Instructions for the external reviewer at a licentiate seminar

The external reviewer must have a doctoral degree and must be an academically qualified university teacher/researcher and have expert knowledge within the licentiate thesis subject area. The external reviewer must not be actively involved in research at the doctoral student’s department. The external reviewer must not be biased in relation to the student, supervisor(s) or project.

External reviewer’s task

The external reviewer is entitled to get access to the licentiate thesis no later than 3 weeks prior to the public defence. He/she has primary responsibility for a deep, critical, scientific review of the thesis. This review is to include all parts of the thesis without exception. During the licentiate seminar, the external reviewer’s task is to carry on an in-depth discussion with the author of the thesis on its various parts. In this discussion, the external reviewer is to highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis. Theoretical and practical aspects are to be highlighted in this discussion, as well as how the results of the thesis work can be placed in a broader scientific and medical context. It is important that the author of the thesis is given the opportunity to demonstrate his/her knowledge and to demonstrate how he/she has met the national qualitative targets.

- The person assuming the task of external reviewer must be satisfied that there no obstacles to this task.
- If the external reviewer finds that an obstacle has arisen, he/she must immediately contact the supervisor, who will then submit a new proposal for an external reviewer in writing to the faculty secretariat. The Director of Studies then appoints a new external reviewer.
- Should the external reviewer fail to appear at the beginning of the seminar, the chairperson is entitled to appoint a member of the examining committee as the external reviewer. The chairperson then appoints a suitable replacement on the examining committee from among the audience’s representatives from academia.

Licentiate seminar

The licentiate seminar has no real time limitation, but is usually conducted as follows:

1) The chair welcomes the audience and introduces the author of the thesis, the external reviewer and the members of the examining committee, and briefly describes what will happen.
2) The author of the thesis is given the opportunity to inform the audience of any corrections made to the licentiate thesis.
3) The external reviewer provides a brief overview of the scientific area and places the student’s results in a wider context.
4) The author of the thesis presents his/her thesis.
5) The external reviewer and the author of the thesis carry on a scientific debate on the various parts of the thesis.
6) The examining committee discusses the thesis with its author.
7) Before the seminar ends, the audience is offered the opportunity to put questions to the author of the thesis.

Examining committee meeting

The examining committee convenes directly after the licentiate seminar. The external reviewer and supervisor are entitled to attend and participate in the deliberations of the examining committee, but not to participate in its decision.

National qualitative targets

Licentiate

Knowledge and understanding

Objective: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the area of research, including up-to-date specialist knowledge within a defined part of this area.

Objective: In-depth knowledge of scientific methodology in general and the methods used in the specific area of research in particular.

Competence and skills

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate questions and to plan and use adequate methods to carry out a defined piece of research and other qualified tasks critically, independently and creatively, with scientific exactitude and within specified time limits, thereby making a contribution to the body of knowledge; and to evaluate his/her own work.

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to in both the national and the international context oral and written clearly present and discuss research and research results in dialog with the scientific community and society in general.

Objective: Demonstrate the skills required to participate independently in research and development work, and to work independently in other skilled activities.

Judgement and approach

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to make ethical judgements in his/her own research

Objective: Show an awareness of the possibilities and limitations of science and its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used.

Objective: Demonstrate the ability to identify his/her needs for additional knowledge and to be responsible for the development of his/her own knowledge.