



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK

**The Doctoral School of Engineering  
and Science & The Doctoral School in  
Medicine, Biomedical Science and  
Technology**

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## **Guide for the doctoral dissertation and defense at the Faculty of Medicine and at the Faculty of Engineering and Science**

This guide is a consolidation and simplification of the "Rules for the award of doctoral and honorary doctoral degrees at Aalborg University," <http://www.aauhaandbog.aau.dk/faces/viewDocument/5292> and the Ministerial Order on Doctoral Degrees, Order no. 750 of 14 August 1996.

Generally, about doctoral degrees:

<b>Who</b>	<b>Award of degrees</b>
TEKNAT/SUND	Technology – doctor technices (dr. techn.)
TEKNAT/SUND	Natural Sciences - doctor scientiarum (dr. scient.)
SUN	Medicine – doctor mediciniea (dr.med)

The faculty office must receive 5 physical copies of the dissertation. This should include:

1. Abstract, if the dissertation is in English, the abstract must be in Danish. If the dissertation is in Danish, the abstract must be in English.
2. Co-author statement, if parts of the thesis have been written with others, this must be indicated by a co-author statement. Please refer to the Doctoral School's websites.
3. Summary, if the dissertation consists of several dissertations/articles, there must be a summary of the research results obtained.



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4. The author provides a statement as to whether the dissertation has previously been submitted for assessment for a doctoral degree and/or whether parts of the thesis have been the basis for an academic degree or positively assessed for an award.
5. The doctoral candidate must attach a CV containing a list of publications.
6. If the doctoral candidate has a related master's degree in relation to the degree being requested, a brief reasoned application for exemption must be included indicating that the author possesses research qualifications within the subject area.

When the PhD office and the dean have approved the form of the dissertation and accepted it for assessment and evaluated it (see § 3 and 4 of the ministerial order), a confirmation letter is sent to the doctoral candidate.

#### **Assessment committee/assessment:**

The department proposes an assessment committee. The committee must consist of 3 professors, one of whom is from AAU (chair), as well as two external persons who preferably are from universities abroad. One of the members of the committee should preferably hold a doctoral degree. Eligibility (conflict of interest) in relation to the doctoral dissertation must also be verified.

The assessment committee is approved by the Academic Council and by the dean.

The doctoral candidate must be notified about the composition of the assessment committee as soon as possible and may object in writing within 8 days. When the assessment committee is appointed, the doctoral candidate may withdraw his/her dissertation within 8 days.

The assessment committee must submit a written recommendation to the Academic Council on whether the dissertation should be accepted or rejected for defence. The dean reviews the recommendation before it goes to the Academic Council.

The recommendation must be available no later than 8 months after the committee is appointed or within another period specified by the dean. When the final recommendation is available, it is sent as soon as possible to the doctoral candidate for information purposes.

Based on the assessment committee's recommendation, the Academic Council decides to accept the dissertation for defense for a doctoral degree.<sup>1</sup> Based on the assessment committee's recommendation, the dean designates the official opponents, and an email is sent back to the committee with the approval. When the thesis has been accepted for defense, the doctoral candidate, the dean and the official opponents agree on a time to hold the defense.

The dean's secretary is contacted for coordinating the date.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The oral defense can be annulled with approval from the dean (see § 3 of the Ministerial Order on Doctoral Degrees). However, the Academic Council should be consulted on this.

<sup>2</sup> The dean is the moderator, but the task may be delegated in his/her absence.



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### **Four weeks before the defense:**

The department arranges location, publication in appropriate media and catering.

The final date and information on the auditorium are emailed to all relevant persons by the department: the doctoral candidate, head of department, assessment committee, dean/vice dean, department secretary.

The program and announcement are made with help from the AAU communication. The text of the announcement and the program are sent to the doctoral candidate/department for review/acceptance prior to publication (via email).

On the back of the dissertation's title page or on a gummed label in the dissertation, the following must be indicated:

This thesis is accepted by the Academic Council of the Faculty of Engineering and Science/Faculty of Medicine at Aalborg University for defense for a doctoral degree (dr. techn., dr. scient., dr. med.). The defense takes place at Aalborg University, ....., the ...

Aalborg, the

Dean

The date is the day on which the Academic Council has approved that the dissertation can be accepted for defense; it is not necessary to have a physical signature from the Dean.

For the purpose of making the dissertation publicly available, the doctoral candidate must supply the faculty office with 7 physical copies of the dissertation, at no cost, and possibly a link to an electronic version, no later than 4 weeks before the defense. These are made publicly available.

The department ensures that AAU Communication (Pia Pedersen, ppe@adm.aau.dk) is notified of the time and place of the defense as well as the subsequent reception. AAU Communication notifies the relevant channels, and Nordjyske (or other relevant local newspapers, depending on whether the defense takes place in Aalborg, Sydhavnen or Esbjerg). The notification shall contain the dissertation's title and author, the names of the official opponents as well as information on where the dissertation is available (often electronically available). In addition, the defense is included on AAU's event list.

The department ensures that the doctoral candidate's special wishes regarding advertising are accommodated, e.g. advertising in a special trade journal, announcement at relevant institutions and companies. (department).

The department contacts the opponents and offers assistance with travel planning, hotel booking etc. The faculty pays the opponents' travel and accommodation expenses in connection with defense (1-2 nights). Preparation and forwarding of expense documentation, etc., to the faculty are the department's responsibility. A transfer is sent to financial services at the faculty office (department).

### **Checklist before the defense:**

It is the department's responsibility to ensure the following:

Doctoral candidate has the necessary AV equipment, etc., available

Preparation of the room (any floral decorations, water/soda)



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Seating for the opponents and the doctoral candidate's family

Workspace for the external opponents

Meeting room/coffee for the preliminary meeting between the assessment committee and moderator, as well as lunch before the defense

Ordering coffee for breaks during the defense. The department pays these expenses.

Ordering of the reception after the defense. The department pays these expenses.

Any unofficial opponents must contact the faculty office prior to the defense, or whomever is the leading defense before the start of the defense.

### **Defense:**

The doctoral candidate is entitled to start the defense with a lecture of up to 30 minutes.

Official opponents are generally allotted not more than 1½ hours, and this includes time for the doctoral candidate to respond. Unofficial opponents are generally allotted not more than 45 minutes, and this includes time for the doctoral candidate to respond.

The entire defense must not exceed 6 hours, including any breaks.

As soon as possible after the defense, the official opponents report on whether they found the defense to be satisfactory. This is subsequently sent to the faculty office. (The chair of the assessment committee or the moderator is responsible for doing so.)

There will be coffee breaks during the defense and a reception afterwards. (the department).

### **After the defense:**

Based on the opponents' report, the Academic Council awards the doctoral degree.

The faculty office is responsible for distributing the financial reimbursement to the 2 external members of the assessment committee.

The dissertation is sent to the following:

The Royal Library	2 copies
AUB	1 copy – unless the dissertation is registered in VBN
Rector	1 copy
Dean	1 copy
Office	1 copy



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When a doctoral degree is awarded, a doctoral disc for a ring can be ordered upon request. A letter is sent from the faculty office to the University of Copenhagen about the order, and a unanimous report from the two opponents is attached. In addition, the decision by the Academic Council on the award of the degree is attached. The disc will be sent directly to the doctoral candidate's private address; it is sent COD. (faculty office)

"According to faculty rules, a positively assessed doctoral dissertation generates DKK 50,000 for faculty employees. The amount is paid by the department's annual operating expenses. The amount or parts thereof may be paid as a one-time remuneration to the doctoral candidate – the rest is kept in the department as a special annual operating expense for the doctoral candidate. A letter on this is sent to the department concerned with a copy to the doctoral candidate. The department reports back to the faculty on the agreement with the doctoral candidate.

The doctoral dissertation is included as a resource generating item in the faculty's PhD budget. Doctoral dissertations submitted by external persons (non-AAU employees) are also included as a resource generating item in the faculty's budget, but with ½ the rate, and they do not generate the 50,000 kroner.

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#### **Receipt of a dissertation from a non-AAU employee:**

The dissertation is submitted to the dean of the respective faculty where the dissertation is submitted for assessment in relation to § 3-4 of the Ministerial Order on Doctoral Degrees. It must also be determined where the dissertation must be placed organizationally since both a faculty and a relevant department (subject area) have responsibility for the process.

In the event that the dean is not an expert in the field, he can ask a professor who is an expert in the dissertation's subject area to make this evaluation on behalf of the dean. The expert writes a brief recommendation to the dean on which basis it can be determined whether the dissertation can be considered for assessment or whether it may be rejected based on § 3-4.

Upon receipt of a dissertation, the dean may consult with the vice dean; and in his/her own absence, s/he may consult with the vice dean in relation to the evaluation of the material.

Upon receipt of a dissertation, the dean will consult with the head of the doctoral school in relation to the evaluation of the material.