

Appendix XIII - Guidelines for the Committee for State Doctoral Examination (SDE)

The SDE and its aim

Taking the SDE is possible only at three particular periods during the academic year, in January/February, May/June, and September. The SDE aims to evaluate the PhD student's knowledge of a selection of academic publications based on the requirements of the doctoral study programme. It consists of an oral exam on the knowledge and understanding of ten major publications in the field of Media and Communication Studies. Five of those publications are chosen by the student from a fixed list, and five are chosen by the supervisor. During the SDE, the student should be able to provide an in-depth understanding of the publications, and be able to explain their context, their role within the field of Communication and Media Studies, and their paradigmatic position. The student will also briefly present their dissertation project to the SDE committee during the exam. The SDE of one student will last around 90 minutes.

The committee members

The committee comprises a chairman and four members. The committee's composition is approved by the Dean before the SDE takes place. Ideally, the committee includes members internal to the Faculty of Social Sciences and external members. The CDS members approach proposed members, to check their availability to take part in the SDE approximately two months before the period for examination begins.

Role of the committee members

The committee members will ask questions about the ten selected publications the student studied for the exam. CDS members will send the list of 10 publications for each examined student to the committee, at least one month before the SDE, and will ask the committee members to inform CDS on what books from the list they would like to examine the student. CDS will then communicate the members' preferences to the chair of the committee.

Role of the committee chair

The committee chair will ensure the fairness of the SDE, making sure that all committee members can ask questions (e.g., through a rotation system), that questions are appropriate, and that the student is given ample opportunity to respond to questions. The chair will also be responsible for the time management of the SDE, and will appoint the secretary for the SDE.

SDE procedure

The committee members will meet physically in a prearranged location; members not physically present can join the exam online. In exceptional circumstances, the PhD student can apply to take the SDE entirely or partially in a distance form and the committee chair will decide if the request is granted. For both cases of physical and distance form, the PhD student must provide an ID for identity verification and the SDE must allow for public attendance. . After the questions by the committee, the student is asked to leave the room, and a vote will take place, with two options: pass or fail. When ready, the chairperson informs the student about the outcome of the evaluation. The secretary appointed by the committee chair (usually a CDS member) fills in an evaluation protocol, and the committee members sign the protocol. At least three committee members must sign the protocol for it to be legitimate. The CDS will arrange for the signatures of the members who are not physically present at the SDE, after it takes place, if necessary.

The SDE procedure for PhD students is further described in the PhD Guide, [pp. 22-26](#).