

Official Gazette A

2016

Published May 27, 2016

No. 63

May 24, 2016

Executive Order regarding PhD studies at the University of the Faroe Islands (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya)

Pursuant to the provisions in Arts. 3.4 and 5.2 of Faroese Parliamentary Act 58 on the University of the Faroe Islands dated June 9, 2008, as amended by Faroese Parliamentary Act 51, dated May 8, 2012, the following is stipulated:

Chapter 1

Purpose and structure of the PhD degree programme

- 1.1 The purpose of the PhD degree is to educate independent researchers pursuant to the principles of science and ethics. The degree programme affords the capacity to undertake research and development that require the highest standards of scientific knowledge and analytical thinking.
- 1.2 The PhD degree programme is undertaken with supervision.
- 1.3 The PhD degree encompasses a dissertation that demonstrates scientific ability in the chosen discipline. The dissertation is defended in public.
- 2.1 Candidates who successfully complete the PhD degree programme are awarded the PhD title.
- 2.2 Candidates who successfully complete the PhD degree programme have the right to use the PhD title.
- 3.1 The PhD degree programme is equivalent to 180 ECTS and is usually structured as full-time study.
- 3.2 60 ECTS is equivalent to one year of full-time study.
- 3.3 Under exceptional circumstances permission may be granted to complete a PhD degree as a course of part-time study. However, the PhD degree programme cannot be structured to take longer than 8 years from the date of commencing the PhD degree. Maternity leave and other statutory or regulatory leaves do not count towards that period.

Admission

- 4.1 Admission onto the PhD degree programme is conditional on applicants having qualifications equivalent to a completed 5-year masters programme.
- 4.2 The University of the Faroe Islands may allow students who have demonstrated exceptional academic skills and performance to enrol on the PhD degree programme before completion of their masters degree.
- 4.3 Admission is also conditioned on the lead supervisor being a permanent faculty member at the University of the Faroe Islands or having ties to the University of the Faroe Islands as assistant professor, associate professor or professor pursuant to Art. 7. Exceptions may be made to these provisions under special circumstances.
- 4.4 Applications for admission on the PhD degree programme must include:
 - 1) diploma from a 5-year masters programme or equivalent,
 - 2) outline of the planned PhD project, maximum five A4 pages

- 3) details and confirmation of funding for the project
- 4) letters of reference from scholars in the discipline familiar with the student's ability to undertake research, and
- 5) confirmation from the intended supervisor that he or she is ready to take on supervision of the PhD student.

Enrolment

- 5.1** Registration for a PhD degree takes place on submission of forms available at the University of the Faroe Islands.

Chapter 2

Course of Study

- 6.1** During the PhD degree programme PhD students will, with supervision,:
- 1) independently carry out academic work as outlined in the PhD project,
 - 2) complete courses at international PhD level equivalent to 30 ECTS,
 - 3) spend some time in active research environments other than the University of the Faroe Islands in order to take part in academic work and debate and thereby develop their own research, complete some of the stipulated courses and familiarise themselves with working methods,
 - 4) acquire experience in teaching at university level, meaning designing and delivering teaching and assessing their own performance as well as students' performance,
 - 5) acquire experience in communicating knowledge linked to the PhD project, and
 - 6) write a PhD dissertation based on the PhD project.
- 6.2** If prior to enrolment the PhD candidate already has completed one or more of the points specified in Art. 6.1 points 1 to 5 the University of the Faroe Islands can, following a detailed assessment, transfer credit for the work completed and exempt the PhD candidate from parts of these points during the completion of the degree programme.
- 6.3** The University of the Faroe Islands shall ensure that the necessary conditions are in place to enable PhD students to complete their degree programme.

Supervision

- 7.1** The University of the Faroe Islands appoints a lead supervisor who will be responsible for the whole PhD degree programme.
- 7.2** The lead supervisor shall be a researcher recognised in the field of the PhD project.
- 7.3** The lead supervisor or appointed co-supervisor shall:
- 1) ensure that the course of study is completed as stipulated,
 - 2) produce the biannual assessments, pursuant to Art. 10,
 - 3) have regular supervision meetings with the PhD student and agree with the student how supervision and communication between them shall take place,
 - 4) read and assess the candidate's work during the course of study, pursuant to Arts. 10 and 13.
- 7.4** The University of the Faroe Islands may, on its own initiative or on request from a PhD candidate:
- 1) appoint a co-supervisor with relevant skills in the PhD student's field of research, and
 - 2) replace the lead supervisor if special circumstances warrant this.

- 8.1 The University of the Faroe Islands can accept applications to assess a PhD dissertation from an applicant who has not been enrolled at the University of the Faroe Islands. In such cases authors must document that they satisfy the requirements in Art. 4.1 and otherwise prove that they have acquired knowledge equivalent to the requirements in Art. 6.1 points 1 to 5.

Completion of the PhD degree

- 9.1 Candidates must submit a study plan for the PhD degree, which addresses the provisions in Art. 6.1, to the University of the Faroe Islands along with proof of enrolment on the degree programme. The study plan is subject to approval by the University of the Faroe Islands.
- 9.2 The plan must also include:
- 1) title of the PhD dissertation in Faroese and English,
 - 2) name of the lead supervisor and any co-supervisor,
 - 3) a timetable for the degree programme,
 - 4) funding plan, and
 - 5) any agreements on intellectual property rights.
- 9.3 Any PhD candidate who fails to complete the degree programme within the period stipulated will lose the entitlement to supervision, courses and access to the University of the Faroe Islands' ICT network, unless special circumstances warrant an extension. The PhD candidate may, however, submit the dissertation to the University of the Faroe Islands after the period of study has ended.
- 10.1 Each semester the lead supervisor shall, in consultation with the PhD candidate, produce a written assessment determining whether the PhD candidate is progressing satisfactorily in accordance with the degree study plan.
- 10.2 If there are departures from the study plan, the lead supervisor shall explain in the written assessment why this has occurred and make recommendations about adapting the study plan. The PhD candidate will have the opportunity to comment on the recommendations within two weeks.
- 10.3 In the case of departures from the original study plan any leave granted, e.g. for illness or childbirth, shall be taken into account.
- 10.4 If PhD candidates fail to comply with the study plan, in spite of adaptations, the University of the Faroe Islands can notify the candidates that they are required to bring their studies back in line with the study plan within a three-month period, which does not constitute an extension of the PhD programme.
- 10.5 After this three-month period the University of the Faroe Islands shall, as soon as possible, carry out a new assessment in accordance with 10.1.
- 10.6 If performance after these three months is not satisfactory, then enrolment will be terminated.

Chapter 3 PhD dissertation

- 11.1 The PhD dissertation shall demonstrate the candidate's ability to apply scientific methods and carry out research of international PhD standard in the chosen discipline.
- 12.1 The PhD dissertation shall be submitted to Administrative Office (*Setursskrivssovan*) at the University of the Faroe Islands in digital format and in six hardcopies. One for the archives,

- one for the school and one for each of the examiners. The National Library of the Faroe Islands shall receive one copy for the public domain.
- 12.2 It is not possible for several candidates to submit a joint PhD dissertation.
- 12.3 PhD dissertations must comply with standard academic conventions. It must be written in the language of academia using the terminology of the field, be well organised, apply referencing and have a bibliography. The PhD dissertation must contain a summary in Faroese and in English.
- 12.4 If the PhD dissertation encompasses published articles, which the PhD student has written together with other scholars, then all co-authors must individually and in writing state what part of the work was carried out by the PhD candidate.
- 12.5 A dissertation may be made up of articles. In addition to the articles, a summary explaining how the dissertation is interlinked as a whole is required.
- 13.1** No later than two weeks after the submission of the PhD dissertation, the lead supervisor must submit a report to the dean in charge detailing whether the PhD candidate has met all the requirements for the PhD degree programme pursuant to Art. 6.
- 13.2 If the report states that the PhD candidate has not met all the requirements, then the PhD candidate shall be allowed to comment on the report from the lead supervisor. The candidate shall have at least two weeks to make these comments.
- 13.3 The dean shall assess based on the report from the lead supervisor pursuant to Art. 13.1 and any comments from the PhD candidate pursuant to Art. 13.2, as well as the assessments written pursuant to Art. 10, whether the PhD candidate has satisfied all the requirements for the PhD degree programme.
- 13.4 Once the PhD dissertation is submitted the PhD candidate's enrolment ends.
- 14.1** A condition for approving the PhD dissertation for defence is that all elements of the PhD degree programme have been completed satisfactorily pursuant to Art. 6.1.
- 14.2 Dissertations or part of dissertations, which have already been submitted for assessment may not be included in the assessment. Data, analyses and methods in dissertations, which the PhD student has used previously may be used as a basis for PhD studies.

Publication

- 15.1** Publication of a PhD dissertation cannot be restricted or postponed unless this has been agreed previously with the rector.
- 15.2 In individual cases it is possible to postpone publication of the dissertation on the condition that the PhD degree is fully or partially funded by external parties, which have to decide whether to apply for patents. Such interested parties may not bar parts of the dissertation or the whole dissertation from publication or print.

Panel of Examiners

- 16.1** The University of the Faroe Islands shall appoint a panel of examiners with three members and appoint one of them as chair. The chair shall organise the panel's work. Once the PhD dissertation is submitted, the University of the Faroe Islands has appointed a panel of examiners.
- 16.2 The panel shall consist of professors, associate professors or individuals with equivalent competences in the PhD candidate's field of research. At least two of the examiners shall be from other universities or research institutions within relevant fields of research.

- 16.3 Supervisors cannot be members of the assessment panel, however, they may take part in the panel's work without a vote.
- 16.4 PhD candidates shall be notified of who is part of the panel of examiners and are entitled to challenge the composition of the panel within 8 working days of having received notification of the composition of said panel.
- 16.5 The chair shall organise the panel of examiners' work. The panel shall issue a recommendation on whether or not a PhD candidate's dissertation demonstrates that the candidate meets the requirements in Arts. 2.1 and 6.1.

Chapter 4

Recommendation on the PhD dissertation and defence

- 17.1 Within 3 months of submission of the PhD dissertation the panel of examiners is required to issue a recommendation to the University of the Faroe Islands regarding whether the PhD dissertation can be approved for public defence to obtain the PhD title.
- 17.2 The recommendation must be detailed and well argued. The subject of the dissertation, methods used and research findings must be well described. The dissertation's strong points and weaknesses must be highlighted and the panel shall assess whether the dissertation is of sufficient academic standard for public defence, or whether any changes are required. The panel's conclusion must be clear, as must any minority recommendations.
- 17.3 Once the panel of examiners has drawn up its recommendation, the chair shall forward the recommendation, with a copy for the dean, to the PhD candidate who shall have two weeks to comment on it. The chair and panel of examiners shall discuss the candidate's comments.
- 17.4 The chair shall subsequently send the final recommendation with any comments made by the PhD candidate to the rector, with a copy for the dean.
- 18.1 If the panel of examiners in its recommendation unanimously agrees that the PhD dissertation can be approved for public defence, or two of the members of the panel agree on this, then the defence may proceed.
- 18.2 If the panel of examiners in its recommendation unanimously agrees that the PhD dissertation cannot be approved for public defence, or two of the members of the panel agree on this, then the panel is required to issue a recommendation regarding whether the dissertation can be reviewed and resubmitted within a specific deadline. The PhD candidate and lead supervisor shall be given the opportunity to comment on the recommendation within two weeks.
- 18.3 If the dissertation is not considered fit for defence, then the University of the Faroe Islands, based on the panel of examiners' recommendations as well as any comments from the PhD candidate and lead supervisor, shall determine whether:
- 1) there will be no defence,
 - 2) the PhD candidate is given the opportunity to make changes to the dissertation and resubmit within three months for reassessment by the same panel of examiners, unless there are special circumstances. If extensive additional work is required, then the deadline may be extended, but not usually beyond 6 months, or that
 - 3) a new panel of examiners is appointed to assess the PhD dissertation.
- 18.4 The panel of examiners may allow the PhD candidate to change or add to the dissertation before the defence. The chair of the panel sets a deadline for submission of any such changes and notifies the dean and rector.

- 19.1 The University of the Faroe Islands shall stipulate when and where the public defence shall take place and ensure that the dissertation is made available at a specified location, and that anyone interested may familiarise themselves with the dissertation at least three weeks prior to the defence. The dissertation shall be defended no less than two weeks and no more than three months after the panel of examiners has approved the dissertation for public defence.
- 19.2 The rector or his representative shall organise the defence.
- 19.3 The panel of examiners shall decide among itself which two members will be the opponents at the public defence.
- 19.4 PhD candidates shall have the opportunity to present their work before the panel examines them.
- 19.5 The entire event cannot last beyond 3.5 hours, meaning approximately 1 hour per opponent, 30 minutes for a presentation by the PhD candidate, 20-minute break and at most 40 minutes for opponents *ex auditorio* to raise their opposition.

Chapter 5

Award of the PhD title

- 20.1 Once the defence has concluded, the panel of examiners shall meet briefly to decide whether or not it will recommend awarding the PhD title. After the meeting the chair shall announce their conclusion.
- 20.2 If the PhD title is not awarded the arguments underpinning this decision must be set out.
- 20.3 If the PhD title is not awarded, pursuant to 20.1, the rector can decide that the dissertation will be assessed by a new panel of examiners, if the PhD candidate within two weeks requests in writing that the rector do so.
- 20.4 If the PhD title is not awarded, the University of the Faroe Islands can, on request, issue a certificate for the elements of the degree programme that were completed satisfactorily.
- 21.1 The PhD title shall be conferred if at least two of the members of the panel of examiners recommend it.
- 22.1 The University of the Faroe Islands shall issue a diploma in Faroese and English to successful PhD candidates, in accordance with the rules and regulations governing issuing of diplomas by the University of the Faroe Islands.
- 22.2 PhD diplomas shall specify in which discipline the PhD title was awarded as well as the title of the dissertation. In addition, a list of the courses completed pursuant to Art. 6.1 and 6.2 shall be issued along with diploma supplements.
- 22.3 If the University of the Faroe Islands is collaborating with another university on the PhD degree, including assessment, defence, award of title, etc., the collaborating university may sign or otherwise annotate the diploma so that it is clear that it is a joint document if it is to have legal effect under foreign legislation, understood as the English term 'joint degree'.
- 22.4 Similarly, the University of the Faroe Islands can also in collaboration with another university pursuant to Art. 20.3 sign or otherwise annotate a diploma from the partner institution so that it gains legal effect under Faroese law, if the University of the Faroe Islands considers that the PhD candidate has acquired competences equivalent to a Faroese PhD degree.
- 22.5 the University of the Faroe Islands and one or more other universities may, as part of a cooperation agreement, pursuant to Art. 22.3 and 22.4, issue each their own diploma for the same degree conferring a double degree or multiple degree.

Chapter 6
Appeals against decisions made by the University of the Faroe Islands

- 23.1** Decisions made pursuant to this executive order may be appealed to the University of the Faroe Islands in accordance with Chapter 6a of the Faroese Parliamentary Act.

Chapter 7
Entry into force and transition

- 24.1** This executive order shall enter into force on June 1, 2016.
- 24.2** This executive order repeals executive order 18, dated March 3, 2011, regarding PhD studies at the University of the Faroe Islands, notwithstanding the effect of Art. 25 herein.
- 25.1** The present Executive Order does not apply to PhD candidates, who enrolled on the PhD degree programme before June 1, 2016. However, the University of the Faroe Islands may, on application from PhD candidates, allow a PhD dissertation to be subject to the rules laid down in this Executive Order.

Ministry of Education, Research and Culture, March 24, 2016

Rigmor Dam (signed)

Minister

/ Poul Geert Hansen (signed)