

Stockholm University

Decision

8 October 2014

Guidelines for the public defence of doctoral theses at the Faculty of Social Sciences

SHV FN rev. 2007-02-09, 2011-05-02, 2013-05-24, 2014-05-06 and 2014-09-03. Procedure regarding public defence of doctoral thesis can be found in Chapter 6 of the Higher Education Ordinance and in Stockholm University's "Regulations for doctoral studies at Stockholm University" (2014-06-12, Reg. no. SU FV-1.1.2-0138-14).

1. Assessment at department level¹

When work on the thesis is nearing completion, the manuscript should be discussed by the faculty's supervisors and, if necessary, by specialists outside the department. The closest affected professor² has an obligation to decide whether or not to advise a public defence. The decision to advise against a public defence shall be communicated in writing.

2. Proposal to the Social Sciences Faculty Board

The chair of the public defence, the faculty examiner and the grading committee are appointed by the dean on behalf of the Social Sciences Faculty Board on the basis of a proposal from the closest affected professor in consultation with the head of department.³ The doctoral student shall be notified of the content of the proposal before it is sent to the Faculty Board.

The proposal shall be submitted via an electronic form to the faculty's web page no later than 6 term weeks before the intended date of the public defence so that the defence can take place at the appointed time even in the event of the proposal being referred back for reconsideration.

¹ In this document, institutes without their own study programmes at doctoral level are equal to departments in cases where a collaboration agreement regarding the studies at doctoral level is made with the department which has a programme on the subject in question. The institute and the department shall, in that case, be regarded as the same unit in these guidelines. However, consultations regarding the proposal for the public defence shall be carried out with the *department's* head.

² If the main supervisor is a professor at the department, he/she is the closest affected professor. If not, but an assistant supervisor is professor at the department, he/she will be the closest affected professor instead. If none of the supervisors are professors at the department, a closest affected professor shall be appointed by the Department Board. This appointee shall preferably be a professor at the department but can in certain cases, if so decided by the Department Board, be a professor at another department or institute within the Faculty.

³ If the closest affected professor is the head of department, consultation shall be carried out with the acting head of department. For institutes without their own study programme at doctoral level, consultation shall be carried out with the collaborating department's head.

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The proposal shall, in addition to the proposed chair, faculty examiner and grading committee, include an outline of the content of the thesis and details about which supervisor is granted the right to attend the grading committee meeting. One person can only occupy one of the following roles: chair of the public defence, faculty examiner or grading committee member.

3. Chair

A professor, visiting professor, associate professor or docent can be appointed chair of the public defence. An exception to the requirement that the chair comes from the department can only be made if there is no possible person for the chair available.

4. Faculty examiner

The examiner should have the academic level of docent. In special circumstances, a doctor who does not have the academic level of docent can be appointed. The examiner shall have no ties with the doctoral student or the thesis and he/she may not come from the same department as the doctoral student or any of the supervisors. If the examiner is unable to attend, one of the ordinary examining committee members who has a post outside Stockholm University can take the examiner's place. His/her position on the examining committee shall be taken by the reserve member. If none of the ordinary examining committee members who have a post outside Stockholm University are willing to act as examiner, the public defence should be called off.

5. Grading committee

According to Stockholm University regulations, the grading committee should comprise three or five members. At least one of the members must have a post outside Stockholm University and no more than one member may be from the same department as the doctoral student. A person who has been the doctoral student's supervisor or can in other respects be considered not to be impartial, due to close collaboration or a relationship of dependency, may not be on the committee. The committee appoints its chair internally. A reserve member shall also be appointed. If any of the ordinary members are unable to attend, the reserve member shall take a place on the grading committee.

The faculty examiner and one of the supervisors are entitled to be present at the meeting of the grading committee and participate in its deliberations but not in its decision. The name of the supervisor attending the meeting shall be stated on the public defence application form.

The doctoral thesis should be assessed using the grade Pass or Fail. The grading committee is quorum when all of its members are assembled. The decision of the committee will be the opinion that a majority of the members agree upon. If members of the committee differ in opinion, or decide on the grade Fail, their reasons must always be registered in the recorded minutes of the grading committee.

Both genders should, unless there are special circumstances, be represented on the grading committee.

The following rules also applies at the Faculty of Social Sciences:

- * All members of the grading committee, including the reserve member, shall have the qualifications of docent.

- * Two of the ordinary members must have their posts outside Stockholm University, and may not belong to the same department.

- * One ordinary member shall belong to the department to which the doctoral student is enrolled. An exception can be made if there is no possible member available.

- * The reserve member shall belong to the Faculty of Social Sciences and come from another department and another examination subject than the doctoral student. If there are special circumstances, an exception to the faculty requirement can be made. As regards reserve members, see recommendations in appendix 1.

- * Members within the faculty may not represent the same examination subject even if they belong to different departments.

- * Co-opting additional members to the examining committee's deliberations is not permitted.

6. Reimbursement for costs

The department is allocated a standard amount of SEK 40,000 in arrears for each thesis that receives a Pass grade. This amount is the Faculty Board's standard contribution towards printing costs, fee for the faculty examiner, travel expenses and per diem allowance for the faculty examiner and the members of the examining committee, inter alia.

If the thesis receives a Fail grade after the closest affected professor has advised against a public defence in writing, the doctoral student shall not receive any printing expenses contribution. The standard amount that the department is allocated in that case is SEK 20,000. A doctoral student who chooses to defend his/her thesis in spite of being advised against it in writing by the closest affected professor has to personally cover the printing costs if the thesis is rejected. The amount is paid by the Social Sciences Faculty Board Administrative Office twice a year (June and December) and is based on the minutes of the grading committee.

Appendix 1

Recommendations for deputy members of the examining committee

The following recommendations apply to deputy members of the examining committee at the Faculty of Social Sciences:

- Reserve members are termed **deputy members**.
- The deputy member is the faculty's representative in the evaluation process.
- The deputy member shall read the thesis prior to the public defence.
- The deputy member is expected to attend the public defence.
- The deputy member has the right to be present and voice an opinion at examining committee meetings but do not have the right to vote.

If a deputy member becomes a grading committee member, the same requirements and rights apply to the deputy as they do to the ordinary members. According to the guidelines, both genders shall be represented among the ordinary members. In some cases this may mean that when the deputy joins the grading committee both genders are no longer represented. In these exceptional cases, the main rule about both genders being represented is automatically waived. For these reasons, it is an advantage (but not a requirement) if two people from both genders are on the grading committee including the deputy.