Stockholms universitet

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Quick Reference Guide
Public Defence of Doctoral Thesis

Department of Psychology

Timetable in Brief

	What?	*When?*	*Who?**
☐	Book a time for dissertation defence by emailing the Student Services.	8- 12 months	S/D
☐	Book relevant premises (lecture hall for public defence, seminar room for grading committee, room for mingle)	8- 12 months	S/D
☐	Confirm opponent and grading committee participation	8- 12 months	S
☐	Submit advance notification of a public defence to the professors' group (*swe.* professorsgruppen)	6 months	S
☐	Book an appointment with the University Library	4 months	D
☐	Send the synopsis (*swe.* kappa) and sub-studies to the director of studies, who will send it to the internal and external reviewer.	4 months	S/D
☐	Revise manuscript after review.	3 months	D
☐	Register your thesis and its components in DiVA	3 months	D
☐	Send manuscript for a test print	2 months	D
☐	Book any travel and hotel needed for opponent and grading committee	2 months	S, A **
☐	Public defence notification to the Faculty of Social Science ("Samfak")	6 weeks	S
☐	Notify the relevant parties at the department of the Samfak decision		S
☐	Notify the HR officer of opponent details		S
☐	Send manuscript for printing	5-6 weeks	D
☐	Send the thesis electronically to the opponent and the grading committee, and submit 20 copies to the administrator of the doctoral programme	5-6 weeks	D
☐	Send information to the opponent about the opposition process and agree on whether opponent or respondent will carry out the summary of the thesis	5-6 weeks	S

☐	Contact the local communications unit at the department.	4 weeks	D
☐	The printer delivers the thesis no later than the day before the posting (notification of the date of the defence of a doctoral thesis; *swe*. spikning)	---	---
☐	Posting the thesis (digitally in DIVA, and symbolically at the staff dining room level 4)	3 weeks	D
☐	Send the thesis in paper form to the opponent and the grading committee, and submit 20 copies to the administrator of the post-graduate programme	3 weeks	D
☐	Conduct grilling seminar (optional)	1-2 weeks	S/D
☐	Conduct dress rehearsal to check connectivity etc. for participants included in zoom	1-2 weeks	S/D
☐	Submit the minutes of the grading committee to the education administrator of the post-graduate programme	After the public defence	S
☐	Apply for a diploma	After the public defence	D

* D = doctoral student is responsible; S = supervisor is responsible; A = administrator is responsible

** S does booking arrangements *or* S provide A with dates and contact information, and A make booking arrangements

Notes:

- ✓ Public defences normally start at 10:00 am or 1:00 pm. The length of the public defence session is determined by how long it takes to go through all the questions and discussion points from the opponent, the grading committee and the audience. Normally, a public defence takes just over 2 hours, but to be on the safe side, a room should be booked for at least 4 hours.

Detailed Timetable

Approximately 8-12 months before the date of the public defence

☐ **Book (tentative) date for the public defence,** follow this link.

☐ **Book relevant rooms.**

Contact the administrator of the post-graduate programme for booking a lecture hall for the public defence (e.g. Lecture Hall 24), a seminar room for the grading committee (e.g. Jordgubbe) and a room for mingling (e.g. Meeting Room 41).

*Keep in mind***:**

- The defence must take place between 15 August and 15 June.
- If the date changes, both the premises and the date booking must be cancelled and changed as described above.
- Be sure to set the time well in advance, as the date should also suit the opponent, the grading committee and the chairman.
- There may not be two public defences at Samfak at the same time, but there are two sessions per day, so if, for example, the morning session is already booked, it is possible to defend your thesis in the afternoon.

☐ **Confirm opponent and grading committee participation at scheduled date**

At least 6 months before the date of the public defence

☐ **Submit advance notification of a public defence to the Professors' group**

Upload an advance notification of the dissertation on the common server "psychology.su.se" in folder 4 "Education, doctoral education level", subfolder "Advance notification dissertation" (*swe*. ”Utbildning, forskarutbildningsnivå”, undermapp ”Föranmälan disputation).

Three documents should be submitted:

1. Samfak's form for Dissertation notification (found here). Feel free to enter the abstract under the section "Summary of the thesis". If the abstract is yet not written, this section can be left blank. The section on consultation with the head of department does not need to be answered.
2. You need also to upload a LADOK-summary of all completed course credits that are to be included in the doctoral grade, please contact phd@psychology.su.se in good time for help with this document.
3. Document with name of reveiwers and a list of studies, please use the form “reviewers_list_of_studies.docx” available on the common server ”psychology.su.se” in folder 4 ”Education, doctoral education level”, subfolder ”Advance notification dissertation”.

A working group will review the applications and prepare for the professor-group's decision. The applications are reviewed continuously, but must be uploaded to the server at least 14 days before the meeting of the professor group. The professor group usually meets once a month during term time (you can email Göran Kecklund if you want to know the exact meeting dates). The working group in 2025 consists of Björn Philips, Göran Kecklund, and Torun Lindholm Öjmyr.

Application forms that are incomple (without a comment stating why information is missing) will be returned to the main supervisor.

Please upload the Advance Notification in good time before the planned defense and do not forget to allow time for review and then time for revision of the thesis manuscript. It is important that the doctoral student is given sufficient time to revise the summary ("kappa") and manuscript included in the thesis after submitted review reports. A month or more may be needed for extensive revisions.

Detailed information on the guidelines regarding grading committee, opponent, etc., including conflict of interest, can be found here: Guidelines for Public Defences at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Keep in mind:

- The professors' group meeting times (available on Athena/email: phd@psychology.su.se).
- Take into account any conflict of interests.
- The gender distribution on the grading committee should be balanced.
- The title of the thesis will only be posted when the application is submitted to Samfak. In the preliminary application to the professors' group, a preliminary thesis title can be used.
- Please notify Samfak as soon as it is clear with the professors' group, but no later than 6 weeks before the public defence.

Approx. 4 months before the date of the public defence

☐ **Book an appointment with the University Library.**

The University Library provides information that is useful to know relatively early, such as registering the thesis in DiVA, printing, choice of paper, ISBN number, and things to consider regarding formatting for the thesis template. Questions about posting and doctoral support should be sent to avhandlingsstod@su.seSee their website about posting and printing for more information.

Keep in mind:

- Start now to familiarise yourself with the thesis template and associated instructions.

☐ **Send the synopsis and sub-studies to the director of doctoral studies, who will submit to the reviewers.**

An internal reviewer (from the department) and an external reviewer (outside the department) are given at least three weeks to assess your thesis, starting from the date the director of studies sends it to them. Their written reviews must address the questions listed in Appendix 1. The reviewers then submit their assessments to the director of doctoral studies, who forwards them to the supervisor and the doctoral student.

If either reviewer deems the thesis unsuitable for public defence in its current form, the director of studies will convene a meeting with the supervisor and the doctoral student. This meeting will result in an action plan for how to proceed, which must be approved by the Head of Department..

Keep in mind:

- Reviewers may need more the three weeks for the review. To be on the safe side, it is a good idea to take this into account in your planning.

Note. It is the director of studies who reports the fee information for the internal and external reviewer to the administration.

Approx. 3 months before the date of the public defence

☐ **Revise the thesis after receiving comments from reviewers.**

The director of studies will forward the reviews to you as soon as they are received. Please allow at least 2–3 weeks for your revision, though having more time would be even better.

☐ **Register your thesis and its components in DiVA**.

To be able to post your doctoral thesis in DiVA, fill in a web form. Make sure there is an ample amount of time before the manuscript is sent to the printer. The staff at the University Library will check your details before sending you the posting sheet.

Keep in mind:

- Formatting often takes a lot of time, e.g. formatting of figures and tables.
- The front page (and back page with picture if you choose to have one) should also be ready now.
- A Swedish summary is compulsory, but you can choose how long it should be and whether it should be a translation of the English summary or written in a more popular scientific style. We recommend that you keep the summary to a popular scientific form as it will be more accessible to a wider audience.
- The sheet with the notification of submission of the doctoral thesis (*swe*. spikblad) must be included in the printed thesis and must therefore be written before the manuscript is sent to press. It should be the same text as in the abstract with a maximum of 3500 characters including spaces. Keywords may have a maximum of 250 characters including spaces. N.B.! The articles must be registered in DIVA.
- For unpublished manuscripts in the thesis, you do not need to upload full text files. Title, author, abstract and keywords are sufficient.

At least 2 months before the date of the public defence

☐ **Send manuscript for a test print.**

The printer needs 10 working days for test printing and then 10 working days for final printing.

Keep in mind:

- Please allow at least 5 days between the estimated arrival date of your test print and the dispatch of the final print.
- The 10 working days required by the printer are not from the date you send the thesis in finished form to the library, but from the date the printer receives the thesis. First, the library will make a test print (about 1-2 working days, plus 1-2 more working days for

each time something needs to be changed) which must be approved by you before anything is sent to the printer.

- Tables and figures are best made in *at least* 300 dpi and tables are most easily made directly in Word
- Decide the type of paper on which you want to print your thesis. The choice of paper affects the cost.

☐ **Book travel and hotel for opponent and grading committee.** See the heading "Information on the Public Defence Budget" for further instructions.

No later than 6 weeks before the date of the public defence

(or as soon as it is ready in the professors group)

☐ **Public defence notification to Samfak**

Once the professors' group has approved the pre-notification the notification of the dissertation must be sent to Samfak. This *must be done no later than 6 weeks before* the dissertation, but it can be done as soon as it is ready in the professors' group.

Keep in mind:

- If the confirmation from Samfak takes more than a week, you can contact them (samfakdisputationer@su.se) and ask about the status of the case.

☐ **The decision is sent to the relevant parties at the department**

Once Samfak has made a decision on the defence, the supervisor (the person who submitted the application) receives an extract from the Faculty Board's minutes. Forward this e-mail (with the pdf file) to:

- Head of the PhD Programme
- Departmental archivist (registrator@psychology.su.se),
- Administrator for postgraduate studies (phd@psychology.su.se)
- Web editor for the website (kommunikation@psychology.su.se)
- HR (hr@psychology.su.se)
- Economics (ekonomi@psychology.su.se)

☐ **If the opponent is a foreigner, work is initiated on the payment of the opponent's fee.** See the heading "Information on the Public Defence Budget" for further instructions.

At least 6 weeks before the date of the public defence

☐ **Send manuscript for printing**.

Read about the entire printing process at the library's website.

☐ Send the finished thesis to the opponent and the grading committee.
Please send them a PDF version earlier to streamline the whole process.
Keep in mind:

You must print at least 80 copies of the thesis, but you can print more if necessary if it fits within the budget for the thesis.

Approx. 4 weeks before the date of the public defence

☐ **Contact the local communications unit at the department**
kommunikation@psychology.su.se to discuss the possibilities below when the date for posting (spikning) has been decided.

Standard communication activities include:

– Printed poster about the defence is handled by the administrator for the postgraduate programme.

– Web calendar event is published by the webmaster.

– Have your profile page at www.su.se updated to advise the press and other interested people about your research.

The optional communication activities are planned and decided together with the local communications team. Link to profile page will be used in the communication. Created content may be distributed in newsletters and on Linkedin.

Decide about optional communication activities:

Examples of external communication:

Web news article including

A. Written interview about the dissertation (questions and text are produced in collaboration with the PhD student via e-mail)
or
B. Film clip about the dissertation (more time and preparations needed + about 2 hours of recording)

Proactive media relations:

– Press tip to professional journals, industry or membership magazines (if you have a specific audience you want to engage with your research)

– Press release from SU central news desk (only done on rare occasions for dissertations, but may be applicable if the topic is of significant public interest or linked to current events)

– Pitch your subject to *The Conversation* and write a popular scientific article (if you can connect parts of your research to a universal or current issue)

Update the profile page at www.su.se

Update your profile page to advise the press and other interested people about your research.

No later than 3 weeks before the date of the public defence

☐ **Posting the thesis**

Three weeks before the defence, the thesis is electronically posted in DIVA (see the library's website for more information). Normally, the thesis is physically posted at the department (staff dining room, floor 4) on the same day as it is posted electronically in DIVA.

☐ Submit 20 copies to the administrator of the postgraduate programme.

On the day of the public defence

☐ Procedure during the public defence, see Appendix 2.

☐ Flowers, lunch for the grading committee and refreshments for the mingle are ordered and handled by the administrator for the postgraduate programme.

☐ After the meeting, the minutes of the grading committee are submitted to the administrator of the postgraduate programme.

After the day of the public defence

☐ Apply for a degree certificate when the administrator for the postgraduate programme has notified you that everything is ready in Ladok.

☐ The Communication Group will email three questions for inclusion in the the Department of Psychology´s Newsletter.

Information about the public defence budget

☐ **Budget** (see table below) for the public defence is submitted to ekonomi@psychology.su.se well in advance of the public defence, preferably as soon as you know the cost of travel, accommodation and printing.

Invoices in connection with the public defence are submitted to ekonomi@psychology.su.se

The invoicing address is Stockholm University, Box: 50741 , 20270 Malmö, ref.: 308 + name of the doctoral candidate.

Travel and accommodation is booked by the supervisor via Amex GBT using a form for guests, the invoice will automatically be sent to the department. Or, if you as a supervisor cannot book, please contact phd@psychology.su.se for help with this.

Remuneration to the opponent is handled by the department's HR. HR contacts the opponent about the salary details. For foreign opponet, HR also handles the SINK application, which can take up to 12 weeks before the decision comes back (does not have to be ready before the day of the public defence). *Important*: The supervisor provides the opponent's contact details to hr@psychology.su.se as soon as the opponent has been appointed.

Keep in mind*:*

- The supervisor is responsible for the budget.
- External review, lunch/coffee for the grading committee and subsequent mingling are ordered and paid for by the department and are therefore not included in the budget below.

Budget plan - example			
Type of cost	**Cost**	**LKP**	**Total**
Fee to opponent	11,400	approx 60 % *	
Two professorial hours for a foreign opponent**	1,400	700	2,100
Travel expenses for opponent	?		?
Hotel expenses for opponent	?		?
Travel expenses for the grading committee	?		?
Language editing of summary	approx. 5,000		approx. 5,000
Printing costs for the thesis	approx. 12,000		approx. 12,000
Total sum ex VAT			*(max 45,000)*
*) Does not apply to foreign opponent **) Corresponds to per diem. This means that the opponent is not reimbursed for meal expenses. There is no compensation for participation via zoom.			

Appendix 1

Guidelines for compilation theses: Scope, quality and review

Scope and quality

A compilation thesis consists of a number of scientific articles (sub-studies) and a summarizing chapter (*swe*. kappa).

Each of the sub-studies contributes to answering one or more of the specific questions of the thesis and the sub-studies together constitute a whole that contributes to answering the main question of the thesis. In general, each sub-study should be relevant to the main question of the thesis and each sub-study should contribute with theory development, method development, new data or new analysis of existing data (including systematic reviews and meta-analyses). Opinion papers, tutorials, non-systematic literature reviews and the like are not normally included as sub-studies of a thesis.

A strong summarizing chapter typically includes the following elements:

- A comprehensive introduction to the research field, including a thorough review of relevant previous research.
- A clear and well-justified formulation of the main and specific research questions addressed in the thesis.
- An integrated presentation of the methodology and key findings from the sub-studies.
- A detailed discussion of the results, addressing the research questions, situating the findings within the context of previous research, and reflecting on the strengths and limitations of the sub-studies.
- A balanced analysis of the thesis's overall contribution to the research field, along with implications for future research.

A typical compilation thesis includes three to four scientific articles (sub-studies). Fewer than three articles may be considered if any article is very extensive in terms of empirical or theoretical contribution. The number of articles should be proportionate to the amount of work the doctoral student has put into collecting data. Three articles are reasonable for a thesis where the doctoral student has spent considerable time collecting data, four or more articles is reasonable for a thesis based on existing material and where the doctoral student has not spent time collecting data. All articles should be intended for publication in established peer-reviewed scientific journal. A minimum requirement is that the journal is assigned at least one point in the *Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals*. Most of the articles should be published and the rest submitted to a journal by the time the thesis is presented. The doctoral student's contribution to each article must be significant. In the case of co-authored articles, this normally means that the doctoral student is first author on at least two articles and at least third author on all articles. All co-authors' contributions should be reported in the summarizing chapter.

Review procedure

Drafts of articles and summarizing chapter are of course continuously reviewed by supervisors during the course of the doctoral project. When the supervisor and the doctoral student consider that the draft thesis is of sufficiently high quality to be presented, a final quality assurance is carried out by an internal and an external reviewer who read the summarizing chapter and sub-studies (published or in manuscript form), and summarize their impressions in separate statements. Each reviewer's statement should clearly state whether the reviewer considers the material to be of sufficiently high quality to be publicly defended, summarize what the reviewer considers to be the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, and give the reviewer's suggestions for improvements to the summarizing chapter and unpublished manuscripts.

The professors' group, in consultation with the supervisors, proposes both internal and external reviewers. Supervisors are responsible for contacting the proposed reviewers to confirm their willingness to undertake the assignment. Once the reviewers have accepted, they receive detailed instructions (see below) from the Head of the PhD program. Reviewers then submit their evaluations to the Head of Studies, who forwards them to the supervisor and the doctoral student.

If any reviewer indicates that the thesis is not of sufficient quality to proceed to public defense ("No" to Question 1), the Head of the PhD program convenes a meeting with the supervisor, the doctoral student, and the Head of Department to determine how to proceed.

If any reviewer selects "Possibly, but only after major revisions" (Question 1) this signals that the thesis may reach the required standard, but only after substantial improvements. In such cases, the Head of the PhD program

will initiate a meeting with the supervisor and the doctoral student to assess the scope of the revisions needed and agree on the next steps before any decision is made regarding public defense.

If both reviewers approve the thesis for public defense ("Yes" or "Yes, after minor revisions" to Question 1), the doctoral student and supervisor proceed with any revisions based on the reviewers' feedback.

Once revisions are complete, the doctoral student prepares a written response ("rebuttal") describing how each comment has been addressed and submits it to the Head of the PhD program for information. The doctoral student and supervisor may also choose to share the response letter with the reviewers.

Instructions for internal and external reviewers of the thesis

We greatly value your review, as it represents the final quality-assurance step prior to the public defense. If you consider the thesis not to meet the required standard (mark "No" to Question 1), we will act on your assessment accordingly. If you judge the thesis potentially suitable for defense but only after major revisions (mark "Potentially" to Question 1), your feedback will be especially important in guiding the necessary improvements; but please note that you will not be consulted further, as your role concludes with this assessment. Even if you find the thesis ready for defense (mark one of the "Yes" alternatives), we still welcome any suggestions for further refinement.

Please note that you should review both the summarizing chapter and the sub-studies, and that you may consider a sub-study to be inadequate even though it has been published and peer-reviewed. However, revision proposals are of course only meaningful for the summarizing chapter and the sub-studies that have not yet been published.

Below is a template for your statement, which you may write in English or Swedish.

1. Do you consider that the thesis, i.e., the summarizing chapter and sub-studies together, is of sufficiently high quality and scope to be defended publicly at a public defense? [ ] Yes – any suggestions I have are minor [ ] Yes – acceptable for defense, but potential for notable improvement with revisions [ ] Potentially – but only after substantial revisions [ ] No – there are significant issues that would likely require more than major revision to resolve If No, justify here. Suggestions for revisions are given under point 8.
2. Has the doctoral student succeeded in integrating the sub-studies in the summarizing chapter in a way that well describes the scientific contribution of the thesis in relation to its main research question? [ ] Yes, excellent [ ] Yes, but there is room for improvement [ ] No If No, justify here. Suggestions for revisions are given under point 8
3. Do all sub-studies make a contribution to the thesis as a whole? A sub-study's contribution is sufficient if it (a) is relevant to the overall question of the thesis, (b) is of good scientific quality and (c) contributes with theory development, method development, new data or new analysis of existing data. [ ] Yes [ ] No If No, justify here.
4. Has the doctoral student made a significant contribution to all sub-studies? Author contributions are reported in the summarizing chapter of the thesis. [ ] Yes [ ] Difficult to assess [ ] No

If difficult to assess or no, elaborate here.
5. Does the summarizing chapter give the impression that the doctoral student is well versed in the literature of the research area? [ ] Yes [ ] No If No, justify here.
6. List the main strengths of the thesis (summarizing chapter+ sub-studies)
7. List the main weaknesses of the thesis (summarizing chapter+ sub-studies)
8. Provide a list of suggested revisions that would improve the thesis (summarizing chapter+ unpublished sub-studies). Please number the proposals (#1, #2, ...) and make clear for each one which part of the thesis the proposed revision refers to.
Place and date: **Reviewer's name, title, and affiliation:**

Appendix 2

Description of the PhD Viva - The Examination Procedure and Participants

Participating in the examination seminar are the following persons:

- Chairman
- Opponent
- Examining Committee (three ordinary members and one substitute)
- Doctoral Candidate
- Supervisors
- Members of the audience (as the defense is public)

The examining committee are the formal evaluators of the thesis and the defence and will give the defendant the grade pass or fail. The procedure is as follows:

1. The chairman declares the session open and introduces the opponent, the defendant, and the members of the examining committee.
2. The defendant is given the opportunity to make initial remarks, particularly if an errata list has been submitted.
3. One of the following alternatives is chosen:
   - Alternative I: The opponent presents a summary of the thesis (25–40 minutes). The defendant then has the opportunity to state whether they agree with the summary or wish to add comments.
   - Alternative II: The opponent gives an introduction to the research field in which the thesis is situated (15–20 minutes), followed by the defendant's summary of their thesis (20–25 minutes).
4. The opponent conducts a more detailed examination of the work by posing questions to the defendant, with the aim of fostering a high-level scientific discussion. This discussion typically lasts for about 60-90 minutes, but there is no strict time limit—the viva continues as long as necessary.
5. The examining committee poses additional questions to the defendant
6. The thesis is opened for debate with members of the audience.
7. The chairman closes the session.
8. The members of the examining committee withdraw for their official meeting, during which the grade (pass or fail) is decided. The opponent and the supervisor will be present during that meeting, but cannot vote for the grade.
9. The members of the examining committee announce their decision. The head of the PhD programme gives a small talk and hands over a symbolic gift from the department.