A PhD thesis can typically be written in three different forms:

1. Monograph
2. Article based
3. Combination model

A *monograph* is based on individual authorship. It is recommended that the thesis does not exceed 300 standard pages[[1]](#footnote-1).

An *article-based thesis* typically consists of 4 articles plus a summary report of 50 standard pages[[2]](#footnote-2). All articles must be qualified for publication[[3]](#footnote-3), and at least half are expected to be submitted or published. A maximum of half of the articles can be written with co-writers and the contribution of the PhD student must be substantial and clearly indicated.

The summary report is expected to at least a) provide a background to the analytical and theoretical relevance of the PhD-project and relevance for practice, b) how the research questions has been formulated, as well as c) reflections about the chosen research design and the conclusions across the different analyses (typically on a meta-level as compared to the conclusions made in the individual contributions) and d) how findings contribute to the academic conversation in the chosen field.

A *combination model* consists of a ‘short monograph’ (approximately 100 standard pages) and 2 articles, one of which can be written with co-writers. However, the individual contribution of the PhD student must be substantial and clearly indicated, in order to make it possible for the assessment committee to evaluate the scientific output delivered by the student. Although not mandatory, a summary report may be included in the ‘short monograph’ or appended separately (approximately 50 standard pages). In this case, the short monograph and the summary report together comprises approximately 150 standard pages.

The summary report typically comprises a ‘state of the art’ overview of the field of research; the theoretical and methodological approaches of the thesis as well as summaries and discussions of the thesis’ analyses and results in relation to the general research question and how findings contribute to the academic conversation in the chosen field.

Even if the thesis is a monograph it is highly recommended that the PhD student writes at least one scientific article during the PhD studies.

The decision surrounding the form of the PhD thesis is closely linked to the subject matter of the thesis and should be discussed thoroughly with the principal supervisor. It is recommended that the form of the PhD thesis is decided no later than at the 12-month evaluation.

It must be emphasized, that **these models (monograph, article-based, combination model) are meant to be guidelines.** This means that there will be variations within the different disciplines at the Doctoral School not completely covered by these main models, just as there may be theses that are adjacent to the convention of other traditions.

1. A standard page covers 2400 characters (with space) or 360 words. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. If less than 4 articles are submitted it has to be particularly meritorious publications. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Publishing journal papers does not automatically qualify for an adequate academic level. The final decision whether scientific contributions are academically qualifying for achieving the PhD degree is made by the committee who assesses the thesis, not by the journal editors and referees. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)