

Admission requirements / Supplementary Guidelines for the PhD Programme *Health, Function and Participation*, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL)

Revised by the Programme Committee for the PhD Programme Health, Function and Participation on
6 May 2025.

These provisions supplement the [Regulations for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor \(PhD\)
at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences](#).

Admission

Admission to the PhD programme is granted on a continuous basis throughout the year.
Applications are assessed by the programme committee.

To be admitted to the PhD programme *Health, Function and Participation*, the applicant must hold a master's degree of 120 ECTS credits, with or without a professional education, and have a research topic that is relevant to the academic profile of the PhD programme. Normally, this requires a two-year master's degree, or equivalent degree with corresponding grades (cf. supplementary provisions for PhD studies at HVL). The applicant must document satisfactory academic results, normally with the following grades:

- Master's thesis: grade B or better
- Courses on master's degree: average grade B or better

Admission is granted based on an overall assessment of the applicant's formal qualifications, the quality of the project description, and the research environment the applicant will be affiliated with.

The PhD project must be academically relevant to the PhD programme Health, Function and Participation's scientific profile. All master's degrees offered by the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences at HVL qualify for admission. In addition, applicants with relevant master's degrees from HVL or from other national or international institutions may be considered. All applications are assessed by the programme committee, to ensure that formal admission criteria are met and that the PhD project is consistent with the profile of the programme.

Coursework Component

The programme committee is responsible for ensuring regular provision of the courses in the coursework component. A plan must be provided specifying which elective courses will be offered over the following two years.

For candidates admitted from autumn 2025 (15 July) onwards, dissemination activities and/or an international research stay equivalent to 5 ECTS credits are mandatory. These activities are optional for candidates admitted prior to this date. Applications for approval of such activities shall be submitted to the programme committee and assessed in accordance with the [applicable guidelines](#).

The coursework component shall comprise 30 ECTS credits in total. All courses must be passed. The profile course *Health, Function and Participation* (5 ECTS) is compulsory and may not be substituted or waived.

Progress Reporting

The PhD candidate and the principal supervisor shall submit individual annual progress reports to the programme committee. If necessary, Academic Head of programme shall conduct follow-up interviews with the candidate and supervisor(s). Individual reports and interviews form the basis for the consolidated progress report presented for the programme committee.

PhD Thesis

The thesis shall be written in English or a Scandinavian language. The programme committee may, upon application, approve the use of other languages. Such requests shall normally be stated in the application for admission. If a candidate wishes to change the language of the thesis during the PhD period, and the language was not specified upon admission, an application must be submitted to the programme committee, accompanied by a recommendation from the supervisor(s).

The thesis shall be an independent academic work in accordance with international standards. The normal structure of the thesis consists of a summary (synthesis) and three to four scientific articles that have been published or submitted to peer-reviewed journals. Alternatively, a monograph may be submitted.

The synthesis shall place the research in a broader theoretical and methodological context and normally include an introduction, the theoretical framework for the study and the individual articles, research questions for each article, presentation and discussion of design and methods, a summary of key findings, and a discussion of the thesis's knowledge contributions to the field. The number of articles may vary depending on quality and scope and shall be determined in consultation with the supervisor. At least half of the articles must be published or accepted in recognised peer-reviewed journals at the time of submission. The candidate shall be the first author on at least two articles.