



# Handbook for Research Studies

LUND UNIVERSITY | SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



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# HANDBOOK FOR RESEARCH STUDIES

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This handbook is intended for doctoral students, supervisors and others involved in research studies at the School of Social Work, hereafter referred to as the “department”. The information can also be useful for those who are thinking about applying for research studies and those who carry out assignments for the department, for example as an external reviewer or member of an examining committee.



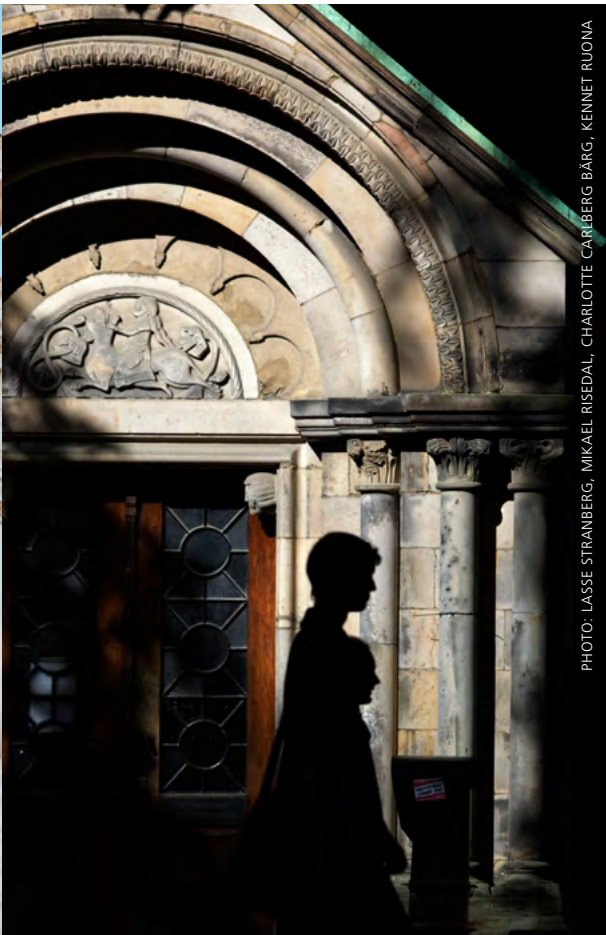


PHOTO: LASSE STRANBERG, MIKAEL RISEDAL, CHARLOTTE CARLBERG BÄRG, KENNET RUONA



## General information on research studies

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Research studies is the highest level of education within public education. Research studies are regulated by the Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434) and Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) as well as Lund University's and the faculty's regulations concerning research studies.

The programme consists of four years of full-time study (240 credits) and leads to a doctoral degree. The doctoral student has an opportunity to obtain a licentiate degree (120 credits) as a stage in research studies. It is also possible to undertake research studies as a licentiate student over a period of two years (120 credits). The licentiate degree and doctoral degree can also be conducted on a part-time basis, at least 50 per cent, which translates to four, and eight, years.

### RESEARCH STUDIES IN SOCIAL WORK

Research in social work mainly concerns social problems and their origins, causes and solutions, the conditions and life situations of vulnerable groups and individuals, analysis of welfare policy, social policy measures, social interventions, and human service organisations and professions. Current fields of research are outlined on the department website and the learning outcomes for the doctoral and licentiate degrees follow the Higher Education Ordinance and are stated in the general syllabus for research studies.

The aim of research studies in social work at the School of Social Work, Lund University, is to provide specialised knowledge of social work and to train students to become independent and critical researchers with broad theoretical knowledge in the social sciences, methodological skills and the ability to carry out research projects. The studies are conducted with a high degree of independence and an emphasis on the student's own sense of responsibility for planning and execution.

### ADMISSION TO RESEARCH STUDIES

Admission to research studies is regulated by Lund University's Admission rules for doctoral programmes, the Regulations for third cycle education at the Faculty of Social Sciences, and the general syllabus.

The School of Social Work normally seeks to admit a group of doctoral students every other year. The group's size is determined by the department's financial situation. Admission may also take place on a separate basis, for example when a doctoral student is to work within an externally funded

research project. All available positions are announced on the University's web page.

The requirements for admission to third-cycle studies are that the applicant meets the general and specific admission requirements and is considered to have the ability required to benefit from the programme.

A person meets the general admission requirements for third-cycle studies if: he or she has been awarded a second-cycle qualification or has fulfilled the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second cycle, or has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

A person meets the specific admission requirements if he or she has fulfilled the requirements for courses comprising at least 30 second-cycle credits in Social Work, or a corresponding qualification acquired in Sweden or abroad. The doctoral student must also have a completed second-cycle independent projects worth of 15 credits.

Selection is done solely amongst those who meet the admission requirements. The overriding selection criterion is the applicant's *ability to benefit from the third cycle programme*.

At the School of Social Work, the selection process for doctoral students involves internal experts. The internal experts are selected from members of the supervisors' committee, in connection with the sorting of received applications. The stages in the process are:

- Reading and assessment
- Interviews and checking of references for the strongest candidates
- Final assessment on admission
- Communication of ranking of applicants
- Decision on admission
- Employment.



## Officials, advisory bodies and functions

The Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University has overall responsibility for research studies at the faculty's various departments. *The Faculty Board* is the faculty's highest decision-making body and makes decisions based on what is stated in the University regulations. The Faculty's *Research Studies Council* is an advisory body that monitors research studies, briefs the *Faculty Board* and initiates faculty-wide courses and events.

*The Departmental Board* is the School of Social Work's highest decision-making body, whose decision-making scope includes the course syllabi within research studies.

The School of Social Work's *Head of Department* has formal responsibility for staff management and finances at the department and is therefore well acquainted with making decisions on matters such as employment, leave etc. Among the functions delegated to the Head of Department by the Faculty Board are: admission and employment of doctoral

students, appointment of supervisors and approval of drafts and revisions of individual study plans.

The teaching staff at the department who are supervisors or active within research studies are members of the *supervisors' committee*. The supervisors' committee meets regularly to discuss policy, exchange information, and plan and solve issues of relevance to research studies. Memos from the supervisors' committee are available on the intranet. Matters relating to policy are also discussed during the department's annual Research days in which both doctoral students and supervisors participate.

At the School of Social Work a *Director of Studies* has overall responsibility for policy, planning, coordination and follow up of general and specific issues that affect research studies.

The School of Social Work's *Programme Administrator* participates in the planning of activities and handles administrative matters relating to registration, statistics, reporting of study results and archiving.

The School of Social Work's *HR Coordinator* processes employment matters and assists in HR affairs such as the calculation of extended employment due to special reasons. These reasons include leave due to illness, parental leave, other requested leave and departmental duties.

### DOCTORAL STUDENT GROUP

The *doctoral student group* consists of the doctoral students who are admitted to research studies. The doctoral students meet regularly in various formats such as workshops, doctoral student meetings and more informal doctoral student lunches. Doctoral student workshops can discuss everything from individuals' texts to invited guest's lectures in a seminar format. Formal doctoral student meetings are held two to three times per semester or when required. Current issues are taken up concerning doctoral students' rights and obligations, matters within the department and other issues affecting the doctoral student group that should be taken further to the departmental board or departmental management. If required, the head of department or director of studies is invited in for direct discussions and information at doctoral student meetings.

Doctoral students at Lund University are organised within the Lund Doctoral Students' Union (LDK).



PHOTO: KENNET RUONA







## ADMITTED DOCTORAL STUDENT

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At the School of Social Work, the introduction of a doctoral student consists of a meeting with the School of Social Work's HR coordinator, the director of research studies, supervisor and the coordinator of research studies. An introductory course concerning the field of research is normally held when a group of doctoral students is admitted; for doctoral students who are admitted individually, consultation takes place between the supervisor and director of research studies on the organisation of an introductory programme.



PHOTO: KENNET RUDNA



# Terms of employment

In general, students admitted to research studies are appointed to a doctoral studentship<sup>[1]</sup>. The employment and education is thereby covered by legislation concerning work environment, co-determination and equal treatment. Doctoral students who are employed have the right to all resources available for employees, i.e., workplace (including access to phone, computer and possibilities to print and copy), occupational health service, access to library and other information resources at the University etc. The doctoral student is expected to, when time permits, participate in the department meetings and staff days.

Admitted doctoral students have a full time employment term of four years, while those admitted to licentiate studies have a full time employment of two years.

## ABSENCE, OTHER ASSIGNMENTS AND DEPARTMENTAL DUTIES

Customary rules apply for sick leave, care of children and leave of absence. Absence must be registered in the university's personnel administration system, "Primula". More information regarding this can be found at the internal website for staff at Lund University.

Remember to document absence since it can extend the period of studies – *one day's sick leave at full-time employment extends the period of study by one day.*

Doctoral students are sometimes offered assignments – evaluations, external funding, editorships – that are not directly related to thesis work. It is possible to reduce duties as a doctoral student to part time in order to devote time to assignments or suchlike. The faculty dean can grant leave of absence from a doctoral studentship for a period, but this is granted restrictively. Give a long period of notice, discuss with supervisors and consult with the HR coordinator on matters concerning leave of absence and changes in the percentage of employment.

A doctoral student can carry out departmental duties for a maximum of 20 % of full working hours, estimated over the entire study period. In most cases, departmental duties consist of teaching, but can also cover administrative duties, such as organising seminars, as well as research that is not part of the student's own thesis project (for example, work on other researchers' projects). This is usually the case if the assignment would otherwise have been carried out by col-

leagues at the department. The head of department decides which assignments can be considered departmental duties.

Details about departmental duties are to be documented in the individual study plan (read more in the section "The Individual Study Plan"). The Doctoral Student shall be compensated with an extension of his or her study period. Three things to bear in mind concerning departmental duties:

1. Ensure that it is clear how many hours an agreed task is to be compensated for, *before* the assignment is carried out.
2. *Keep a record* of all departmental duties. The course director accounts for hours in a matrix, but if there are gaps in reporting, it is advisable to have your own records.
3. The director of first cycle studies has responsibility for planning the department's teaching and shall be informed of any agreements that affect the teaching of specific courses.

Doctoral students interested in teaching can contact the director of studies during the introductory phase of research studies.

## CALCULATING EXTENSIONS

The principle for calculating an extension based on departmental duties is as follows:

$(\text{Hours of departmental duty}^{**} / \text{annual working hours}) = X$   
percentage \* 365 = extension in days when employed full time.

\*\* This number can be replaced with the days of sick leave or other leave of absence, or the number of hours spent on other assignments. See the description of such in the episode above.

Annual working hours are based on age as follows:

- up to 29 years – 1756 hours/year
- 30–39 – 1732 hours/year
- 40 and above – 1700 hours.

The extension in days for full-time work are then counted as a whole, not including public holidays. The same calculation applies to sick leave and other leave of absence.

[1] Funding for PhD study that is not a doctoral studentship is referred to as alternative funding. This could for example be a doctoral student employed by a company, while pursuing parttime research studies.

**Sample calculation 1:** Mary teaches 260 hours in one year. She is 35 and therefore has 1732 annual working hours:  $260 \div 1732 = 0.15$  (15 %)  $\times 365 = 54.75$  days, i.e. an extension of 55 days.

**Sample calculation 2:** Leo teaches 351 hours each year. He is 26 and has 1756 annual working hours. Teaching accounts for 20 % of annual working hours ( $351 \div 1756 = 0.2$ ) and this results each year in an extension of 73 days ( $0.2 \times 365$ ), which over four years amounts to an extension of 292 days ( $73 \times 4$ ). Converted into months = 9.6 months. This gives Leo the maximum extension possible according to the Higher Education Ordinance, which therefore means the original employment period of 4 years (48 months) is extended to four years and 9.6 months (57.6 months).

### PAY RAISE

Lund University applies a salary scale that includes step increases when the supervisors deem that a doctoral student has reached 60, 120 and 180 credits. Previously, step increases followed the seminars in accordance with the model: planning seminar 60 credits, mid-way seminar 120 credits and final seminar 180 credits. This structure can be rigid, as courses and data gathering are not included, so our procedure is to make a less restrictive assessment.

The supervisors, after consultation with the doctoral student, determine whether a step increase is applicable. It is the responsibility of doctoral students to raise the matter of a step increase.



PHOTO: JOHAN PERSSON



## Cost and financing

The School of Social Work covers the cost of courses that are provided by the department, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Research School in Social Work. This accounts for the costs for course participation, travel, food and overnight stays, if applicable. On the other hand, the doctoral student pays for the required reading and similar items.

The School of Social Work can participate in financing other courses, but this is always subject to individual assessment. The assessment considers aspects such as costs, the course's value or necessity for the doctoral student's research studies and possibilities to fulfil this need through courses at our own faculty or within the framework of the Research School in Social Work. The general principle, however, is that the doctoral student is expected to use external grants or the so-called doctoral backpack – a pot of money available for doctoral student expenses – to finance external courses. If such funding is not available for the doctoral student, it is appropriate to consult the director of research studies. Our policy is to contribute a maximum of SEK 10 000 for external courses.

For doctoral students working within externally funded projects there is often funding within the project for expenses such as the purchase of recording equipment, travel and overnight stays related to data collection, literature, conference participation, transcription of interviews etc. Doctoral students who do not work within externally funded projects are expected to apply for grants in order to cover the corresponding costs <sup>[2]</sup>, or use their doctoral backpack. The doctoral backpack is a pot of money for each doctoral student totalling SEK 40 000 for the entire study period (administered by the School of Social Work's financial officer; the programme administrator has information on what costs are covered).

Costs for ethical review, i.e. a fee of SEK 5 000 paid to the ethical review board, are covered by the department, if payment cannot be covered by project funds (funds for this are commonly applied for within projects).

In general, decisions on paying thesis-related costs are based on an assessment of the activity's necessity, the cost and possibilities for finding other financing. The faculty has a policy of paying for proofreading of articles that are accepted for publication in international peer-reviewed journals. The department covers the cost pending acceptance by the jour-

nal and when this happens, the information is passed on to the financial officer who requisitions money from the faculty. Note that this type of service has been procured centrally and we must keep to a list of suppliers. Regarding costs for completion of the thesis, see Public defence of a PhD thesis.

### ACTIVITY AND MAINTENANCE

The doctoral student is responsible for continuous reporting of activity and maintenance. Information is compiled using a simple form twice a year, in December–January for the autumn and July–August for the spring. When information is registered in Ladok, it is sent to Statistics Sweden (SCB) and forms the basis for allocation of resources to Lund University.

The programme administrator provides instructions and forms to all doctoral students and supervisors. The form is filled in as follows:

**Activity is the proportion of a full-time position that the research student devoted to their research studies during the semester.** Departmental duties and administrative work *do not* count. The calculation is made over a six-month period and stated in per cent. Those who have devoted 100 % to research studies for half a semester and 50 % for the other half therefore state 75 %.

**Maintenance means how research studies have been funded.** Here, the total shall always be 100 %, something that many find difficult to understand. The reason is that the information only relates to activities *linked to* research studies. Those with a part-time doctoral studentship devoting 50 % to research studies and 50 % to other employment shall therefore state 50 % as activity and 100 % as maintenance via a doctoral studentship (DTJ). Among the types of maintenance stated on the form as possible are "Other" (ÖVR), which is the category used when maintenance is absent, or when maintenance is via gainful employment outside the University. Those who, for example, pursue studies part time and have a position as a lecturer at the department 30 % and as a social worker 30 % shall therefore state activity as 50 % and maintenance as 30 % duties within higher education (HTJ) and 70 % other (ÖVR) (other, in this case divided between gainful employment unconnected to research studies and absent maintenance). Those who have a full-time doctoral studentship and have full departmental duties state 80 % activity with 100 % doctoral studentship (DTJ) as maintenance.

[2] Doctoral students and researchers can apply for the faculty's travel and research grants in February and September.

## Conditions of study

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The objective and outcomes for Doctor and Licentiate degrees can be found in the general syllabus for third-cycle studies in Social Work (Reg No. U 2020/961). There you can also find an outline of the programme design<sup>[3]</sup>

### REGISTRATION

All doctoral students shall be registered in Ladok. This is done by the doctoral students themselves prior to every semester by logging in to "Studentportalen" with username and password.

### THE INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN

An individual study plan (ISP) is to be constructed for each doctoral student and be signed by the doctoral student, supervisor and head of department. The individual study plan is intended as a tool and support in the planning and execution of research studies, but it is also a document that could be referred to in discussions on how the parties have fulfilled the agreed undertakings. Consequently, it is important that the document's content is given serious attention.

*The individual study plan shall be drawn up in a basic version when studies begin.* It is the principal supervisor who initiates the process and sets up the study plan. The individual study plan shall subsequently be followed up and *revised at least once a year*, normally in May/June (latest submission date for signed plans is 30 June). It is part of the doctoral student's tasks to revise the study plan, see more in the section on Withdrawal of Supervision and Other Resources.

In the annual follow up of the study plan, the doctoral student downloads a Ladok transcript to check that completed courses have been registered correctly. It is advisable to discuss the plan with the supervisors twice per year: to plan and revise the plan for the coming year at a meeting in May/June and review the progress of the plan in December. Discuss specifically the progress of the studies and forms of supervision.

The individual study plan is to contain information on the preliminary title of the thesis, thesis work, and planned and completed courses and seminars. The plan presents the doctoral student's funding history, degree of activity, maintenance, access to workplace, departmental duties, remaining study time and date for the planned public defence of the doctoral thesis. The plan shall also state special reasons for

extension of the study period (parental leave, sick leave, care of children) and document other important circumstances.

### SUPERVISION

Each doctoral student is assigned two supervisors, of whom one is to be the principal supervisor. The principal supervisor shall be a qualified reader ("docent") and employed by the department. Having more than two supervisors is an exception, but can occur, for example when the doctoral student has connections with an external research environment. At Lund University, doctoral supervisors are required to have taken a course on doctoral supervision, unless they are considered to have corresponding expertise.

The doctoral student has the right to supervision during the time that is deemed necessary for the prescribed studies comprising 240 credits, i.e., four years of full-time study. Supervision includes guidance on the focus of studies and thesis work, as well as assistance and quality assurance during on-going work.

The supervisors and doctoral student together draw up the individual study plan, which covers planning of courses, the thesis project, conferences, leave etc. The supervisors also have overall responsibility for ensuring thesis work is conducted in line with research ethics and are responsible for submitting applications for ethical review to regional ethical review boards, if required.

### The scope of supervision

The supervisors are remunerated for a total of 80 hours per year per doctoral student, and time is divided equally between the supervisors, unless otherwise agreed. This means work amounting to approximately 20 hours per semester and supervisor. The work encompasses reading, supervisory meetings and administration. The allotted time is intended to balance out over the course of the thesis work, as certain periods require more reading and meetings than others.

### How are supervisors appointed?

The director of research studies has overall responsibility for this process. The supervisors' expertise, considered as a pair, is the basis for the allocation of supervisors. The doctoral student's wishes are, of course, an important aspect in the process of appointing supervisors.

[3] The degree of Doctor comprises 240 credits. Courses comprise 75 credits and an academic thesis 165 credits. The degree of Licentiate comprises 120 credits, of which courses comprise 37.5 credits and academic thesis 82.5 credits.



### Changing supervisor

In accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 5 Section 28), a doctoral student has the right to change supervisor. A change of supervisor can be initiated by the doctoral student or supervisor, for instance when the doctoral student's thesis work takes a new direction, when the supervisor's work situation changes or when a doctoral stu-

dent resumes thesis work after a long break. If the change of supervisor is due to dissatisfaction or conflict, the parties are expected, as a rule, to first talk about the difficulties together, but it is also possible to seek advice prior to this from the director of research studies or the head of department. If the issue cannot be resolved, the director of research studies or the head of department become involved.

## Courses in research studies

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The course component of research studies consists of courses that are offered by the department and faculty, courses at other higher education institutions in or outside Sweden, and independent study courses. The assessment of the course component is usually by individual advanced assignments. Exams included in third cycle studies and the thesis are assessed using the grades Pass or Fail.

The 75 credits awarded for courses must include at least 25 credits in theory of science and methodology, including research ethics, and at least 25 credits in social and behavioural science theory and research orientation of relevance to social work. For a degree of Licentiate, the 37.5 credits awarded for courses must include at least 15 credits in theory of science and methodology, including research ethics, and at least 15 credits in social and behavioural science theory and research orientation of relevance to social work. These are the minimum requirements and it is likely that students will obtain more credits in both areas.

At the School of Social Work, the head of department and director of studies are examiners of research studies and determine whether the course requirements stated above have been met.

*Courses in research studies that do not fall within the two categories above must be relevant to the subject.* Our policy is not to include language courses as courses in research studies, even if these are necessary for conducting field-work. In the case of courses taken at other higher education institutions, the number of credits available for transfer is assessed by the examiner of research studies.

*Second cycle courses* that are deemed to be appropriate and of sufficiently high quality can be included as courses in research studies. The examiner of research studies makes decisions on these matters and also specifies whether an additional assessment is required to include the course

in research studies. In some instances, it is also possible that first cycle courses can be transferred, and in that case an additional assessment may be required. An additional examination usually consists of writing a paper and if necessary, presenting specialised literature. First or second cycle courses in quantitative or statistical methods can – after consideration of the need for additional assessment – be accepted as courses in research studies.

Which courses the individual doctoral student shall take and whether these can be included in the degree is decided in consultation with the supervisors and documented in the individual study plan.

### READING COURSES

Reading courses are defined as courses that do not involve teaching. This can apply to research overviews or advanced studies in theory and methods. A course syllabus is drawn up in consultation with the supervisor and director of research studies, reviewed by the supervisors' committee and then approved by the departmental board. Reading courses are to be designed in a way that makes it possible for other doctoral students to take them.

The courses may not have the character of concealed chapter writing for a thesis, as this would mean counting work double, as both course and thesis credits. The text content of a reading course of 7.5 credits should be around 1 500 pages, but can vary depending on the character of the course and texts. Reading courses are assessed by professors or readers within the department. The assessment is usually by a written paper (10–15 pages). It is possible that, based on their expertise, supervisors make a practical assessment of activities during a reading course, but supervisors should not to assess their own doctoral students. As the dialogue between lecturers and students during lectures and seminars is a key part of the learning process, the doc-

toral student and supervisor should ensure that reading courses do not make up a predominant part of the course component. It is preferable if several doctoral students can participate in a reading course and discuss the literature together.

### OTHER CREDIT-EARNING ACTIVITIES

Credits can be earned for activities other than courses in research studies and our position is that this applies to presentations at international conferences. Active participation, i.e., presenting a paper or poster entitles two credits. Note that credits for conference participation is limited to one occasion during research studies. In the case of co-authorship, the doctoral student must be the major contributor and it is a requirement that the doctoral student is the one who physically presents the work at the conference.

### CREDIT TRANSFER FOR COURSES COMPLETED PRIOR TO ADMISSION TO RESEARCH STUDIES

The examiner (by delegation from the departmental board) may approve credit transfer from a second cycle programme completed prior to admission to research studies. A decision on such credit transfer is to be linked to a decision on a deduction of the study period corresponding to the credits transferred. Credit transfer is to be documented in the individual study plan, as soon as possible or at least within a year of making the study plan so that the matter is not addressed when the study period comes to an end.

According to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), credit transfers for courses prior to admission are appealable. Lund University's plan of handling documents states that granted credit transfers shall be documented in the study documentation system Ladok. When rejected, the student shall be informed and the decision should be archived in W3D3, the Lund University-wide support system for document registration and case management.

### HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING

The University regulations for third-cycle studies (STYR 2018/ 562) stipulate that doctoral students who teach in first and second cycle education shall undergo two weeks of introductory training in teaching and learning in higher education. All doctoral students shall be offered such training.

The department should ensure that doctoral students who continuously teach take further relevant higher education teacher training. Completed higher education teacher training

can be counted as departmental duties, and thereby extension of the study period. Alternatively, a maximum of 4.5 credits can be counted as course credits in research studies. Further course credits from higher education teacher training can be counted if they have an obvious relevance to the subject of the thesis. The matter is decided by the examiner and should be discussed in the supervisors' committee.

### IF A TEACHER WANTS TO CREATE A PHD COURSE – WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

Those planning to create a course should initially investigate the need and interest among doctoral students, and think carefully about cooperation within and outside the faculty etc.

1. Consult the director of research studies.
2. Find support in the supervisors' committee – submit an outline.
3. Submit a course syllabus for a decision by the departmental board.

Templates, examples and administrative support are provided by the programme coordinator. According to University regulations, course syllabi for research studies shall contain the following information:

1. Course details, i.e., course code, course title in Swedish and English, cycle and number of credits.
2. General information (the place of the course in the educational system and language of instruction).
3. Learning outcomes.
4. Course content.
5. Teaching methods.
6. Examination details.
7. Grades available in accordance with University regulations (Pass or Fail).

It's important that those taking the course understand how it is designed and what is required. Therefore, it should be emphasised that the reading list should be well thought out and carefully presented. This is particularly important for independent study courses. According to University regulations, courses in research studies shall be evaluated. Please note that course syllabi are to be written in Swedish, even if the course is taught in English. If a course syllabus needs to be translated, this will be provided by the University translation service.



# DOCTORAL THESIS

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A doctoral thesis can be designed as either a single unified scholarly work (monograph thesis) or as a compilation of research papers (compilation thesis). The requirements for quality and scope of the research effort are the same for monographs and compilation theses. A doctoral thesis is worth 165 credits (82.5 credits for a licentiate thesis) and is normally written in Swedish or English (however, it can also be written in Danish, Norwegian, German or French). A thesis not written in English must include an English abstract. It is appropriate to include a Swedish summary for a thesis written in English (and to consider how the results of the thesis are to be made accessible in Swedish).

## MONOGRAPHS

A monograph is defined as a thesis presented as a book divided into chapters. A monograph includes chapters in which the doctoral student presents the aim and issues, the method and material, theory, relevant research and empirical results. The division into chapters and structure of the text is determined by what is appropriate for the monograph as a whole.

A monograph consists of approximately 200 pages as a printed book and is normally published in the department's thesis series. If a monograph is published by another publisher, the publisher's rules need to be harmonised with the rules that apply for theses presented at Lund University.

Monographs are normally written by a single author, but in principle it is possible for two doctoral students to produce a joint monograph. In such cases, it is necessary to carefully indicate how the work has been divided between the two authors.

## COMPILATION THESES

A compilation thesis consists of research publications or manuscripts that address the same complex of problems or theme, and a comprehensive introduction ("kappa"). Compilation theses are generally written in English.

As is the case with a monograph thesis, an overall assessment is made of the scholarly quality of the compilation thesis, which means that deviations from these guidelines are possible. At the School of Social Work, a compilation thesis typically consists of four research papers and an introductory chapter. The papers shall be published or possible to publish in peer-reviewed research journals or edited volumes or anthologies. It is recommended that at least two of the papers are published or accepted for publication at the time of submission.

A compilation thesis can include co-authored papers, if the author's independent share in these can be shown. The division of work between the authors shall be clearly documented, either in the respective papers or in the introductory chapter. Before the public defence of the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student shall have submitted a co-authorship certificate that complies with the faculty guidelines for such certificates. If several co-authored papers are included in the compilation thesis, the doctoral student's contribution must appear to be the dominant part.

The scope of the papers, the number of co-authored papers, and the division of work within them shall be considered in the assessment of how many papers the thesis must include. The department's position is that sole-authored papers to a greater extent emphasise the doctoral student's ability to work independently. However, the ambition to emphasise such ability should not entail overlooking the contribution of others. The Vancouver System might provide some guidelines on what qualifies as co-authorship of articles.

The introductory chapter ("kappa") places the separate papers in a research context and discuss the contribution of the thesis. Furthermore, the introductory chapter is to present the overall aim and issues, theoretical premises, methodological considerations and relation to relevant previous research on the complex of problems under discussion. In typical cases, the introductory chapter also contains summaries of each of the appended papers.

It is possible to conceive of variants of the compilation thesis that deviate from the above. One is the possibility to merge a licentiate thesis in monograph format with one or two thematically linked articles and an introductory chapter to form a doctoral thesis.

## SEMINARS

Seminars are the backbone of research studies. Doctoral students and other researchers are expected to participate and submit comments as much as possible. Participating in seminars is important for your own development as a researcher and a way to contribute to colleagues' research and to the research environment of the department.

During the thesis work, the doctoral student shall have the opportunity to present texts on theoretical and methodological problems in the work, put forward plans, papers and thesis texts – for example, drafts for chapters in a monograph or articles in a compilation thesis – and act as a critical reviewer of the work of fellow doctoral students. The doctoral student shall present thesis work in at least three seminars:

1. in connection with planning of the thesis (**planning seminar**)
2. when the thesis work has reached approximately half-way (**middle seminar**)
3. at a **final seminar** about six months before the estimated public defence of the doctoral thesis (see relevant heading).

It is also customary for the doctoral student to hold a presentation seminar in the first semester, either within the framework of the introductory course or on a separate occasion. The timing of a seminar is decided jointly by the doctoral student and supervisors.

It is important not to restrict the planning and middle seminars by detailed instructions on content and number of pages. Planning seminars usually focus on a text that outlines the overall idea of the thesis based on a problem formulation and research questions, previous research in the field, the place of the thesis project within it, and a plan for data collection. A text of this character consists of some 18–25 pages.

A middle seminar text typically consists of an introduction (background, aim, presentation of the thesis structure as a whole) as well as a few empirical chapters or one or two articles. It is common for a full-time student to hold a planning seminar after about one year of studies, and a middle seminar after two years, but there is a considerable variation depending on the type of research project.

Doctoral students shall be provided with and seek opportunities to act as commentators at seminars that present

the work of others. Commentators at planning seminars should therefore be sought among the group of doctoral students and it is quite accepted for doctoral students to act as commentators at middle seminars. On occasion, more than one person has been engaged as commentator if the material has been extensive. Regarding planning and middle seminars, it is usually the doctoral student, after consultation with the supervisors, who asks a colleague if they can act as commentator (see Final Seminar).

Seminars are an opportunity to receive valuable comments on your own work and can be used very creatively, as morning or afternoon seminars, lunch seminars with short presentations, in cooperation with external parties or in other formats that are deemed appropriate. They can also be used for the discussion of material that is not directly related to the thesis (such as reports).

It is important that information on planned seminars is presented in the calendar, so that other researchers can plan to participate, and that texts are sent out in reasonable time, which is normally one week before the seminar is held, but earlier if the text is extensive. The supervisors and doctoral student have a special responsibility for asking and encouraging colleagues to participate in a planned seminar.

The department does not usually remunerate researchers who are asked to introduce or provide comments at seminars (however, remuneration is paid for final seminars, see relevant heading). An exception can be made if, for example, there are project funds that can cover such assignments (incidentally, one tip is to include funds for inviting researchers to seminars, workshops etc. in project applications).

## FINAL SEMINAR

The thesis manuscript is discussed at a final seminar which is usually when about six months remain until the public defence. The seminar is part of a quality assurance process and it is therefore important that the manuscript presented can be assessed as a whole. Ideally, this means that all the parts of the thesis are present. However, if a chapter is missing, there should at least be information about what the chapter is intended to deal with.

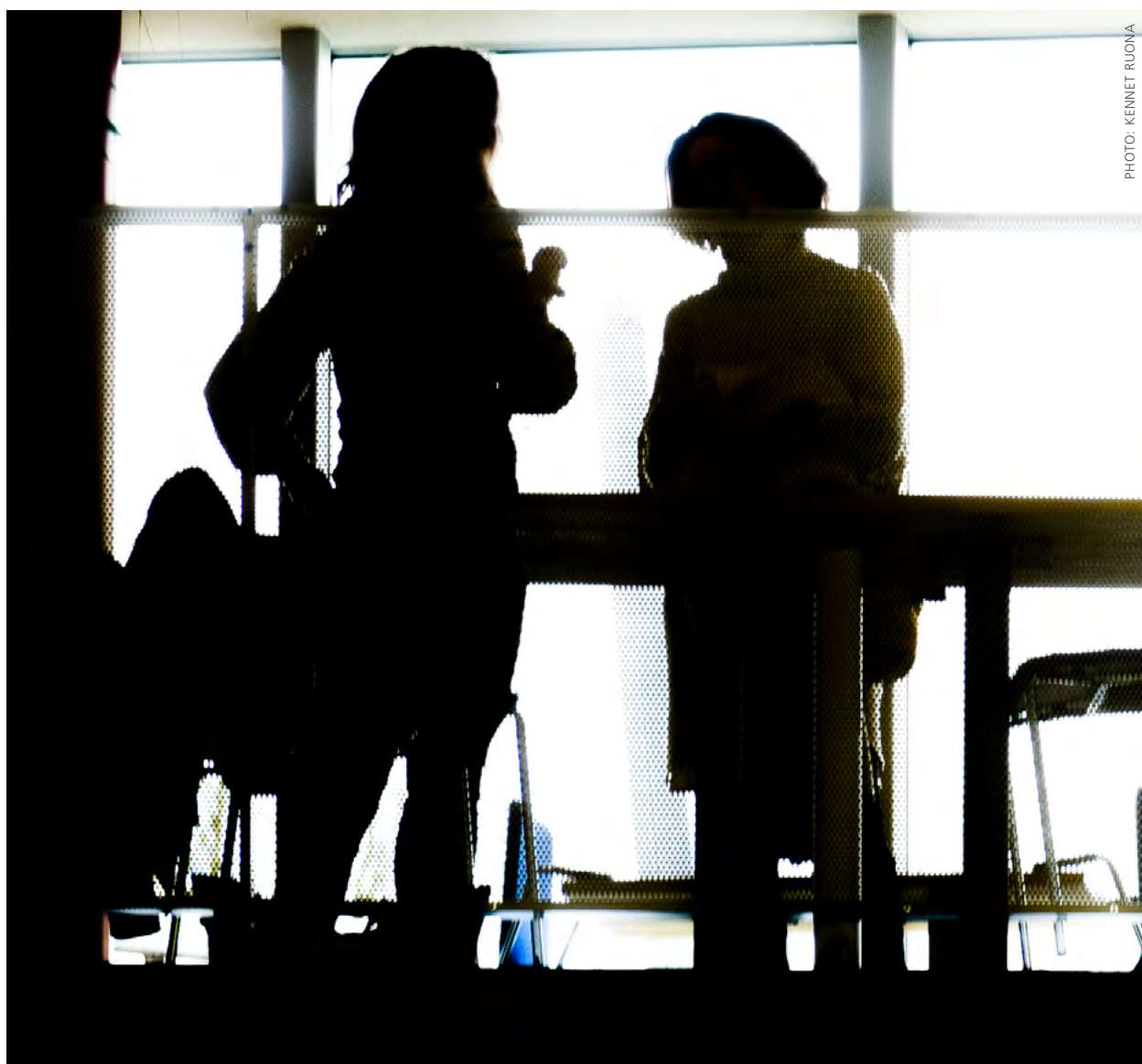
At the final seminar a researcher with a doctoral degree is engaged as commentator. The commentator is expected, on the basis of his or her expertise, to go through the different parts of the thesis, and both point out deficiencies that need to be rectified and existing strengths that can be enhanced. The examining committee that has been asked to assess the

thesis is invited to submit comments at the final seminar. Our experience is that examining committee members often come to final seminars, but participation is not a condition, and it has been the case that only the members from the department have been present at the final seminar. See Defence of a Doctoral Thesis for information of the composition of the examining committee.

Even though a final seminar can sometimes resemble a public defence of a doctoral thesis, it differs in that the doctoral student's defence of the text is not subject to assessment and the examining committee and audience are expected to need more time for comments on the manuscript. The

final seminar usually lasts 2–3 hours and the commentator is expected to set aside at least 30 minutes for comments from the examining committee and audience. The commentator can also choose to initiate a general discussion during the proceedings.

The choice of examining committee members and commentator, and the date of the final seminar, shall be decided with the support of the supervisors' committee. The supervisors take the initiative in this matter and in general it is the principal supervisor who contacts the examining committee members and external reviewer. The doctoral student is welcome to be involved in this process.





# PUBLIC DEFENCE OF A DOCTORAL THESIS

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The public defence of a doctoral thesis is the public testing of a thesis. A detailed description of what applies prior to, and during, the public defence (composition of examining committee, remuneration, printing etc.) can be found in the faculty's *Regulations for third cycle education at the Faculty of Social Sciences*. The faculty also provides a checklist: *Prior to the Public Defence of a Doctoral Thesis*.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE BEFORE THE THESIS IS PRINTED

The doctoral student is responsible for the quality of the language and scholarly precision of the thesis.

**Reference check:** It is recommended that the doctoral student at a late stage in the thesis work reviews all the sources in the manuscript. Ideally, this includes checks of both literature and data material.

**Plagiarism check as a preventive measure:** As thesis work extends over a long period, there is a possibility that extracts from other's work can become mixed with one's own texts over the years. It is recommended that the doctoral student conducts a self-regulatory check of their thesis manuscript using the plagiarism detection system Urkund to reduce the risk of including seemingly plagiarised texts. It is suggested that this self-regulation is carried out in connection with the reference check. You can transmit the text to your own Urkund address or borrow someone else's address. The Urkund analysis at this stage is an aid, and any plagiarism discovered by self-regulation has nothing to do with the later assessment.

**Internal final assessment ('Green light reading'):** Approximately four weeks before the thesis is intended to be ready for proofreading, it is submitted to the two internal examining committee members for a reading that is to determine whether the department can support the presentation of the thesis. Following a relatively general reading, the members decide on a green or red light for the public defence of the doctoral thesis.

A 'red light' means that the internal members do not consider that the thesis (even after a number of revisions) should be presented. This position shall be justified, but the internal members do not go into a detailed discussion of how the problems can be resolved. For a decision on a 'green light'

the two members are welcome to attach comments and minor requirements for changes in the manuscript and tips based on what they noticed during the reading.

The members give their comments to the supervisors, as a dialogue about the thesis between the doctoral student and the examining committee members is not appropriate at this late stage. The internal members are not bound to the position they took at the internal final assessment during the later public defence of the doctoral thesis. The doctoral student is entitled to present their thesis against the department's recommendation.

It is important to count the internal final assessment as a stage in the process and the supervisors are therefore expected to contact the internal members in good time, so that the reading in the best case can take place within a predetermined week.

**Plagiarism check in connection with the assessment:** At the School of Social Work, a thesis shall have been checked using the Urkund database before it is presented. The aim is to reduce the risk of plagiarism. The check is done not long before the thesis is ready to be printed. The manuscript is to be sent to the Urkund address that the director of research studies uses. If plagiarism is detected at this stage, the process leading to the public defence of the thesis is discontinued and the matter is referred to the University disciplinary board.

## PRINTING

The faculty board has decided that at least 33 copies of the doctoral thesis are to be printed. The policy of the School of Social Work is to pay for 150 printed copies of the thesis, calculated as the cost of printing in the same format as the thesis series. The doctoral student is entitled to 20 of these copies. If the doctoral student wishes more copies, the costs are on the student.

Theses at the School of Social Work are generally published in the department's own thesis series: *Lund Dissertations in Social Work*. The doctoral student is responsible for editing the thesis, but receives a certain degree of assistance regarding publication in the thesis series, and layout is according to a set template.

Theses at the School of Social Work are also published electronically (exception are texts for which there is no permission for electronic publication, such as monographs issued by commercial publishers, and journal articles in a compilation thesis). For further information on printing and distribution of the thesis, see information provided by Libraries at Lund University.

#### Notification of the date of the defence (Spikning)

Not more than one public defence at the Faculty of Social Sciences should take place at the same time. The public defence of a doctoral thesis shall take place during the semester and is to be announced through a notification at least four weeks in advance. The doctoral student or supervisors should contact the external reviewer and examining committee regarding the need for sending the thesis as a file or printed copy in connection with preparations for printing.

**Licentiate theses:** Licentiate theses should be available to coincide with information on the public seminar in the faculty calendar (four weeks before it takes place). Proposals for examining committee members and an external reviewer are to be submitted to the faculty office at least five weeks before the seminar. The licentiate student shall submit at least two copies of the dissertation to the University library. There is no subsidy to cover printing costs.

#### PUBLIC DEFENCE OF A DOCTORAL THESIS AND SEMINAR FOR LICENTIATE THESIS

The public defence of a doctoral thesis is when the doctoral student defends his or her thesis in public. The public defence is led by a chair, usually the doctoral student's principal supervisor. The chair, the external reviewer (opponent) and examining committee are appointed by the dean, based on a proposal by the department (the appointments shall be made five weeks before the public defence). For a doctoral degree at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the examining committee shall consist of five or three members; at the School of Social Work, the examining committee usually consists of five members. The members shall be qualified readers as a minimum requirement (however, it is possible to include members who are not readers following an application for

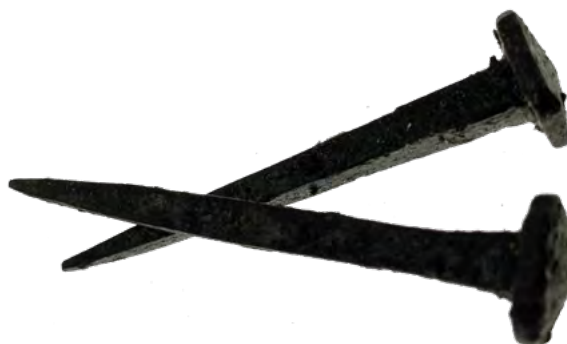
exemption to the faculty). The examining committee shall include at least one member who is not active at Lund University. If the examining committee consists of five members, no more than two shall be active at the School of Social Work. Of the other three members, no more than one shall belong to the Faculty of Social Sciences in Lund. It is often the case that some of the external members represent the subject of social work.

**Licentiate seminar:** Licentiate of Philosophy theses are discussed at a public seminar, in which it is reviewed by an external reviewer and assessed by an examining committee. The examining committee shall consist of three members who are qualified readers as a minimum requirement.

#### Disposition

The public defence begins with opening remarks by the chair and a presentation of the doctoral student, the external reviewer and examining committee members. The author of the thesis is then asked if there is anything that needs to be clarified or corrected before the public discussion and review commence. The floor is then handed over to the external reviewer, who begins by summarising the thesis. The external reviewer is free to allot the time used for the specific sections of the public defence, but a recommendation is that the summary is not too long (20–30 minutes). The external reviewer can also choose to allow the author of the thesis to present a summary of approximately 20 minutes and then add comments, but must in this case have informed the author of the thesis in good time beforehand. After the summary there is a dialogue between the reviewer and the author of the thesis, which, by highlighting the content, shortcomings and merits of the thesis for discussion, provides a basis for an assessment of both the quality of the thesis and the doctoral student's oral defence.

Towards the end of the public review, it is appropriate for the external reviewer to sum up impressions of the thesis and evaluate it; however, it is not the reviewer's task to decide whether the thesis should be graded as a pass or



not. When the public review is concluded, the chair gives the examining committee members an opportunity to pose questions, and finally there is an opportunity for the audience to pose questions or submit comments.

#### Reimbursement

No fee is paid to examining committee members. The external reviewer receives a fee of SEK 12 000 plus employer's contributions (SEK 6 000 for the review of a licentiate thesis). A fee of SEK 8 000 is paid to final seminar commentators (SEK 4 000 for lic.).

#### THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE'S MEETING

The examining committee convenes immediately after the public defence of the thesis. The external reviewer and supervisors have the right to be present at the meeting and to participate in the deliberations, but not in the decision.

The principal supervisor opens the meeting and hands over to the examining committee to select a chair (usually the senior internal member of the examining committee). Thereafter, the supervisors have a passive role in the deliberations. The external reviewer is asked for further comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, and whether there was any important information that was not presented in the public defence. The examining committee also has an opportunity to pose clarification questions to the supervisors (for example, regarding the division of work in

The members of the examining committee present their assessments one by one (external members begin; as a matter of courtesy, it is usually the member who has travelled furthest who starts). There may be a subsequent discussion. The chair asks the members if they are ready to vote, and if so, asks each member whether they vote to pass or fail the thesis, after which the grading decision is made. The supervisors are invited to present their views and comments.

The chair signs the committee report (the doctoral student receives a copy and the original is retained by the department). If any of the members vote against a pass for the thesis, this is to be noted in the report. If the thesis will be failed, the report must clearly state the reasons for the fail grade.

After the meeting, the committee (via the chair) informs the doctoral student of the decision and hands over a copy of the report. The decision is usually communicated in front of the people who have gathered after the public defence, upon which the chair proposes a toast. If the decision is unanimous, this is also made public. If someone has voted against a pass for the thesis, the chair usually says only that the thesis has received a pass grade. If more than one member has voted against a pass grade, it is appropriate that the doctoral student is called into the meeting and informed of the decision there.



PHOTO: KENNET RUONA



## CAREER PLANNING

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A doctoral degree in social work provides possibilities to work in different sectors of society, for example as a researcher or analyst at government, municipal, voluntary or private organisations in and outside Sweden. Social work is the main subject in professional training for social workers – and most of those who have doctoral degrees are active at higher education institutions.

It is common for doctoral students at the School of Social Work to teach and take courses in higher education teacher training, which increases possibilities for later employment in higher education. Researchers with a doctorate have the opportunity to apply for research funding, both for specific research projects and in the form of various postdoctoral positions. It is usually possible for those who have finished but not yet defended a thesis to apply for such posts.

Lund University and the Faculty of Social Sciences organize regular meetings and seminars on the theme of career planning, and doctoral students are encouraged to look out for these and register to attend. Often the number of places is limited and only those who apply promptly can attend.

### DISCUSSION WITH THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

It is recommended that doctoral students book a meeting with the head of department six months before the public defence or six months before funding runs out. The director of research studies is also to take part in the discussion. The discussion is an opportunity to raise practical issues regarding the public defence and to discuss the conclusion of the research studies and possibilities for future employment.

## WITHDRAWAL OF SUPERVISION AND THE RIGHT TO OTHER RESOURCES

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### NEGLECTING UNDERTAKINGS

If a doctoral student substantially neglects their undertakings in accordance with the individual study plan, a decision can be taken that the doctoral student no longer has the right to supervision and other resource for their studies, which is stated in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) and in the University's guidelines *Processing decisions regarding withdrawal and recovery of the right to supervision and other resources for a doctoral student* (Reg. no. V 2017/458). It is therefore vital that the individual study plan is continuously updated by the institution even if the doctoral student is inactive.

The supervisor who observes the short comings shall, if the problem cannot be resolved, file a report with the head of department. The doctoral student has the right to make a statement about the report and thereafter the head of de-

partment determines whether the department shall request that the faculty board withdraws resources. The director of research studies is instrumental in processing matters relating to the neglect of undertakings.

### STUDY PERIOD RUNS OUT

In some cases, doctoral students do not complete the thesis during the allotted study period. When the study period runs out, the doctoral student no longer has the right to the resources associated with the doctoral studentship. However, it may be possible to reach an agreement on resources for a further period in order to complete the thesis. This is determined on a case-by-case basis in which the completed result and remaining work are the most important aspects under consideration. The doctoral student has an opportunity to have a discussion with the head of department six months before the end of the study period.

## USEFUL TERMS FOR PUBLIC DEFENCES IN SWEDISH

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### ENGLISH

**Thesis**

**Examining Committee**

**Public defence of a thesis**

**PhD candidate**

**Author**

**Defence**

**Supervisor (principal)**

**External reviewer**

**Critical review**

**Chair of the examining committee**

**Chair of the public defense of a thesis**

### SWEDISH

Avhandling

Betygsnämnd

Disputation

Doktorand

Respondent

Försvar

Handledare (huvud-)

Opponent (fakultets-)

Opposition

Ordförande i betygsnämnd

Ordförande vid disputation





