



14 June 2021

Distribution list

Temporary adjustment to the guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education

Decision

The vice-chancellor has decided

that the vice-chancellor's decision of 2 December 2020 on a temporary exemption from the guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education, SLU ID: SLU.ua.2020.1.1.1-1283, will cease to apply as of 14 June 2021;

that the number of people allowed to be physically present for the public defence of a doctoral thesis must not exceed what is permitted by the Public Health Agency of Sweden;

that until a new decision is taken, the public defence of doctoral theses should take place online to the extent possible;

that, notwithstanding section 8.4, Defence of a doctoral thesis, in *Guidelines for doctoral education*, the author of the thesis, the external reviewer, the examining committee and the chair need not be physically present at the defence;

to instruct the deans to ensure that the public can attend defences of doctoral theses via video link or other online tools, provided they have registered to attend prior to the event;

to instruct the deans to ensure that there are alternates for the external reviewer, the chair and the members of the examining committee should those appointed be unable to perform their duties due to technical problems;

to instruct the chief operating officer to ensure that the university administration can provide sufficient IT support at defences of doctoral theses, and

to apply this decision for as long as the decision by the SLU Board of 26 March 2020 on *particular authority granted to the vice-chancellor et al because of the corona pandemic*, SLU ID ua 2020.1.1.1-1283, remains in force.

Background

During the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Public Health Agency of Sweden (www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se) issues guidelines aimed at reducing the spread of infection. The guidelines on the maximum number of people allowed to be present in the same room will be updated as the pandemic progresses. Those who cannot be offered a place should have the option of attending the event online.

On 18 December 2018, the vice-chancellor adopted guidelines for doctoral education (Section 233/18, SLU ID ua. 2018.1.1.1-4677); these guidelines state that the external reviewer, examining committee, chair and author of the thesis must be physically present in the same room during the public defence of a doctoral thesis. On 2 December 2020, in *Temporary exemption from the guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education* (SLU ID: SLU.ua.2020.1.1.1-1283), the vice-chancellor decided to allow a temporary exemption from this rule. This temporary exemption remains in force.

The aim of today's decision is for public defences of doctoral theses at SLU to take place in a way that prevents the spread of infection while at the same time allowing the maximum number of guests permitted by the Public Health Agency's guidelines to attend.

This decision has been taken by Vice-Chancellor Maria Knutson Wedel after a presentation by Principal Administrative Officer Lotta Hansson and in the presence of Chief Operating Officer Martin Melkersson. Pro-Vice-Chancellor Ylva Hillbur also contributed to the preparation of the case.

Maria Knutson Wedel

Lotta Hansson

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