

Brief information for committee members and faculty opponents participating in the public defense of a doctoral thesis.

The school of engineering sciences at KTH is very grateful for your contributions to our thesis defense procedure. This document aims at informing you about the procedure and help you perform your role during the public defense and the following committee meeting. The public defense of a thesis at KTH has the following actors:

1. **The chairman:** Opens and guides the proceedings.
2. **The respondent:** The author of the thesis who should defend the thesis and demonstrate adequate knowledge about the content of the thesis.
3. **The opponent:** Demonstrates to the committee to which extent the respondent knows the content of the thesis.
4. **The committee:** Decides whether to pass or fail the respondent.
5. **The audience**

The defense contains the following parts as outlined below:

- **Introduction:**
 - **Option A:** A brief introduction to the field by the opponent. The introduction should introduce the field in general and put the thesis work into context.
 - **Option B:** An expose of the highlights of the thesis given by the respondent.

Option A, B or both must be chosen. Typical total time for the introduction is 30-40 minutes.
- **Optional:** 5-10 min break. The chair may choose to hold the break at a later time.
- **Thesis discussion:** The opponent discusses the thesis with the respondent and asks questions that mainly concern the work and the area described in the thesis. The aim is to clarify to which extent the respondent masters the content and topic as well as to establish the respondent's contribution to the work presented in the thesis. Typical time 45-60 minutes
- **Questions by the committee:** The committee members are given the chance to ask questions to the respondent. The committee members are not obliged to ask questions, but it is customary to do so. Typically, one or two questions per committee member
- **Questions from the audience**
- **Closing of the defense:** Total time is typically 2-2.5 hours, but it is important to note that there is no formal time limit.
- **Committee meeting:** The committee members meet to decide on a Pass or Fail grade. The opponent and main supervisor should be present to answer questions in the initial part of the meeting but must leave before the committee discusses and decides on a grade.
- **Presentation of the grade:** The chairman of the committee presents the grade (Pass or Fail) to the respondent.