

Defence Proceedings

- The main participants enter the auditorium in the following order: the respondent, the Custos (presiding official) and the opponent(s). The audience has to be in the auditorium in good time before the opening of the public examination. The audience rises, when the main participants enter. The text “Pro Arte Utili” has to be placed in the auditorium.
- The doctoral candidate, the Custos and the opponent(s) wear a dark suit, a tailcoat with a black waistcoat or a formal black dress or suit without hat. The respondent can also wear the distinctive colour of her/his department for example on a scarf or a tie. A foreign opponent may wear the gown of her/his own university. The Custos and the opponent(s) carry their doctor’s hat when entering and leaving the auditorium.
- When everyone is seated, the Custos opens the examination by saying: "As the Custos appointed by the Doctoral Programme Committee of the Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture, I declare this public examination open."
- The candidate stands up to deliver her/his introductory lecture (lectio praecursoria) which should not exceed 20 minutes. The lectio starts with the words: “Honoured Custos, honoured opponent(s), ladies and gentlemen”.
- No oral reference is made to the correction of misprints. But the respondent may give the opponent(s) a list of misprints which will then be attached to the written statement which the opponent submits to the Doctoral Programme Committee.
- After the lectio praecursoria the candidate addresses the opponent(s) with the words: “I ask You, honoured opponent(s) appointed by the Doctoral Programme Committee of the School of Arts, Design and Architecture, to present the critical comments on the dissertation You find well-founded”.
- The opponent then stands up and presents a brief statement in which she/he discusses the status and importance of the topic and other similar issues of a general nature. After this talk, both the opponent and the candidate seat themselves.
- Usually, the opponent first deals with methodological and general questions, and a more detailed examination follows. The opponent(s) may spend at most four hours on the examination, but two hours is customary. If the examination is likely to take a long time, the Custos may interrupt it by announcing a break.
- When the examination of the dissertation is completed the candidate and the opponent(s) rise and the opponent makes her/his final appraisal. Finally he/she will (usually) announce that he/she will propose to the Doctoral Programme Committee that the dissertation be accepted or not accepted. The respondent remains standing to thank the opponent.
- The respondent thanks the opponent and turns to the audience and says: "If anyone present wishes to make any comments concerning my dissertation, please ask the Custos for the floor."
- The Custos sees to it that the candidate can respond immediately to each comment and that the speakers keep to the point.
- The Custos rises and closes the proceedings by saying: “The dissertation proceedings are closed”. The proceedings may not exceed six hours, two hours is customary.