

These instructions and guidelines will be applied by the UniOGS Doctoral Training Committee (DTC) for Health and Biosciences. They do not substitute the guidelines already available on the UniOGS web pages, but aim to complement and clarify them in the context of the Health and Biosciences (www.oulu.fi/uniogs/).

Deviations from the principles described here may be made for justified reasons, which must be addressed to the Chair of the DTC well in advance of the submission of the doctoral thesis for pre-examination.

Instructions for the doctoral thesis accepted by the Health and Biosciences Doctoral Training Committee

The minimum number of research articles included in a compilation-based doctoral thesis should normally be three.

If a compilation-based thesis comprises only two articles, both shall be of high scientific quality and at least accepted for publication in series amongst the highest tiers of the field. As a general rule, the latter are ranked at JUFO (Julkaisufoorumi) levels 2-3, although these may vary in different fields. Only exceptionally may the pre-examination process be started whilst one of the research articles is still in the form of a manuscript. In such cases, the article must have been under review for a long time in a journal of a high scientific quality.

One of the research articles in a compilation thesis with at least three research articles may be a systematic review, or an equivalent review comparable to an original article generating new scientific knowledge.

All manuscripts must go through an appropriate peer review process. Articles published in electronic series with no indexing, or in predatory journals, will not be accepted as research articles in a doctoral thesis.

Typical characteristics of predatory journals include:

- the name of the journal imitates, or is similar, or identical to a quality journal of a well-known publisher;
- the name of the journal is misleading or of extremely wide scope, e.g. “American Journal of Scientific Research”;
- the publisher has a suspicious background;
- the country of origin of the publisher is typically e.g. India, Nigeria, Pakistan, or “international”;
- the name of the publisher is linked with science, research, academy, e.g. “Academic and Scientific Publishing”;
- journals change their name or ISSN-code frequently;
- information concerning the editorial board of the journal cannot be found, or its members are mentioned only with name, without title or organization;
- the content of its articles is plagiarized, pseudoscientific, or ethically doubtful;
- aggressive email campaigning for academics;
- it has a trumped-up Impact Factor (IF);
- it has no Scopus-, Web of Science (WoS)-, or Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) indexing;
- the journal has no JUFO-, or IF-grading.

A journal is to be considered suspicious if it is listed in List of Predatory Journals (<https://predatoryjournals.com/journals>).

As a general rule, a research article may be included as a part of only one dissertation. The first author has the priority to use the article in his or her dissertation. If someone else wishes to use the research article in question as a part of his or her dissertation, he or she must obtain written permission from the first author and supervisor/supervisors of the research.

In case of an international multicenter study, only signatures for the first author, the last author (if he/she is not the supervisor), and the corresponding author are needed.

With well-reasoned justification, i.e. contribution of the two PhD candidates to the research is extensive, a dissertation may include research articles which have been used, or will be used, as a part of another dissertation. The same research article may be included in two dissertations at the most. If the number of joint publications will be higher than two, this must be accepted by the doctoral training committee before the pre-examination process is initiated. The number of such joint publications may comprise no more than one-half of the number of research articles of a dissertation.

Before the pre-examination process is initiated, more than a half of the research articles to be included in the dissertation must be already published, or accepted for publication in series or journals using a peer review system. In cases where there are only two research articles, one may be in the form of a manuscript only if it has been under review for a long time in a journal of a high scientific quality. In cases where there are three research articles, one article may be in manuscript form. If a manuscript is included in the dissertation, it has to be ready to be submitted with regards to both content and extent to an international journal using a peer review system.

As to the “shared” publications and manuscripts, it is important that the author has made an independent contribution. The doctoral student must be the first author in one research article. In another research article, the doctoral student must either be the sole first author, or a co-author with equal contribution. In all other research articles, the doctoral student may be one of the authors without the first position if his or her contribution is sufficient with respect to the entirety of the thesis work. If the doctoral student is not the first author in a research article to be included in a thesis, the first author must give written consent to use the research article in the thesis.

Nomination of the pre-examiners

In case of an article based-dissertation, the doctoral student must submit a written statement on his or her contribution to each of the research articles. The statement will be enclosed with the *Application for permission to defend a doctoral thesis* (form B, proposal for the nomination of pre-examiners) and submitted to the Academic Affairs Lead Specialist of the student’s Faculty, at the time when the pre-examiners are proposed. If the number of research articles is less than three, the statement shall include a written justification of that by the doctoral student and principal supervisor, and follow the above-mentioned requirements concerning the quality of the research articles.

To start the pre-examination process, the doctoral student submits an *Application to defend the thesis* (part B, proposal for the nomination of the pre-examiners), with all appendices and a copy of thesis manuscript in its final version, including references and offprints of the research

articles/manuscripts in PDF form to the Academic Affairs Lead Specialist of the Faculty. If the thesis includes a manuscript, written permission from all of the authors to use the article in the thesis must be enclosed with the *Application for permission to defend a doctoral thesis*.

List of all appendices of the application for permission to defend the doctoral thesis (form B):

- the thesis manuscript as a PDF file;
- a copy of each of the original publications, as PDF files, including, if relevant, any non-published article manuscript (if the work is a compilation thesis)
- a written consent from all authors, if the thesis includes a non-published article manuscript
- a consent from the first author for using the original publication in a doctoral thesis (in case of an original publication in which the doctoral student is not the first author)
- a clarification on the doctoral student's contribution in each of the publications, signed by the doctoral candidate and his/her supervisor(s).
- a written consent from the Doctor of Medicine or Philosophy, if a research article has already been used in another thesis

Based on the proposals of the *Application for permission to defend a doctoral thesis*, the chair of the doctoral training committee will nominate at least two pre-examiners for the thesis manuscript. It is recommended that one of the pre-examiners be from Finland, i.e. he or she is familiar with the Finnish dissertation process and general practice for doctoral training. In cases where the thesis is presented as a monograph, there must be two pre-examiners, of which one should be familiar with the Finnish dissertation process and general practice for doctoral training.

Usage of conference papers as research articles included in a thesis

Conference papers may be accepted as a research article to be included in a thesis handled by the UniOGS Doctoral Training Committee for Health and Biosciences under the following conditions.

“*Conference paper*” refers to a peer-reviewed original article which is based on a presentation given at a conference. It must produce new scientific knowledge and be presented in a form that makes it possible to establish the authenticity of the results and/or apply the results in a new study. It must be publicly available and written using a language that makes it accessible to all interested researchers. A conference paper must have a JUFO-ranking.

Only complete written versions of studies presented at a conference (i.e. full paper) will be considered. The paper must include at least four (4) pages. Its content is equivalent to the content of a scientific article. Abstracts, extended abstracts, posters, or Power Point presentations of conference lectures will not be taken into consideration.

One original article in a scientific series is equivalent to two conference papers. A doctoral thesis that includes conference papers, must include at least one original article published in a scientific journal.

On disqualification

A doctoral thesis expert (pre-examiner or opponent) is not considered to be biased if he or she has acted as a co-author with a supervisor in a single multicenter study, or an equivalent joint project, and both have only provided material to the research without close scientific cooperation. If there have been two or more of such multicenter studies during the past three years, a person may not be nominated as a doctoral thesis expert.

A person should not be nominated as a doctoral thesis expert if he/she, or a supervisor of the student, is the first or last author in an article published during the past three years, and where both are co-authors.

Working together in the production of Current Care Guidelines, or Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nursing with a supervisor does not disqualify a doctoral thesis expert. A thesis expert is not disqualified if the above-mentioned guidelines are published in an international journal using a foreign (non-Finnish) language.

A descriptive (narrative) review article in a national journal or textbook co-authored with a supervisor of the student does not disqualify a doctoral thesis expert.

Permission to defend a doctoral thesis and nomination of the opponent and custos

Permission to defend a doctoral thesis and nomination of the opponent and custos is applied for using part C of the *Application for permission to defend a doctoral thesis*. It must include a detailed written report on the revisions made subsequent to the pre-examination, which must be signed by both the doctoral student and the principal supervisor.

URKUND inspection

UniOGS recommends submitting the doctoral thesis manuscript for a plagiarism detection inspection in Urkund in order to detect possible plagiarism. The Urkund inspection may be omitted, but only upon approval by the principal supervisor of the doctoral thesis. In such cases, the supervisors and the doctoral student must verify with extra care that the manuscript meets the authenticity requirements.

ISBN code

UniOGS recommends that the student applies for an ISBN code for the thesis. If the thesis is to be published in the Acta Universitatis Ouluensis series, the editors of the series will take care of the ISBN code automatically. If the thesis is to be published in another series of the University of Oulu, the doctoral student asks for the code from acta.toimitus@oulu.fi. If the thesis is published in an academic series of another publisher, or as a single book that is not part of any series, the doctoral student asks for the ISBN code from the National Library (<https://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi>).

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