

## Declaration of conflicts of interest - before the defence of the doctoral thesis and licentiate thesis

### Concerning public defence of PhD thesis

Members of examining committee as well as opponent must not have any conflicts of interest. This applies to the PhD candidate as well as to the supervisor. Conflict of interest is defined in the Administrative Procedure Act (Förvaltningslagen 16 §). Below you find an extract of this law.

### Concerning licentiate seminar

A distinguished researcher within a relevant subject area should be appointed as opponent. Neither the examiner nor the opponent should have a conflict of interest. This is in relation to the author of the thesis as well as to the supervisor. Conflict of interest is defined in the Administrative Procedure Act (Förvaltningslagen 16 §). Below you find an extract of this law.

#### Conflict of interest

- 16 § Each person who, on the account of an authority, takes part in the processing in a way that may affect the decision of the authority has a conflict of interest if
1. he or she or a close relative is a party in the case, or otherwise may be affected by the decision and not in a non-essential way
  2. he or she or a close relative is or has been a deputy or representative for a party in the case, or for someone else who may be affected by the decision, and not in a non-essential way
  3. he or she has participated in the final administration of a case at another authority, and as a result of this, already has taken a stand on the issues that the authority shall decide on as a superior instance, or
  4. if there is another specific circumstance that makes his/her impartiality questionable

If it is obvious that the question of conflict of interest is of no value, the authority shall disregard the conflict of interest.

16 § p. 4 in the Administrative Procedure Act (förvaltningslagen) refers to what is known as "appearance of bias" (in Swedish: delikatessjäv). This term means that a proposed individual may be considered disqualified if there are other circumstances that could call the person's impartiality in the matter into question. This means that a person can be regarded as biased even if they have not actually failed to meet the requirements of objectivity and impartiality. Part of the assessment involves considering how the situation appears from the outside specifically, the fact that the proposed individual has some kind of connection to the case

and is involved in its handling. It could involve a level of engagement in the matter that easily gives rise to suspicions that the conditions for an impartial judgment may be lacking. When examining conflict of interest, according to the Administrative Procedure Act (16 § p. 4 Förvaltningslagen), assessment is done according to the two levels below.

Level 1: Relationships that are not allowed:

The proposed person has had a PhD student relation/supervising relation to the principal supervisor.

Level 2: Relationships that should be avoided and that need to be acknowledged/communicated in connection to the application regarding the public defence of the PhD thesis/application regarding the licentiate seminar:

The proposed person has had a PhD student relation/supervising relation to the second supervisor.

The proposed person has had scientific co-production with the supervisor or the author of the thesis during the five last years.

The proposed person had participated in mutual research projects with the supervisor or the author of thesis during the five last years.

In addition to the relationships mentioned above, any relationships that might question the confidence for the suggested person should be avoided and need to be acknowledged/communicated in connection to the application regarding the public defence of the PhD thesis/application regarding the licentiate seminar.

**In connection with assessment of:**

[Here you enter the doctoral student's name]

[Here you specify whether it is a doctoral thesis or a licentiate thesis]

**doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis, we ask you to consider possible conflicts of interest.**

Other comments for possible conflicts of interest. If you are unsure whether it is a conflict of interest, you should inform us of this:

**With reference to the Administrative Procedure Act (Förvaltningslagen) I consider myself not to have any conflict of interest in this matter. I certify this with my signature:**

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Place and date

.....

Name clarification

*NOTE! You can use a digital signature*