



Norwegian University of Life Sciences

PhD Handbook

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1 Introduction

The PhD programme at UMB aims to educate independent researchers with qualifications at a high international level, in cooperation with Norwegian and international research communities and in accordance with recognised scientific and ethical principles. The programme shall qualify the candidate for research activity and other work that demands considerable scientific insight and analytical thinking.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide an overview of rules and procedures relating to admission to, completion and conclusion of the Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) programme. The handbook is intended for use by PhD candidates, internal and external supervisors, members of evaluation committees and others involved in the PhD programme at UMB.

The handbook is based on 'Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences with supplementary provisions' issued by the University Board on 5 March 2009. PhD candidates, supervisors, staff who administer the PhD programme or who administer an evaluation committee, should also read the actual Regulations.

If you are employed as a research fellow, you have both an employment relationship to UMB or another employer and a student relationship to UMB. Both these relationships involve rights, contracts and reporting procedures. The student relationship to UMB is the same for all PhD candidates, and it is independent of how the studies are funded and who the employer is. This handbook contains rules and procedures relating PhD candidates' relationship to UMB as students. UMB's "[Employee Handbook and HSE Manual](#)" provides information on the rules and guidelines that apply to employment at UMB.

1.1 *The PhD programme – who is responsible for what?*

The University Board has overall responsibility for the PhD programme at UMB (adopts the PhD Regulations). The Education Committee (SN) and the Research Committee (FON) collaborate on, and are jointly responsible for, the PhD programme at UMB. SN has overall responsibility for quality assurance of the academic training component, while FON has overall responsibility for quality assurance of the research component of the PhD programme.

The departments have operational responsibility for the PhD programme within their defined academic fields. In cases where a department is the decision-maker, the department's board shall decide the division of responsibilities between different departmental bodies. All the departments have a Research Committee (FU) or a Research and Education Committee (FUU) that deal with PhD matters. In some departments, the board of the department also deals with PhD matters. Admissions can be granted continuously throughout the year by each department. The department provides a main supervisor, approves the individual education plan and is a party to the contract between UMB, the PhD candidate, the supervisors and any external institution involved. The department organises the compulsory seminars and deals with progress reporting. The department also proposes an evaluation committee and administers the committee's work.

The departments and Department of Academic Affairs at UMB are jointly responsible for updating information about the PhD candidates in UMB's student database (FS). The Department of Academic Affairs therefore needs to have an overview at all times of all PhD candidates at the different departments. It therefore receives electronic copies (via ePhorte) of applications for admission, approved education plans and signed agreements.

The Rector appoints the evaluation committee at the proposal of the department, and the University Board confers the PhD degree on the PhD candidate, when all parts of the PhD programme have been completed and approved. The Department of Academic Affairs deals with these matters on behalf of the Rector/University Board. It will therefore receive the department's proposal for the evaluation committee and reports/statements from the evaluation committee. The departments are responsible for organising the trial lecture and public defence, while the Department of Academic Affairs issues the certificate and diploma.

1.2 The contents of the PhD programme

Formally, UMB only has one PhD programme. Through individually customised education plans, this one programme covers the many academic fields in which UMB offers PhD degrees.

The PhD programme includes:

- an independent research effort in cooperation with a supervisory team and, when relevant, other researchers
- an approved academic training component
- participation in active national and international research groups
- research dissemination that is closely related to the doctoral work
- compilation of a doctoral thesis based upon the research work.

It is a precondition for conferral of the PhD degree that all parts of the programme have been completed and approved.

2 The start-up phase

The process from application for admission to a written contract and an approved individual education plan is dealt with in Chapters 5, 6 and 8 in the PhD Regulations. This process consists of the following parts:

1. The potential PhD candidate (if applicable, already employed as a research fellow) sends an application for admission to the PhD programme.
2. The application is considered and a decision on admission made.
3. Admission is formalised in the form of a written contract between the PhD candidate, the supervisory team, the department and any external institution involved.
4. The PhD candidate and supervisory team draw up and submit an education plan.
5. The education plan is considered and a decision on its approval made.

2.1 Application for admission to the PhD programme (Chapter 5 in the PhD Regulations)

To be admitted as a PhD candidate, the applicant must hold a Master's degree or have an equivalent education approved by UMB as the basis for admission. The applicant must have strong academic credentials from previous studies. Grades from higher degree examinations (120 credits) should normally be among the upper half of the student population. Documented proficiency in English is required (PhD Regulations § 5-1).

The PhD Regulations state that an application for admission to the PhD programme must be submitted, considered and granted prior to starting as a research fellow/PhD candidate. If, for practical reasons this has not been possible, an application for admission to the PhD programme must be submitted no later than three months after start-up. By 'start-up' it is meant the commencement date (research fellows employed on projects, plus university research fellows), the date of start-up of

doctoral work at UMB (quota scheme PhD candidates and non-employee research fellows with grants) or the date for start-up of the doctoral collaboration with a supervisor employed by UMB. It is not permitted to take courses at UMB before being formally admitted as a PhD candidate at UMB, and UMB has no formal supervisory responsibility until a decision on admission has been made.

The application shall contain (PhD Regulations § 5-3):

The application for admission shall include:

- Application form
- Documentation of educational credentials qualifying for admission
- Documentation of proficiency in English
- A brief description of the project (1/2-1 A4-sheet: background, research questions and methods)
- An overview of funding sources
- A proposal for a main supervisor and supervisory team. All PhD candidates shall have at least two supervisors who are researchers with a doctorate or equivalent competence. The main supervisor shall be an employee of UMB, while the others can be employed by external institutions or by UMB.
- An explanation of required facilities and infrastructure (special needs for equipment for the research work)
- A request, if relevant, to use a language other than English or Norwegian in the thesis (the PhD Regulations section 10-5).
- Documentation of English language skills

Proficiency in English

Applicants who meet the following requirements for proficiency in English, is regarded as “English language qualified” to be admitted to the PhD programme (PhD Regulations, Addition to Section § 5-1):

- a) Foundation/level 1 course in English at upper secondary school (5 weekly periods) with the mark 4 or better (alternatively, a pass in the English Advanced course I and/or II)
- b) Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a result of at least 550 points for the Paper-based test (PBT) or 80 points for the Internet-based test (IBT)
- c) International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) with a score of at least 6.0
- d) Other approved documentation following an individual assessment

For certain applicant groups to the PhD programme, English language skills can be documented by an undergraduate or master degree certificate submitted with the admission application. Other applicant groups should be prepared to submit specific documentation for their English language skills, perhaps at the request of the department processing the admission application. Please see NOKUT (article about language requirements) for additional information about the various applicant groups. Lack of documentation or unsatisfactory knowledge of English can result in rejection of the application for admission to the ph.d. programme.

Processing the application

The application is sent to the department at which the main supervisor is employed and is considered by FU/FUU. The basis for decisions on admission and the contents of decisions on admission are described in more detail in the PhD Regulations section 5-4. Conditions can be stipulated for decisions on admission. In such case, this must be specified in the decision. Admission may be granted conditional upon:

- funding, admission capacity, supplementary education and infrastructure requirements

- agreement being reached on intellectual property rights when the contract is signed (cf. [UMB's IPR guidelines](#)). The department sends a letter about the decision on admission to the PhD candidate with a copy to the supervisors (and via ePhorte to the Department of Academic Affairs).

If an application for admission is rejected, the applicant is entitled to appeal ([PhD Regulations](#) § 22-1).

2.2 Tips and advice on getting started

2.2.1 UMB in a nutshell and where to go

[UMB in a nutshell](#) presents UMB in short terms. [Handbook for new students at UMB](#) is made for bachelor and master students but PhD candidates can also find useful information here, for example a map and an overview of the buildings on campus.

2.2.2 Contact persons in the departments (in addition to the main supervisor)

Each department has a [PhD contact person](#) who can either help you or refer you to the right person if you have questions about procedures, student or employment matters. However, as a PhD candidate you have an independent responsibility, together with your main supervisor, for drawing up an education plan and contract, holding compulsory seminars and submitting annual progress reports (see 4.2 below). Academic questions and questions relating to the research component of the PhD programme are to be discussed with the supervisory team.

2.2.3 Information and material on UMB's website

On UMB's PhD web pages: <http://www.umb.no/phd-studies>, you will find information about rules and procedures that you as a PhD candidate must adhere to. From these pages, you can download all the forms you will have to use during the programme – the education plan, agreement, progress report etc. You will also find a [PhD check list](#) that may be of help to both supervisors and candidates.

Information about research at UMB is available at <http://www.umb.no/research>.

The individual departments have their own web pages containing externally and internally accessible department-specific information that can be accessed from <http://www.umb.no/english/> and <http://intern.umb.no/frontpage>, respectively.

2.2.4 Research schools

If you have an opportunity to participate in a local or national [Research school](#), you will have access to a network and arena for academic collaboration and development, as well as a social fellowship.

2.2.5 Forum for Doctoral Students at UMB (FODOS)

You can benefit greatly from membership of [FODOS](#). It is an independent interest organisation for PhD candidates at UMB. All PhD candidates automatically become members of FODOS. What you get out of membership is up to you.

2.2.6 Student Information Centre (SiT)

[The Student Information Centre](#) helps with administrative student services, such as registering for exams (if there are problems with StudentWeb), transcripts of grades, questions about residence

permits for foreign PhD candidates etc. SiT is located in the Economy Building, building no 27 on the campus [map](#).

2.2.7 Computer services

PhD candidates located at UMB are helped by the IT administrator in their departments to access the intranet and internet. For information about who the IT administrators are, go to the intranet website <http://intern.umb.no/it/artikkel/telefonliste> or contact the department.

If you have a workplace other than UMB, you can connect to UMB's server by using a so-called [VPN connection](#), which gives you access to internal resources even though you are located outside UMB's network. By using VPN, a user will be able to access the local network/intranet, i.e. you will be able to send emails via your usual email client (for example Outlook), access your home area and read internal UMB web pages and use BIBSYS. You use your normal UMB user name and 'zone2 password' for this VPN connection. If you live in a SiÅs flat and need access to the student network, contact the [Students computer service](#), dt@umb.no, and they will help you. See also [information about computer services for UMB students](#).

2.2.7.1 Email

PhD candidates who are employed by UMB are assigned an employee address: firstname.lastname@umb.no while PhD candidates who are not employees of UMB are assigned a student address: firstname.lastname@student.umb.no. These addresses are automatically registered in UMB's student database (FS) and they are used by UMB's central administration to send information about studies. It is important to have access to and use this address. If you are located outside UMB's network, you will be able to read and send emails via:

- webmail <https://webmail.umb.no> (log in using your UMB user name and 'zone1 password')
[Webmail users guide \(in Norwegian\)](#)
- VPN connection (log in using your UMB user name and 'zone2 password').

2.2.7.2 Fronter

UMB uses an electronic classroom service called Fronter. To access Fronter, you have to have registered for assessment/an exam in a course that uses Fronter in its teaching. You log in to Fronter via fronter.com/umb. Use your normal user name and 'zone2 password'.

Problems logging in to Fronter can be due to several reasons: Not all PhD courses have 'Fronter rooms'. Ask the person responsible for the course. If you have not registered for the exam, you must do so on StudentWeb or by contacting the [Student Information Centre](#) (sit@umb.no). If you have other Fronter problems, send an email to fronterhjelp@umb.no.

2.2.7.3 Student Web

On [StudentWeb](#) you can check and update various personal PhD programme information: address and telephone number, UMB subjects in the academic training component, registration for UMB classes and exams. You can also order transcript of records for courses taken at UMB. You will find the StudentWeb at <https://www.studweb.no/as/WebObjects/studentweb2?inst=UMB>). Log in using your personal ID number and a pin code that you can be sent by email or be told at SiT. Choose the menu 'Registrations/Progression report' and go through the following sequences to access, edit and confirm the information.

Certain information cannot be changed by you: the contract period, the supervisory team, external subjects, time account. These data are to be registered and updated by the department (the PhD-contact person). Note: for approved external subjects, the result registered will always be 'passed' (not the letter or numerical grade).

2.2.7.4 Registration for exams

To sit an exam in courses offered at UMB or other Norwegian higher education institutions, you must register for the exam within the stipulated deadline, see [the academic calendar](#). The UMB deadlines are 15 September for autumn parallel courses and 1 February for spring parallel courses. For courses offered at UMB you can, within the deadline, register for an exam via StudentWeb. Note: It is not sufficient to register for a class, *you must* (also) *register for exam*. In case of trouble using the StudentWeb, you may contact SiT (sit@umb.no) to register for an exam.

2.2.8 Teaching and Exam Schedule

On this webpage http://www.umb.no/sit_english/article/teaching-and-exam-schedule you will find when and where lessons are given each semester. You may also search directly here: <http://timeedit.umb.no>. Quite many courses on PhD (400) level are not arranged regularly, and can't be found in the schedule. If you don't find a specific course in TimeEdit, ask at the responsible department.

2.2.9 Payment of semester fees

The main rule is that PhD candidates cannot pay semester fees. This does not apply if you receive financial support from the State Educational Loan Fund (the quota scheme), HEC or via the NUFU programme or other NORAD-funded programmes. Those who belong to one of the above categories can choose to pay the semester fee, while those who live in SiÅs accommodation *must* pay semester fees. In such cases, you will also receive a student discount at SiÅs canteens and on certain bus and train tickets. PhD candidates must contact SiT to be sent an invoice. The semester registration card is sent automatically once the semester fee is paid.

2.2.10 UMB's identity card

If you are employed at UMB, you will be issued an employee identity card. PhD candidates who pay semester fees are issued a student identity card. Together with the semester registration card, a student identity card entitles PhD candidates to discounts as described above. Research fellows employed by external institutions as Bioforsk, Nofima and Skog og landskap, have 'student status' at UMB, and may request a student identity card (a key card) even though they do not pay the semester fee. Without a semester card, discounts may not be granted.

Identity cards are issued by the IT Department. Go to "IT-bygningen" (building no 51 on the campus map), the ground floor. A picture is taken, and the card is issued while you are waiting. Access to buildings must be agreed upon at your UMB department, and written on a requisition which you bring.

2.2.11 The University Library

The UMB library is located on the ground floor of Tårnbygningen (building 31 on the campus [map](#)). [More info about the library's services](#).

2.2.12 Visas and residence permits

There are three main categories for international PhD candidates who wish to study at UMB:

1) *Right of residence in Norway for EU/EEA/EFTA nationals*

If you are a citizen of an EU / EEA / EFTA country, you no longer need to apply for a residence permit, but you must make a registration. You can make a preliminary registration at www.udi.no and then you visit a police station to complete the registration.

2) *International PhD candidates financed through employment*

You should apply for a skilled worker residence permit at the Norwegian embassy in your home country if

you come from a country that requires a visa to travel to Norway. If you can travel to Norway without a visa, you can apply for a residence permit from within Norway. The residence permit application will require a copy of your employment contract. For more details about the application process, you can visit www.udi.no.

3) International PhD candidates financed through scholarships or non-employment sources (f.ex. Quota, NUFU)

You should apply for a residence permit at the Norwegian embassy in your home country. The residence permit application will require proof of admission to the PhD programme, housing and financing guarantee. For the academic year 2010/11, documentation of financing must be a minimum of NOK 89.000 per year. On the PhD website you will find [More information for Quota PhD candidates](#).

Residence Permits and renewals are processed at the local police station:

- For candidates living in Ås:
Vestveien 16, 1400 Ski (Closed Mondays)
- For candidates living in Oslo:
Grønlandsleiret 44, Oslo Health and welfare

2.2.13 Health and welfare services

If you need health and welfare services, information about how to access medical and social services is available at: <http://www.sias.no/english/counselling/>.

As an employee research fellow, you must contact the person responsible for personnel matters at your department/your employer.

2.3 Formalisation of admission in a written contract (Chapter 6 in the PhD Regulations)

2.3.1 Responsibilities, rights and obligations of the parties

The PhD programme shall be formalised by means of a written contract no later than six months after admission. The contractual parties are the PhD candidate, the supervisory team, the department to which the candidate has been admitted and any external institutions involved.

The contract shall stipulate the parties' responsibilities, rights and obligations – with respect to issues such as funding, supervision, reporting, publishing and ownership of research results. The parties fill in the contract form (in Norwegian or English) and send it to the department. The department signs the contract and files it in the candidate's PhD folder in ePhorte. All the relevant parties at UMB have access to it via ePhorte, but copies are sent by the department as required (for example to external parties).

The contract for the PhD programme shall include the following (as annexes, if appropriate):

- A complete funding plan
- Information about
 - where primary data are stored
 - (the division of) title to results
- Intellectual property rights agreements where relevant.

Copyright is part of the intellectual property rights and is governed by the Copyright Act. Agreements cannot be entered into that can prevent the publication of results or public defence of the thesis. However, if the PhD programme is partly or wholly funded by an external party, it can be agreed that publication can be deferred by a maximum of four months in order to enable the external party, in

cases in which the external party has rights of utilisation, to consider the issue of patenting/commercialisation.

The PhD candidate's right to use his/her own results, the utilisation of patentable inventions, copyright etc., are regulated by the Act respecting the Right to Employees' Inventions (Arbeidstaker-oppfinnelsesloven) and by UMB's own regulations concerning employees' rights. This shall apply unless provisions in any copyright and/or intellectual property rights agreements specify otherwise.

In special cases, it may be expedient to regulate in detail the right to use background knowledge and/or future results in a separate intellectual property rights agreement. This may be done prior to, or during, the PhD period. UMB's Technology Transfer Office can assist and advise in such matters, and may help to draw up an agreement. Contact: vegard.arnhoff@umb.no.

2.3.2 Extension of the contract period

If minor changes are made to the PhD contract, for example an extension of the contract period without changing other terms and conditions, the amended document shall be enclosed with the original contract.

The contract can be extended in the event of leaves of absence or agreed part-time studies that are approved by the department (PhD Regulations § 7-2). Leave of absence in this context means 'leave of absence from the PhD programme', for example maternity or welfare leave, a prolonged period of sickness absence or a period in which you work on another project. 'Part-time studies' refers to a situation in which you have reduced the scope of your doctoral studies to a part-time activity, while you, for example, are working on another project or are on partial parental leave or partial sick leave.

In connection with an extension, a form 'Changes of the PhD programme's contract period' must be filled in. It must be explained in the form why the contract is being extended and how the extension will be funded. In the case of an extension due to leave of absence, sickness absence, work on another project or similar, documentation or confirmation from your employer must be enclosed. Extensions are approved by FU/FUU at the department, and the form must be signed by all the parties to the contract. The department files the contract in ePhorte.

It is important to report prolonged absences and, if relevant, to apply for an extension so that UMB can register and report the correct completion time for your PhD programme. If the contract expires without being extended, you will no longer be registered as a PhD candidate and cannot, for example, take courses at UMB. Some departments reward the supervisor's research team financially once the public defence has been held, and in some cases, this reward is reduced if the PhD candidate takes longer to complete the programme than stipulated in the contract. In addition, leaves of absence, prolonged periods of sickness absence, periods of required duties and agreed part-time studies are not included in the maximum permitted study period of eight years (PhD Regulations § 7-3).

2.3.3 Significant changes to the contract – new contract

If significant changes arise in relation to the agreed conditions during the study period, a new contract must be drawn up (PhD Regulations § 6-2).

2.3.4 Termination of the contract

In the event of breach of contract, such as violation of ethical principles, lack of progress or significant changes to the research project, the University Board may decide that the PhD candidate must discontinue the PhD programme before completion and thereby terminate the contract (PhD

Regulations § 7-4). In fact, the department which has made the decision on admission to the PhD programme, also makes the decision on termination of a PhD contract.

2.4 Individual education plans (Chapters 5 and 7 in the *PhD Regulations*)

2.4.1 Describe an academically sound and realistic basis for the research training

The education plan is an important means of arriving at an academically sound and realistic basis for completion of the PhD programme. Work on developing the plan should start as soon as possible. The education plan is prepared by the PhD candidate in cooperation with the supervisory team. The initial seminar (see 4.1.2 below) must be completed before the education plan can be submitted to the department for consideration and approval.

The PhD programme shall be organised in such a way that it can be completed within the prescribed duration of three years of full-time study (PhD Regulations § 7-1). If the PhD-candidate has to perform required duties, the contract period can be four years. This must form the basis for the education plan and for planning progress.

The education plan shall consist of (PhD Regulations § 8-3):

- The completed 'Education plan for the PhD programme at UMB'. Among other things, the education plan contains a progress schedule for the research component and the academic training component, courses/activities in the training component, and a plan for publication and for stays abroad. The academic training component shall include courses corresponding to 30 - 70 credits (ECTS) (PhD Regulations, § 8-2). Check with your department what is required. Minimum 30 credits must be for courses at the 300 and 400 level. In subjects where no suitable courses are available, elective courses at the 400 level can be approved as part of the training component (PhD Regulations § 8-1).
- A course in research ethics is compulsory
- A project description of the research assignment. The project description (maximum three pages) shall contain a description of the background to the project, research questions to be studied and a brief description of the methodology. The research questions must be clearly defined.
- Course descriptions. The courses offered at UMB are listed in the electronic study guide, from where they can be printed.¹ The same applies to other educational institutions.

2.4.2 Approval of the individual education plan

The education plan must be sent to the department no later than six months after admission. The education plan is considered and approved by FU/FUU at the department. The education plan and enclosures and the letter of approval are filed in the candidate's PhD folder in ePhorte. The department then sends a letter of approval to the PhD candidate, and a copy to the supervisors, if required.

2.4.3 Courses in the academic training component, grade requirements

Grade requirements apply for approval of the courses that are part of the academic training component (PhD Regulations § 8-4). See 5.2 below for a description of the grade requirements. PhD candidates

¹ A good quality print-out can be achieved by converting the document to PDF format before printing it. Right click when you have found the course and select 'Convert to Adobe PDF'.

who have been awarded the grades C, D, E, F, or 'failed', for a course included in the academic training can re-sit the examination, either during the period for resits and new tests or during the next period for ordinary examinations (PhD Regulations Ad § 8-4). This is in order to ensure that it is practically possible to complete the academic training within the time frame available to the PhD candidate. Having to retake courses leads to delays in other planned work, and it is therefore a big advantage to give high priority to work on courses during the phase of the PhD programme set aside for this purpose.

2.4.4 Significant changes in the education plan – revised plan

If changes arise in the content of the education plan during the study period, a revised plan must be submitted to the department for approval. In such case, this should be done in connection with progress reporting. FU/FUU considers the revised plan, and the department sends its decision/reply to the PhD candidate. The revised plan and the decision are filed in ePhorte, and a copy is sent to the supervisors, if required. It is not necessary to revise the plan because of delays.

2.4.5 Tips and advice on planning

2.4.5.1 The research component

Perform a literature search and systematically review the literature in the field covered by your doctoral thesis. You will find a lot of important information and many useful links on the website of the Norwegian University Library of Life Sciences ([UBMB](#)). These include public information, reference works, statistics, research, databases, standards, patents etc. The library also offers [courses and guidance](#). It may be particularly useful to read scientific literature and review articles, because they often contain a good overview of the current status of research and what the most important research questions are.

Try to be realistic about your use of time when preparing a time schedule for the project. For example, you should allow time for experiments and analysis work having to be repeated and/or changed. Similarly, publication work often takes longer than first anticipated. Experience shows that the actual publication work often takes at least a year.

2.4.5.2 The academic training component (the courses)

A list of courses offered by UMB and some other Nordic institutions is available on UMB's [PhD webpages](#). With respect to what can be included in the training component, see the [PhD Regulations](#) and discuss what will be most useful and practical with your supervisor. Before starting a course, it is important to clarify whether the course can be approved as part of your programme. In special cases², it may be possible to have courses from Master's degree studies approved as part of the PhD programme.

2.4.5.3 Stays abroad

Try to include a study or research period in another country in your plan. A stay at another university or research centre will provide you with insight that you might not get at UMB, and it can thereby put you in a position to bring something genuinely new to your research (and the department). In addition to the academic benefits of a stay abroad, you will also benefit personally by improving your language skills and broadening your cultural and social horizons. If the stay abroad is in an English-speaking country, you will also acquire useful English skills that will help you in the publication context.

It is possible to apply for special grants for stays abroad, for example from [The Research Council of Norway](#) (NFR) or [NordForsk](#). You must apply to the Research Council of Norway a year before you are planning to go abroad. See the Research Council's website for information about grant schemes and deadlines for applying. It is also worth noting that pay in this context is exempt from tax in some

² If the course was not a prerequisite for admission to the PhD Programme

countries, for example the USA. A lot of information about practical matters in connection with stays abroad is available on the [EURAXESS](#) research mobility portal.

2.4.5.4 Participation at symposiums and conferences

Relevant meetings, symposiums and conferences are a good opportunity to make new academic contacts. Conferences also provide a good overview of the most recent research. Participation should be planned well ahead, because the deadline for registration is often far in advance. Contributions in the form of lectures or poster presentations will make it easier to come into contact with other researchers in the same field, and you will receive useful feedback. Remember that the requirements that apply to results presented in this way are less stringent than when the results are submitted to a journal. There are also many travel grants it is possible to apply for in such contexts, for example from [unions](#), [endowments](#) (in Norwegian called “legater”) or organisations, such as [The Norwegian Biochemical Society](#) (NBS).

2.4.5.5 Work duties

Some PhD candidates carry out work duties for their department or external institution. In such case, this must be stated in the contract. It can be a good idea to plan use of this work together with your supervisor and employer, for example for a year at a time. It is important that it is clearly defined which work is intended to be included in the work duties and that the PhD candidate keeps a timesheet that can be presented to the employer. The work duties should be work that confers merit, such as teaching, research assignments, administrative work on projects or participation in UMB or department/institution committees. If, for example, the PhD has salary funding for three years from the Research Council of Norway and UMB is to cover his/her salary for the fourth year, the PhD candidate should be familiar with the department's guidelines for the funding of this fourth year.

3 Supervision and affiliation to a research group (Chapter 9 in the PhD Regulations)

3.1 PhD programme – work under individual supervision

The work on the PhD thesis shall be carried out under individual supervision. A supervisory team of at least two researchers shall be set up (PhD Regulations § 9-1). Supervisors shall hold a doctoral degree or equivalent competence (PhD Regulations § 9-2). A main supervisor, who must be employed by UMB, shall be appointed from among the supervisory team. The main supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the PhD candidate maintains regular contact with his/her supervisors. The supervisory team shall be jointly responsible for the academic follow-up of the PhD candidate and shall make arrangements to ensure that he/she regularly participates in an active research group with senior researchers and other PhD candidates (PhD Regulations § 9-3). The department responsible must immediately appoint a new supervisor or supervisors in the event of long-term illness, leave of absence etc. (PhD Regulations § 9-5).

Supervisors must have enough time and energy to devote to their role as supervisor. The management of the department must therefore ensure that individual supervisors are not assigned more (PhD) candidates than they can follow up at a time.

The supervision shall be based upon the education plan. The PhD candidate and supervisors shall keep each other informed about all circumstances that are important in relation to the PhD programme and the supervision (PhD Regulations § 9-4). A good dialogue between the PhD candidate and supervisor and mutual trust and respect are crucial factors if good cooperation and results are to be achieved.

3.2 *The PhD candidates' role and responsibilities*

Completing the PhD programme requires the development of skills, competence and self-confidence. With support from his/her supervisors, the candidate must take responsibility for developing intellectual independence.

3.2.1 Plan study and research work

PhD candidates must plan and carry out their study and research work under the guidance of the supervisory team within the time frame agreed in the PhD contract and individual education plan. Should it become necessary to change the agreed terms and conditions, the PhD candidate is responsible for raising the matter with the department (and his/her employer, if relevant) and for obtaining approval of any changes in accordance with the applicable procedures.

3.2.2 Take responsibility for completing the programme

PhD candidates are responsible for ensuring that the time set aside for the PhD programme is used as effectively as possible for study and research activities. PhD candidates must contribute to the agreed progress being made, holding compulsory seminars and taking part in meetings agreed with the supervisory team.

3.2.3 Participate in the academic and social life of the university

PhD candidates are encouraged to take part in academic and social activities at UMB and to present their work to and cooperate with staff and other PhD candidates. Participating in discipline groups, research schools, the Forum for Doctoral Students at UMB (FODOS), and actively seeking opportunities to take part in seminars in Norway and abroad, is a valuable form of academic and social network building.

3.2.4 Identify challenges and problems

As a PhD candidate, you must take the initiative to discuss with your main supervisor/supervisory team any challenges and problems that may arise in connection with your research work or with the supervision. If you feel unable to discuss the problem with your supervisor(s), you can contact your academic/administrative manager or the person responsible for personnel matters in your entity.

3.2.5 Familiarise yourself with administrative rules and procedures

As a PhD candidate, you are responsible for familiarising yourself with and adhering to the rules and procedures that apply to the PhD programme at UMB. The most important documents in this context are the [PhD Regulations](#) and the PhD handbook, which, in addition to templates and forms, are available on [UMBs PhD-webpages](#). Together with your main supervisor, you are responsible for drawing up an individual education plan and signing a contract. You are responsible for submitting progress reports and for notifying the department about and obtaining approval for any major changes that may arise during the programme.

3.2.6 Follow good scientific practice

As a PhD candidate, you are responsible for following good scientific practice. Among other things, this means familiarising yourself with and complying with [UMBs Ethical Guidelines](#), and obtaining the necessary permits for research involving people or animals, or tissue samples. The [Personal Data Act](#) and the [European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and Other Scientific Purposes](#) contain important provisions in this context.

3.2.7 Submit a thesis you are satisfied with

As a PhD candidate, you are responsible for the contents of your thesis, which is the basis on which you wish to be evaluated for the PhD degree at UMB. You are responsible for submitting the thesis by the agreed date and, together with the supervisory team, you are responsible for the thesis meeting the formal requirements for a PhD thesis at UMB.

3.3 The supervisors' role and responsibilities

3.3.1 Academic and administrative assistance

The supervisors' primary responsibility is to assist the PhD candidate in completing the research component of the PhD programme within the agreed deadline. The main supervisor is also responsible for following up administrative aspects of the PhD programme. The main supervisor must ensure that an education plan, contract, progress reporting and proposal for an evaluation committee are in place at the right time, and that supervision meetings and compulsory seminars are held. The supervisors should be familiar with the PhD candidate's academic background and should consider whether it is necessary to strengthen his/her knowledge or skills in particular areas, either at the start of or during the PhD period.

3.3.2 Supervision

The quality requirements that apply to supervision are set out in the current agreement on the PhD programme. The contract states that the supervisors shall:

- Provide advice on formulating and delimiting the field and specific topic of the thesis
- Discuss and evaluate hypotheses and methods
- Help the candidate to become acquainted with the scientific literature and data material (library, archives etc.)
- Discuss results and their interpretation
- Discuss the design and implementation of work on the thesis (outline, language style, documentation etc.)
- Keep themselves updated on the doctoral candidate's progress, and assess the progress in relation to the candidate's education plan/progress schedule
- Facilitate contact between the PhD candidate and relevant scientific communities
- Provide advice on research ethics issues related to the candidate's PhD work.

3.3.3 Nominal scope of the supervision

The number of hours of supervision to be distributed among the supervisory team is 100 hours per year during the effective study period, corresponding to a total of 300 hours for the whole programme period ([PhD Regulations](#) Ad § 9-4). It is natural that the distribution of the supervisory work and the frequency and form of contact will vary depending on the academic field involved and what stage of the research training it concerns.

3.3.4 Regular contact and agreed meetings

Regular contact between supervisors and the PhD candidate, at least one planned meeting a month, is recommended. It is important to avoid a situation in which the PhD candidate only has contact with the supervisors when problems arise.

Planned meetings between the supervisory team and the PhD candidate should be prepared in advance by briefly listing keywords about matters to be discussed and sending material and questions that

require discussion; research-related questions, plans, outlines for manuscripts or manuscripts for articles etc. The supervisors should help to ensure that the right issues are focused on at the right time.

A simple record should be kept of the meetings – the date, topic, the most important conclusions or measures, and further plans. The meetings should be held in a form that encourages dialogue and should be characterised by constructive and supportive criticism on the part of the supervisors.

3.3.5 Contribute to progress and provide feedback

The supervisors should assess the PhD candidate's progress in relation to the approved education plan, encourage the candidate to make productive use of the available time and agree upon specific milestones that will be followed up at meetings with supervisors. The supervisors should help the PhD candidate to plan his/her work on writing the thesis and contribute to sufficient time being set aside for this purpose and to the candidate starting writing early.

The PhD candidate should be given written feedback on draft manuscripts and other written material submitted to the supervisors. As an indication, feedback on short written work should be given within a week, while feedback on a thoroughly prepared draft (substantial parts of the) thesis should be given within two weeks.

3.3.6 Empathetic support

Without crossing over into the PhD candidate's private sphere, the supervisors should be aware of a range of factors that can influence candidates' effort and results during the course of the PhD programme. If they believe it is advisable, the supervisors can assist the PhD candidate to get in touch with medical and social services (see 2.2.11).

3.4 If problems arise (PhD agreement clause 6)

If the progress and/or quality of the work presented are not satisfactory, the supervisory team should inform the PhD candidate of this as early as possible and propose measures to improve matters. If you as a PhD candidate experience problems, you should raise them with your supervisor, or with your manager or the person in your department with personnel responsibility.

If a supervisor finds that the PhD candidate is not fulfilling his/her contractual obligations, or that the supervision is problematic, the supervisor can, on this basis, ask to be freed from his/her duties as supervisor. Accordingly, the PhD candidate can request the appointment of a new supervisor if he/she is dissatisfied with the provided supervision or if the relationship with the supervisor is problematic.

A request to be released from the candidate-supervisor relationship must be submitted to the department, and a copy must be sent to the other involved party. In case of disagreement between the supervisor(s) and the PhD candidate, the party requesting to be freed from the supervision agreement must notify the other party in advance.

A change in the candidate-supervisor relationship may also be necessary for other reasons. In such cases either party may initiate the change. The department is responsible for appointing a new supervisor if a supervisor resigns. The department must ensure that a new agreement is signed. The department's and any external institution's financial commitments under this agreement will continue to apply after a change of supervisors.

4 Implementation

4.1 *Compulsory seminars*

As part of the quality assurance of the PhD programme, the candidates must hold (at least) three seminars during the programme period (PhD Regulations § 11-3). The purpose of the seminars is to ensure that PhD candidates get off to an early start on their doctoral theses, demonstrate the progress they have made and have an opportunity to discuss scholarly and practical challenges in connection with the project with a broader audience than the supervisory team.

The initial seminar shall be held before the education plan is submitted for consideration, the midway seminar after one and a half to two years, and the final seminar when the thesis is approaching completion.

4.1.1 All the seminars

Audience

- The whole supervisory team; at least one supervisor must be present
- Staff and PhD candidates at the department and any relevant research groups
- Other PhD candidates and their supervisors

Responsibility

- The main supervisor is responsible that each seminar is being held and for reporting to the department that it has been held.
- The whole supervisory team should be present at each seminar and during the ensuing discussion. At least one supervisor must be present.
- The department, represented by FU/FUU, is responsible for organising each seminar.
- The PhD candidate is responsible for the presentation at each seminar.

Time must be set aside for audience response. It may be a good idea to give one or more persons the task of making constructive criticisms.

4.1.2 The initial seminar

Time and purpose

The initial seminar is to be held within six months of commencing the programme, and before the individual education plan (with enclosed project plan) is submitted for consideration. The seminar will therefore be of help when discussing the project plan and in finding relevant courses and activities to be included in the PhD candidate's education plan.

Implementation

1. A presentation of the project plan aimed at obtaining input on the approach to, design and implementation of the project, and discussing the project's scope and realism.
2. Discussing what technical, academic and practical resources are necessary in order to complete the project. Discuss spending a period at an educational institution other than UMB.
3. A presentation of the education plan with the aim of receiving input on courses, seminars and activities the PhD candidate can include in the academic training component.

4.1.3 The midway seminar

Time and purpose

The midway seminar shall be held roughly halfway through the programme (after approx. 1 ½ to 2 years). The goal is to evaluate the candidate's progress and to identify any needs and/or obstacles in connection with the project.

Implementation

1. Presentation of the status of the project: Have the midway goals been achieved?
 - Provisional results and conclusions
 - Are changes necessary?
 - Are the resources required for completion in place?
 - Are supervision needs being met?
 - Are there any bottlenecks in relation to completion of the project?
2. Presentation of the completion plan:
 - A publication plan
 - A stay at another (educational) institution, abroad?
 - Progress schedule
3. Discuss the education plan and identify any changes that are required in the academic training component.
 - Have most of the courses in the education plan been taken and concluded?

4.1.4 Final seminar

Time and purpose

The final seminar is to be held approximately six months before completion. The goal is to receive input on work on completing the thesis and on preparations for the trial lecture/public defence.

Implementation

1. Presentation of the contents of the thesis.
2. Response from the audience. Input on concluding work.
3. Practical tips and advice about the trial lecture and public defence.

4.2 Progress reporting and follow-up of the reporting

Both PhD candidates and supervisors shall report on the progress of the work (PhD Regulations § 11-2). The PhD candidate (and main supervisor) fill in and sign 'Progress report for PhD Candidates at UMB'. The progress report must be submitted to the department for approval (and follow-up, if necessary), and a copy sent to the external institution(s) that provides supervisor(s). UMB's departments shall have procedures for following up any deficiencies that are discovered, such as lack of progress in work on the thesis and any shortcomings in the supervision (PhD Regulations §§ 11-1 and 11-2).

The first report shall be submitted no later than six months after approval of the education plan, then once a year by the deadline set by the department.

It is not unusual that changes to the contract period and/or education plan become necessary. See 2.3.2 and 2.4.4 above concerning procedures in connection with such changes. If significant changes are required, the form 'Changes of the PhD programme's contract period' and a revised education plan must be submitted to the department – ideally together with the progress report.

FU/FUU at the department considers the reports that are received and calls for any missing reports to be submitted. In cases where progress is too slow in relation to the education plan, but where this is not the result of a leave of absence from the programme, the department will initiate such measures as it deems necessary to improve progress. By 'leave of absence from the programme' is meant, for example, maternity or other leave, a prolonged period of sickness absence or a period in which the PhD candidate works on another project.

FU/FUU checks that the mandatory seminars are held at the correct time during the PhD programme, that the education plan has been submitted for reconsideration if it has been significantly changed and that the form for changes in the contract period, or, if applicable, a new contract, has been received and signed if progress is delayed. Progress reports and decisions are filed in ePhorte.

If the progress and/or quality of the work done and presented are not satisfactory, the supervisory team should inform the PhD candidate of this as early as possible and propose measures to improve matters.

4.3 Publication

4.3.1 Requirements for the thesis

The thesis shall be an independent piece of scientific work of international standard and at a high academic level, and it shall contribute to developing new scholarly knowledge to the discipline, see [PhD Regulations](#) § 10-1.

Most theses consist of several pieces of work (articles or manuscripts). In such case, the thesis shall also contain a chapter which, from an overall perspective, summarises and collates the research problems and conclusions presented in the separate works, and which documents the coherence of the thesis. The PhD candidate must be the sole author of this part of the thesis (PhD Regulations § 10-1).

The thesis shall contain a brief abstract in English and, if possible, also an abstract in Norwegian (PhD Regulations § 10-1).

The thesis shall be written in either English or Norwegian. A PhD candidate who wishes to use another language must apply for permission to do so upon admission (PhD Regulations § 5-3).

Work that has been approved as the basis for previous examinations may not be accepted for evaluation unless it forms a minor part of a thesis consisting of several related pieces of work (PhD Regulations § 10-6).

4.3.2 Right to publication

No restrictions may be placed on public disclosure or publication of results that are part of the PhD work, with the exception of a postponement of publication agreed in advance. Public disclosure/publication may be postponed if the PhD contract period is fully or partly funded by an external party in order to allow the external party to make decisions relating to patenting/commercialisation. Any agreements to postpone the time of public disclosure/publication shall not exceed four months ([PhD Regulations](#) § 10-7). Publication shall take place in accordance with national and internationally-recognised guidelines, see 3.2.6.

4.3.3 Right of use and title to results

The PhD candidate's right to use his/her own results, the utilisation of patentable inventions, copyright etc., are regulated by the Act respecting the Right to Employees' Inventions (Arbeidstakeroppfinnelsesloven) and by UMB's own regulations concerning employees' rights. This shall apply unless provisions in any copyright and/or intellectual property rights agreements specify otherwise (PhD Regulations § 10-8).

4.3.4 Storage of primary data

The PhD candidate is obliged to store research data in accordance with UMB's guidelines (PhD Regulations § 10-3).

UMB is responsible for storing research data (primary data). This is according to standard contracts with public financing agencies (Norwegian Research Council, EU), national guidelines for research ethics, and decisions made by the University Board. Research data underlying the results and conclusions presented in the doctoral thesis shall be stored as described in guidelines for UMB's 'Primary Data Storage System'.

A self-declaration form on storage must be completed for the thesis itself and for each of any other scientific publications that result from the PhD work.

For PhD candidates who are doing their PhD as part of a position at an external research institution, it can be agreed that this institution shall be responsible for storing the primary research data.

4.3.5 Authors' addresses (PhD regulations § 10-4)

When printing the thesis, UMB's official cover page template for doctoral theses shall be used. This ensures that UMB's address is listed on the cover page. If the PhD candidate is employed by or takes part in collaboration with another institution for the degree, this institution's address may also be listed on the cover page.

As a main rule the PhD candidate shall list UMB and cooperating institutions, if any, as the author's address on all lectures, articles, publications, presentations, posters etc. which constitute a part of the doctoral work.

Crediting institutions in scientific publications

Authors' addresses in publications are not just used as contact information. They also have an important function in crediting the research institutions to which the authors are affiliated. The authors' addresses decide which entities are awarded publishing credits and resultant allocations of result-based budget components.

UMB's PhD regulations state that: "[Recommended guidelines for crediting academic publications to institutions](#)" (see <http://www.uhr.no>) shall be used to determine which institutional addresses are to be listed on scientific publications that form part of a doctoral work. Requirements for co-authorship shall be based on the Vancouver Convention (Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts (URM), see: <http://www.icmje.org/>).

The guidelines from The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions represents the *main rule* for crediting authors and authors' addresses on publications (given below). The guidelines provides

in addition clarifications and examples that should ease both the understanding and use of the guidelines. Look in particular at “Clarification of the main rule for authors who are students” .

Main rule for crediting institutions in scientific publications

1. An institution shall be listed as an address on the publication if the institution has provided an essential and significant contribution to or provided the foundation for the authors’ contribution to the publication.
2. The same author shall also provide addresses for other institutions if these, in each particular case, fulfill the condition in section 1.
3. Employment or responsibility for research supervision can be considered grounds for crediting an institution, *provided the condition in section 1 is fulfilled.*

Section 3 is to be regarded as a clarification of the basic condition in section 1 and guidelines from the Norwegian authorities. Employment or a research supervisory role is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for crediting institutions on publications even if this, in most circumstances, will be the normal outcome. When an author has several employment relationships in research milieu, where the research activity is integrated (where the various employers have joint research), the independent institutions should be credited.

This has led UMB to adopt the following supplementary provisions in the PhD Regulations (Ad § 10-4):

An institution shall be listed as an address on a publication when the institution has provided an essential and significant contribution to, or basis for, an author’s (read: a PhD candidate’s) contribution to the published work, as for instance an active supervisory role. If the institution’s contribution is supervision, the contribution required to be listed as an institution on the publication is smaller than if the supervisor himself/herself were to be listed as a co-author of the said work.

Questions on authors’ addresses on publications? Send an e-mail to: forskningssavd@umb.no.

4.3.6 Scientific publications must be registered in CRISStin

All scientific publications, that forms part of the doctoral work, must be registered on a continual basis in the national research documentation system “*Current Research Information System in Norway*” (CRISStin).” Each registered publication implies monetary benefits for the institution or institutions that the author(s) have listed as their address on the publication in question. Also presentations, posters, popular science articles (dissemination of research) provides monetary benefits in the metric based financial budgeting system at UMB and must therefore also be registered.

The financial allocations from the Ministry of Education is partly based on the named authors on the scientific publications. It is therefore vital that all who have contributed to the publication are listed as authors with their correct institutional address (see 4.3.5). All authors must be registered. It is absolutely necessary that the author(s) address(es) on the publication are the same the address(es) as that entered in CRISStin database. In order for the institution to be credited for the publication the correct address must be also given in CRISStin.

Each piece of scientific work shall be registered only once regardless of which author (if several) who actually does the registration. Each author must, however, provide his or her electronic “signature” in CRISStin if the institution shall reap the monetary benefit from the metric based financial budgeting system. More information on what is supposed to be registered, why and how, is provided on the [Research Department’s homepage](#).

4.4 Tips and advice about completion of the programme

4.4.1 Responsibility, initiative and overview

Take responsibility for your PhD programme by playing an active role – and not just being a participant – in planning and completing the research and academic training components during your PhD period.

Show initiative and contact your main supervisor and the rest of the supervisory team. Prepare in advance for planned meetings with the supervisory team. Take notes at informal meetings with individual supervisors and take minutes of planned meetings with the supervisory team.

You should register all the required work you do. Note down the time you have spent and what the work consisted of. Keep your supervisor informed about the scope of required work you carry out.

4.4.2 Start writing

Work purposefully on your thesis and other publications. Start writing scientific articles already during the planning and performance of experiments, and finish the work as soon as you have the results of the research. If you wait too long, it will be more difficult to work on the results, and you will often have too little time at the end.

The more work you have had accepted by scientific journals, the less the opponents will have to criticise you for at the public defence, because you will have already been subjected to weighty scholarly criticism through the peer review process.

The Department of Academic Affairs organises academic writing courses for PhD-candidates which can be very useful.

5 The concluding phase

5.1 The basis for conferral of the degree (Chapter 12 in the PhD Regulations)

The Philosophiae Doctor degree shall be conferred on the basis of an approved:

- Academic training component
- Doctoral thesis
- Trial lecture on a specified topic
- Public defence of the thesis

The training component must be approved by the department and an evaluation committee must be appointed before the thesis is submitted for evaluation.

5.2 Approval of the academic training component (Chapter 8 in the PhD Regulations)

The department (FU/FUU) shall approve the academic training component on the basis of documentation (transcript of grades/certificates) submitted by the PhD candidate for courses included in the approved education plan (PhD Regulations Ad § 8-5). The PhD candidate shall also document how the grade requirement in section 8-4 is met (see below).

For the academic training component to be approved, no grade lower than C and an average of B is required for courses taken at UMB or at other educational institutions in Norway for which letter grades are awarded. Other courses shall not be included when calculating the grade average, but are approved if passed (PhD Regulations § 8-4). This requirement applies to everyone admitted to a PhD programme at UMB after 1 January 2007. If you were admitted before 1 January 2007, a grade requirement of C or better applies to courses concluded³ before 1 April 2009 (PhD Regulations Ad § 8-4), while the requirement for courses concluded after 1 April 2009 is minimum C and an average of B or better.

Separate Guidelines for calculating the grade average have been produced to help in calculating the average grade. Since it is only courses for which letter grades are awarded and courses taken at UMB or other Norwegian universities that are included when calculating the average grade, the implementation of the grade requirement is rather tricky. This can have unintended consequences – for example if you only have one (‘Norwegian’) course for which letter grades are awarded, and you were awarded the grade C. Even though all the other courses were passed (perhaps even with flying colours) and the course in question is only worth 5 credits, the result is that the academic training component cannot be approved. In cases where the rules have particularly unfortunate consequences, the Director of Academic Affairs can grant dispensation from the grade requirement.

The PhD candidate encloses documentation of the completed training component with the proposal for an evaluation committee when this proposal is submitted to the department (see 5.3). Before consideration by FU/FUU, the department’s PhD contact checks that all courses that are part of the academic training component and that are to be included on the certificate are registered in UMB’s student database (FS). Confirmations of courses taken at other educational institutions are filed in ePhorte. A ‘Candidate Report – Plan of Study’ is printed from FS and enclosed with the documents to be submitted to FU/FUU.

5.3 Appointment of an evaluation committee (Chapter 13 in the PhD Regulations)

Under the authorisation of the University Board, and at the proposal of the department, the Rector appoints a committee consisting of at least three expert members (PhD Regulations § 13-1).

Section 13-1 of the PhD Regulations states: Supervisors or co-authors cannot be members of the evaluation committee. The composition of the committee shall comply with the following requirements:

- both genders should be represented, if possible
- two of the members shall have no affiliation with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and at least one of the members should be affiliated to a recognised foreign institution.
- one of the members shall be employed by UMB in a permanent position and shall serve as the committee’s administrator
- All the members shall hold a doctoral degree or competence judged to be equivalent.

Proposals for the composition of the evaluation committee may not be presented before the academic training has been completed in accordance with the education plan and approved by the department. Proposals shall be justified, showing how the committee as a whole can cover the field of study in the thesis (PhD Regulations § 13-2). In special circumstances, UMB may appoint from among its own employees, an administrator of the committee who will not participate in the academic evaluation of the thesis, in addition to the three expert members (PhD Regulations Ad § 13-1).

³ By ‘concluded’ is meant the date for the exam, the date for submission of the final assignment, or, if applicable, completion/submission of the final mandatory activity/work that is part of the course.

The supervisory team/discipline group submits a proposal for an evaluation committee to the department after having established whether the members are willing to take on this task. The following information is sent together with the proposal:

- The PhD candidate's name and address
- The title of the thesis
- The titles, names and addresses of the supervisors
- The titles, names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of the members of the committee
- A description of the completed academic training component⁴
- Certified copies of transcripts of grades/certificates for courses that are part of the training component.

If the department approves the academic training component and recommends the proposed committee, the PhD candidate is entitled to submit written comments on the composition of the committee (PhD Regulations § 13-1).

Via ePhorte, the department's PhD contact sends the recommendation decision and information about the committee to the Department of Academic Affairs using the [letter template](#) produced for this purpose. It is the Rector who appoints the evaluation committee under the authorisation of the University Board. The Department of Academic Affairs sends the formal letters of appointment to the committee's members, with copies to the PhD candidate, the main supervisor and the department, and informs them about UMB's current regulations for PhD degrees. The following are enclosed with the letter of appointment sent to the committee members (as links, or as documents):

- [PhD Regulations](#)
- [Guidelines for evaluation of candidates for the PhD degree at UMB](#)
- Form for claiming evaluation fees and travel expenses (only for external members).

In practice, the PhD candidate, supervisors, members of the evaluation committee and the head of the department often agree on a tentative date for the public defence and a deadline for submission of the thesis in connection with the appointment of the committee.

5.4 Submission of the thesis

The academic training component must be completed and approved by the department before the thesis is submitted ([PhD Regulations](#) § 8-5). The main supervisor should have given the go-ahead for submission, and it is a good idea to have a third party proofread and possibly also carry out a language revision before the thesis is submitted. Contact mona.bye @umb.no at the Department of Academic Affairs to be assigned a serial number, ISSN number and ISBN number for the thesis. These numbers must be written on the cover of the thesis. Use the [front page template](#) you find on the [PhD webpage](#) about submission. The PhD candidate submits five copies of the thesis to the department, together with signed [authorship declarations](#), and a [thesis submission declaration](#).

The department stamps the date on the thesis when it is received and ensures that any declarations from co-authors are filed in ePhorte. Of the five copies, the department shall send three to the evaluation committee's members and two to the Department of Academic Affairs (one of which will be forwarded to the Norwegian University Library of Life Sciences, [PhD Regulations Ad](#) § 14-1). The originals of any declarations from co-authors are sent to the Department of Academic Affairs.

⁴ An approved education plan and certified transcripts of grades/certificates for the courses included.

Submitted theses will normally be ordinary printouts. They must be simply bound (glued along the spine). The final version cannot be printed by a printer until after the thesis has been approved (see 5.7). UMB's official cover page template for doctoral theses is to be used (PhD Regulations Ad § 10-4). Ask the [Department of Communication](#) to prepare an official UMB cover page.

After submission, the PhD candidate is only entitled to make corrections of a formal character, in which case a list must be provided of all errata in the submitted thesis. The errata list shall be sent to the committee no later than one week prior to the public defence (PhD Regulations § 14-2).

The department sends the thesis and a copy of any co-author declarations together with a letter written for the purpose to the members of the evaluation committee, who will then evaluate the thesis. The deadlines for the committee members' evaluation of the thesis and for the committee's joint report shall be stated in the letter.

5.5 The evaluation committee's evaluation of the thesis (Chapter 15 in the PhD Regulations)

When evaluating the thesis, particular consideration should be given to whether the thesis fulfils the requirements stated in Section 10-1. An overall assessment must be made with consideration of strong and weak points – including evaluations of whether the material and methods are relevant to the questions raised in the thesis, and whether the arguments and conclusions presented are tenable (PhD Regulations § 15-1).

The committee's administrator shall be responsible for organising the committee's work and ensuring that the time frame is complied with, and shall otherwise participate in the committee's work on a par with the other members (unless he/she has been appointed solely as administrator). The administrator shall collate the committee's report, inform the other members of the structure of the public defence and clarify the division of tasks between the committee members during the defence (PhD Regulations Ad § 13-1).

The main supervisor may be asked to attend evaluation committee meetings in order to inform the committee about the supervision of the PhD candidate and the work on the thesis (PhD Regulations § 15-2). The committee may require the PhD candidate to present his or her basic material as well as supplementary or clarifying information.

[Guidelines for evaluation of candidates for the PhD degree at UMB](#) contains more information about the work of the evaluation committee.

Should the evaluation committee, when evaluating the thesis, suspect cheating or plagiarism, the case shall be dealt with in accordance with UMB's 'Procedures for handling cases of cheating and attempted cheating on written examinations and tests' (PhD Regulations Ad § 15-3).

5.6 The evaluation committee's statement concerning the thesis (Chapter 16 in the PhD Regulations)

The committee shall submit a joint reasoned report to the department to which the PhD candidate was admitted (based on the criteria in section 10-1 and section 15-1), stating whether the thesis is worthy of a public defence for a PhD degree. The committee's report shall be submitted within three months after thesis submission and no later than 25 working days prior to the planned public defence (PhD Regulations § 16-1). The evaluation committee's report shall be forwarded to the PhD candidate, who shall be given 10 working days to submit written comments.

Should the evaluation committee unanimously approve the thesis, the trial lecture and the public defence of the thesis may be carried out (PhD Regulations § 16-4).

Should the committee find that the thesis contains minor deficiencies, and for the time being does not approve it for public defence, the committee may permit a revised version of the thesis to be resubmitted only once. The committee should comment on areas of the thesis to be improved (without giving the impression that a new evaluation will necessarily lead to approval of the thesis). A revision of the thesis should be possible within the framework of a maximum of six months' work. The committee shall set a deadline for submission in agreement with the candidate and the main supervisor. (PhD Regulations § 16-5).

Should the committee find that fundamental changes to theory, hypothesis, material or methods are necessary before a thesis can be recommended for public defence, the committee shall not recommend resubmission of the same thesis in a revised version for new evaluation. In such cases (rejection), the committee may permit a new thesis to be submitted only once. The new thesis may be submitted at the earliest six months after the evaluation committee's decision was reached. (PhD Regulations § 16-6).

One candidate cannot submit a thesis for evaluation more than twice (source: The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions).

On submission of a revised thesis or a new thesis, the thesis shall be evaluated by the original evaluation committee unless there are special reasons for not doing so (PhD Regulations § 16-7).

Section 16-3 of the Regulations describes what the university can do if there is disagreement among the committee's members.

5.7 Printing and publication of the thesis (Chapter 17 in the PhD Regulations)

Do not have the thesis printed until you know that it has been approved by the evaluation committee. The thesis is printed at a printers, see webpage for information on current printers:
<http://www.umb.no/phd-studies/article/doctoral-thesis-submission-cover-template>

UMB's official cover for PhD theses must be used. Before creating a PDF file for the printer, you should agree with them how the file should be created. Creating a correct PDF file can sometimes involve unexpected problems, so do this well in advance if possible. The number of copies is agreed with the main supervisor. The bill will normally be charged to the PhD candidate's project.

The PhD candidate must deliver 10 copies of the printed thesis to the Department of Academic Affairs as well as submitting an electronic version of the thesis in PDF format for filing purposes (or possibly only the abstract). In addition, the thesis will be registered electronically in 'Dissertations & Theses (Proquest)' by the Norwegian University Library of Life Sciences (PhD Regulations § 17-1).

The thesis shall be publicly available at the Norwegian University Library of Life Sciences no later than 10 working days prior to the public defence (PhD Regulations § 17-2). Initially, the Department of Academic Affairs sends one copy (see 5.4) to the library. This copy will later be replaced by the final, printed version (the Department of Academic Affairs sends one of its 10 copies to the library).

PhD Regulations § 17-1 states that UMB reserves a non-exclusive right to store the thesis in UMB's open electronic publications archive. Unless storage in an electronic archive conflicts with the

publishing rights of other parties, pertinent minor pieces of work may be included in the electronic version. The PhD candidate and the Norwegian University Library of Life Sciences shall sign an agreement concerning registration and archiving of the thesis. The PhD candidate may reserve the right to postpone electronic registration and archiving by a maximum period of one year on account of possible subsequent publication.

Before the public defence (approx. two weeks), a brief summary of the thesis including information about the public defence shall be prepared for use as a press release. Send the completed pressemeldingsskjema and a photo of the PhD candidate to the Communication Department.

5.8 Trial lecture and public defence (Chapters 18 and 19 in the PhD Regulations)

The PhD candidate shall give a trial lecture on a specified topic after the thesis has been submitted and approved. The topic of the trial lecture shall be prescribed by the evaluation committee and announced to the PhD candidate 10 working days prior to the lecture. The prescribed topic should not be selected from the central research questions covered by the candidate's degree work (PhD Regulations § 18-1). The trial lecture shall be given in either English or Norwegian unless the evaluation committee has approved another language (PhD Regulations § 18-3).

The evaluation committee's administrator sets a date for the public defence with the rest of the committee, the PhD candidate, the supervisors and the head of the department. The department books suitable premises. The time and place of the public defence will be announced ten working days before the public defence. The form "Annonsering av PhD-disputas" must be sent to mona.bye@umb.no at the Department of Academic Affairs. The Department of Academic Affairs then announces the trial lecture and public defence by posting an announcement on UMBs external and internal website.

In cases where one of the committee's members becomes ill or is otherwise unable to attend the public defence, the administrator or supervisor must contact the Department of Academic Affairs as soon as possible in order to discuss a solution that will enable the public defence to proceed as planned. A deputy member of the committee could be appointed, for example if this is desirable and possible. The department must in such case submit a written proposal to this effect to the Department of Academic Affairs, containing brief information about how the new member is capable of performing this task. The department may choose to hold the public defence by video and/or telephone conference in cases where the aforementioned solution is not possible. In the worst case, the public defence must be postponed and a new date agreed.

The department shall take steps to ensure that the trial lecture and public defence are held in a satisfactory manner. See the checklist for the main supervisor on page 44 and the department on page 33.

The trial lecture and public defence are normally chaired by the head of the department. The trial lecture should be at Master's level and last for 45 minutes. The trial lecture is part of the doctoral degree exam and must be approved by the evaluation committee before the PhD candidate can defend his/her thesis at the public defence (PhD Regulations § 18-2).

The public defence shall be held in either English or Norwegian unless the evaluation committee has approved another language (PhD Regulations § 19-2).

The public defence shall be a scholarly discussion between the opponents and the PhD candidate on the formulation of research questions, methods, the empirical and theoretical basis, documentation and form of presentation. Particular emphasis should be placed on testing the tenability of important conclusions drawn by the PhD candidate in his/her thesis. The questions the opponents choose to

pursue need not be limited to those discussed in the committee's report on the thesis. The opponents should strive as much as possible to form the discussion in such a way that members of the audience who have not read the thesis or are not well acquainted with the academic field are able to follow the discussion. (PhD Regulations § 19-5).

At the start of the public defence, the PhD candidate shall present the objective for and results of the scientific work (approx. 30 minutes). There shall normally be two ordinary opponents. The ordinary opponents shall be members of the evaluation committee (PhD Regulations § 19-3). The opponents present their evaluation of the thesis. The two opponents discuss the thesis and ask the PhD candidate to answer their questions. Members of the audience who wish to oppose (*ex auditorio*) must notify the chairperson during the defence and within the time limit set by the chairperson (PhD Regulations § 19-4). The public defence should not last for more than approximately three hours.

5.9 Statement from the evaluation committee

As soon as possible after the public defence, the evaluation committee shall send a signed statement to the department of Academic Affairs in which it gives its evaluation of the thesis, the public defence and the trial lecture (PhD Regulations § 20-1), concluding by stating whether or not the trial lecture and public defence are approved. A separate form shall be used: Statement from the evaluation committee. It is best to fill in parts of the statement in advance and then fill in those parts that concern the trial lecture and public defence immediately after the public defence, and then sign the statement before the members of the evaluation committee go their separate ways.

External committee members' fees, travel expenses and hotel accommodation are paid by the department. Some departments make a financial contribution to a concluding celebration after the public defence. Expenses for printing, travel expenses and events on the day of the public defence are tax deductible for the PhD candidate, see Norwegian Tax Administration.

5.10 Conferral of the degree, certificate and diploma (Chapter 21 in the PhD Regulations)

Once the academic training, thesis, trial lecture and public defence of the thesis have been approved, the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) shall be conferred on the PhD candidate by the University Board (PhD Regulations § 21-1).

The certificate is issued once Rector on behalf of the University Board has conferred the degree. Certificates shall state the title of the thesis, the topic of the trial lecture, courses included in the approved academic training, the names of the supervisors and the members of the evaluation committee. The doctor also receives a PhD diploma. The certificate and diploma shall be signed by the Rector and the Director of Academic Affairs (PhD Regulations § 21-2).

The Department of Academic Affairs sends (or hands over) the certificate, diploma supplement and the evaluation committee's statement to the doctor as soon as possible after conferral. If necessary, the Rector can confer the degree by authorisation immediately after the public defence, and the Department of Academic Affairs can issue the certificate shortly after, if this is requested in good time before the public defence. In such cases, the documents can be collected from the Department of Academic Affairs.

A doctoral degree ceremony is held at UMB once a year (in autumn) at which doctors awarded a doctoral degree during the preceding academic year receive their diplomas. The diplomas will be sent to those who are unable to attend the ceremony.

6 Check lists for the final phase

6.1 Check list for PhD candidate

1. Get the go ahead to submit the thesis from the main supervisor or the supervisory team. If possible, ask someone to proofread your manuscript(s).
2. Submit your documentation of a successfully completed academic training to your main supervisor (i.e. certified copies of course certificates or transcripts of records). Your main supervisor will then send the documentation to the department, along with an updated version of your education plan, and the supervisory team's proposal for an evaluation committee.
3. Contact the Department of Academic Affairs to obtain the serial number, as well as the ISBN and ISSN numbers to be printed on the thesis.
4. Submit five copies of the thesis and the original authorship declarations (for multi-authored publications), to the department.
5. Contact one of the printers listed on this webpage to agree on printing date and formatting specifications for your thesis file.
<http://www.umb.no/phd-studies/article/doctoral-thesis-submission-cover-template>
6. After the thesis has been approved, complete the 'press release form' together with your supervisor. Submit the completed form and a photo of yourself to redaksjonen@umb.no.
7. Notify the technical support staff of the AV equipment required for the disputation.
8. The trial lecture and the disputation (the defence) is usually held the same day. The trial lecture should last for 45 minutes. After a 15 minutes break, you will give a presentation of your work using about 30 minutes (a maximum of 45 minutes).
9. After the disputation, send or deliver 10 copies of the thesis to the Department of Academic Affairs. These copies will be distributed to various libraries. Some departments also require an additional copy of the thesis for their own library. An electronic version of the thesis is to be sent to the Department of Academic Affairs by using the e-mail address phdthesis@umb.no.

6.2 *Check list for main supervisors*

1. Review the current edition of the 'PhD Regulations'.
2. Make sure that all formalities are fulfilled:
 - If the education plan has been changed in the course of the doctoral programme – has an application for the approval of a revised plan been submitted?
 - If any contractual obligations have been changed (e.g., change of completion date) – has the agreement been updated/renewed?
 - Has the academic training component been successfully completed?
 - Have all of the three compulsory seminars been held?
3. Ask the candidate for documentation which shows that the academic training (all courses included in the approved education plan) has been successfully completed, see chapter 5.2.
4. Send a proposal for an evaluation committee to the department. The proposal shall also contain certain information and attachments, see chapter 5.3.
5. After the thesis has been approved complete the 'press release form' together with the PhD candidate. Submit the completed form and a photo of the candidate to redaksjonen@umb.no.
6. Make sure that the disputation chairperson is provided with all necessary data on the PhD candidate's previous education, admission date, education plan, etc.

6.3 Check list for the administrator of the evaluation committee

1. Make sure, in due time prior to the disputation, that the PhD candidate and the committee members are familiar with the relevant sections of the [PhD Regulations](#) and with the routines for thesis approval and for carrying out trial lectures and disputations at UMB.
2. Agree upon a schedule for the final phase with the PhD candidate and the evaluation committee, including the thesis submission date. The disputation date can be set prior to thesis approval, but there is a risk of having to call off the disputation if the thesis is not approved. Remember to involve all parties, i.e., PhD candidate, supervisors, committee members and the head of department when agreeing upon a disputation date.
3. Make sure that the other committee members have received a copy of the thesis – as soon as possible after the submission of the thesis to the department.
4. Take part in and coordinate the committee's assessment of the thesis, and submit a justified report on whether or not the thesis is worthy of being defended for the PhD degree. The report must be submitted to the department within three months after the committee has received the thesis, and at least 25 weekdays prior to the set disputation date. Make sure that copies of the evaluation report are sent to the PhD candidate and the supervisors.
5. Contact the department to ensure that reservations for a lecture hall have been made, and that the evaluation committee has access to a separate room between trial lecture and disputation.
6. Ask the opponents to suggest a topic for the trial lecture, and make sure that all parties agree on the given topic. Inform the PhD candidate of the assigned topic for the trial lecture 10 weekdays prior to the disputation. Complete the form for announcing the trial lecture and disputation ("[Annonsering av PhD-disputas](#)") and send it to vilma.bischof@umb.no.
7. Ask the committee members for their travel specifications (arrival and departure dates, remember to mention any concluding celebrations). Make sure that the committee members are welcomed and assigned accommodation (in cooperation with the department).
8. Make sure that the department arranges lunch for the committee, supervisors and chairperson on the day of the disputation.
9. Show the committee members the premises for the disputation and available AV equipment. Make agreements on the use (or non-use) of microphones.
10. Make arrangements for quick access to an IT expert during the disputation.
11. Coordinate the assessment of the trial lecture and disputation. Complete the evaluation committee report form ([Statement from the evaluation committee](#)) and submit it to the PhD contact person at your department or directly to the Department of Academic Affairs.
12. Make sure that the committee members send the following to the department: copy of their passport (foreign members only), documentation of travel expenses and form for honoraria payments (they should have received all necessary forms beforehand from the Department of Academic Affairs).

6.4 Check list for department

1. Assess the PhD candidate's academic training component: has it been successfully completed and in accordance with the education plan? Process the supervisory team's proposal for an evaluation committee. Forward the proposal to the Department of Academic Affairs together with the necessary information and enclosures (see 5.2).
2. If the head of department is not able to chair the disputation, a chairperson must be appointed.
3. Organise the welcome, accommodation and local transport of the opponents (in cooperation with the committee's administrator).
4. Make reservations for a lecture hall for the trial lecture and disputation. Make sure that the evaluation committee has access to a separate room between trial lecture and disputation.
5. Make sure that the premises are prepared for the disputation.
 - a. AV equipment must be checked (extra light bulbs, etc.)
 - b. The premises must be cleaned and tidied up
 - c. Put in place speaker's platform, tables, and have extra chairs at hand
 - d. Have a water mug and 5 glasses available
 - e. Reserve appropriate seats for the PhD candidate, committee members and the chairperson
 - f. Have some extra flower vases at hand
6. Make sure that the department buys flowers for the PhD candidate.
7. Organise lunch for the committee members, supervisors and the chairperson on the day of the disputation, as well as coffee, tea and a snack for the break between trial lecture and disputation.
8. Cover the committee members' travel expenses and honoraria payments.

6.5 Check list for the chairperson (usually the head of department)

1. Obtain necessary information for the presentation of the PhD candidate, supervisors and evaluation committee.
2. Make sure that chairperson, PhD candidate and evaluation committee enter the room together.
3. Chair the trial lecture and disputation

6.5.1 Suggested manuscript for the chairperson:

Introduction

Honoured evaluation committee, supervisors, candidate, ladies and gentlemen - welcome to this defence for the philosophiae doctor degree.

The Norwegian University of Life Sciences is authorized to give degrees at the doctoral level. The degree philosophiae doctor shall qualify for research and other activities requiring scientific competence.

The philosophiae doctor degree will be conferred on the candidate, on the basis of:

- A scientific thesis approved for public defence.
- A fulfilled academic training program.
- An approved public lecture over a given topic.
- A public defence of the thesis versus (two) opponents.

The candidate today, (name) was born in (place) and grew up in (place). He/she obtained his/her M.Sc. degree from (institution) in (place) on a thesis in (theme). He/she has been working on a research project at (institution), and since (date) he/she has been employed as (title) at (institution). The philosophiae doctor education plan was approved on (date). (Name) has fulfilled the tests and examinations defined in his/her plan.

The title of (name)'s thesis is:

His/her advisors have been: (titles, names, departments/ employers)

The evaluation committee consists of:(titles, names, employers)

The thesis has been approved for public defence.

Program for today:

- The lecture over a given topic (duration approx. 45 minutes)
- A 15 minute break
... and provided the lecture is approved by the evaluation committee:
- The presentation of the thesis (duration 30 to 45 minutes)
- The public defence (duration maximum two hours) with comments and questions from the opponents

The disputation is also open for opponents from the audience. If somebody would like to raise objections, critical remarks or other critical comments to the thesis, please notify me during the break after the lecture.

(Name) will first present his/her lecture with the title

(Name), the floor is yours.

After the trial lecture:

Thank you for the lecture. The first part of today's defence is over. We will now have a break of about 15 minutes. The committee will use the time to evaluate the lecture. Refreshments are available outside.

After the break, given that the trial lecture is approved

The lecture has been approved by the committee, and we therefore proceed with the presentation of the thesis. (Name), the floor is yours for presentation of your thesis.

Thank you for the presentation of your thesis. We will continue with the discussions between the candidate and the opponents.

.....(Title, name) will be the first opponent.

.....(Title name) will be the second opponent

Closing the seremony

The disputation is over. The committee will now evaluate the defence and complete their report. If the examination committee recommends approval, the University Board may award the degree philosophiae doctor to (name) at its next meeting. Thanks to the three opponents. Thanks to all of you for staying with us during this ceremony.