



FACULTY
OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES

STATEMENT FROM EXTERNAL
EXPERT GROUP

Reg. No.
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2022-09-04

Program evaluation of Master and PhD education in sociology of law: Statement from external expert group

Assignment and external expert group

The assignment of the external expert group (see composition below) has been to evaluate the Master's program and the PhD education for sociology of law. The evaluation is based on Lund University's eleven criteria for quality enhancement, with support from the Faculty of Social Sciences' instructions¹. The assignment includes raising the strengths, challenges and development opportunities of the learning environment and the programme/programmes.

Prior to the evaluation, the expert group were given access to LU Box with a large number of documents from the department and the faculty, including the department's self-assessment and input of students/doctoral students.

On the 13th of June 2022, a site visit was conducted (see the program in appendix).

The external expert group:

- Associate Professor, Annika Staaf, Malmö university (chair of the expert group)
- Professor Joxerramon Bengoetxea, Ñati international institute for the Sociology of Law

¹ *Instructions and procedures for programme evaluations by external experts at the Faculty of Social Sciences (2021-02-04, reg. no STYR 2021/117) and Instructions for external experts regarding programme evaluation at the Faculty of Social Sciences (2021-02-04, reg. no STYR 2021/118)*

The main strengths and challenges of the programme, and the external expert group's reflections and recommendations

Our statement is thematized according to the eleven criteria that University of Lund have decided upon in their current template for quality development. Those criteria are based on theories of Constructive Alignment, originated from Biggs and Tang (2011). The evaluation consists of two different levels of Sociology of Law education: the Master's program and the PhD education. We will initiate all criteria with our impression of the Master's program and continue to the PhD education. On those occasions, our comments include both levels of education (advanced and research) this will be clearly marked and if the comments concern only one educational level that will also be clearly stated. Our assessment will be finalized with our joint impression and conclusive recommendations to the department.

We are interpreting the evaluation assignment as a reconciliation as to which level the department are working in accordance with the guidelines of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University being communicated us and in harmony with the theories of Constructive alignment. We have not interpreted the evaluation assignment to include an assessment of the pedagogic choices made by the faculty.

1. That the actual study results correspond to learning outcomes and qualitative targets

The evidence to ground our assessment is principally the program and course syllabi, the reports on the forms of assessment and on progression, plus analysis of the matching between the two, complemented by the site visit.

The advanced level (Master's program of Sociology of Law) is an international interdisciplinary program aimed at introducing students to the study of law in a social context and was initiated in its present form in 2016. It is a full time Master's program of 120 credits consisting of initial 30 credits core courses in sociology of law (SOLP01 and SOLP02), 30 credits methodology and theory of science, 30 credits elective course (inhouse possibilities RÄSN10, RÄSN11, RÄSN12 or other) or internship (RÄSN03) also 30 ECTS, and a concluding 30 credits master's thesis (SOLM02). There is also the option on a one-year master consists of the following courses: SOLP01, SOLP02, 15 ECTS methodology and theory of science, and SOLM12 (15 credits thesis). The master's program has had an increased popularity over time (from 121 to 254 applicants) and usually all firsthand applicants are accepted.

For the PhD education in principle, the first year 60 credits are gained from the courses, of which a core - 7,5 credits theory of science, 7,5 credits sociology of law methodology, 15 credits theory of sociology of law, and 3 credits on research ethics - are compulsory. Each PhD candidate has an Individual Study Plan (ISP) regulating their studies. There are about eight or nine PhD candidates constantly throughout a 4-year program: about two or three defend their theses every year and the same amount entering as new candidates. The PhD candidates all have grants, from different institutions. Half of the grants are external, and one or two of these are externally funded, so-called industrial PhD:s, as part of larger research projects. But these schemes are not so flexible on the amount of time candidates can devote to teaching and tutoring. Each candidate has one director or supervisor and a co-supervisor from the University. A third, external, supervisor is quite normal. PhD students are also “employees” hired by the University and receive a monthly salary. They engage in teaching and tutoring graduate and Master students. Students are very positive about the quality of the courses on the theory and methods of the Sociology of Law. Some comments made that the education was a bit loose and needed to be tightened up, but it was also said that it could be an effect of Covid 19. Reading courses are welcome by students: they amount to “specialised knowledge in a limited area of SoL” and are useful towards the literature review. The remaining three years are for research. For the doctoral level, the documentation from examining committees and the list of thesis titles and formats (research projects, titles and even direct access to a PhD thesis) of the last 10 years is also a key support for this assessment.

Strengths:

The Master’s program is attractive to students and responsible lecturers at the program seems to be actively working on the course didactics and its development. There is nothing that supports the idea that the study results and learning outcomes does not correspond. The learning outcomes covers a variety of anticipated competencies needed for academic studies. This includes mastering critical reading and handling of sources, collecting relevant data, analysing such data with the aid of theory, and eventually writing a thesis. The engagement on the teaching staff is obvious when assessing the self-evaluation and other documents as well as during the interview with the responsible lecturer at the site visit. The lecturers all seem to collegially work for the development of the program.

For the PhD program a strength is the ISP being discussed in the research collegium and approved yearly by the main supervisor, by the head of Department and by the head of third cycle studies. The ISP has many controls

to ensure the actual study corresponds to learning outcomes and degree targets, i.e., “broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field; advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field; familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular”. At least once a year the candidates present their research in internal Department seminars, and towards the end stage, also in open seminars, where they receive internal and external comments.

Challenges and recommendations:

For the advanced level it is an obvious deficiency that Master student representatives themselves have not conducted the self-assessment. The responsible parties at the department must engage more to motivate students to actively participate in such important assessments. The uninspired assessment we took part of was not of any assistance for gathering information from the students themselves concerning the program. Such assessments work as shadow reports and are crucial in finding different perspectives of essential information such as study objects.

Moving on, in the self-assessment it is stated that a challenge is to teach students academic writing and one recommendation would be to initially have courses on that topic, maybe optional and not as part of the regular courses. With our experiences from other international Master’s programs in which students come from different countries and academic background even things like plagiarism and correct quoting of sources are looked upon very differently and needs further instructions. The student’s throughput is by the evaluation group seen as part of study results. As stated above the program has many applicants but, in the end, only approximately 20 (17-22) students begin their Master studies each year, in some cases the early drop off probably is due to visa issues and scholarship rejections or other forms of extended and late handling. This is rather common in many master’s programs with an international profile and one recommendation would be for the department to more actively be of assistance early and initially when students apply for scholarship and visas and guide them through that process. With similar experiences from other international Master’s programs such more general early assistance has made a difference. With that said, we would like to encourage the entire department, not only the study counselor/administrator to take a more active part in such assistance. The interviews at the site visit also mentioned that the Master’s level did not have a study advisor employed at the moment and we urge the department to employ such person. To make some of this possible there must be resources given to lecturers specifically for such interventions. Furthermore, it also seems that no more than 50-60 %

receive their master's degree, which is a rather low figure. These numbers need to be investigated and addressed by the department. During our interviews the economy of the Master program was mentioned more than once and seen as an expensive program. Drop-outs are always expensive in our system of funding making it important for more than study reasons to address this even if students pay fees for attending. Also see discussion for criteria 2 beneath.

PhD Students are concerned some courses are too time-consuming considering their equivalence in credits. The first-year computation of 60 ECTS could be recalculated on the basis of the amount of time devoted to each credit, and the concrete objectives. The optional courses could focus on the literature on the topic of each thesis. It is important that the compulsory courses are given in the first year of the doctorate. These courses could be merged with the equivalent Master courses but taken them into a deeper level.

The attitudes of the faculty to the ISPs can be rather bureaucratic sometimes; and it is important that the ISP becomes a tailor-made roadmap for the learning, reading, drafting, presenting and research objectives of each individual candidate, focusing on what needs to be done next.

A challenge for both these levels of education is to continuously work with academic progression and alignment. This also being a question for the department to find resources and give the teaching staff enough time to actively deal with the development of didactics and increased quality.

2. That the programme focuses on students'/doctoral students' learning

Strengths

The Master program is clearly actively working on formative parts of teaching with a variety of ways of methods described both in the course curriculum and the self-assessment to engage students in their own learning. The current focus on active learning, giving attention to how students learn not only what they learn is definitely a step in the right direction. As stated, active learning can be more challenging for teachers but also much more interesting and fun, giving the lecturers new ideas and perspectives. The stated shift to a mix of lectures and seminars within the same session is a way forward to involve students more actively. The site visit confirms our impression from the box material that high ambition among staff members concerning teaching applies on a general level. We wish to encourage these ambitions.

For the PhD program when looking at examples of individual study plans and the procedures for course evaluation reports and course guides, we can detect some strengths and identify challenges leading to suggestions. The three

seminars where the students present their research are a best practice, especially the final one as it is public and receives great input not only from their peers acting as discussants but also from senior internal and external assessment (critical input and feedback). The students consider they have sufficient opportunities to personalize and shape their educational process, including, for example, choosing courses and attending conferences. It is important to encourage candidates to present their work in Conferences and workshops in other Universities.

Challenges and recommendations

The Master's program, including many international students, seems to have too many of drop-outs due to anxiety issues and worries probably partly due to negative changes in the world (e.g. Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine). It is stated during our site visit that it becomes a challenging fact to deal with for the department. We agree and consider it a serious dilemma for the department to tackle but it must be done. Engaging staff and teaching assistants (amanuenser) in student-oriented activities off working hours during the first semester, mentorships, giving optional courses (in academic writing etc) and encouraging third semester students and student's associations to get involved. It is our belief that the department and course administrators/coordinators must follow this up in a systematic way. Again, these issues are rather common in international programs, but it still presents a problem and we do have experiences of successfully dealings with such issues. Another stated dilemma seems to be that many different lecturers are involved in the program making it rather hard to coordinate it. This is a question of resources and time, and our overall impression is that staff of the department find that they are not given time enough to meet increasing demands from students, their faculty, and the management of the University.

PhD candidates are halfway between postgraduate students and teaching faculty. As quasi-lecturers, PhD candidates and it is our opinion and recommendation that could and should supervise junior students at Bachelor or Master level, thus identifying their own needs and queries. Training for teaching is provided, which is very positive, although limited by the fact that a significant part of the PhD students does not speak Swedish. As students, PhD candidates have training needs, and they obtain supervision from the senior faculty in tutorials and meetings. Students feel that colleagues at the department are interested in their work, but they should not be treated as peers.

Sometimes specialised supervision is necessary, if their topic is new or has no expert in the Department or in the University, and in that case external expert supervision is called for. It is important to be able to identify exactly what type

of expertise is necessary in order to ensure a productive supervision to the candidates. PhD candidates who have not done a sociolegal Master before (Lund University or elsewhere) could do with extra internal supervision, but this may strain an already loaded supervision agenda of the Department Faculty. A recommendation would be to, at an early state in their ISP, examine the need of special supervision.

3. That the program is based on a scientific and/or artistic foundation and proven experience

Strengths

The literature of the Master program is clearly fulfilling the requirement of scientific foundation in all course curriculums. It is a clear progression in the choice of literature between the courses and in the learning outcome of the curriculum. We welcome the fact that the lecturers have also provides the Master students with research articles of their own production making the program more research based.

For the PhD education we can, on the basis of the program and course syllabi, the publication lists for teaching staff, and the supporting documentation from research evaluation, identify as a strength, the assessment of each candidate by the Faculty in the Sociology of Law Department. Not only at each of the three major seminars where candidates present their project and their work, but also with drafts of their articles and texts.

Challenges and recommendations

The lecturers at the Master program as well as the bachelor courses wished to change the curriculum so new interesting research topics, current debates etc was introduced more easily. Usually, the administrative planning of courses is time-consuming and little space is given for such hasty transitions of courses. One option would be to rewrite a few course curriculums to become more flexible, at least in parts of the course which we recommend being investigated if being possible to carry out.

The PhD education seem to have a common challenge in finding the optimal supervisor for each candidate, as this requires expertise in a very broad range of topics. A suggestion would be to have a broad pool of supervisors at the early stage of the candidate's itinerary (first two years) and then, depending on the chosen topic and/or methodology, select the ideal fit, internally, if it is available, or externally. But all internal supervisors should get credit and recognition for the actual supervision they have provided, also at the earlier stage. Recruitment of future faculty could seek to ensure that a large variety

of themes and topics and fields are covered by the Department as a whole. This would not do away with the need of external expert supervision, but it would enhance the quality of supervision even more.

4. That teaching staff, including supervisors, have appropriate expertise in terms of subject, teaching and learning in higher education and subject teaching as well as other relevant expertise, and that teaching capacity is sufficient

Strengths

The Master and the PhD education have taken into account the available teaching resources, their form of employment, the academic expertise, the training offered in teaching and learning in higher education, i.e., the fact that special pedagogical courses and seminars are available for supervisors; the number of teaching/planning hours or clock hours per course-education development projects, and the forms of teaching (individual supervision is much more work-intensive than lecturing).

We are satisfied that the faculty, teaching staff, including supervisors, have appropriate expertise in terms of subject and are trained academics with very good publication records, with teaching as well as other relevant expertise in both these educational programs. We consider the quality of teaching is high, although the teaching capacity is clearly strained, and in need of recognition, see recommendations below. Unless faculty members can buy out their teaching duties by obtaining external finance for research projects, research is often carried out using predominantly their leisure, off-work, time, since there is a risk working hours are consumed by lecturing and supervision.

The Master program lecturers have taken the required pedagogical courses for university teaching, while many teachers have in addition taken specialized pedagogical courses, and the head of the program is a member of the Faculty of Social Science's Teaching Academy. As mentioned above, the teaching is research based, and all teachers are researchers, or PhD candidates, teaching at the program. The self-evaluation and site visit gave information that lecturers at both the Master program and the PhD education did receive insufficient time for preparation and lecturing, making it hard to develop courses and not enough time to keep up to speed with current research concerning their fields of expertise.

Challenges and recommendations

As stated above these recurring answers of lack of possibilities to develop courses or/and personal skills in research is hard to evaluate since there are not any documents for us to study (bemanningsunderlag/kurs) how teaching hours are distributed. This is partly a work environment question, but it goes hand in hand with quality of the department's education and are equally important to address. We would urge the management of the department in collaboration with staff members to do so. The increasingly extensive administrative burden put on lecturers is not uncommon for us. See Liv Finstad's recommendations from the Norwegian context (assessment of bachelor program in Criminology, point 4).

For the PhD education applies as well that when expertise in a given topic is not available, externals can be called in (see points 2 and 3) when capacity is below supervision needs. This may be a temporal shortcoming due to the special circumstances mentioned in the introduction, but it may also have to do with the need to increase the faculty in more recruitments and allow the faculty lecturers to engage in research and to attend each PhD candidate with tailor-made supervision.

Encouraging PhD candidates to present their work in seminars, workshops and conferences and gain feedback can be as important as supervision and presenting their research to other PhD candidates from other disciplines can be equally fruitful. The Department could consider seeking financial help to offer paid visiting fellow schemes to invite visitors for a semester or a term and do special supervisions to the PhD candidates.

5. That the programme is to be relevant for the students and doctoral students and meets the needs of society

Strengths

As stated in the beginning of this evaluation, p. 1 there is a high interest of the Master program in Sociology of Law with many domestic as well as international students. It is also a program that we earlier claimed to be based on a scientific and/or artistic foundation and proven experience, point 3. We consider the program to be relevant for further research studies and for being a theoretical academic discipline that meets the demands of society on an adequate level. The variety of possibilities to choose from during third semester including internship is giving quality and relevance to the program as well as probably serving the needs of society well.

For the PhD education we can detect there is a high interest in the doctoral program: many candidates apply to the program, 70 for only 2 positions, and

a very high success rate after the PhD, mostly in academia. on the basis of background and foreground factors (based on Statistics Sweden figures), alumni surveys and programme evaluation reports, The success rate for completion of the doctoral thesis within five years is also high.

Challenges and recommendations

For the master program is the drop-out level previously discussed, point 2, and should be taken seriously by the department. It could be one indicator (of course of many) that students do not consider the program being relevant enough. See recommendations under point 2. The self-assessment is reflecting on how to make the first course relevant for a diverse student group, and maybe prevent students from dropping out. We encourage the lecturing staff to continue such discussions and to involve Master students as well.

The PhD education the students state that they feel the need for improving their communication abilities both in academic contexts and to media and the general public, especially as regards their research results. Communicating their work becomes crucial and extra training and advice on post PhD career applications could be useful.

6. That the students and doctoral students have an influence on planning, implementation and follow up of the programme

Strengths

The different documents presented to us makes it clear that there are well-structured formal ways for students' representation and participation and the site visit presented us with some more informal ways. Evaluations, students' counselling, dialogues during courses all adds up to an environment where it should be possible to feel and have real influence.

The Ph.D. students are content with the work environment and how they are integrated as colleagues. As the department is relatively small, there are several possibilities for Ph.D. students to take part in everyday activities and access colleagues. The relationship between the department's leadership and the Ph.D. students is healthy. Students find it easy to voice concerns and feel included in decision-making processes to the greatest extent possible. An example of this is the department's tradition of having a Ph.D. student as one of two work environment representatives. Students have open and

constructive discussions of matters related to their individual research, the Ph.D. education and more general employment issues (equal opportunities, work environment, salary, etc.) at bi-monthly meetings with the Director of Research Studies.

Challenges and recommendations

The Master program have a low number of respondents on the surveys (about 40%), even if time is used to discuss the importance of taking part. Even so, the on-site visit informed us that student's (it was a bachelor student's point of view) did not feel it useful to fill in such reports and wanting them to be more of expectations of the course lying ahead of them instead of a summary of things impossible to change for the answering cohort. Maybe this is possible to alter, at least partly by discussing expectations at the introduction of courses?

The setback for the PhD education is that there is no set routine for course evaluations, and due to low number of PhD students participating in internal courses it is unlikely course evaluations can be anonymous. Having an external supervisor can sometimes help in these cases.

We recommend the department to include the students' assessments of courses (at all levels and over the years) and their recommendations in the material given to external groups for evaluation to come in order to examine how students consider the courses' relevance. It could also be of significant relevance in future assessments to take part of if and how the department handled and maybe remedied recommendations and demands from students.

7. That an appropriate study and learning environment is available to all and includes a well-functioning support system

Strength

On the basis of the programs' use of SI mentors or other support in teaching; of the management of special learning support for doctoral students with disabilities: mentors, special study stations, access to alternative forms of assessment; the support from the library; the access to study stations; the access to learning platforms; the special introductory activities for students/doctoral students (programme or freestanding course) and the access to study guidance, we come to the conclusion that the Master as well as the

PhD program provides excellent working and research environment and facilities.

Challenges and recommendations

For the Master program one challenge is that the function of study advisor is missing. Instead, this task is divided by the program coordinator and the head of program as part of one among many other of their workload. One main issue for the Master program is the drop-out of students and their lack of wellbeing, particularly the international students and this should be taken seriously as previously stated, point 2. Especially since the perfect mix of students at the program preferably includes more international students according to the head of program.

PhD-students have detected a need for clear guidance and advice on data storage and security.

8. That there is continuous follow up and development of the programme

Strength

Actually, for all levels of education the time, energy and level of ambition spent processing the different self-assessments leading up to this evaluation are impressive and actually a form of rather systematic evaluation in itself. Good work! Other and multiple forms of (systematic) following-up and assessments are already in place at the department, at the faculty and at the university being crucial for the development of education at the Master program as well as the academic subject Sociology of law and Criminology(bachelor).

For the PhD level each PhD student's situation and progress is thoroughly discussed in addition to the supervision situation at each research collegium meeting. Once a year, all ISPs are discussed in the research collegium before the yearly approval.

To conclude, we understand that the pandemic has put a strain on regular meetings and day-to day reflections with colleagues at work, but we would like to stress the importance of getting back to "normal" as soon as possible and to formalize meetings etc.

Challenges and recommendations

See above, point 2 concerning dropping out the Master program. A proper and systematic analysis and action plan is needed to find ways to prevent this in the future.

There is positive collaboration between the PhD group and the head of third cycle studies, but there seems to be a need for better structures for the evaluation of each internal PhD course, as mentioned in the previous point. Candidates' conference and workshop planning could be incorporated into the ISPs.

9. That internationalisation and an international perspective is promoted in the programme

Strength

The Master program is to a great extent influenced by and active in promoting internationalization, being an international program taught in English (all components of the program are in English). It recruits students from across the world, and normally the student group consists of about 1/3 students from Sweden and the rest of the group from the rest of the world. The literature is in English and different external visiting scholars are invited to some courses. Semester three offers a possibility to internship abroad and that should be further encouraged.

The PhD program is truly international. The collegial environment, the recruitment of postgraduate students and Faculty are also global. Research visits abroad are available and there are visiting scholars at the Department. International research seminars are held, and funding is available. PhD candidates' participation in international Conferences, workshops and seminars could be clearly specified in ISPs.

Challenges and recommendations

For the Master program as well as the PhD level and as mentioned in point 4, the Department might consider seeking financial help to offer paid visiting fellow schemes to invite visitors for a semester or a term guest teaching and to do special supervisions to the PhD candidates.

10. That gender equality and equal opportunities perspectives are integrated in the programme

Strengths

The Master program and PhD education have gender equality and equal opportunities that are reflected in the internal courses, exam committees, supervision constellation, and recruitment and other more formal processes.

Challenges and recommendations

For the Master program an obvious challenge is the gender imbalance of the applying students with today more than twice the number of women applying for the program. This seems to be an increasing issue when looking back some 6-7 years where equal numbers of men/women applied, and it needs to be addressed by the department (Swedish Council for Higher Education, 2022, retrieved from Box). Apart from that we notice that gender perspectives in literature is well represented. To reach a better integration of such perspectives, one possible solution is to make the learning outcomes needed to be examined, (se assessment, bachelor level, point 10).

All Ph.D. candidates hired for externally funded research projects are male, and there is an over-representation of male project assistants (this could indicate a gender bias in recruitment of PhD students through external funding). It is equally important to make sure female master students are as likely as male master students to approach senior researchers about externally funded projects towards their PhD.

11. That subject-relevant perspectives on sustainable development are promoted in the programme

Strengths

We have detected a strong Social Sustainability focus in syllabi and Master thesis/ doctoral dissertations for both Master program and PhD education.

Challenges and recommendations

Some internal courses could reflect sustainable development a little more, especially ecological/environmental perspectives, although Sociology of Law has traditionally focused on social sustainability. Master students and PhD students could be encouraged to relate their thesis or dissertations and topics to one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda.

Summarised views and recommendations

The site visit took place, after having examined relevant documents made available by the department, in June 2022. The last three years have been rather special and delicate for all walks of life and education, with the Covid-

19 pandemic, spanning globally over more than two years, and now also with the outbreak of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, a situation that affects Eastern European and Baltic regions significantly. During the pandemic, working from home became the norm and Master students as well as candidates were unable to attend conferences and seminars, or do visit research or fieldwork as initially planned or to have informal and substantive discussions about their research with colleagues at the department. In the case of the Department of Sociology of Law at Lund University another sad event has added up to the list of challenges, i.e., the passing away of Reza Banakar, one of the key names in the field internationally. This has required an adaptation of the Department to make up for the loss of guidance and insight that Professor Banakar provided, after the retirement of the previous generation of very gifted scholars and pending the full incorporation of two new professors. As far as we can tell, the faculty at the Department has coped very well in this interim period, both as regards teaching, organising seminars and mentoring of postgraduate students, but this has come at a personal cost in their own research careers, something the University could and should acknowledge.

The overall impression of the Master's program of Sociology of Law (120 credits) is that the Master students receive varied forms of teaching and examination possibilities. This also includes the program of 60-credits, one year Master program (in Swedish called a magister). One central focus of lecturers is clearly didactics, i. e. how structured and varied teaching is organized and performed to students for them to reach the goal of a master's degree. The claim made by the department that they have a solid master's program well adapted to students' and society's need, with an international and inclusive profile seems to be accurate even though a constant need of change and adaption to societal and educational development is said to be ongoing. The master's program in sociology of law is rather new, in its current form five and a half years old, including a different online version running for approximately two years due to Covid 19. It seems to have found its formation with a couple of newly designed courses and different literature as well as structure in courses. The evaluation group highly appreciates the way Master's thesis is presented for us. Even though we have not had the time to investigate the quality of all presented theses, we have taken a couple of samples and the academic quality is satisfactory of all samples. The three graded examples of Master thesis seem to have been graded accurately. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a challenge to all teaching environments as well as society as a whole. An online Master's program was installed and now the program is getting back to a more "normal" state of teaching. The change of structure from regular teaching to online teaching as well as the earlier

mentioned illness and passing of Professor Reza Banakar meant that a lot of responsibility for the program was given one person. We strongly urge the management of the department to be prepared even for the unforeseeable events and act fast to assure a fair division of responsibility among staff members in order to limit work environmental related challenges. The situation with Master students dropping out sometimes connected to anxiety issues and not reaching a Master's degree must be evaluated systematically as earlier suggested under criteria 1-2. We also urge the management of the department in collaboration with staff members to evaluate the given teaching hours in relation to adequate time for course development and personal research.

The overall impression of the PhD program in Sociology of Law is a self-sustaining doctoral research program. Candidates can either take this program as a follow up (progression from) of the Master (120 ECTS) in Sociology of Law at Lund or take it after having followed an equivalent sociolegal Master program in another University (two thirds of the doctoral candidates have taken their Master elsewhere). This program is well structured, giving most of the weight to autonomous, individual research, but ensuring a good training in drafting skills (planning and carrying out a research program and organising the knowledge gained into a readable document), presenting and discussion skills (critical discursive communication) and teaching skills (transmission of knowledge) or other work-oriented skills (internships allowing candidates to gain direct knowledge of the working environment). The key to a successful Ph D thus relies, to a large extent, on the skills and interests developed during the Master program, combining knowledge of the field academic writing, analysis and criticism and individual research design. Doctoral candidates have the possibility to engage in teaching/tutoring Master students and they can thus gain important teaching experience. Swedish speaking doctoral candidates can also profit from teaching at the Bachelor level. This is an asset. The doctoral thesis is an opportunity to generate new sociolegal knowledge based on a thorough methodology and taking into account the ethical requirements of research. The taught component of the doctoral program, in the initial phase, is thus oriented to make sure the candidates acquire or strengthen those skills. Postgraduate teaching, in principle, is done onsite, with the possibility of combining online live teaching, seminar and tutorial events. The doctoral students will know the relevant literature on their topic in depth and detail, and will identify the areas where new knowledge, new information or new developments can be added, so that a contribution to the discipline follows as a result, something that will be assessed by a community of peers, competent in the field. Once their research project is sufficiently mature, they can plunge into the research and fieldwork, seminar,

presentations, discussions of their findings and drafting of their theses of their self-standing articles.

The atmosphere at the department is international, especially at the postgraduate level, and this adds value to the work and impact of the research produced. The Sociology of Law doctoral program of the University of Lund clearly lies in the cutting edge of the sociolegal discipline globally, with important doctoral theses over the last decades.

Appendix: program for site visit

8.30–9.30 Institutions-/programledning

9.45–11.15 Lärarrepresentanter

11.30–12.15 Studenter/doktorander

12.15–13.30 Lunch

13.45–14.30 Studievägledning/utbildningsadministration

14.30–15.00 Visning av lärmiljö och undervisningslokaler

15.00–16.00 Sakkunniggruppen arbetar enskilt

16.00–16.30 Återföring till institutionsledning/motsvarande