Doctoral Programme in the Built Environment

Doctoral Dissertation Examination Process

Actors:

- **Dean**: Dean of the Faculty of Built Environment, Antti Lönnqvist
- **Head of the Doctoral Programme (HDP)**: University lecturer (minna.chudoba@tuni.fi)
- **Coordinator**: Coordinator of the doctoral programme
- **Student services assistant**: The Faculty’s student services assistant, Kati Cosby (ben.doc.tau@tuni.fi)
- **Campus assistants**: Campus assistants of the building in which the public defence will take place (kampusassistentit@tuni.fi; campusassistants@tuni.fi)
- **Financial administrative assistant**: Maija Mäkelä (maija.makela@tuni.fi)
- **Doctoral candidate** (or **candidate**): The doctoral student who is presenting original scientific work required for achieving a doctoral degree
- **Supervisor**: A professor, associate or assistant professor (tenure track) or adjunct professor, responsible for the progress of the doctoral candidate’s doctoral studies and dissertation.
- **Custodian**: A professor, associate or assistant professor (tenure track) or adjunct professor, overseeing the public defence (usually supervisor)
- **Internal pre-examiner**: Head of the doctoral programme or person appointed by the director to evaluate the dissertation before external pre-examination
- **Pre-examiners**: Appointed by the Dean to evaluate the dissertation before it’s finalized.
- **Opponent(s)**: Appointed by the Dean to evaluate the final dissertation

0. **Doctoral candidate** and her/his **supervisor** agree that the dissertation is ready to start the examination process.

1. **Candidate** sends the dissertation as a pdf to **HDP** (cc: **coordinator**) for internal pre-examination. The manuscript should be proof-read and finalized.

2. **HDP (or appointed internal pre-examiner)** checks the dissertation and reports as soon as possible, if the dissertation can be considered for pre-examination. The following aspects must be properly taken into account in the dissertation and will be commented on by the HDP/internal pre-examiner:

   a. Clear formulation of objectives and research questions
   b. Theory defined
   c. Clear and justified methodology
   d. Credible analysis and results
   e. Clear description of contribution that includes novelty
   f. Validity, reliability and limitations
g. In case of a compendium dissertation, that all publications conform with the criteria set in the guidelines for pre-examiners and with the guidelines of the programme

h. Practice of referencing is appropriate

i. Language (based on sampling the text), mathematical expressions, figures, tables etc. are adequately confirming with what is generally required of a dissertation

3. In case corrections are suggested by the HDP/internal pre-examiner, the candidate makes the changes and confirms that they have been taken into account by sending the revised dissertation with the changes marked clearly (e.g. with track changes), accompanied with a point-by-point response document to the HDP (cc: supervisor, internal pre-examiner (if appointed), coordinator).

4. HDP confirms, if dissertation is revised sufficiently and whether dissertation can process with the process.

5. Supervisor proposes at least two eligible [1] pre-examiners by handing in the Proposal for pre-examiners -form together with the pre-examiners’ CVs and publication lists (as documents or links) to coordinator.

6. Based on the documents received, presented by coordinator and checked by the HDP, the Dean decides either to appoint the pre-examiners or to return the matter for further preparation (back to step 5 in this process description).

7. When pre-examiners have been appointed, the student service assistant sends out the dissertation manuscript, the instructions of the pre-examination process and the appropriate forms to the pre-examiners (cc: supervisor, candidate, coordinator) with request to provide the pre-examination report within two months.

8. Pre-examiners send their free-form statements and evaluation forms, which are forwarded to the candidate, supervisor and HDP immediately upon receipt. If pre-examiners do not send the statements within two months (coordinator tracks), coordinator or supervisor will contact the pre-examiner(s) and request an updated schedule. If a pre-examiner is permanently unavailable, the supervisor proposes an eligible substitute pre-examiner (back to step 5).

9. Pre-examiners will give one of four recommendation options for publishing the dissertation. The recommendation options and their procedures are as follows:

   a. Publication as such: proceed to point 10.

   b. Publication after minor modifications (no re-examination): candidate, after discussing with supervisor, revises the dissertation based on pre-examination statement. Candidate writes a response letter to each pre-examiner (Search for help if needed eg. at: https://thinkscience.co.jp/en/articles/2016-06-WritingResponseLetters.html), in which she/he point-by-point documents how the dissertation has been revised, based on the requirements and suggestions of the pre-examiner in question. Once supervisor and candidate agree that the dissertation and the responses are ready, candidate sends the response letters and modified dissertation to HDP (cc: coordinator). After her approval
coordinator and supervisor agree on which of them (coordinator or supervisor) sends the letters and the revised dissertation to the pre-examiners (for their information).

c. Major revision and re-examination: candidate, after discussing with supervisor, revises the dissertation based on pre-examination report. Candidate writes a response letter to each pre-examiner (Search for help if needed eg. at: https://thinkscience.co.jp/en/articles/2016-06-WritingResponseLetters.html), in which she/he point-by-point documents how the dissertation has been revised based on requirements and suggestions of the pre-examiner in question. Once supervisor and candidate agree the revision and the responses are ready, candidate sends the response letters and modified work with the changes marked clearly to HDP (cc: supervisor, coordinator) and after her approval the student services assistant (or coordinator) sends the dissertation and response letter to new pre-examination. The process returns to point 8.

d. Not to be published: candidate, supervisor, HDP and possible internal pre-examiner will meet to analyze the pre-examination report and decide on future actions. The examination process is re-initiated once candidate has produced a dissertation manuscript of adequate quality and response letters in which she/he point by point documents how the dissertation has been revised.

Should the pre-examiners disagree on recommendation, the process is continued separately according to each pre-examiner statement. The coordinator sends a reminder of the process steps following the reception of the statements to the HDP, candidate and supervisor of the dissertation.

10. Once the candidate has favorable pre-examination reports (publication as such or publication after minor modifications without re-examination, accompanied with response letters approved by the HDP), candidate applies for permission to publish a doctoral dissertation by sending the application (Students’ Guide > Student’s forms) to coordinator.

11. Supervisor proposes one or two eligible [1] opponents and a chairperson for the public defence by sending the form “Public defence, opponents and chairperson” together with the opponents’ CVs and publication lists (as documents or links) to coordinator.

12. The application for right to publish and the opponent(s) are checked by the HDP.

13. The Dean decides on the right to publish the dissertation, the opponent and the chairperson.

14. The student service assistant sends the instructions and the personal data form to opponent(s) (cc: HDP, candidate, supervisor, coordinator), with the request to return the personal data form by email before the public defence.
15. **The candidate** has the dissertation printed and takes care of the practical arrangements for the dissertation (see below).

16. The dissertation is held.

17. The **opponent(s)** design final report on the dissertation within **two weeks** (preferably on the day of the public defence) after the public defence and conclude with an unambiguous recommendation if the dissertation is to be accepted, and if so, with which grade (Approved or Approved with Distinction).

18. The **opponent’s** statement is handed in to **coordinator** or to **student service assistant**.

19. The **Faculty council** decides if the dissertation is accepted and on the grade (Accepted or Accepted with Distinction).

[1] All experts have to be professors or hold a degree of the corresponding level as well as be impartial to both student and supervisor (e.g. no co-written publications during the last three years).
Practical arrangements

The candidate

- contacts campus assistants (kampusassistentit@tuni.fi, campusassistants@tuni.fi) to arrange practical issues of the dissertation > auditorium reservation, coffee arrangements, lunch reservation etc.

- contacts the library to prepare title page and discuss publishing issues: https://libguides.tuni.fi/dissertationpublishing

- has the dissertation printed (the printing order at PunaMusta Oy has to be made 5 weeks before the public defense). The opponent’s version of the dissertation (every other page is blank) will be sent to the opponent by mail (campus assistants will send it for you, if needed). 1 copy has to be delivered to the coordinator at least two weeks before the public defence: the dissertation will be displayed publicly 10 days before the defence. A total of 10 copies are sent directly from PunaMusta Oy (4 to TUT library, 6 to National Library).


- stores the dissertation online in Trepo

- Checks the room and technical equipment with the help of the campus assistants before the public defence.

- arranges a party in honour of the opponent, to be held after the dissertation (“karonkka”).

Campus Assistants (kampusassistentit@tuni.fi; campusassistants@tuni.fi)

- arrange the opponent’s travelling and accommodation
- arrange possible tailcoat rent for opponent
- make the reservation for the auditorium of the public defence
- arrange coffee for the participants of the public defence
- arrange lunch for the chairperson, opponent(s) and doctoral candidate
- arrange a flower arrangement to the auditorium of public defence
- arrange refreshment drinks, water and serviettes to the auditorium of public defense
- take care of the technical equipment arrangements
- display the corridor announcement

Financial Administrative Assistant (maija.makela@tuni.fi)

- advises on language check and printing payments