Rules for Quality Control of PhD Theses

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Each thesis chapter should have been presented at a seminar at the department or elsewhere, or at a conference. A final seminar of the thesis is recommended. The quality of each completed chapter should be approved by three persons who are either active in the PhD education at the department, or experts in the field inside or outside the department. That is, if there is one supervisor then two other persons should read and approve the quality of the thesis chapters before the thesis is sent off for printing, and before the defence date is decided. To save time at this late stage of the process, it is of course recommended that these other persons have read the thesis carefully even before the final seminar. It is possible to have different persons that check and ensure the quality of each different paper, and it is also possible to have the same persons checking all papers. All persons, i.e. including supervisor(s), should sign and hand in their judgement to the head of forskarutbildningsnämnden, currently professor Olof Johansson-Stenman. The supervisor is responsible for this, and the PhD candidate should not be involved in the process of asking people for the final quality check.

If the person that checks a paper does not find that the current version holds an appropriate quality, he or she may of course suggest different ways of improvements. However, the person has no obligation to do so, and the responsibility is still with the supervisor. Moreover, one cannot approve conditional on improvements. If improvements are needed, the document must be signed with respect to the final, improved, version.

The statement that each chapter of the thesis has the appropriate quality, i.e. that it is publishable as a journal article, should be made by filling in and signing the document Thesis Quality Certification. Thus, if a thesis consists of three publishable papers, 9 signed versions of the document should be handed in before the thesis is sent off for printing and defence date is decided.
PhD Thesis Quality Requirement

The thesis manuscript is of an appropriate quality if at least three papers are publishable in respected refereed journals (either general economics journals or specialized journals that are appropriate and with a wide readership given the focus of the paper) in their current versions, or with minor modifications. Given the large time-lag between submission and publication, it is not required that any of the papers are published at the date of the thesis defence. However, it is strongly recommended that the publishing process is started before the defence. It is recommended (but not required) that one paper, preferably in the beginning of the process, is written together with the supervisor or with any other more senior researcher. At least one paper must be written by the candidate him/herself.

A quantity adjustment should be made in case the manuscript consists of co-authored papers. As a crude benchmark, a paper written with one co-author counts as 2/3 paper, and a paper written with two co-authors counts as 1/2 paper. A chapter may count differently if the candidate has contributed more or less than the other co-authors with respect to scientific ideas and influence of the final paper. A quantity adjustment could also be made if the candidate has published a long essay in a major journal, and the contribution is comprehensive enough so that it could have been divided into two essays instead. Then one additional publishable paper may be sufficient. A quantity adjustment will also normally be made if the papers are very similar in terms of contribution, or if a paper is very short and of a note-format, implying that more than 3 publishable papers may be required.

Moreover, there is a certain degree of quality-quantity trade-off, meaning that if one of the chapters is considered to be very good, i.e. publishable in a top journal, the quantity requirement can be relaxed somewhat. Generally, quality is more important than quantity. Therefore, if none of the chapters have the appropriate thesis quality, then it is not sufficient to adjust the quantity to include more than three papers. However, the corresponding possibility exists, to some degree, for lic-theses. That is, three papers, where none of them have the appropriate thesis quality, may be sufficient as a lic-thesis.

If the thesis manuscript is a monograph (which is allowed but not recommended) the scientific contributions should be of a magnitude corresponding to the above criterion of three publishable papers. The major contributions should then be clearly specified on a separate paper by at least three competent persons.
Thesis Quality Certification:

I hereby certify that I have read and gone through the following chapter/paper of the PhD thesis manuscript by which is supervised by.

According to my judgement, the quality requirements of this chapter are fulfilled, and I judge that it, in the current form of the manuscript, or with minor modifications, is publishable in a respected refereed journal. According to my judgements, the paper has a good opportunity to be accepted in any of the following journals (specify at least two):

1. 
2. 
3. 

If I would recommend one journal for the first submission of the paper it would be:

Date:

Signature

Name elucidation