

General information – Public defence of a doctoral thesis in Biotechnology

Forms referred to in this document can be found under the heading “Licentiatseminarium, disputation” here: <https://intra.kth.se/administration/blanketter/forskning-forskarutbildning> (The web-page is in Swedish, but all forms are bilingual.)

Essential reading: KTH *Guideline on Third Cycle Studies* [KTHs riktlinje för utbildning på forskarnivå]: <https://intra.kth.se/en/styrning/styrdokument/regler/utbildning-1.1117452>

See especially

- Eligibility/requirements for participants: Ch. 6.2.6 (advance reviewer), 6.4.2 (opponent etc.)
- Conflicts of interest [Jäv]: Ch. 7

What are the requirements for a doctoral degree?

Before considering to write and defend a doctoral thesis, make sure that the requirements for a doctorate can be obtained on time.

1. Thesis part

This would typically correspond to at least:

- Two published or accepted articles in peer-review scientific journals (at least one should be first- authored by the student).
- Two manuscripts in preparation of sufficient quality for publication in peer-review scientific journals (at least one should be first-authored by the student).

2. Course part of 60 **ECTS**

Compulsory courses

For students admitted after January 1, 2017

- At least two PhD seminar courses
- FLH3000 Basic Communication and Teaching 3.0 ECTS (for students who teach in cycle 1 or 2)

Additionally, for students admitted from January 1, 2019

- Course in basic research ethics
- Half time seminar

For students admitted after December 11, 2021

- Seminar course series: at least two consecutive courses in a series, min. 6 ECTS. The total time participating in seminar courses must not be less than two years.
- Basic higher education pedagogy, minimum 3.0 ECTS
- Sustainable Development, minimum 3.0 ECTS
- Basic research ethics, minimum 2.0 ECTS
- Half time seminar

When can a public thesis defence be scheduled?

Doctoral thesis defences may only be scheduled during the periods **January 7 to June 15** (spring term), and **August 15 to December 20** (autumn term). This means that the intervening periods are deferred, and must be deducted from the plan. For example, if you plan to hold your defense on August 15, you must count backwards from June 15.

Thus, there is no distinct time advantage to plan the thesis defence sooner than 5 weeks after January 7 or August 15. For this reason, the periods **February 12 to June 15**, and **September 19 to December 20** are preferred for thesis defences. This still means that tasks due 8-12 weeks before the defence have to be carried out *before* the intervening periods, i.e. in **November and May** respectively.

Planning the public defence of a doctoral thesis – timeline

12 WEEKS (at the very latest 8 weeks) before the dissertation defence (5 tasks)

1. Book date and room

Email phdadmin@cbh.kth.se to reserve a date for the thesis defence. A suitable room is then booked by the student or supervisor.

There should not be more than two thesis defences (doctoral or licentiate) per day within the same subject (i.e. *Biotechnology*), at least if the defence is targeted towards the same audience. The first session typically starts at 9 or 10 am, and the second in the afternoon at 1 pm. Book the room as soon as possible since the booking calendar fills up quickly.

2. Suggest advance reviewer for the doctoral thesis (form FO-FOGR)

Advance review of the doctoral thesis is mandatory. The supervisor must suggest an advance reviewer, and motivate the choice, and e-mail an initial suggestion to the Director of Third Cycle studies (FA Christina Divne, divne@kth.se) for advance approval. Potential conflicts of interest must be taken into consideration. The information must next be entered in the form FO-FOGR and sent to FA for signature (formal approval).

The principal supervisor is responsible for conducting thesis review and plagiarism control of the thesis (and associated unpublished material) and rectify any deficiencies **before** the thesis is submitted for advance review.

Who can act as advance reviewer?

See Chapter 6.2.6 in the KTH Guideline on *Third Cycle Studies* for requirements.

3. Suggest opponent, grading committee, substitute committee member, and chair for the defence

The supervisor sends an initial suggestion to FA for approval. Include title, affiliation, homepage, CV for the suggested persons, as well as the doctoral student's complete list of published papers and manuscripts. FA then evaluates the suitability of the named persons for their respective roles, including possible conflicts of interest. When contacting the opponent and committee members, provide information about articles and manuscripts that will be part of the thesis.

Who can act as faculty opponent, member of the grading committee, substitute member and chair of the thesis defence?

See Chapter 6.4.2 in the KTH Guideline on *Third Cycle Studies* for requirements.

4. Update ISP to the final version

The individual study plan (ISP) must be updated to reflect that all examination goals have been fulfilled at the time for examination. Be particularly careful when addressing the goals in section 9 of the ISP interface. Here, each of the learning outcomes defined by the Higher Education Ordinance should be adequately motivated.

Since this is the final ISP, clear statements must be given, e.g. "I have reached the goal to... [enter the goal], by [for instance] participating in the PhD seminar courses given at the department [state course]". Motivate goal fulfillment by giving as many examples as possible for each goal.

The final ISP will not be approved until satisfactory motivation for goal fulfillment has been given for all goals. The final ISP is approved electronically by FA.

The general study plans and help document with examples of how the examination goals can be concretized are also found via the CBH Canvas sites for [Doctoral students](#) and [Doctoral supervisors](#).

5. Contact the printing office (US-AB)

Make sure to book thesis printing in due time since US-AB is very busy, especially at the end of the semester.

Web: <https://www.us-ab.com/eng/> ; Email: info@us-ab.com

6 WEEKS (at the very latest 5 weeks) before the dissertation defence (4 tasks)

1. Submit application for thesis defence

The application contains three parts:

1. "Application thesis defence" (form FO-ANDI)
2. The completed and signed summary for the advance review (form FO-SUKV)
3. Approved final ISP (approved electronically by FA).

In the "Application Thesis Defence" (FO-ANDI), the names of the opponent, chair, grading committee and substitute committee member are given, as well as time and place for the public defence. The main supervisor also needs to certify that no conflicts of interests exist for the named persons.

All forms are completed and submitted to the administrator for third-cycle studies:
phdamin@cbh.kth.se

2. Preparations for the thesis

[Graphical profile and layout](#) (kth.se)

Identifiers for the thesis:

- Request a **TRITA number** from phdadmin@cbh.kth.se
- [Order ISBN number](#)

3. Supervisor review and plagiarism check

The review of both the formalities and the scientific content of the doctoral thesis shall be continuously carried out by designated supervisors.

The summary/scientific abstract of the thesis shall be available in English and in Swedish (compulsory).

A popular science summary/abstract may be included in both languages (optional).

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The principal supervisor is responsible for conducting a **plagiarism review** once the thesis (and associated unpublished material) is completed and before submitting the form "Summary of Advance review of licentiate/doctoral thesis" (FO-SUKV). KTH provides the tool [Inspira Originality](#) for plagiarism review. It can also be used as a [stand-alone](#) (outside Canvas).

4. Print your thesis

- See [Printing thesis](https://kth.se/printing-thesis) (kth.se)
- At least 30 copies must be printed, but it is recommended that **75-100 copies** be printed.
- The printing office takes care of sending the legal deposit (“pliktexemplar”) comprising 7 copies of the printed thesis to Kungliga Biblioteket and the libraries at the main Swedish universities Lund U, Stockholm U, Uppsala U, Linköping U, Gothenburg U and Umeå U.
- The ”spikblad” is no longer required (KTH President’s decision 2018-02-20).

5. Zoom webinar

When you have obtained a webinar link for the public part of the defence, send it to phdadmin@cbh.kth.se and we will add it to your post in the KTH Calendar. How to set up a Zoom webinar: <https://intra.kth.se/en/cbh/forskarstuderande/lathund-disputationswebbinar-1.978970>

KTH IT-Support can help with instructions, tips and advice, with the start of the Zoom webinar meeting itself, as well as with on-site support. If you will need support during the defence, please contact it-support@kth.se at least three weeks before the defence. For acute help during the defence, call 08-790 6600. KTH IT-Support handles these types of cases with the highest priority.

4 WEEKS (at the very latest 3 weeks) before the public defence (hard deadline) – “Spikning” = “Nailing” (3 tasks)

The doctoral thesis must be available to the public **at least three weeks prior** to the public thesis defence. These three weeks must fall **between January 7 – June 30 or August 1 - December 20**. This means that *three weeks before the thesis defence, the opponent and grading committee should have received the printed thesis*. This is important because the quality of review depends on all parties having enough time to go evaluate the thesis contents thoroughly.

This also means that “nailing” is the most **critical deadline** in the time plan. Failure to meet this deadline will result in a hard end point, that is, postponement of the public defence. To not risk having to postpone the public defence, it is therefore advised that the “nailing” is performed **no later than at least two days before** this “3-week-deadline”, but preferably earlier. This is because after uploading, it may take a few days for the thesis meta-data to be reviewed, edited and finally approved in DiVA.

Please note that although the full thesis must be uploaded, the version that is *published on-line* in DiVA (the thesis “kappa”) will not contain the full content of the printed thesis and that published papers and manuscripts are not always available through DiVA for copyright reasons. It is thus essential that the opponent and grading committee receive the printed thesis as stated above.

[Posting a doctoral or licentiate thesis](#) – general information at kth.se

Task 1: Prepare to send printed thesis to required recipients

Required recipients should receive the printed thesis as soon as possible after printing. To give the opponent and committee sufficient time to prepare, you can send them a PDF of the final version of the thesis as soon as you receive it from the printers. This is optional and in addition to the printed thesis.

As of March 1, 2026, submitting a distribution list (form FO-DIDO) is no longer required. You must still, however, make sure the complete thesis is distributed to:

- the KTH library at least 3 weeks before the defence (part of the “nailing” process in addition to the electronic posting in DiVA),

- opponent, members of the grading committee (incl. replacement member) and supervisors as soon as the thesis has been printed a copy to the chairperson is recommended),
- third cycle admin. at AlbaNova (archive copy). If there is enough time you can send it by post (see “Contact” below for address) or you can leave in my mailbox on floor 3, in the CBH mailbox on floor 5 or in person (to schedule an appointment write me at krjan@kth.se).

You are encouraged to disseminate the thesis widely to colleagues and collaborators inside and outside KTH, as well as to people within the field who may have an interest. Since you can send an electronic version or download link you are encouraged to be generous when considering potential recipients. It is not required but suggested that you provide the Chair of the defence with a copy.

Also be sure to bring some printed copies for the audience at your defence.

Task 2: electronic posting of thesis in DiVA

Step-by-step checklist for posting in DiVA – Section 4 and following provide essential information for completing the electronic posting (kth.se).

If you are not employed by KTH (e.g. scholarship and industry employed students) and cannot register your thesis or papers in DiVA:
please contact KTH Library biblioteket@kth.se and they will help you get the right access.

Comments to the step-by-step checklist:

At CBH you do NOT need to upload the formal decision for your defense. It will be issued and sent out after the thesis has been published and submitted to the KTH library: just skip step 4:9 in the instructions. You must however upload three other files: two from the printers and a signed media agreement – further information below.

When the thesis has been published in DiVA the event is added to the [KTH calendar](#), and the local administrator for third-cycle studies will send out the formal decision for thesis defence “*Beslut – Disputation*” (form FO-BEDI).

Before uploading, make sure to have the following at hand:

- The two digital files from the print office: one pdf for electronic publishing in DiVA (“kappa”) and one pdf for electronic archiving (full text)
- The abstract text in English and Swedish
- Keywords
- Your KTH-ID
- A signed and scanned Media agreement for upload. Leave the original to the KTH Library when handing in your thesis.
https://www.kth.se/polopoly_fs/1.586913!/Media_agreement.pdf

Now, you are ready to upload the files in the DiVA database:

Log into DiVA: <https://kth.diva-portal.org/dream/login.jsf>

- Choose “Add publication / Upload files”.
- Choose the correct publication type, normally “Doctoral thesis, comprehensive summary” (this is the kappa of your thesis). You first have to register the individual papers of your thesis in DiVA (unless you have done it before). You must also create posts for any unpublished manuscripts that are part of your thesis, but here the full text is not uploaded, only information about the manuscript. Click continue.
- Register the requested information about your thesis.
- Add name and year of birth.
- Add ORCID (if you have one).

- Add your KTH-ID in the field “Local User Id”.
- Add your organization and email.
- Add title, language, and year.
- Add publisher.
- Add “National subject category”, for instance “Natural Sciences”.
- Add “Research subject”, should be “Biotechnology”.
- Add keywords.
- Add the abstract in English and Swedish.
- Add supervisor.
- Add opponent.
- Add information about public defence.
- Choose “Degree”
- Click continue and upload.
- Approve conditions for electronic publishing.
- Review the information and make sure everything is correct.
- Check the fulltext file by clicking on “fulltext” to make sure it is possible to open it.
- Submit.

Once the post has been processed and approved by KTH it will appear in DiVA and information about the defence will be added to the online [KTH calendar](#). This, i.e. making your thesis publicly available, is the first part of the formal “nailing”. (The second is providing a hard copy to the library.)

Task 3: Visit KTHB (campus library) and hand over one copy of the printed thesis and the original Media Agreement, and provide a copy for the School Office (see Task 1).

When the “nailing” has been confirmed the local administrator for third-cycle studies will send out the formal decision for thesis defense “*Beslut om disputation*” (form FO-BEDI).

1 WEEK before the public defence

The local administrator for third-cycle studies emails the draft minutes (“*Minutes of the Grading Committee for Grading of Doctoral Thesis*”, form FO-PROT) to the chair and main supervisor to be handed over to the grading committee at the meeting following the public defence.

0 WEEKS – Day of the public defence act

Local guidelines regarding the procedure for the public thesis defence

The thesis defence is open to the public. The parties at a thesis defence include the opponent, the respondent, the members of the grading committee, the chair of the thesis defence, and normally the supervisors, as well as the general public and colleagues in the audience. There are no strictly defined rules regarding the form of the act, but it typically follows the scheme described in the CBH two local guidelines regarding [responsibilities of opponent and grading committee](#) and the procedure for thesis defence.

What happens after a successful thesis defence?

Provided that you have completed the course curriculum, and that the protocol from the defence has been submitted to the administrator of third-cycle studies, is now time to apply for doctoral degree.

This step is performed electronically when you are logged in at kth.se, under “My account / Services / Certificates / Degree certificate. When this is done, send an email informing the local third-cycle studies administrator so that he/she can proceed with the application.

Additional information

Remuneration for faculty opponent and external members of grading committee (Swedish only):

https://intra.kth.se/polopoly_fs/1.661677.1744724667!/Anvisning_om_ers%C3%A4ttning_till_ledamot_sakkunnig_och_opponent.pdf

Contact for *Biotechnology*

Christina Divne, vice FA (divne@kth.se)

Kristina Jansson, administrator of third-cycle studies (phdadmin@cbh.kth.se).

Postal address: AlbaNova University Center, Att. Kristina Jansson, KTH-CBH, 106 91 Stockholm; Visiting address (by appointment): AlbaNova, Roslagstullsbacken 21, floor 3, room B3:1009

Floor 5 mailbox: From the entrance (floor 5) you walk to the right of the stairwell and then turn right and follow the gallery all the way to the end. Again turning right you see a white mailbox. The box is locked and can only be opened by those of us who work here.

All decisions related to the dissertation as outlined in this document are taken by vice FA (by delegation from FA) or FA.