

Program Trial lecture and public defence

About 09:45: Committee meet (earlier time if some preparation is needed)

10:15: Trial lecture

- 45 min presentation by the candidate
- Questions from the committee (optional)

About 11:15: Deliberation about the trial lecture with conclusion about approval and lunch.

13:15: Defence of the thesis

- Introduction by the administrator
 - Presentation of the thesis by the candidate (about 30 min)
 - Short break
 - Comments, questions and discussion with the candidate (normally max 2 hours)
 - o First opponent
 - o Second opponent
 - o Other Committee members (optional questioning if any beyond the first and second opponent)
- The First and Second Opponents should be allocated most time.
- Questions from the audience

About 16: Committee deliberation and thereafter announcement of the main conclusion

Extracts from Guidelines for the Assessment of Candidates for Norwegian Doctoral Degrees

5. The committee's assessment of the trial lecture(s) and public defence

5.1 Trial lecture(s)

The purpose of the trial lecture(s) or other test on an assigned topic is for the candidate to document his or her ability to acquire and impart knowledge beyond the candidate's area of specialization. The trial lecture(s) should be structured so as to be accessible to an audience with knowledge of the subject that can be expected among advanced students (with at least one year of study in the academic field).

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The assessment committee decides whether the trial lecture(s) is/are to be approved or not. In the assessment of the trial lecture(s), emphasis should be placed on both the academic content and the candidate's ability to impart knowledge. The trial lecture(s) is/are part of the doctoral degree examination and must be approved prior to the public defence. ... If the trial lectures are rejected the committee must state its grounds for this. If the trial lecture(s) is/are not approved, a second attempt at the trial lecture(s) and public defence may be made in accordance with the regulations for that particular degree.

5.2 Public defence

The public defence is an academic discussion between the opponents and the doctoral candidate concerning the research questions raised, the methodological, empirical and theoretical sources, documentation and form of presentation. A primary objective is to test the validity of the central conclusions drawn by the candidate in his/her work. The questions that the opponents choose to address need not be limited to those mentioned in the committee's report. The opponents should seek to give the discussion a form which allows those unfamiliar with the content of the thesis or the subject area to follow the discussion.