

Order no. 750 of 14 August 1996

## Ministerial Order on Doctoral Degrees<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with section 2, para. (2) of the University Act, Act no. 334 of 27 May 1993, the following shall apply:

### Part 1

#### *General provisions for doctoral degrees and honorary doctoral degrees*

1. (1) Institutions of Higher Education comprised by the University Act may award doctoral degrees and honorary doctoral degrees in accordance with the provision listed below and other current provisions including the statutes of the individual institution.  
  
(2) Within the framework of the provision of this order, the institutions may draw up more detailed regulations.
2. The institutions may, to the extent that the individual subject area are represented at the institution with corresponding master's degrees, award the doctoral degrees listed below, and holders of the degrees are entitled to use the titles listed:

the doctoral degree in theology – doctor theologiae (dr.theol.)  
the doctoral degree in philosophy – doctor philosophiae (dr.phil.)<sup>2</sup>  
the doctoral degree in anthropology - doctor scientiarum anthropologicarum (dr.scient.ant.)  
the doctoral degree in pedagogy - doctor paedagogiae (dr.paed.)  
the doctoral degree in psychology – doctor psychologiae (dr.psyk.)  
the doctoral degree in professional language – doctor linguae mercantilis (dr.ling.merc.)  
the doctoral degree in law – doctor juris (dr.jur.)  
the doctoral degree in economics – doctor politices (dr.polit.)  
the doctoral degree in political science – doctor scientiarum politicarum (dr.scient. pol)  
the doctoral degree in economics – doctor oeconomices (dr.oecon.)  
the doctoral degree in economics and business administration – doctor mercaturae (dr.merc.)  
the doctoral degree in administration – doctor scientiarum administrationis (dr.scient.adm.)  
the doctoral degree in sociology – doctor scientiarum socialium (dr.scient.soc.)  
the doctoral degree in social sciences – doctor rerum socialium (dr.rer.soc.)  
the doctoral degree in medical science – doctor medicinae (dr.med.)  
the doctoral degree in odontology – doctor odontologiae (dr.odont.)  
the doctoral degree in veterinary science – doctor medicinae veterinariae (dr.med.vet.)  
the doctoral degree in natural sciences – doctor scientiarum (dr.scient.)  
the doctoral degree in pharmacy – doctor pharmaciae (dr.pharm.)  
the doctoral degree in agronomy – doctor agronomiae (dr.agro.)  
the doctoral degree in technology – doctor technices (dr.techn.)

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<sup>1</sup> As opposed to the PhD degree, cf. order no. 989 of 11 December 1992.

<sup>2</sup> The title dr. phil is the most common title within the humanities.

(2) The institutions may award the corresponding honorary doctoral degrees. In case the title carries the addition "honoris causa" (h.c.)

(3) On the receipt of a doctoral degree or honorary doctoral degree holders shall receive a diploma from the institution. They are entitled to wear a ring, obtainable at the institution, with a disc engraved with a head of Minerva surrounded by a laurel wreath. Holders of a doctoral degree in the theology are entitled to wear cassocks of silk with velvet on front and shoulderpieces and caps of velvet.

## Part 2

### The doctoral degree

#### *General provisions for the doctoral degree*

3. (1) The award of the degree shall be based on a dissertation, which is defended at a public, oral defence session. In very extraordinary circumstances the institution may accept that the oral defence does not take place.  
  
(2) The doctoral degree shall be awarded in acknowledgement of the author's considerable scientific insight and maturity, and of the author having contributed substantially to the advancement of science with the dissertation, cf. section 5 (2).
4. (1) Holders of master's or Ph.D. degrees within the most relevant academic field are entitled to submit a dissertation for consideration for the doctoral degree (but cf. (2) below). The institution may allow others to submit a dissertation.  
  
(2) Notwithstanding (1) above, the institution may decline to consider a submitted dissertation if:
  - 1) it is evident from the form or contents of the dissertation that the degree cannot be awarded, or
  - 2) the institution has no experts in the subject area of the dissertation at the level of professor on its staff, or
  - 3) the dissertation has already been subjected to assessment for the doctoral degree at an institution of higher education without the degree being awarded. If this is the case, the author must provide this information when the dissertation is submitted.

#### The dissertation

5. (1) A doctoral dissertation may consist of one dissertation or several dissertations<sup>3</sup> related in subject matter or method. If a dissertation consists of several dissertations, a compressed account describing the results that the author claims to have obtained from the research must form part of the dissertation. If the dissertation comprises dissertation that have already been assessed (cf. (2) below) the account must also make it clear what new advances are noted compared to the earlier research results.

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<sup>3</sup> Such as theses, articles, papers.

(2) If the dissertation comprises dissertations or research results that have already been successfully submitted for an academic degree in Denmark or abroad or as a prize thesis, this must appear from the doctoral dissertation. The degree can only be awarded if the dissertation demonstrates that the author has obtained new scientific results which in themselves have contributed substantially to the advancement of science compared with those submitted earlier, cf. section 3.

(3) A summary must be submitted together with the dissertation.

(4) If the dissertation or parts of it are the result of collaboration, a declaration must be submitted, signed by the collaborators and the author, setting out the amount and character of the author's contribution to the work.

6. The individual institutions shall decide on the languages in which a dissertation and its summary may be written. However, if the dissertation is written in a foreign language, the summary must be in Danish.
7. The institution may, on the recommendation of the assessment committee, allow the author to make minor alterations or provide minor supplements to the dissertation before the dissertation is made publicly available prior to the defence, cf. section 16.

The assessment committee and the consideration of the committee's report.

8. When a doctoral dissertation is submitted the institution shall appoint an assessment committee as soon as possible and normally not later than three months after the submission. The committee shall consist of two or three members who are experts within the subject area of the dissertation and either are professors or possess comparable expertise. Only the members of the committee may participate in the assessment.

9. (1) Immediately after the decision about the composition of the assessment committee the author shall be notified of the composition and be given the option of objecting to it within a specified term of not less than eight days and not more than fourteen days, excluding Sundays. Objections shall be treated as soon as possible after their receipt. If it is decided to change the composition of the assessment committee, the author shall be notified in the same way and shall be given the opportunity to object.

(2) When the institution has made the final decision on the composition of the assessment committee, the author shall be notified of the fact and of the stipulation that allows the withdrawal of the dissertation from assessment within a specified term of not less than eight days and not more than fourteen days, excluding Sundays. After the expiry of this time limit and until the committee's final report is received, the dissertation may only be withdrawn from assessment if in special circumstances the institution allows it.

10. (1) The assessment committee shall provide a written report containing the grounds for their decision to recommend the dissertation for acceptance for defence or for rejection. If there is a difference of opinion in the committee about the recommendation the members shall report singly or in groups. The report shall take a suitably objective form and shall provide a sufficient basis for a decision.

- (2) Unless a different term has been specified in individual cases, the report shall be submitted not later than eight months after the formation of the committee.
11. (1) If the report contains insufficient guidance or grave deficiencies, the report shall be returned to the committee for revision or correction of formal errors. When the final report is received, it shall be sent to the author as soon as possible.
- (2) If the report or, in case of division, one of the reports recommends rejection, the author shall be notified that within a period of three weeks written objections to the report may be submitted or the dissertation may be withdrawn from further consideration.
- (3) If the author submits objections to the report without withdrawing the dissertation, they shall be sent to the committee for comments and for a possible revision of the report. The author shall be notified of the committee's reaction to the objections.
12. In order to clarify points of doubt the collegiate body responsible for the treatment of the report may summon members of the committee who are not also members of the body in question for the consideration of the report with at least two weeks warning. They will not take part in the vote. If during the consideration information of relevance to the decision is disclosed which has hitherto not been made known to the author, the author shall be notified in writing and given the option of commenting on the information before a decision is made.
13. (1) Voting in the collegiate body on the report of the assessment committee is subject to the rules listed below. Members entitled to vote shall be defined as all members of the said body. In case of decisions being made by simple or statutory majority among those casting votes, blank votes shall not be counted. If it is decided not to follow the recommendation of the assessment committee, the matter shall be treated by an extended assessment committee.
- (2) A unanimous recommendation that the dissertation be accepted for defence shall be approved unless at least 2/3 of all members entitled to vote cast their votes against it. A unanimous recommendation that the dissertation not be accepted for defence shall be approved by a simple majority vote among the members' casting votes.
- (3) A majority recommendation that the dissertation be accepted for defence may be approved by a simple majority of cast votes. A majority recommendation that the dissertation not be accepted for defence shall be approved if at least 2/3 of all members entitled to vote is in favour of following the recommendation.
- (4) If the assessment committee consisted of only two members, and if these have submitted opposing recommendations about acceptance or rejection, the dissertation shall be reviewed by an extended assessment committee.

#### The extended assessment committee and the treatment of the report of the committee

14. If the original committee consisted of two members, the extended committee shall consist of either three or five members. If the original committee consisted of three members, the extended committee shall have five members. Members of the original committee will normally be members of the extended committee. The provisions in sections 8-12 shall apply.

15. Voting in the collegiate body on the report from the extended committee is subject to the rules listed below, cf. section 13 (1), 2:
- 1) A unanimous recommendation that the dissertation be accepted for defence shall be approved unless 4/5 of all members entitled to vote cast their votes against it. A unanimous recommendation that the dissertation be rejected cannot be disallowed.
  - 2) A majority recommendation that the dissertation be accepted for defence shall be approved unless 2/3 of all members entitled to vote cast their votes against it. A majority recommendation that the dissertation be rejected shall be approved unless at least 4/5 of all members entitled to vote cast their votes against it.

#### The defence and the official opponents report

16. When a dissertation is accepted for defence, the author shall see to it that copies of it are obtainable; in accordance with further rules laid down by the institution the dissertation shall be available at least four weeks before the defence session.
17. (1) The defence is public and conducted by the chair of the responsible collegiate body or another member of the academic staff appointed by the chair. The institution shall ensure that the course of the defence session can be documented sufficiently afterwards.
- (2) The defence shall be conducted in Danish, Norwegian or Swedish, unless the institution allows the use of another language.
- (3) Not later than four weeks before the defence the institution shall publish the appointed time and place for it, and state where the dissertation can be obtained, together with further regulations concerning the defence session, including information about registering as an unofficial opponent.
18. (1) Two of the members of the assessment committee shall be appointed as official opponents. In special circumstances others with expert knowledge of the field may be appointed.
- (2) Unofficial opponents, if any, shall register with the chair of the defence session before its commencement. The chair may allow contributions from opponents who registered at a later time, respecting the priority of those who registered earlier.
19. (1) The candidate shall have the option of starting the defence session with a lecture of up to 30 minutes, containing a review of the dissertation's subject and the results that have been submitted for assessment.
- (2) Each official opponent shall normally be allotted a maximum of 1½ hours and each unofficial opponents a maximum of ¾ hour. This time includes the time that the candidate will need for response. The time allotted to opponents may be reduced or increased according to circumstances. The defence session in its entirety shall not exceed six hours, including breaks.
20. (1) As soon as possible after the defence, but cf. (2) below, the official opponents shall submit a report stating whether they consider the defence satisfactory. If one opponent or both of them consider the defence less than satisfactory, this must be substantiated in the report.
- (2) If the defence session has caused one or both opponents to doubt whether a positive report can

be submitted, they can recommend to the responsible collegiate body that the matter be clarified by the institution by seeking written comments, including, if circumstances indicate it, comments from unofficial opponents. The institution shall allow the candidate to comment on statements made by others before the material is sent to the opponents for the completion of their report.

(3) If a report contains insufficient guidance or grave formal deficiencies it shall be returned to the opponents for revision or correction of formal errors. When the final report is received, it shall be sent to the candidate as soon as possible. Unless both opponents have found the defence satisfactory the candidate shall have the option of commenting on the report within a time limit of no less than fourteen days. The comments shall be sent to the opponents for comment and possible revision of the report. The candidate shall be informed of the opponents' reaction.

#### *Final review of the matter*

21. (1) Official opponents, who are not also members of the collegiate body responsible, may be summoned for the final consideration of the matter. The provisions in section 12 shall apply.

(2) Unless the collegiate body in extraordinary circumstances decides to seek further information prior to a decision, cf. (3) below, the following shall apply, cf. section 13 (1), (2) and (3):

- 1) If both opponents have considered the defence satisfactory, the degree shall be awarded.
- 2) If both opponents have considered the defence unsatisfactory, the degree can be awarded only if at least 2/3 of all members casting votes are in favour of it. However, this decision cannot be taken until further information has been sought, cf. (3) below.
- 3) If the opponents are divided in their recommendations, the degree shall be awarded unless at least 2/3 of all members entitled to vote cast their votes against it.

(3) If a majority of the members casting votes find that extraordinary circumstances indicate that a decision should not be taken on the sole basis of the report, and that further information should be sought, such information shall be supplied in written form. The candidate and the opponents shall be notified and given the option of commenting on material furnished by others than themselves before the decision is taken on the matter. Unless the collegiate body makes a simple majority decision to seek exemption under section 25, the provisions in (2) above shall apply in the decision to award or withhold the degree.

22. If in extraordinary circumstances the institution has agreed to forego the public oral defence, the decision whether to award the degree shall be made according to the provisions for the decision to accept the dissertation for defence.

23. One copy of the dissertation shall be delivered to The Royal Library (Det Kongelige Bibliotek), one copy to the State Library in Aarhus (Statsbiblioteket) and one copy to the awarding institution's main library.

### Part 3

#### *Honorary doctoral degrees*

24. The honorary doctoral degree may be awarded to persons who have had such scientific impact that it is considered natural to honour them with the highest academic degree.

### Part 4

#### *Exemptions and complaints*

25. The Ministry may allow institutions to award other doctoral degrees than those mentioned in section 2, and to deviate from the provision of this order if extraordinary circumstances are considered to justify it.

26. Only complains of a legal nature pertaining to decisions taken in accordance with this order can be brought before the Ministry.

### Part 5

#### *The coming into effect of the order*

27. The order shall come into effect on 1 October 1996.

28. (1) Order no. 410 of 2 June 1987 on the award of doctoral degrees is hereby revoked.

(2) Holders of the degree of doctor of philosophy awarded earlier in the natural sciences are entitled to use the title of doctor scientiarum (dr.scient) if they wish.

Ministry of Education, 14 August 1996

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