

# Guidelines from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for the submission of a licentiate thesis and the appointment of examiner and opponent

## 1 Background

Provisions for the degree of doctor and thesis defence are specified in Chapter 6 of the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) and in “Guidelines for teaching and examinations in third-cycle education” (LiU-2022-01125, decision date 2 May 2022).

The Board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences decides on the possibility to award a licentiate degree in specific research education programmes. This is specified in the general study plan for each research education programme. The general study plan also specifies the requirements that are placed for the courses to be taken in a licentiate degree and the extent of the licentiate thesis (expressed in terms of credits).

The guidelines below specify the regulations that are valid for a thesis defence within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Linköping University (LiU).

## 2 Design and language of a licentiate thesis

A licentiate thesis is structured either as a unified work (a monograph) or as a compilation of scientific essays (a compilation thesis) for which the student has been sole author or has authored together with other people. In the event of co-authorship, the contributions of the student must be specified. The licentiate thesis is to be written in Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, English, French or German. A licentiate thesis written in Swedish is to have a summary in English, and vice versa. If the licentiate thesis has been written in Danish, Norwegian, French or German, summaries in both Swedish and English must be given. A compilation thesis is to consist of all texts – as reprints if such have been published, otherwise as manuscripts – and, where relevant, a summary text (the introductory summary).

## 3 Registration of a licentiate thesis ventilation seminar

The principal supervisor is to inform the head of department, or the person in the department to whom the head of department had delegated responsibility for issues

relating to research education, that the PhD student aims for a licentiate degree, and thus aims to present a licentiate thesis at a ventilation seminar. The head of department, or the person to whom the head of department has delegated responsibility, decides on the date for the ventilation seminar, and on the appointment of opponent and examiner. A copy of the registration decision is to be sent to the Research Programmes Board, for information.

Registration of the ventilation seminar is to be made on a form designed for the purpose, which has been approved by the Research Programmes Board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The registration should be made well in advance, preferably two months before the planned seminar date. The registration is to include a proposed date of the seminar, as well as a proposed examiner and opponent.

#### **4 Date and location of the licentiate ventilation seminar**

The seminar at which the licentiate thesis is defended is to be held during term time, and it must be announced at least three weeks in advance. Only if there are exceptional reasons may the seminar be held outside of term time. The ventilation seminar should be held during normal Swedish office hours and in premises at LiU. The examiner and the respondent should normally attend on site. The opponent may attend via video conference or equivalent means should this be deemed suitable. In special circumstances, also the examiner and the respondent may attend via video conference or equivalent means. Special circumstances may be, for example, such circumstances that make national or international travel impossible.

The examiner is to act as chair for the ventilation seminar.

The licentiate thesis must be printed and be made available at least three weeks before the seminar. The department is responsible for ensuring that the seminar is announced, and that the licentiate thesis is made available in the appropriate manner.

#### **5 Criteria for appointment of the opponent and examiner**

An opponent and an examiner are to be appointed for the ventilation seminar. The opponent may not be active within the same research environment as the student and supervisor. Thus, the opponent must be active at another institution of higher education or within another research environment at LiU. The examiner is to be employed at LiU and may be active within the research environment of the student, but neither the principal or associate supervisor of the student may be appointed examiner. The opponent and the examiner must possess a doctoral degree or corresponding scholarly expertise, and it must be established that no conflict of

interests is present as defined in the currently valid regulations relating to conflicts of interest.

## **6 Regulations relating to conflicts of interest in examining a licentiate thesis**

In order to ensure that the examination of a licentiate thesis takes place with legal certainty and in an impartial manner, it is extremely important that the opponent and examiner are appointed in such a way that no suspicion of conflict of interests can arise. This is a fundamental consideration for the credibility and legitimacy of the university, the supervisors, the opponent, the examiner and the student. Even if there is no conflict of interests as defined by the Administrative Procedure Act, it would be unfortunate – not least for the student – if a focus comes to fall on the possible impartiality of the external examiner and examiner, rather than on the quality of the thesis.

An opponent or examiner will be deemed to be subject to a conflict of interests if they:

- have participated actively in the supervision of the research student
- have co-authored any publications with the research student
- have co-authored any publications with the supervisor during the past five years.<sup>1</sup>
- have had any other close professional collaboration with the supervisor or the research student
- are in a position of dependence to the supervisor or the research student
- have an obvious relationship (in friendship or enmity) with the supervisor or the research student.

## **7 Publication and distribution of a licentiate thesis**

Licentiate theses at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences are to be published in the faculty's publication series "FiF-avhandling". Each department will provide more detailed information about department-specific publication series.

Unless provisions of copyright or other circumstances prevent it, theses that are published in the faculty's unified publication series are also to be published electronically through the Linköping University Electronic Press.

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<sup>1</sup> An exception may be made if it is obvious that the co-authorship has not involved close collaboration, such as publication in a large anthology with many independent authors.

The thesis must be reviewed before the ventilation seminar, for instance in a seminar. This review also includes a check for plagiarism. The result is reviewed by the supervisor together with the doctoral student as part of completing the thesis.

The student is requested to contact the university library to obtain the following information, before the thesis is printed:

- An ISBN and ISSN. In cases where the licentiate thesis is published by an external publisher, the latter is to provide an ISBN. In such a case, the library must be informed of this number.
- FiF serial number.

Sufficient copies of the licentiate thesis are to be printed such that the student, after distribution as specified below, retains enough copies for his or her own needs.

The licentiate thesis is to be distributed as follows:

- three copies to the university library
- one copy to the dean's office.

Remaining copies of the licentiate thesis are to be shared between the department and the PhD student, with the student receiving at least half of the print run.

The funds allocated by the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to each research environment cover printing costs and other costs for the ventilation seminar of the licentiate thesis.

## **8 Grade awarded**

The licentiate thesis is to be awarded either a pass or fail grade. When determining the grade, the contents of the thesis and the defence made by the student are to be taken into consideration.

The decision about the grade to be awarded is taken by the examiner appointed. The examiner is to conduct an individual assessment and determine the grade to be awarded. The examiner may ascertain in advance the views of the principal supervisor and external examiner.

A report is to be drawn up that contains information about the identity of the examiner, and the person who participated as opponent. The examiner is to sign the decision. If a fail grade is awarded, the examiner is to provide a written justification. No written justification is required for a pass grade.

A licentiate thesis that has been authored by two or more people working together may be approved as a licentiate thesis if it is possible to distinguish between the contributions of the authors.