

LUND UNIVERSITY

Malmö Theatre Academy

Artistic third-cycle education in theatre

## Memo on intermediate seminars for artistic third-cycle education in theatre

### Outline

Review of ongoing PhD projects is a key component of the third-cycle education at the Malmö Theatre Academy (THM), both for the doctoral students and as quality assurance of the department, University and discipline. The principal supervisor holds the primary responsibility for the ongoing review and follow-up of the doctoral student's work. In order to examine the work and its openness for review from several different perspectives, and to ensure that the doctoral student's activities are well-established at the department and in the artistic field, the work is to be presented in a wider context. At THM, PhD projects are presented in the form of open seminars on at least three occasions during the third-cycle programme. These are referred to as planning, midway and final seminars, and are scheduled to take place when approximately 25%, 50% and 75% of the third-cycle programme has been completed. At these seminars, the doctoral student can present different types of material, and artistic performance can be part of the presentation.

The seminars are designed on the basis of the nature of the specific project, and are intended to support the doctoral students in their continued work. Doctoral students and supervisors can request which issues they want to discuss during the seminars. The supervisors must approve the material to be presented at the seminar and may require revisions and additions.

For every seminar, an external reviewer is appointed who is responsible for reviewing and discussing the work and the material presented. The external reviewer should make the effort to provide constructive criticism based on the issues that they find important and key. Comments on a more detailed level regarding, for example, scholarly precision, linguistic presentation and technical issues are not to be addressed at any length at the seminar, but may preferably be provided as a written supplement.

The material must be submitted by the doctoral student to the external reviewer at least three weeks prior to the seminar. Before the final seminar, the head of subject is to assess whether the material is ready for presentation. The research group and lecturers at THM, as well as all others concerned, are to be invited the seminar well in advance by the doctoral student, who is also to provide any relevant material for the seminar.

### Content and focus of the planning seminar (25%)

Based on the artistic research project described in the doctoral student's application, the material and the preliminary plan for the entire PhD project drawn up by the doctoral student during their first year on the programme are discussed. The doctoral student is expected to present a draft plan for how the artistic presentations relate to the reflective material and how this whole relates to the proposed research issue. The discussion should aim to provide a basis for the implementation of the entire PhD project. During the planning seminar, the design and feasibility of the project are discussed in relation to artistic practice, theoretical and artistic contextualisation, as well as methodological choices. The work presented should demonstrate a good overview of the artistic, methodological and presentational choices for which a foundation was established by the compulsory courses, among other things.

### Content and focus of the midway seminar (50%)

At the midway seminar, the artistic research process should have reached a stage where the

entire design of the PhD project is clear and can be analysed. The doctoral student is expected to present how the work has progressed since the planning seminar.

At the midway seminar, the development of the project and the research issue is discussed in relation to artistic, methodological, theoretical and ethical choices. One issue that should be addressed is the project's relation to the artistic field and to previous research. The seminar should include an in-depth discussion of the qualities of the artistic presentation. Further examples of issues that can be addressed are the project's communicability, choice of type of performance and presentation formats.

In artistic research projects it is not always possible to distinguish between research methods and artistic work processes. Nevertheless, the work presented should reflect deliberate and clear choices of artistic and theoretical perspectives as well as carefully considered methodological choices. During the midway seminar, the relationship between these aspects of the artistic research project is discussed, as are the continued planning and execution of the project.

### Content and focus of the final seminar (75%)

At the final seminar, the artistic research process should have reached a stage where the presentation of the entire PhD project is more or less complete. All of the artistic material to be included in the completed PhD project is to be made available to the seminar participants. The doctoral student is expected to present how the work has progressed since the midway seminar.

How the presented material relates to the project's aim and research issue is discussed during the final seminar. This involves a discussion of how the chosen theories and methods interact with the artistic content of the project. During the final seminar, the main focus is to be on the quality of the project as a whole, which may include discussions about the project's communicability in its current form, and whether the chosen forms of presentation have successfully succeeded in communicating the artistic research processes and results.

The aim of the final seminar is to help doctoral students to complete their artistic research project. The external reviewer should therefore strive to present constructive criticism,

questions and suggestions based on a thorough review of the material presented.

## Execution of the seminars

The seminars are chaired by the relevant head of subject or another member of the research group at THM.

- The chair welcomes the participants, and the external reviewer presents him- or herself.
- The doctoral student presents him- or herself, and comments on their material. If artistic presentations are included, these can be presented at an appropriate time during the seminar.
- The external reviewer gives a presentation and holds a dialogue with the doctoral student (approximately 60–90 minutes). This could start with a very brief description/overview of the work as a whole, followed by a review in which the external reviewer elaborates on their views and comments, as well as a dialogue with the PhD student. The dialogue should provide the student with the opportunity to describe, explain and clarify their material, but the main focus is to be on the external reviewer's presentation.
- The other seminar participants are to be given the opportunity to ask questions and comment.
- Immediately after the seminar, the doctoral student, supervisor and external reviewer should have a brief follow-up meeting to summarise the discussion.