

Instructions for the chair of the public defence of a doctoral thesis

A chairperson is appointed for each individual public defence of a doctoral thesis. The chair for the public defence of a thesis must have a doctoral degree and must be an academically qualified university teacher/researcher at Umeå University, but not one of the supervisors. The doctoral student's examiner may be appointed as the chairperson. The Dean appoints the chairperson.

Public defence of doctoral thesis

The public defence can be held in either Swedish or English. It generally has the following format:

- 1) The chair welcomes the audience and introduces the author of the thesis, the title of the thesis, the external reviewer, and the members of the examining committee, and briefly describes what will happen.
- 2) The chair will then give the floor to the author of the thesis, who then has the opportunity to inform the audience of any corrections to the thesis.
- 3) The external reviewer holds a presentation of approximately 15 minutes to provide a general background in the area of research considered in the thesis, placing the author's thesis results in a wider context.
- 4) The author presents his/her thesis for approximately 20-30 minutes.
- 5) The external reviewer and the author of the thesis then carry on an in-depth scientific debate on the various parts of the thesis, which generally takes approximately 60-90 minutes.
- 6) The examining committee discusses the thesis with its author for about 20-30 minutes.
- 7) Before the defence of the thesis ends, the audience is given the opportunity to put questions to the author.

The public defence of a doctoral thesis has no actual time limit, but normally it lasts approximately 2 to 3 hours. The chair is entitled to decide on whether a short break is needed.

Should any member of the examining committee fail to appear at the beginning of the public defence, the chairperson is entitled to appoint a suitable replacement from among the representatives of academia in the audience. Note that without one external member of the examining committee from another seat of learning, the public defence of a doctoral thesis CANNOT proceed.

Should the external reviewer fail to appear at the beginning of the public defence, the chairperson is entitled to appoint a member of the examining committee as the external reviewer (not the external member). A suitable replacement for this member of the examining committee will then be appointed from among the representatives of academia in the audience.

After the external reviewer's presentation of the thesis, the chair gives the floor to the members of the examining committee. After the questions from the examining committee



have been dealt with, the audience is given the opportunity to ask questions. When there are no further questions from the external reviewer, examining committee, or the audience, the chairperson concludes the defence.

Examining committee meeting

The examining committee convenes directly after the public defence. The chair of the public defence, the external reviewer and supervisor(s) are entitled to attend and participate in the deliberations of the examining committee, but not to participate in its decision.