



PhD-Handbook Nord University

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1. Introduction

The handbook provides information about and regulations for the PhD education that are relevant for potential and current candidates, supervisors and others involved in the PhD education at Nord University.

The handbook is based on the Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University (PhD regulations) adopted by the university board on 07.12.2023. All activities on the PhD education are subject to these regulations. Each faculty also has its own supplementary guidelines. Guidelines can be stricter than the regulations, but cannot relax the provisions of the regulations. In the event of a dispute regarding the understanding of information in the handbook, the PhD regulations will always apply.

The handbook deals with the most important parts in the start-up phase, during the course of study and in the final phase. There is also an important section on research ethics and privacy. Necessary forms, guiding documents and contact persons are available on [Nord University's website for the PhD education](#).

At Nord University, the academic and administrative responsibility for PhD education is delegated to the faculties. Each of the programs has an academic responsible, usually a professor, and an administrative coordinator. The research administration assists the faculties with the tasks related to research training that are common to the entire institution.

Matters concerning the PhD candidates' research education are administered by the individual faculty and regulated by the following document:

1. Regulations regarding the philosophiae doctor (PhD) degree at Nord University
2. Each programs supplementary guidelines
3. Agreement concerning admission to the PhD programme at Nord University
4. For the training component the Regulations relating to studies and examinations at Nord University also apply.
5. Study plans and course descriptions.

All doctoral candidates at Nord University are considered students at the institution. Some

doctoral candidates are employed by the university (source of funding), while others have an external employer.

Nord University offers the following PhD programmes:

- [PhD in Biosciences](#), Faculty of Biosciences and Aquaculture (FBA)
- [PhD in Business](#), Nord University Business School (HHN)
- [PhD in Sociology](#), Faculty of Social Sciences (FSV)
- [PhD in Science of Professions](#), Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences (FSH) and the Faculty of Education and Arts (FLU)

Contents of the PhD programme:

1. A thesis based on independent research
2. A training component consisting of relevant courses as described in the programme plan and in the faculties' supplementary guidelines
3. A final examination consisting of trial lecture and public defence of the thesis.

An important part of a researcher's education is participation in national and international research environments and dissemination of the research, also dissemination of the research also outside academia.

Dr.philos.

Nord University also confers the non-supervised degree of Dr. Philos. This handbook does not address the rules and routines relating to Dr. Philos. Please refer to our [website](#) or contact the Research and Development Division for further information.

2. The start-up phase

Funding

Potential sources of funding are employment as a doctoral fellow at the university, employment at another educational institution, or other external funding (the Norwegian Research Council's various schemes, or other externally funded projects). Sufficient funding that covers both living expences and project funds, is an absolute precondition for administration.

Specific information about doctoral fellowships:

A doctoral fellowship pays the candidate a salary to participate in doctoral education. However, attainment of a doctoral fellowship does not automatically grant admission to doctoral education. Appointment and admission are two parallel processes to which a potential candidate must apply separately. In order to be considered for a doctoral fellowship, the university considers to which doctoral programme potential candidates have applied. The appointment of doctoral fellows accords to the university's procedures for appointment of academic personnel. A project description for the doctoral work may constitute part of the terms of employment.

For PhD candidates who are employed as research fellows at Nord University, the employment relationship is regulated, among other things, by the following documents:

1. Employment agreement
2. Regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment for the posts of postdoktor (post-doctoral research fellow), stipendiat (research fellow), vitenskapelig assistent (research assistant) and spesialistkandidat (resident)
3. Nord University's employee handbook

Other funding:

People other than those employed in a doctoral fellow position may also apply for admission to a doctoral programme. For these, the condition of funding could be met if, for example, an employer commits that the work on the doctoral thesis is the employee's main tasks.

One possibility is to apply for funding through the Research Council's scheme for industrial PhD or public sector PhD or educational grants from various national and international organisations. You can find more information about this on the Research Council's pages. You can also seek out potential employers of professional interest so that you can seek to finance your project together. Regardless of the form of funding, it is expected that all candidates who are admitted have normally competed for funds that have been openly advertised.

Private financing, such as own or family funds or the like, is not normally accepted as financing.

Application for admission to the PhD programme

Admission to PhD education must normally be applied for within three months after starting the research project that will lead to the PhD degree. You must also have prepared a project description in line with the university's regulations and supplementary guidelines for the individual doctoral programme.

The university's regulations for PhD education specify which documents must be attached. The individual PhD program may also have special requirements, including requirements for education or work experience. For all the programmes, the grade B in the weighted average of the higher degree is normally required.

The application with attachments is sent to the faculty. Applications for admission are processed by the faculties' research committee, doctoral committee or equivalent, and decided by the dean of the respective faculty.

Project description requirements

According to the Regulations for Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (§ 6-2) at Nord University, the project description shall consist of the following elements:

- scientific description 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

Each individual programme may have its own requirements concerning the project description, specified in the supplementary guidelines. In processing the application, the individual faculty may ask the applicant to revise his/her project description in order to:

- Adjust the project to the PhD programme
- Uphold programme deadlines
- Satisfy scientific requirements for a PhD project

Doctoral fellows must acquire approval of their project description no later than three (3) months after commencing employment. Depending on which programme the candidate has applied for, approval of the project description at the same time as appointment.

Admission decision

Admission is based on an overall consideration of the application.

If admission is granted, a main supervisor for the PhD project is appointed in the admission decision. The decision shall also specify an agreement period. The agreement period will normally be equivalent to the period of funding.

PhD agreement

When admission to the PhD programme is granted, the faculty should initiate an agreement regarding completion of the PhD programme (PhD agreement). Different parts of the PhD agreement may apply to different parties.

Part A is a general part that regulates the relationship between the candidate and the faculty regarding completion of the PhD programme. This agreement is signed by the candidate and the faculty, represented by the dean.

Part B of the agreement covers academic supervision for the PhD programme and is signed by the main supervisor, co-supervisor, the candidate and the faculty, represented by the dean.

Part C of the agreement is used when an external third party is cooperating on completion of the PhD programme. Part C regulates matters relevant to the external third party, such as infrastructure, patents etc. The agreement is signed by the candidate, a representative of the external party and the faculty, represented by the dean.

The PhD agreement can be extended along the way if circumstances so require. This is further regulated in regulations. If significant changes occur during the course, it may be required that an additional agreement be entered into.

If the agreement is breached, it can be terminated. This means that the candidate may lose the right to further participation in the PhD study. More about this can be found in the university's regulations for the PhD degree section 7.

Tips and advice on getting started

The most important thing to get a good start in life as a PhD candidate is that you work through the project description at as early a stage as possible. The project description is the cornerstone of the doctoral work and is the starting point for the research process to be undertaken. In this connection, it is crucial that you familiarize yourself with current literature. Guidance must also be provided for the project description, and it is therefore important that you and the main supervisor establish a working relationship early on.

It is also important that you start writing early. It is important to be conscious of which process you are in at this stage; the research process or the presentation process. The writing that is part of the research process may not be what becomes the final product, but it helps form a good foundation for entering the production process that leads to the final product.

Setting milestones may help you get started on the writing process.

The coursework will function as support in the doctoral work. It will therefore be an advantage to start with this early. The training part of the PhD program must contain academic and methodological training at a high scientific level. It should support the candidate's work on the doctoral thesis, as well as contribute to the necessary academic depth and breadth, so that the candidate further develops an independent and reflective relationship with his own and others' research, and the role of research in a larger context. Furthermore, the courses in the training section can be an important platform for engaging in dialogue with other doctoral candidates and professionals. Much of the research is established through dialogue with colleagues.

3. Supervision and participation in research community

The work on your doctoral thesis is conducted under individual supervision. Nord University is focused on maintaining high quality in its PhD supervision and has therefore established supervision training courses for our supervisors.

PhD-candidate:

1. Familiarise yourself with the contents of the University's PhD regulations and the respective faculty's supplementary provisions, the PhD Agreement and the PhD Handbook.
2. Participate actively in supervisor meetings and follow up on agreements with the supervisor.
3. Keep the supervisor continuously informed about matters of importance for progress, including results from the course work.
4. Inform the main supervisor of all conditions that may have an impact on the supervision, and to report any conditions that may cause delay.
5. Actively participate in seminars/conferences when recommended by your main supervisor.
6. Publish in line with the field's traditions, preferably in recognized international channels, especially if the thesis is article-based.
7. Annually deliver the progress report on the progression in research training and carry out the mid-term evaluation.
8. Follow Nord's guidelines for open science and publish the thesis in the Norwegian Research Information Repository (Nasjonalt vitenarkiv, NVA).

Supervision

The candidate will be allocated a supervisory group consisting of a main supervisor and co-supervisor(s). The supervisors' research qualifications should cover the research areas in question as well as methodology, so that the group as a whole carries the competence required for supervising the research project in question. Together, the faculty and supervisors shall ensure that the PhD candidate participates in an active research community.

Supervisor:

1. The main supervisor must provide supervision of a high professional quality in your research project, assessment of which issues and methods may be appropriate, and feedback on your written work as it develops.
2. The main supervisor must introduce you to the faculty, other PhD candidates and relevant staff, and encourage you to participate in activities and seminars relevant to the PhD education, and to the relevant research field.

3. Early in your research training process, supervisors must introduce you to relevant academic environments outside the faculty, also internationally, so that you can start planning a possible research stay abroad.
4. The main supervisor must coordinate the supervision with co-supervisors.
5. Supervisors must help to ensure that the research project is approved in accordance with the research ethics regulations, and give advice on questions about ethics in the research work. The supervisor must also ensure that you become aware that it is your responsibility to avoid all forms of misconduct (see the handbooks'l's chapter 6).
6. Supervisors must help to ensure that you store your research data in a proper and systematic way so that it can be understood and assessed by everyone who has the right to access, such as the assessment committee and the Norwegian Data Protection Authority.
7. The main supervisor must annually deliver a standard report to the faculty on the progress in your research training, in accordance with the deadlines specified by the faculty.

If a problem occurs with your supervision

The candidate and supervisors may discuss academic and /or personal issues related to supervision with the programme coordinator, if required. If the supervisor is the programme coordinator, the dean should participate any such discussion. Should the relationship between the candidate and the supervisor develop in such a way as to be an obstacle to progress of the project, it may be appropriate to change supervisor.

4. Implementation

Training component

The PhD education is standardized to three (3) years of full-time studies and includes a training part of a minimum of 30 credits. See additional guidelines for your faculty. The training component is based on the scientific competence that the PhD candidate has acquired through previous studies. The course work will provide knowledge, skills and general competence that will support the work on the thesis and further research.

Courses

As a PhD candidate, you follow courses at PhD level at Nord University or at other institutions in Norway or abroad. In the start-up phase, you create a plan for the training component. It is recommended that the training part be carried out early in the process. It is also recommended that you consult with the main supervisor and administrative coordinator before attending courses that are not included in the original training plan.

PhD candidates will receive information from their faculty about guidelines for choosing courses in the training component. Requirements for training in scientific theory and ethics, as well as in method, are common to all faculties. The courses are chosen in collaboration with supervisors. You will find updated information about available courses on your faculty's website, among other things.

The various programs may have special requirements for courses and this will be described in the supplementary guidelines.

The training part must be completed and approved in its entirety before the thesis may be submitted.

Funding

Contact the PhD coordinator for information on financing course participation. Teaching on PhD courses is normally free in Norway, but literature and material costs as well as travel and subsistence costs may apply.

Dissemination of research

The dissemination of your research may take various forms, such as internal and external presentations, lectures, presentation of papers at conferences, research seminars and similar. You will be required to give several different presentations in the course of your studies. Your faculty specifies the number and form thereof.

Progress report

Annually, you and the main supervisor must submit a separate report to the faculty on the progress of the PhD project. The reports must be based on your plan for the PhD education and provide information on any deviations from the plan and all factors that affect academic progress, cf. section 10-1 of the regulations.

Candidate and supervisor have equal responsibility for reporting. Missing or insufficient progress reporting from the candidate may result in forced termination before the end of the agreement period, cf. § 7-4. Supervisors who fail to follow up the reporting obligation may be deprived of their supervisory responsibility for the candidate.

The various programs may have additional reporting requirements in their supplementary guidelines.

Midway evaluation

As part of the follow-up of our candidates, everyone must have a midway evaluation which should take place in the third or fourth semester. The candidate must present their work so far and be evaluated by a group of at least two people appointed by the faculty. The evaluation group must decide on academic status, progress, research ethics issues and whether the thesis is still within the subject area of the doctoral programme. This is a great opportunity to get feedback on progress so far and what should be taken into account in further work. The opponents must prepare a report that specifies this.

The various PhD programs may have more specifics about the implementation of the mid-term reporting in their supplementary guidelines.

Delay or interruption to the doctoral education

Sick leave and applications for leave are delivered to the employer. If the employer is not Nord University, a copy must be sent to the PhD coordinator for the programme. On the basis of an application and sick note from a doctor, an extension of the study period and possibly the funding can be granted. It is therefore important that the employer and PhD coordinator are informed of such interruptions in your PhD education. If you receive your funding from an external employer, you must investigate your rights and obligations when it comes to extending funding.

PhD candidates who wish to interrupt their studies can read more about this in *Regulations-regarding-the-philosophiae-doctor-degree-at-Nord-University at Nord University* section 7-3. Voluntary termination before end of agreement.

Stay abroad

The candidate may opt to spend parts of the study period at a foreign education or research institution. The institution should be selected in cooperation with the supervisor. It is preferable that candidates stay at institutions with which the candidate, supervisor or institution have an established partnership.

A stay abroad may be inspiring and provide impulses that you do not receive at home. In addition, it is useful for networking. There are several ways to fund study time abroad. Some of the most common ways are through the Norwegian Research Council's grant schemes (<https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/>), with funding from the research project or with

funding from the employer/faculty. Contact the programme coordinator or Research administration for further information.

Publishing

A PhD thesis may consist of a longer piece of work (monograph) or a combination of several shorter pieces of work (article-based thesis) with a written account of the connection between them ("kappe").

The candidate and supervisor are jointly responsible for ensuring that candidate is familiar with current research ethics and the relevant ethics guidelines, as well as good referencing practice and the rules for co-authoring., such as the Vancouver Recommendations.

If the thesis covers a joint piece of work, the authors must adhere to the Vancouver rules. As a rule, the candidate can only attribute credit to Nord University; unless other involved institutions meet the rules for attribution.

Read more: <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/resources/the-research-ethics-library/legal-statutes-and-guidelines/the-vancouver-recommendations/>

See also www.icmje.org for internationally recognised principles for good research ethics in scientific p If the thesis covers a joint piece of work, the authors must adhere to the Vancouver rules.

University Library

University Library at Nord University will be a useful support, with its rich selection of books and periodicals both on paper, electronically and on interlibrary loan. The library also offers courses that could be useful, for example in reference management with EndNote, advanced literature search and publishing.

Tips and advice for completion

- Complete your coursework during the first half of your doctoral studies
- Check out possibilities for external PhD courses
- Use compulsory internal PhD seminars actively to get advice and inspiration from colleagues
- Be active in your academic community, both locally, nationally and internationally
- Create discussion forums
- Be an active user of the university library's services
- Start planning your stay abroad as early as possible
- Attend international conferences
- Build a network
- Take on positions in panels and committees

5. Completion

The PhD degree is evaluated on the merit of:

- an approved doctoral thesis;
- approved completion of the required coursework;
- an approved trial lecture on an assigned topic;
- an approved public defence of the doctoral thesis

Approval of training component

Required coursework must be approved prior to submission of the thesis for evaluation. Coursework is approved based on documentation verifying that the elements included are conducted and passed in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the PhD regulations, and any supplementary requirements stipulated in the PhD programme in which you are enrolled.

Submit your application for approval of completion of required coursework to the Programme Coordinator at your faculty along with:

- Grade transcripts/confirmations/course description of courses completed at other institutions (nationally or internationally).
- Examination results from courses completed at Nord University, which are registered on an on-going basis. The programme coordinator will print this out and add it to your approval file.
- Any other required documentation is specified in supplementary guidelines for the individual programme..

Submission of thesis for evaluation

The candidate applies for assessment of the thesis to his faculty. Section 13-2 of the regulations describes what must be included with an application to have the thesis assessed. The form is filled in and delivered together with the thesis and attachments. The thesis must have an abstract/summary in both English and Norwegian - this regardless of the language in which it is written (included in the colophon pages).

The application for assessment must have 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.

The candidate delivers the thesis to the printer at Nord in the specified template. The thesis will initially be printed in an A4 format and the faculty will pay for the number of copies necessary to carry out the assessment.

Evaluation committee – appointment, work and recommendation

The dean appoints the evaluation committee, following the recommendation of the doctoral committee, research committee or PhD program manager, cf. the supplementary guidelines for the individual program.

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

The coordinator of the Evaluation Committee's work shall produce a recommendation stating whether the thesis is worthy of public defence or not. The recommendation and any potential dissents shall be explained. The candidate is granted a response period of 10 working days to further his/her written remarks to the recommendation.

The faculty makes the final determination about whether a thesis is worthy of public defence. Further procedures relating to committee recommendations are described in sections 16-1 and 16-2 of the PhD regulations.

Printing and publishing of the thesis

After the thesis has been found worthy, the PhD coordinator assigns the thesis an ISBN number and a serial number. The thesis must be printed in Nord University's format for PhD theses. This printing is also paid for by the faculty and in the number of copies necessary to complete the defence.

After approval, the candidate may, once, apply to the faculty to correct formal errors in the version of the thesis to be published. A list (errata) showing the corrections the candidate wishes to make in the thesis must be attached to the application. The deadline for applications to correct formal errors is one week after the candidate has received the recommendation. The errata is added as an insert to the thesis which is publicly available before the defence, cf. § 17-2. The evaluation committee must be notified of approval of and the content of the errata before the defence, cf. § 15-2 of the PhD regulations.

The PhD candidate must prepare a concise summary of the thesis in English and Norwegian, with the aim of making the thesis and its results known to the research community at home and abroad. If the thesis is written in neither English nor Norwegian, a summary in the language of the thesis must also be submitted. The summary must accompany the thesis and, like the thesis itself, be published publicly.

A summary in the language of the thesis and no more than 2,000 characters (including spaces) must be printed on the back of the thesis.

A summary written in Norwegian must also be prepared and sent to the PhD coordinator at the faculty as soon as the thesis has been found worthy. The summary is used in announcements and press releases.

Nord University ensures that the dissertation is compulsorily submitted to the National Library and to the university library at Nord University.

The thesis must be publicly available no later than two weeks before the date of public defence. Publicly available means that it must be available for review, but not necessarily for distribution.

No restrictions may be placed on thesis's publication, with the exception of a pre-agreed and valid postponement. (embargo), cf. 17-3 in the PhD regulations. Such a postponement may take place so that the institution and possibly an external party that has fully or partially financed the PhD education can decide on possible patenting and the like.

Archiving the thesis in the Norwegian Research Information Repository (Nasjonalt vitenarkiv, NVA)

The Norwegian government stipulates that all research funded wholly or partially with public funds shall be publicly available. The Norwegian Research Information Repository (Nasjonalt vitenarkiv, NVA) makes PhD theses and other research available to the public.

To make this as simple and safe as possible for the individual researcher, the University Library, as manager and administrator of NVA, has drawn up routines and guidelines. Read more about publishing of PhD theses in NVA here:

<https://www.nord.no/en/library/research-and-publish/institutional-repository-nord-open-research-archive>

Reworking and resubmission

Revision of a submitted thesis (cf. 15-4)

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.

Rejection of the thesis and submission for a new assessment (cf. 15-5)

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. 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 evaluation 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.

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.

Trial lecture and public defence of the thesis

At Nord University, the trial lecture and defence usually take place on the same day, and both are public. The debate with trial lecture is led by the dean or an acting dean. It is the committee that originally evaluated the thesis that also evaluates the public defence.

Trial lecture

The trial lecture addresses a topic chosen by the Evaluation Committee. The candidate will receive the title or theme of the trial lecture not less than 10 working days prior to the trial lecture. The candidate has 45 minutes to deliver the lecture.

The chair of the defence commences proceedings by welcoming those present and explaining the formalities.

The Evaluation Committee has the opportunity to ask questions in connection with the trial lecture. Usually, however, the committee reserves questions for the defence. Upon conclusion of the trial lecture, the chair will close the session and set a time for commencement of the defence.

The trial lecture must be approved before the defence which means there may be a long break (normally 2 hours) between the two events.

Public defence

The chair of the defence commences proceedings by welcoming those present and explaining the formalities. The chair then invites the candidate to deliver his/her defence.

The thesis will then be presented, usually in approx. 30 minutes. Who presents the thesis is slightly different in the various programmes. For some it is the candidate, for others it is the first opponent.

The public defence is an academic discussion between the opponents and the candidate, concerning the formulation of problems, methodical, empirical and theoretical foundation, documentation and presentation form. The opposing speakers will often emphasize proving the durability of important conclusions that the candidate has drawn in his or her work. The issues the opponents chose to pursue need not be limited to those covered in the committee's statement on the thesis. The speakers may ask questions about any of the thesis's contents. The speakers usually investigate different parts of the thesis. The division of the workload between the opposing speakers varies. The committee's third member (the coordinator from Nord University) does usually not participate actively during the public defence.

The candidate should read the committee's recommendation/report carefully prior to the public defence. In addition to providing a general statement about whether the thesis is worthy of defence, the committee usually comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis. The speakers will often address these issues during the defence.

Each speaker may use up to one (1) hour, but this varies. Normally the entire session lasts for two (2) to three (3) hours. Upon conclusion of the formal debate, the chair will open for questions from other participants (ex auditorio). Any participants who wish to speak in this section must notify the chair before the second speaker commences.

The chair closes proceedings and invites attendees to a reception organised by the faculty. The Evaluation Committee then withdraws to write its recommendation and conclusion, which they deliver during the reception. The reception usually includes speeches and congratulations.

PhD dinner

On the same evening as the defence is held, it is usual (but not required) for the candidate to organize a dinner where the chair, evaluation committee and supervisors are invited, in addition to family, friends and colleagues. The faculties provide some financial support for this. Contact the PhD coordinator for further information.

The evaluation committee's recommendation, conferral of degree and diploma

Upon conclusion of the defence, the committee submits its report to the candidate and faculty. The Dean submits his/her recommendation to award the candidate the doctor of philosophy degree to the Rector.

The doctor of philosophy degree is awarded on the merit of:

- An approved doctoral thesis and successful public defence

- Approved coursework or other approved academic training or qualifications
- Approved trial lecture on a given topic

The Rector formally confers the doctor of philosophy degree (PhD) on the candidate, based on the Evaluation Committee's report.

The degree certificate is sent to the candidate after conferral of the degree. A doctoral diploma is presented in person during a Doctoral Awards Ceremony as part of the academic annual celebration in September at Nord University. The doctoral diploma is issued by the institution. The title of the thesis is listed on this. Information about the academic training program the doctoral student has participated in is an appendix to the degree certificate (Diploma Supplement).

Appeal against rejection of application for evaluation, rejected thesis, trial lecture or public defence

Pursuant to the provisions of the Public Administration Act, the candidate may appeal a decision to reject an application for evaluation, a determination that a thesis is not worthy of defence, or a non-approved trial lecture or public defence.

See also section 22 of the Ph.D. the regulation.

6. Research ethics and privacy

Research ethical guidelines¹

- **Respect.** People who participate in research, as informants or otherwise, must be treated with respect. The same respect must also apply to laboratory animals.
- **Good consequences.** As a researcher, one must strive that one's activity has good consequences, and that possible unfortunate consequences are acceptable.
- **Fairness.** Every research project must be fairly designed and carried out.
- **Integrity.** The researcher is obliged to follow recognized norms and to act responsibly, openly and honestly towards colleagues and the public.

All research carried out at Nord University must be based on respect for the research participants' human rights and human dignity, and for animal welfare. Consideration of the welfare and integrity of the participants is absolutely fundamental, and must come before the interests of science and society.

All research carried out at Nord University is subject to international and national research ethical guidelines and the legislation that may apply to the area in which the research is carried out.

Nord University shall contribute to ensuring the researcher's freedom in choosing a topic, method, carrying out research and publishing results. In commissioned research, the client, in collaboration with the researcher, has the right to define the theme, issues and scope of the research assignment. The client must not inappropriately seek to influence the choice of method, implementation or publication.

As a PhD candidate at Nord University, you have independent responsibility for the research being carried out is in accordance with good research practice and recognized scientific and ethical principles. This must also be the basis for cooperation with external actors.

Quality

Research should maintain high academic quality. It is required that the PhD candidate possesses the necessary competence, formulates relevant research questions, makes a suitable choice of method and ensures proper and appropriate project implementation in accordance with data collection, data processing and storage of data.

Integrity

The candidate is personally responsible for ensuring the creditability of his/her research. Fabrication, falsification, plagiarism and similar serious violations of good academic practise are not consistent with such credibility. The candidate is expected to have familiarised

¹ <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/guidelines/>

himself/herself with the ethical aspects of the researcher's role, and with principles of integrity, impartiality and independence in academic work. Candidates must also familiarise themselves with the Vancouver rules for attribution, if others have contributed to the candidate's work. If your field of study operates with other, stricter requirements than stipulated in the Vancouver rules, you must adhere to these. Check with your research colleague and main supervisor.

Good referencing

The candidate must practice good academic referencing, which allows verification of sources and provides a foundation for further research. References in running text shall be registered in a manner that leaves no doubt about the source of information. Use a referencing standard that is common within your field of study. Candidates writing an article-based thesis must adhere to the format and guidelines of the relevant journals.

Publication of results

As a rule, research results must be made available to the public. Transparency is vital for securing verifiability, as well as for giving something back to research participants and society as a whole, and to secure a dialogue with the public. Such communication also carries a democratic function.

Secure storage of data

All research materials shall be stored responsibly and inaccessible to unauthorized personnel. The law stipulates strict requirements for secure storage of lists with names or other information that makes it possible to identify individuals. At the same time, it is important to preserve materials for future generations.

Sensitive data shall not be preserved for longer than necessary for the purposes of the process. If it is necessary to preserve such information, identifying information shall be stored securely and separately from other research data. It is important to establish and follow good routines for securing quality, reuse and potential destruction of registers and other sensitive data.

The candidate must clarify whether data will be destroyed upon completion of the project, and inform participants accordingly. The candidate must also describe how and in what form data will be stored, in order to facilitate verification of analysis and conclusions, and or re-use. The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees provide more information about good research ethics and ethical [guidelines for your field of study](#).

Privacy and obligation to notify

- Data Protection Official for Research (NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data)
- Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics (REK)
- Norwegian Food Safety Authority

The candidate must report research or quality assurance projects that are subject to obligation to notify pursuant to the Personal Data Act, the Health Research Act or the Animal Welfare Act.

Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research

The main task of the Data Protection Official is to assist institutions in fulfilling their statutory duties relating to internal control and quality assurance of their own research. An important part of this work is prior assessment of research projects in accordance with the Personal Data Act and the Health Research Act, and follow-up in case of project changes, extensions and project closure. Personal information is information and assessments that can be directly linked to individuals, or linked indirectly via a combination of background information.

An anonymous data material consists of information that cannot in any way identify individuals, either directly, indirectly, or via a connection key. If you are only going to collect and register anonymous information, the project is not subject to notification.

If your project is subject to notification, you must submit a notification form no later than 30 days before the data collection starts. If you are in doubt as to whether it should be reported or not, you can use Sikt's notification form. For more information and registration form see [Sikt](#).

Nord University has its own data protection officer.

Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics (REK)

Pursuant to the Health Research Act, the purpose of the project defines whether a project must seek approval from the [REK](#) (for the relevant region), or whether it is to be reported to the Data Protection Official according to the Personal Data Act/the Health Research Act. The Health Research Act only covers research with the purpose of obtaining knowledge about health and disease. This also applies if the projects include collection of health information. Research on patient and health information for other purposes, for instance social science purposes, is regulated by the Personal Data Act and is subject to notification

REK pre-approves:

- Medical and health science-related research projects
- General research biobanks
- Dispensation from confidentiality clauses for other kinds of research subject to the Personal Health Data Filing System Act and the Health Personnel Act.

Les mer: <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/guidelines/medical-and-health-research/>

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority

The regulation on the use of animals in experimentation has two purposes:

- Improve animal welfare for animals in testing
- Promote the 3R principle: Replacement, Reduction, Refinement

The Food Safety Authority ensures that the necessary use of test animals is conducted in a manner consistent with animal welfare principles. The Food Safety Authority makes decisions on individual cases as well as on principles, provides advice, conducts inspections and has the authority to approve test animal departments and projects.

Read more: <https://www.mattilsynet.no/dyr/forsoksdyr>

Nord University's contact point for animal welfare is the Faculty of Biosciences and Aquaculture.

When conducting research using information available online

As a rule, participants must consent to their role in research and receive information about the research they are participating in, and the researcher must obtain the participant's consent.

Exceptions may be granted, depending on whether:

- The information is collected from an open or closed forum/website
- It is practically possible to provide information and obtain consent
- The information is sensitive
- The information is to be published with or without personal information

Information published on the internet that is protected by intellectual property laws cannot be published without acquiring permission from the copyright holder. Copyright is regulated by the Intellectual Property Act. This issue applies to digital materials such as blogs, photographs, videos and music.

It may also be useful to read NESH (The National Research Ethics Committee for Social Sciences and Humanities)'s [Guide to Internet Research Ethics on the internet](#).

Mandatory forms and agreements in research projects

Declaration of Consent

Consent is the rule when conducting research on humans or on information and materials that may be attached to individuals. Valid consent is voluntary, expressed and informed. This implies that any person who is asked to participate must understand what he or she is consenting to and what, if any consequences participation entails. See [Sikt](#) for requirements related to consent and suggested contents for declarations of consent and information letters.

Declarations of consent shall be stored in a manner that allows inspection by the Data Protection Official. Participating in research is voluntary and respondents may withdraw from the process at any time, including while the study is ongoing and without providing grounds.

Data management plan (DMP)

A [DMP](#) is a document that describes how data in a research project are managed. It states e.g. how data will be collected, stored, documented, analysed and, if possible, shared. A DMP is a "living document" that needs to be updated over the course of a research project. A DMP is first and foremost a tool for helping researchers organize and structure their data, contributing to the adoption of best practices in managing research data.

A good data management plan facilitates the workflow in a project, and makes working with the data more efficient. Several research funders (e.g. the Research Council of Norway and the European Research Council) require a DMP.

Research projects at Nord University must also have a DMP

Data processing agreement

In all research projects, ethics awareness is of vital importance. Securing respondents' personal information is core in this context and subject to the Personal Information Act and the Health Research Act. When all or parts of the processing of personal information is outsourced, the researcher shall take necessary steps to ensure confidentiality, integrity and availability for processing of sensitive personal information.

Examples of such processing in a PhD project include transcription assistance, interview assistance in research projects and plotting of data from, eg. health journals. The data processing agreement shall also apply if external parties are engaged to destroy sensitive information, such as interview forms and journals.

Links

Doctoral degrees and career: <https://www.nord.no/en/research/doctoral-degrees>

Research support: <https://www.nord.no/en/research/for-researchers>

Library: <https://www.nord.no/en/library/research-and-publish>

Regulations - laws and rules

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

Links to the supplementary guidelines for the programmes:

- [PhD in Biosciences](#)
- [PhD in Business](#)
- [PhD in Science of Professions](#)
- [PhD in Sociology](#)