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

## **Policy document Örebro University**

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## Introduction

Provisions on the public defence and grading of doctoral theses are laid down in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100, HEO), Chapter 6, Section 33, second paragraph, and Section 34.

Pursuant to HEO, Chapter 6, Section 35, Örebro University issues the following regulations.

## Date and location for the public defence

**Section 1** The public defence shall take place on a weekday between

- 1 September – 22 December, and
- 7 January – Friday a week before Midsummer

The public defence is to take place on one of the university's campuses unless there are special reasons to the contrary.

## Announcement of the public defence and the doctoral thesis (*spikning*)

**Section 2** The date of the public defence shall be announced on a weekday no later than three weeks before the public defence between

- 15 August – 22 December, and
- 7 January – Friday a week before Midsummer

The period from one week before Midsummer until 15 August shall not be counted as part of the three weeks preceding the public defence.

At the time of the announcement, the doctoral thesis shall be made available to the public in such a way that it is possible to conduct a satisfactory review of the thesis prior to the public defence.

**Section 3** As a complement to the announcement referred to in Section 2, the thesis shall also be announced electronically through registration in the university's publication database.

## Chairperson

**Section 4** The public defence shall be chaired by a chairperson, who must be a member of the teaching staff at the university and employed until further notice.

## Grading system and grading

**Section 5** For doctoral theses, either of the grades Pass or Fail shall be used. When determining the grade, the content as well as the defence of the thesis shall be considered.

## Examining committee

**Section 6** The grade for a doctoral thesis shall be determined by an examining committee, which is appointed specifically for each thesis.

The examining committee shall consist of three or five members. An alternate member shall be appointed. A person who has served as supervisor to the doctoral student may not be a member of the committee. The committee shall appoint a chairperson from among its members.

## Participation by remote means

**Section 7** If there are special reasons, the external reviewer and/or members of the examining committee may participate in a public defence by remote means (via two-way real-time audio and video transmission). Special reasons may include, for example, the need to avoid long journeys. Special reasons may also include situations where, at a late stage, the external reviewer or a member of the examining committee are unable to attend in person.

**Section 8** If there are exceptional reasons, for example a risk of the spread of infection, a public defence may be conducted entirely online. In such cases, the requirement that the public defence be open to the public (HEO, Chapter 6, Section 33, second paragraph) must be fulfilled.

## Examining committee meeting

**Section 9** The examining committee meeting shall be held in two parts. The first part shall concern the gathering of information from the external reviewer and the supervisor(s). The second part shall consist of the examining committee's separate deliberations and decision. The external reviewer and all supervisors have the right to attend and to speak, but only during the first part of the meeting.

If the public defence is that of a doctoral student whose resources have been withdrawn pursuant to HEO, Chapter 6, Section 30 and no supervisor is therefore appointed, the chairperson of the public defence may decide that another suitable person may participate during the first part of the meeting in place of a supervisor.

**Section 10** The examining committee shall be quorate when all members are present. If the members hold differing views on the grade, the decision shall be taken by majority vote.

## Guidelines on certain matters

**Section 11** The external reviewer, the members of the examining committee, and the chairperson shall be appointed in accordance with criteria laid down in separate guidelines.

## Decision-making authority

**Section 12** Decisions pursuant to these regulations shall be taken by the vice-chancellor or by a person designated by the vice-chancellor.

## Exceptions from these regulations

**Section 13** Exceptions from these regulations may be made by the vice-chancellor or by a person designated by the vice-chancellor.

## Enter into force

These regulations will enter into force on 30 April 2026.