

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRE- EXAMINERS

The purpose of the preliminary examination is to ensure that the doctoral thesis meets the scientific requirements and faculty's general formalities before permission is granted for a doctoral researcher to defend their thesis. Therefore, it is extremely important that examination is performed carefully and that the Faculty obtain explicit and unambiguous statements from pre-examiners. For minor deficiencies and errors in the thesis manuscript, the pre- examiner can consult directly with the doctoral researcher and agree on how the doctoral researcher corrects the errors and submits the corrected manuscript to the pre-examiner. This must be done before the pre-examiner submits their statement to the Faculty.

A thesis manuscript must be based on original scientific research. The manuscript may be a monograph or based on a collection of related original publications by the researcher. Examination aims at ensuring that the amount and quality of research, and the contribution of the researcher fulfill the requirements for a doctoral degree. Pre- examiners are entitled to propose changes to, or even rejection of a thesis. The pre-examiner should specify in sufficient detail the points that need to be revisited or further elaborated if the pre-examiner's statement cannot unreservedly support the grant for a doctoral researcher to defend their thesis.

The pre-examiner's statement (report) can be free-form, but should address the points listed below **Altogether, the pre-examiner is asked to provide a written statement and to fill in the attached form 'Appendix to examination of thesis'.**

1. General notes on the doctoral thesis

- brief overview of the scientific content and quality of the thesis
- clarity of presentation

2. Topic and aims

- originality, currentness and scientific relevance of the topic
- literature review of topic
- value added to existing knowledge by the new data

3. Materials and methods

- The researcher's contribution to the collection of materials or studied subjects, and to the generation of results. If the thesis consists of original publications, pre-examiner should evaluate the doctoral researcher's contribution to the original publications – a clarification of the researcher's contribution is provided by the Faculty
- quality, quantity and suitability of the materials or studied subjects
- complexity of the methodology
- appropriateness of controls
- development of any new methodology

4. Results and conclusions

- reliability and scientific significance of new findings
- extent of reproduction or confirmation of earlier observations
- appropriateness of analyses (statistical or qualitative)
- justification of conclusions drawn from original observations

5. Organization and presentation of thesis

- organization of the thesis and balance between sections
- quality of scientific style, presentation, language and graphics

6. Literature review

- scope and factual content of literature review
- the researcher's familiarity and critical mastery of the current literature
- adequacy and appropriateness of references

7. Maturity of discussion section

- relevance, factual accuracy, critical mastery and clarity of discussion section
- relationship between researcher's own results and existing information; evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of both
- formulation of synthesis of the entire thesis project – maturity of the researcher as a scientist

8. Summary

- brief description on the nature of the research
 - description of researcher's contribution
 - most significant results and merits of thesis
 - quality of thesis manuscript
 - major defects, if any, and measures taken to correct them
 - statement on the suitability of the work for granting a printing license.

The recommended minimum length of the pre-examiner's statement is 2 pages.

Pre-examiner must discuss any minor defects and errors in a thesis manuscript with the doctoral researcher, request revisions be made, and approve the final version before submitting their statement to the Faculty. If there are fundamental defects (e.g. related to the researcher's own contribution, reliability of methods), a statement should be sent to the Faculty complete with a recommendation of not granting permission to the doctoral researcher to defend their thesis. **The pre-examiner must not recommend permission for the doctoral researcher to defend their thesis in a thesis unless they can approve the final, corrected manuscript without reservations.**

If a thesis is of exceptionally high quality, the pre-examiner may suggest **approval with distinction**. The basis for distinction must be included in the pre-examiner's statement. Distinction may be awarded to a thesis of exceptional merit on the basis of recommendations by the opponent and the pre-examiners.