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Directions for writing doctoral dissertations and licentiate theses

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Educational Sciences

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These guidelines summarise the most important provisions in ordinances, rules of application and other decisions pertaining to public defences at the Faculty of Educational Sciences. Important related documents include the *Higher Education Ordinance* (Chapter 6, sections 33–34), *Guidelines for Third-cycle Education at Uppsala University* (FU 2019/641), and *Admissions procedures and grading regulations for third-cycle education at Uppsala University* (UFV 2012/2057).

For any additional information prior to the public defence/licentiate seminar, the doctoral student/licentiate candidate is requested to contact the third-cycle education administrator at the Department of Education and to visit the University's webpage on dissertations.

1 Discussions and final seminar

Doctoral dissertation

After at least three seminars, the doctoral student should discuss the dissertation manuscript as it has taken form. The first should be during a planning phase and the second should be approximately at the mid-point of the dissertation-writing process. The third and final seminar should be held during the final phase of the dissertation project, when the dissertation is reviewed in its entirety before being announced for public defence and the faculty board appoints an external reviewer and thesis examining committee. Both during the discussions at mid-point of the dissertation project and at the final seminar, the dissertation is reviewed by a specially appointed external reviewer.

Doctoral students admitted to the latter part of the third-cycle programme after the licentiate degree are to discuss their manuscript at a planning seminar and at a final seminar.

After the final seminar, the supervisor, reviewer and doctoral student meet to discuss what corrections need to be made to the manuscript. In consultation with the supervisor, the doctoral student should then consider what feedback on content and conventions should be incorporated. If the feedback at the final seminar is overly extensive, an additional open seminar can be held at which the final manuscript is reviewed once more. After implementing revisions from the final seminar, a reading group/editors are appointed for the doctoral student (consisting of two doctoral-degree-holding staff members from the department) who will read the revised manuscript and comment before the dissertation goes to print.

The reviewer at the seminars should not have served as supervisor for the doctoral student, nor should they be an external reviewer or member of the examining committee for the public defence. This also applies for a licentiate thesis.

Licentiate thesis

At least two meetings should be held to discuss a licentiate thesis: one at a planning phase and one at a final seminar. The thesis is reviewed by an external reviewer at the final seminar.

After the final seminar, the supervisor, reviewer and licentiate candidate consider what corrections need to be made to the manuscript. In consultation with the supervisor, the licentiate candidate should then consider what feedback related to content and conventions should be incorporated. If the external reviewer and/or supervisor consider the feedback at the final seminar to be overly extensive, an additional open seminar can be held at which the final manuscript is reviewed once more before the thesis goes to print.

2 Public defence

Doctoral dissertation

The basic rule at the Faculty of Educational Sciences is that the public defence is held on campus and both the external reviewer and all examining committee members participate on site. In special cases, the dean may permit virtual participation.

In the event of virtual participation, the department must ensure that it can be done in such a way that is legally sound and using reliable technology.

Decisions on the chairperson, external reviewer and examining committee and on the time and place of the public defence are made by the dean/vice dean following delegation from the faculty board and proposals from the principal supervisor. The proposals are sent to the faculty board at least three months in advance on a special form (see the faculty's website). In conjunction with this, the principal supervisor ensures that a venue is booked before the proposal is sent to the faculty board.

Licentiate seminar

Decisions about the external reviewer, examining committee and the time and place of the seminar are made by the department head, following a proposal from the principal supervisor. The proposal is sent to the department head at least two months before the seminar is held. The principal supervisor books the venue before the proposal is sent to the department head.

The licentiate thesis should be made available in printed format at least three weeks before the seminar. It is up to the author of a licentiate thesis to determine which specific requirements and time limits apply for theses that are to be included in predefined publication series.

Chairperson and external reviewer

Doctoral defence

The chairperson for the public defence should be a teacher employed at the Faculty of Educational Sciences; typically, the principal supervisor should be the chairperson.

The external reviewer should ordinarily be a docent (associate professor) or equivalent. Great emphasis should also be placed on expertise in the subject area of the dissertation. The external reviewer's work may not be based at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at Uppsala University. The individual appointed as external reviewer should not have materially participated in the production of the dissertation, for example by serving as a reviewer at the final seminar or as co-author of publications with the respondent.

For both the licentiate seminar and doctoral defence, if in their preparations the external reviewer and a member of the examining committee find shortcomings in the dissertation/thesis serious enough for the student to be at risk of failing, they must

immediately notify the dean and chairperson. It is the principal supervisor's responsibility to inform the examining committee members of this.

Licentiate seminar

The external reviewer of a licentiate thesis must hold at least a doctoral degree. Great emphasis should also be placed on expertise in the subject area of the dissertation. The external reviewer's work may not be based at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at Uppsala University. The external reviewer must not have materially participated in the production of the thesis, for example by serving as reviewer at the final seminar.

Examining committee

Doctoral defence

The examining committee should consist of three members. A substitute should be appointed to the examining committee. Because the majority of the members may not come from the doctoral student's department, the substitute should be external.

One of the members is appointed from among the teachers in the faculty and the other members are appointed from among the teachers in another faculty or from another higher education institution. At least one of the members must be from another higher education institution. Both genders should be represented on the examining committee. If this last goal cannot be met, the principal supervisor should explain why to the faculty board.

The examining committee members should be docents or equivalent. Individuals who have served as principal supervisor or assistant supervisor for the doctoral student should not be on the examining committee. Individuals who have materially contributed to the final design of the dissertation should not be on the examining committee. If these goals cannot be met, the principal supervisor is to explain why to the faculty board.

Licentiate seminar

For licentiate theses, an examining committee is appointed comprising three individuals who hold doctoral degrees from the department or outside of it. The examining committee appoints a chairperson from among its members. According to the central guidelines of Uppsala University, a substitute should also be appointed to the examining committee (UFV 2019/641). Members of the examining committee should not have materially contributed to the content or design of the thesis.

3 Doctoral dissertations

Doctoral dissertations can be designed either as a uniform, cohesive work (monograph thesis) or as a compilation of academic sub-projects referred to as "kappa" or summary (compilation thesis). Together, the various contributions to the compilation thesis should demonstrate "advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field" (Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 1:

System of Qualifications). If the independent contributions of the authors cannot be discerned in co-authored sub-projects, this must be clarified in the summary (“kappa”), because it must be possible to judge the doctoral student or licentiate candidate’s contributions.

The doctoral dissertation may be written in Swedish, English, Danish, Norwegian, French or German. The Faculty Board of Educational Sciences may also decide if the dissertation may be written in another language. The doctoral dissertation must have a summary in English. Dissertations in languages other than Swedish are to have a summary in Swedish. A short abstract describing the content of the dissertation in English should be attached to the dissertation. This, along with information about the actual public defence, constitutes the “spikblad” or notice, which is to be electronically published on the University’s website. For additional information about templates and more, see Uppsala University’s Staff Portal.

No later than 14 weeks before the public defence, the doctoral student must contact Thesis Production to plan the publication process. Information is available in Uppsala University’s Staff Portal.

If the dissertation is to be published by a publisher or is part of a dissertation series that is published jointly with another university, through a foreign publisher or in a foreign dissertation series, the doctoral student must contact the publisher. Information is available in Uppsala University’s Staff Portal and on the faculty’s website in the Staff Portal.

An agreement for printing of the dissertation is made between the doctoral student and the Department of Education, represented by the department head. The doctoral student may not enter a binding agreement for printing with a printer before the department head has approved the quoted price and signed the agreement.

The guidelines in this section also apply for licentiate theses.

4 Grants for printing and other costs

The Faculty Board of Educational Sciences covers the production costs for the edition, which may contain a maximum of 150 copies.

Since the principal supervisor approved printing, an agreement is drawn up between the department and the doctoral student, in which the department agrees to act as the ordering party and to cover production costs of the dissertation/licentiate thesis, for the amount established by the faculty board.

The author is not entitled to sell any of the dissertation copies for which funds were issued from the department.

5. Number of copies and distribution of the dissertation

The edition should amount to at least 120 copies. No later than three weeks before the public defence, the dissertation should be available at the University Library in the necessary number of copies (see below). No later than two weeks before the public defence, the dissertation should be available at all Swedish departments that conduct third-cycle education in the disciplinary research domain of the subject of the dissertation. It is up to the department to draw up a list of which departments should generally receive a copy of the dissertation.

The author should deliver 10 copies of the dissertation to the University Library no later than three weeks before the public defence, which is also the latest possible date for posting the dissertation. Authors of monographs published in the Acta series should contact Thesis Production to determine what is applicable for each series.

Fifteen copies of the dissertation are departmental copies and should be delivered to the administrator for third-cycle education. The author should also distribute the dissertation in accordance with a list drawn up by the department.

The author may also have any number of copies of the dissertation available at the public defence. The remaining copies can be used for distribution to participants in the research seminar and colleagues in the field at other Nordic or non-Nordic higher education institutions or used by the author for their own purposes.

Well before posting the doctoral dissertation, the author should contact the department's third-cycle education administrator to obtain the necessary information to clarify the distribution procedure.

The guidelines in this section also apply to licentiate theses, except that two copies of the thesis rather than 10 are to be delivered to the University Library, and five copies of the thesis are departmental copies.

6 Posting, time available and location of public defence

The time and location of the public defence is announced via mandatory electronic posting and traditional posting in the University Main Building (voluntary) no later than three weeks before the public defence. Licentiate theses can be posted in the University Library premises in Blåsenhus, and the licentiate seminar should be announced on the department's website at least three weeks before the seminar is held.

Neither posting nor public defences may occur between 15 June and 15 August. This means that anyone who wishes to defend their dissertation between 16 August and the beginning of the semester must announce the dissertation before the summer break. The Uppsala University Staff Portal contains more information on digital posting.

The guidelines in this section also apply for licentiate theses.

7 The public defence ceremony

The public defence may only begin if all examining committee members are present.

The public defence is led by the chairperson in the presence of the entire examining committee. It is carried out as follows:

- The ceremony begins with the chairperson introducing the author of the dissertation, the title of the dissertation, the research subject, the external reviewer and the members of the examining committee.
- The chairperson declares the public defence open.
- The chairperson gives the floor to the author, who has the opportunity to present any corrections or changes (*errata*).
- The external reviewer briefly presents the dissertation and the author states whether the content has been properly understood.
- This is followed by the actual public discussion and examination, which may vary in form and scope, but should constitute a critical review and scrutiny of the dissertation's scientific findings. It should consist of a discussion between the external reviewer and the author, in which the external reviewer presents critique of the dissertation and the author responds to the critique. The public discussion and examination concludes with the external reviewer presenting a summarising assessment of the dissertation. However, the external reviewer does not make a statement on the matter of the dissertation's grade.
- After the external reviewer concludes their review and the examining committee has the opportunity to ask questions, the chairperson opens up the floor, at which time anyone who so wishes may present, in the order determined by the chairperson, opinions on the dissertation. The author should respond to these statements.
- The chairperson closes the public defence.

There is no maximum time for a public defence, which should be taken into consideration when booking a venue. It is best if the external reviewer can give the supervisor a sense in advance of how long the public discussion and examination is expected to take.

The guidelines in this section also apply to licentiate seminars.

8 Meeting with examining committee

When the examining committee begins deliberations after the public defence, they should appoint a chairperson from among the committee members. All members must be present for the examining committee to be in quorum. The individual appointed chairperson of the examining committee is responsible for notifying the author of the committee's decision.

The external reviewer, principal supervisor and assistant supervisor have the right to participate in the meeting with the examining committee and in the deliberations but not in

decisions. An appointed substitute may not participate in the meeting of the examining committee unless an ordinary member is absent.

A doctoral dissertation is to be judged with a grade of either pass or fail. When grading, consideration should be given to the content of the dissertation and its defence. The committee's decision should be agreed upon by the majority. The examining committee is in quorum when all members are present. The committee's decision should be agreed upon by the majority. If a member of the examining committee disagrees with the majority's decision, a dissenting opinion should be noted in the minutes or in another decision document but not on the degree certificate.

If observations come up at the public defence that are sufficiently extraordinary for the examining committee to find it necessary to conduct a special investigation or checks before making a decision, they may adjourn their meeting for this reason.

Once the examining committee's meeting has ended, the Vice-Chancellor should be notified of the dissertation's grade. This is done by submitting to the third-cycle education administrator the signed examining committee minutes, which are then sent to the Faculty Board of Educational Sciences. The chairperson of the public defence ceremony is responsible for this notification.

The guidelines in this section also apply to licentiate seminars.

8 Fee and compensation for external reviewer

The relevant department pays the fee for the external reviewer. The external reviewer is also compensated for travel and accommodation in conjunction with the public defence. Members of the examining committee are compensated for travel and lodging, as long as they are not employees of Uppsala University.

9 Doctoral degree

The Vice-Chancellor issues a doctoral degree after the student submits an application. A doctoral degree requires both passing the courses of the third-cycle programme and a grade of pass on the doctoral dissertation.

A doctoral degree application is submitted on a specific form (see www.uu.se).

The guidelines in this section also apply to licentiate seminars.