

Doctoral programmes at the School of Engineering Sciences
KTH – Royal Institute of Technology

Compiled information about disputations and licentiate seminars at SCI

1. *Disputation*

Brief information for committee members and the faculty opponent participating in a public defense of a doctoral thesis.

The school of engineering sciences at KTH is very grateful for your contributions to our thesis defense procedure. This document aims at informing you about the procedure and help you perform your role during the public defense and the following committee meeting.

The public defense of a doctoral thesis at KTH has the following actors:

1. **The chairperson:** Opens and guides the proceedings. The person acting as chair of the disputation is typically a senior faculty from the department at which the respondent has studied (department head or a professor/associate professor at the department).
2. **The respondent:** The author of the thesis who should defend the thesis and demonstrate adequate knowledge about the content of the thesis.
3. **The opponent:** Demonstrates to the committee to which extent the respondent knows the content of the thesis.
4. **The committee:** Decides whether to pass or fail the respondent.
5. **The audience**

The public defense contains the following parts as outlined below:

- **Introduction:**
 - **Option A:** A brief introduction to the field by the opponent. The introduction should introduce the field in general and put the thesis work into context.
 - **Option B:** An expose of the highlights of the thesis given by the respondent.

Option A, B or both must be chosen. Typical total time for the introduction is 30-40 minutes.

- **Optional:** 5-10 min break. The chairperson may choose to hold the break at a later time.
- **Thesis discussion:** The opponent discusses the thesis with the respondent and asks questions that mainly concern the work and the area described in the thesis. The aim is to clarify to which extent the respondent masters the content and topic as well as to establish the respondent's contribution to the work presented in the thesis. Typical time 45-60 minutes.
- **Questions by the committee:** The committee members are given the chance to ask questions to the respondent. The committee members are not obliged to ask questions, but it is customary to do so. Typically, one or two questions per committee member.
- **Questions from the audience**
- **Closing of the defense:** Total time is typically 2-2.5 hours, but it is important to note that there is no formal time limit.
- **Committee meeting:** The committee members meet to decide on a Pass or Fail grade. The opponent and main supervisor should be present to answer questions in the initial part of the meeting but must leave before the committee discusses and decides on a grade.
- **Presentation of the grade:** The chairperson of the committee presents the grade (Pass or Fail) to the respondent.

2. Licentiate seminar

Brief information for the special reviewer and the examiner participating in a public defense of a licentiate thesis.

The school of engineering sciences at KTH is very grateful for your contributions to our thesis defense procedure. This document aims at informing you about the procedure and help you perform your role during the public defense.

The public defense of a licentiate thesis at KTH has the following actors:

1. **The chairperson*:** Opens and guides the proceedings. The person acting as chair of the licentiate seminar is typically a senior faculty from the department at which the respondent has studied (department head or a professor/associate professor at the department). The supervisor should not take this role. However, the examiner is allowed to act as chairperson of the licentiate defense if no other faculty member can take on this role.

* A chairperson is not officially appointed by KTH for licentiate seminars but is strongly recommended.

2. **The respondent:** The author of the licentiate thesis who should defend the thesis and demonstrate adequate knowledge about the content of the thesis.
3. **The special reviewer:** acts as opponent at the licentiate defense and should demonstrate to the examiner to which extent the respondent knows the content of the thesis.
4. **The examiner:** Decides whether to pass or fail the respondent.
5. **The audience**

The public defense contains the following parts as outlined below:

- **Introduction:**
 - **Option A:** A brief introduction to the field by the special reviewer. The introduction should introduce the field in general and put the thesis work into context.
 - **Option B:** An expose of the highlights of the thesis given by the respondent.

Option A, B or both must be chosen. Typical total time for the introduction is 30-40 minutes.
- **Optional:** 5-10 min break. The chairperson may choose to hold the break at a later time.
- **Thesis discussion:** The special reviewer discusses the thesis with the respondent and asks questions that mainly concern the work and the area described in the thesis. The aim is to clarify to which extent the respondent masters the content and topic as well as to establish the respondent's contribution to the work presented in the thesis. Typical time 30-40 minutes.
- **Questions from the examiner and other participants at the seminar**
- **Presentation of the grade:** Is done immediately after the seminar. The examiner of the licentiate thesis decides on the grade after discussions with the special reviewer, advance reviewer (if present) and the supervisor. After the discussion the grade (Pass or Fail) is presented to the respondent.
- **Closing of the defense:** Total time is typically 1-2 hours, but it is important to note that there is no formal time limit.