

RULES ON DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE REYKJAVÍK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

Article 1 Doctoral studies (Ph.D.)

The Reykjavik University School of Law offers doctoral studies in law. The name of the degree is Ph.D. in law (*Philosophiae Doctor*).

Article 2 Administrative arrangements of doctoral studies

The Research Council of the School of Law is responsible for supervision of the Ph.D. programme. The Research Council, in consultation with supervisors, shall monitor the development of doctoral studies internationally and supervise the quality of the studies accordingly. The Council shall ensure that the quality of doctoral studies at the Reykjavík School of Law is comparable with the quality of similar studies in other countries.

Article 3 Substance of doctoral studies

The objective of the Ph.D. programme is to train doctoral candidates for research and teaching careers and other positions which require in-depth scientific training and knowledge. The programme is designed to deepen the theoretical and methodological knowledge of Ph.D. candidates in order to qualify them for independent and well-founded research in the field of law.

In order to meet the requirements for a Ph.D. from the Reykjavik University School of Law doctoral candidates must have conducted supervised academic research which constitutes an independent contribution to the creation of knowledge in the field of law. A Ph.D. degree shall therefore only be awarded if the doctoral candidate has done independent original research of sufficient originality, scientific value, and scope to merit the degree.

At the end of doctoral studies, candidates must have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

- General knowledge of and overview over the field of jurisprudence and all the principal fields of law.
- Specialist knowledge of the field or fields of law forming the subject of study.
- Knowledge of the methodology of legal research and mastery of applying the research methods.

- The ability to conceive, design and implement independent academic research in the field of law.
- The ability to make independent and original contributions to the creation of knowledge in the field of law.
- The ability to perform critical analysis and assessment in the context of the subjects of law.
- The ability to communicate the conclusions of research and prepare them for publication in peer-reviewed publications.
- The ability to disseminate knowledge and the conclusions of research in the legal field to students.
- The ability to work within an academic or professional context that requires the application of scientific method.
- The ability to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in their respective academic or professional areas of work.

For a further description of the substance of doctoral studies, reference is made to the Criteria for the study of law (Ph.D.) at the Reykjavik University School of Law.

Article 4 **Credits and duration of studies**

The Ph.D. programme at the Reykjavik University School of Law constitutes the equivalent of three years of full-time study and corresponds to 180 ECTS credits.

Ph.D. candidates should complete their studies no later than five years after enrolment. In special circumstances, candidates may apply to the Research Council for an exemption from this condition.

Article 5 **Applications and requirements for admission**

Only candidates who have completed a university master's degree in law or related fields (with an ML or comparable degree) may enrol for doctoral studies at the Reykjavik University School of Law.

Applicants must have demonstrated outstanding performance in their studies and/or work and be viewed as capable of showing initiative in the advancement of scientific or professional knowledge.

Applications shall be submitted on a special form available at the Reykjavik University website. Applications shall be submitted to the Research Council of the School of Law. The application should be accompanied by transcripts of diplomas, a curriculum vitae and list of publications, together with a draft research proposal. Applicants should specify their wishes regarding choice of supervisor and the application and research proposal should be approved by this person. A

supervisor is not required to supervise doctoral candidates unless their ideas concerning the research subject are compatible with the supervisor's own research and research interests.

In their draft research proposal, candidates should provide an account of their research subject, including the questions that the research will attempt to answer, the purpose of seeking answers to the questions, what research methods the candidate intends to use and why, and where the candidate intends to seek his/her material and sources. An itemised work schedule should also be included. The draft research proposal should also reveal in what way the applicant believes the research could constitute an independent contribution to the creation of knowledge in the field of law. The draft research proposal should not exceed five pages in length.

The School of Law's Research Council will evaluate applicants' qualifications and make a proposal to the Dean of the School of Law as to whether the applicant should be accepted into the PhD. Program. The assessment by the Research Council should be based on the education and experience of applicants and the submitted draft research proposal. The assessment shall also take account of whether the research environment of the School and its financial position will permit the admission of doctoral candidates in the field requested. Selection of candidates for doctoral studies shall be based on objective criteria and take account of gender equality.

A response to an application for admission to the Ph.D. programme shall be made within two months of its submission. If an application for admission to doctoral studies is rejected, a statement of the reasons shall accompany the response.

Article 6

Supervisors and thesis committee

The Dean of the School of Law will appoint a supervisor pursuant to a nomination by the Research Committee. The supervisor's role is to advise Ph.D. candidates in their research work, track the progress of their studies, and monitor the quality of their research work.

Supervisors are required to meet the following requirements.

- A supervisor shall have a doctoral degree.
- A supervisor shall have a permanent position as an adjunct, assistant professor, specialist, associate professor or full professor at Reykjavik University.
- It should be ensured that the respective candidate's research pertains to the field of specialisation of the supervisor.
- Supervisors shall be active participants in the research community and recognised experts in their respective fields. Assessment of this qualification shall take account of academic publications and the supervisor's experience of international research co-operation and funding of research projects.

Doctoral candidates may be assigned more than one supervisor. If there are more than one supervisor, one of them shall be appointed principal supervisor. In such an event the principal supervisor shall be an adjunct, specialist, assistant professor, associate professor or full professor at Reykjavik University and meet in all other respects the requirements listed above for

supervisors. As regards other supervisors the condition regarding Ph.D. degree or aforementioned positions at Reykjavik University may be waived. At least one doctoral supervisor shall have experience of guidance in doctoral studies or extensive experience of guidance at the master's level.

A contract shall be made between doctoral candidates and their supervisors providing for the progress of studies and the rights and obligations of the doctoral candidate on the one hand, and the supervisor and university on the other hand. Doctoral candidates are entitled to up to 30 hours of guidance per semester.

The Dean of the School of Law will appoint a thesis committee (evaluation committee) pursuant to the nomination of the Research Council. The role of the thesis committee is to evaluate the final research proposal, provide a reasoned opinion on whether a Ph.D. thesis is acceptable for defence, and make a final decision on the award of a Ph.D. degree. The thesis committee may be assigned other tasks in consultation with the supervisor and the Research Council.

The thesis committee shall consist of three scholars who are active participants in the research community and recognised experts in the relevant field of study. In this respect, account shall be taken of the professional requirements for supervisors. At least one member of the Ph.D. thesis committee shall have completed a Ph.D. degree. At least one member of the thesis committee shall work outside the School and another shall work abroad, if at all possible. A supervisor or supervisors, if more than one, should not sit on the thesis committee.

Article 7

Progress of study, doctoral thesis and doctoral defence

Doctoral studies at the Reykjavik University School of Law are based primarily on the research work of doctoral candidates under the guidance of a supervisor and conclude with a doctoral thesis submitted for defence.

Ph.D. candidates at the Reykjavik University School of Law shall stay at Reykjavik University for at least 18 months during the course of their studies, and up to six months at a another university abroad. An exemption to this may be granted in exceptional cases with the agreement of both the supervisor and the Research Council.

Doctoral candidates should complete the equivalent of 30 ECTS credits through participation in courses and/or research seminars that enhance their skills to work on their research and engage in research and teaching in their fields. The courses should primarily consist of specific Ph.D. courses at Reykjavik University or its collaborative universities. With the consent of his/her supervisor a candidate may complete up to 15 standard credits through participation in courses or research seminars at the master's level. An exemption from the conditions of this article may be granted in exceptional cases with the agreement of both the supervisor and the Research Council.

If an applicant has not completed a first and a second degree in law (i.e. both a BA and an ML degree in law) or if warranted by special circumstances, the supervisor and the Research Council may require the applicant to complete up to 30 ECTS credits through specified courses in

addition to those credits which all Ph.D. candidates are required to complete pursuant to the preceding paragraph.

At the end of the first year of study a Ph.D. candidate shall submit to the thesis committee a final research proposal which has been approved by his/her supervisor. The research plan shall summarise the state of the art and knowledge in the specific field concerned. It should also include the Ph.D. candidate's proposed research (one or more projects) which will serve as basis for a Ph.D. thesis and address in detail all the same matters as the draft research proposal pursuant to Article 5. The complete research proposal should not exceed twenty pages in length.

The thesis committee shall evaluate the research proposal, basing the evaluation on whether the proposal reflects the candidate's possession of adequate expertise, whether the candidate's proposed research is feasible, and whether the project adequately extends the frontier of knowledge and is of sufficient academic importance. In exceptional cases candidates may be granted an extension of the deadline for submitting a research proposal.

At the end of each year of study following the submission of the complete research proposal Ph.D. candidates shall submit to the Research Council a progress report approved by their supervisors.

Before defending their Ph.D. theses and completing their studies Ph.D. candidates shall give two public lectures sponsored by the Reykjavik University School of Law. If warranted by the subject matter of the thesis and the state of the art in the field of study concerned, a Ph.D. candidate may instead, with the agreement of his/her supervisor, give a seminar about the thesis or selected parts thereof.

When a Ph.D. candidate has completed a stay at a university abroad, completed the required number of credits through participation in courses and/or research seminars, delivered two public lectures or held a seminar on his/her research topic and completed his/her research, the candidate will submit his/her doctoral thesis for defence. The doctoral thesis should be an independent piece of writing constituting a contribution to the creation of knowledge in the field. The general principle is that a doctoral thesis should be a single cohesive work, approximately 2-300 pages in length. It is also permitted to submit a series of published scholarly articles forming by their substance a consistent whole, in which case they should be summarised in a single comprehensive essay placing them in context with each other and highlighting their overall conclusions. When a doctoral thesis is composed in this manner, all the articles must be published in recognised peer-reviewed journals after the time at which the doctoral candidate enrolled for doctoral studies in the Reykjavik University School of Law, with the approval of the supervisor, and before the essay is submitted for defence.

Doctoral candidates should submit their theses to the Research Council in four copies. The presentation of the doctoral theses should observe the accepted procedures on the format of theses and citation of sources. The format should be based on the Guidelines on the format and presentation of master's theses at the School of Law. The Research Council and/or students' supervisors are permitted to lay down in further detail the procedures and guidelines on the format and presentation of doctoral theses that doctoral candidates are required to observe.

The thesis committee will evaluate the thesis and return a reasoned opinion to the Research Council as to whether the candidate should be permitted to submit his or her thesis for defence. This should be permitted only if the thesis is considered likely to satisfy the School's requirements. Otherwise, it is permitted to give an extension of 3-6 months to make improvements before the thesis committee evaluates the thesis again.

If the thesis committee considers a thesis acceptable for defence, a public Ph.D. thesis defence is held before the thesis committee. One or more examiners may also be appointed to participate with the thesis committee in the Ph.D. thesis defence. In the course of the defence the thesis committee shall evaluate both the substance of the thesis and the candidate's defence. The final version of the thesis shall be certified by the thesis committee after the candidate has taken into account any comments made at the defence.

Following the defence, the thesis committee shall decide on the award of a Ph.D. degree. A Ph.D. degree may only be awarded if the candidate has carried out independent original research which sufficiently extends the frontier of knowledge and is of sufficient scientific value and scope to merit the degree.

Article 8 Collaboration on doctoral studies

Reykjavik University's School of Law has permission to make agreements with other universities on doctoral studies. In such instances, a collaboration agreement shall also be made with individual students. These rules also apply to doctoral studies based on such agreements.

If an agreement is made that the principal supervisor is appointed at the collaboration university and the principal supervisor fulfils the requirements that both universities have for principal supervisors, it is possible to waive the requirement that the supervisor from Reykjavik University has a Ph.D. degree.

Changes approved at the School of Law's department meeting on March 3rd 2012.