints an administrator from among the committee members or in addition to the committee members.

The candidate shall be notified of the proposed composition of the committee and shall have the opportunity to submit written comments no later than one week after the proposed composition has been made known to the candidate.

In the event of a vacancy, the faculty may appoint a substitute member to the evaluation committee.

Section 7. *The work of the evaluation committee*

Section 7-1. *Collecting supplemental information*

The evaluation committee must be made aware of NTNU's Dr.Philos.-regulations and guidelines for evaluation.

The evaluation committee may, where necessary, request that the candidate submit their source material and any supplementary or clarifying information.

Section 7-2. *The evaluation committee's recommendation*

The evaluation committee shall issue a reasoned recommendation stating whether the doctoral work is worthy of defence for the Dr.Philos. degree. The recommendation should be discursive and end with a clear conclusion regarding whether the work should be approved. Any dissenting opinions or individual statements by committee members must be included in the recommendation, with an explanation of the reasons.

The evaluation committee submits its recommendation to the faculty.

The committee's recommendation must be submitted no later than three (3) months after the committee has received all parts of the doctoral work for evaluation.

The committee's recommendation shall be forwarded to the faculty, which shall present it to the candidate. The candidate is given a deadline of ten (10) working days to submit written remarks on the recommendation. If the candidate does not wish to submit remarks, the candidate must notify the faculty of this in writing without delay.

Any remarks that the candidate may have must be submitted to the faculty. The faculty shall hand down a decision on the matter, cf. [Section 8](#).

Section 7-3. *Minor revisions and rejection of thesis*

Based on the submitted thesis and any additional material, cf. [Section 7-1](#), the evaluation committee may recommend that the faculty permit the candidate to make minor revisions before the committee submits its final recommendation. The committee must provide a written overview of the specific revisions that the candidate should make.

If the faculty permits minor revisions to the thesis, a deadline that is normally no longer than three (3) calendar months must be set. A new deadline for submission of the committee's final recommendation must also be set. The candidate may not appeal the faculty's decision regarding minor revisions pursuant to this section.

If the committee finds that substantial changes regarding theory, research questions, material or methodology are necessary before the thesis can be deemed worthy of public defence, the committee must reject the thesis.

The committee shall not recommend minor revisions if the thesis only contains minor ambiguities that can be clarified within the framework of the public defence.

Section 8. *The faculty's consideration of the evaluation committee's recommendation*

Based on the recommendation of the evaluation committee, the faculty shall decide whether the thesis is worthy of a public defence for the Dr. Philos degree.

Section 8-1. *Unanimous recommendation*

If the committee submits a *unanimous* recommendation and the faculty adopts the committee's recommendation as the basis for its deliberations, the faculty shall decide in accordance with the unanimous recommendation.

If the faculty finds that there is reasonable doubt as to whether the committee's unanimous recommendation should be accepted as the basis for its decision, the faculty must seek further clarification from the committee and may appoint two new experts who will issue individual statements on the doctoral work. Such additional or individual statements must be presented to the candidate, who must be given the opportunity to submit remarks.

The faculty shall decide on the matter based on the recommendation and any additional statements obtained.

Section 8-2. *Non-unanimous recommendation*

If the committee submits a *non-unanimous* recommendation and the faculty decides to adopt the majority's opinion as the basis for its deliberations, the faculty shall decide in accordance with the majority's recommendation. If the committee submits a non-unanimous recommendation and the faculty considers adopting the minority's opinion as the basis for its deliberations, the faculty may seek further clarification from the committee and may appoint two new experts who will issue individual statements on the doctoral work. Such additional or individual statements must be presented to the candidate, who must be given the opportunity to submit remarks. If both the new experts concur with the majority in the original recommendation, the committee's recommendation must be followed.

The faculty shall decide on the matter based on the recommendation and any additional statements obtained.

Section 9. *New application for evaluation*

A Dr.Philos. thesis that has been found not worthy of a public defence may be resubmitted for evaluation in a revised form no earlier than six (6) months after the faculty has made its decision. The faculty shall then appoint a new evaluation committee, in which at least one member of the original committee should be reappointed. A new evaluation can only take place once.

The final deadline for submitting an application for a new evaluation is normally two (2) years after the faculty decided not to approve the work. The faculty decides whether to approve the application.

A candidate who submits a new application for evaluation must state that the work has previously been evaluated and was found not worthy of a public defence.

Section 10. *Publication and availability*

Section 10-1. *Correction of formal errors in the thesis*

A thesis that has been submitted may not be modified or withdrawn until a final decision has been made on whether it is worthy of defence for the Dr.Philos. degree. However, the candidate may correct typographical and formatting errors following submission. The candidate must attach a complete list of errors to be corrected (errata list). The faculty must approve the errata list prior to publication.

Section 10-2. *Publication requirement*

The thesis must be publicly available no later than three (3) weeks prior to the date of the public defence in the format determined by the faculty. The thesis must be made available in the format in which it was submitted for evaluation, with any minor revisions based on the committee's provisional remarks, cf. Section 7-3.

No restrictions may be imposed on the publication of a Dr.Philos. thesis.

When publishing or making work publicly available, the candidate must follow the applicable guidelines for crediting institutions.

The thesis must include a brief summary of the doctoral work in Norwegian and English.

Section 11. *Doctoral examination*

Section 11-1. *Trial lectures*

If the work is found worthy of being defended for the Dr.Philos. degree, the candidate must give two public trial lectures, one on a self-chosen topic and one on an prescribed topic. The public defence must normally be held within six (6) months of the thesis being submitted for evaluation.

The candidate must notify the faculty of the title of the trial lecture on their self-chosen topic four (4) weeks before the public defence. The topic of the trial lecture on the prescribed topic is determined by the evaluation committee and announced to the candidate ten (10) working days prior to the lecture. The prescribed topic must not be directly related to the topic of the thesis or the trial lecture on the candidate's self-chosen topic. The objective is to test the candidate's ability to acquire knowledge outside their area of specialisation and their ability to disseminate this knowledge in a lecture situation or other relevant form of dissemination.

The trial lectures must normally be conducted in the language in which the thesis is written, unless the faculty approves another language.

The evaluation committee determines whether the candidate has passed the trial lectures. Grounds must be provided if the conclusion is that the candidate has not passed the examination.

The trial lectures must be passed before the public defence can be held.

Section 11-2. Public defence

The public defence of the doctoral work must normally take place within two (2) months of the faculty having found the work to be worthy of a public defence.

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

The committee that originally evaluated the doctoral work shall also evaluate the public defence. The public defence is normally conducted in the language of the doctoral work, unless the faculty approves another language.

There shall normally be two opponents. The two opponents must be members of the committee and are appointed by the faculty.

The public defence is chaired by the Dean or another person authorised by the faculty. The chair of the public defence provides an account of the submission and evaluation of the thesis, as well as the trial lectures and their evaluation. The candidate then presents the purpose and findings of the doctoral work.

The first opponent opens and the second opponent closes the opposition. The faculty may, where appropriate, determine a different division of responsibilities among the opponents and between the doctoral candidate and the first opponent. After both opponents have concluded their opposition, members of the audience shall have the opportunity to comment *ex auditorio*. The chair closes the public defence.

The evaluation committee issues a recommendation to the faculty stating how the committee assessed the defence of the doctoral work. In its recommendation, the evaluation committee assesses the level of the doctoral work in relation to international standards in the discipline, culminating in a conclusion stating whether the public defence should be approved or not approved.

If the evaluation committee does not approve the trial lectures, new trial lectures must be held. New trial lectures must cover new topics and must be held no later than six (6) months after the first attempt. New trial lectures may only take place once. Unless the faculty decides otherwise, the lectures must, insofar as possible, be evaluated by the same committee that assessed the original lectures.

If the faculty does not approve the public defence, the candidate may defend the thesis one more time. A new public defence must normally be held within six (6) months and, insofar as possible, be evaluated by the same committee that assessed the original defence.

Section 12. Conferral of the degree and diploma

Upon successful completion of the doctoral examination, the faculty confers the degree of Doctor Philosophiae on the candidate by issuing a diploma.

In addition to the diploma from the faculty, the doctor shall receive a doctoral diploma signed by the Rector and Dean.

The faculty issues a standardized English diploma supplement together with the diploma.

Section 13. Appeals

Rejections of an application for evaluation of doctoral work or a decision not to approve the thesis, trial lectures or the public defence may be appealed pursuant to the provisions in [Section 28 et seq. of the Public Administration Act](#).

The appeal, including a description of the grounds for the appeal, must be submitted to the faculty. The faculty may annul or amend the decision if it finds there are valid grounds for the appeal. If the faculty dismisses the appeal, the appeal shall be forwarded to NTNU's Appeals Committee for a final decision. The appeals body may review all aspects of the decision that is being appealed.

If the faculty or the appeals body deems it necessary, individuals or a committee may be appointed to review the evaluation that has been conducted and the criteria upon which it is based, or to conduct a new or supplementary expert assessment.

Section 14. Delegation

Authority that, pursuant to these Regulations, is to be exercised by the faculty itself may not be delegated to the department.

Section 15. Entry into force

The Regulations shall enter into force immediately.

The Regulations relating to the Dr.Philos degree at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) adopted by the Board of NTNU on 7 December 2005 pursuant to [Section 3-9, \(7\) of Act no. 15 of 1 April 2005](#) relating to Universities and University Colleges are simultaneously repealed.