



Regulations on the public defence and grading of doctoral theses at Södertörn University

Södertörn University stipulates the following under Chapter 6, Section 35 of the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100).

Regulations

Section 1 In addition to the provisions in Chapter 6, Sections 33-34 of the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), the following otherwise applies to the grading system, public defence and grading of doctoral theses.

Date and place of public defence

Section 2 The public defence must be held on a holiday-free Monday to Friday in the period 15 August – 21 December or 7 January – 15 June. Two public defences may not be held at the same time at the university.

The public defence must take place at the university unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Notification of public defence and doctoral thesis

Section 3 The notification of a public defence and doctoral thesis (*spikning*) must take place at least three weeks prior to the date of the public defence. Any weeks outside the public defence periods may not be included in these three weeks. Electronic *spikning* must be done in the university's publication database.

Section 4 The doctoral thesis must be available at the university library when it is presented at the *spikning*, so it can be reviewed prior to the public defence.

Chair of the public defence

Section 5 The public defence must have a chairperson.

Grading system

Section 6 A doctoral thesis must be assessed as one of the following grades: Pass or Fail.

Section 7 The content of the thesis and its public defence must be considered when it is graded.

Examining committee

Section 8 The grade for a doctoral thesis must be decided by an examining committee that is specifically appointed for each thesis.

Section 9 The examining committee must have either three or five members. The committee must appoint its chair internally. None of the doctoral student's supervisors may sit on the examining committee.

Section 10 At least one substitute must be appointed for the members of the examining committee.

Meeting of the examining committee

Section 11 The examining committee must meet as soon as possible after the public defence. The examining committee is quorate when all the appointed members are present, either on campus or via online conferencing tools.

Section 12 The external reviewer and supervisor may attend and may have the right to speak, but not to participate in decision making.

Section 13 The substitute on the examining committee must attend and participate in the decision if they are replacing an appointed member. The examining committee decides whether a substitute who is not called upon to replace an appointed member may attend the meeting and have the right to speak. A substitute who is not replacing an appointed member may not participate in decision making.

Section 14 The examining committee has the right to discuss and decide the grade without the presence of other participants.

Decision of the examining committee

Section 15 The meeting of the examining committee and the grading decision for the thesis must be documented in minutes that are immediately checked by all members of the examining committee. A decision on grading is a majority decision. If a thesis receives a fail

grade, the examining committee must justify this in writing within one week of the public defence.

Section 16 A member of the examining committee who wishes to register an objection to the majority decision may have this noted in the minutes of the meeting. A divergent opinion may be submitted in writing to the chair of the examining committee within one week of the public defence and appended to the minutes.

Additional guidelines

Section 17 The procedure for requesting a public defence and the criteria for appointing the external reviewer, members of the examining committee and the chair of the public defence are provided in separate guidelines.

Entry into effect

These regulations enter into effect on 1 July 2022 and replace the equivalent section in Regulations for Third-cycle Education at Södertörn University (reg. no. 2740/1.1.2/2014).