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LUND UNIVERSITY

School of Economics and Management

Department of Business Law
Dr. Jörgen Hettne, Professor
Head of Department

Peer-Review Committee Evaluation Report – Business Law Comments – Department of Business Law

We note at the outset that the evaluators are overall positive as regards the doctoral programme at the Department of Business Law, given the current conditions. The Committee states that “Considering its comparatively small size and in the light of the structural challenges and viewed as an educational programme in law in the 3rd cycle, the programme at the Department for Business Law is maintaining a high standard.” Indeed, the Committee considered that LUSEM is to be applauded for the way it has managed to set up its programme despite significant challenges not least in terms of its small scale and limitations as to freedom of manoeuvre. The Committee stressed, in particular, the high satisfaction of the interviewed doctoral students, who seemed to perceive the intimacy characterizing the small research environment as a huge strength. The Committee concluded that in other words, LUSEM provides a positive environment for its doctoral to conduct their research.

We also note that there is a clear potential for improvement and that the evaluators have provided several constructive comments and suggestions which we will take into account in the continued evaluation and improvement of our doctoral programme.

We believe that in particular two issues need to be addressed immediately.

Firstly, it is important to clarify the relationship to the Faculty of Law's (Juridicum) doctoral programme and especially the current quality check carried out at final seminars. In this regard it should be noted that an error appears in the evaluation report regarding the role of the Faculty of Law at these seminars. It is not a senior researcher from Juridicum who actually acts as a reviewer at these seminars. It should normally be someone who is not employed by LU (external reviewer). However, the members of Juridicum's Research Council traditionally conduct a full quality review at this occasion. The Committee welcomed a higher degree of clarity of the cooperation between Juridicum and business law – if any – in this regard

and did not exclude a stand-alone procedures for LUSEM. We will shortly initiate a discussion with Juridicum about a continued collaboration, but more efficient (less bureaucratic and time consuming) and based on more equal scrutiny powers from the two Research Councils (Juridicum and Business Law). We also note, and agree with the Committee's suggestion, that also the cooperation with other Swedish and Nordic institutions may prove mutually beneficial regarding quality-assurance in the doctoral program.

Secondly, it is important to clarify the relationship between LL.D and Ph.D. There should, of course, be clear and predictable criteria for the attribution of these different doctoral titles. The focus among current doctoral students in Business Law is on a LL.D degree, but we believe that the Ph.D may have a value for projects with more clearly cross-disciplinary research efforts in the future (not the least within LUSEM). We believe that it is highly important to prepare for such cross-disciplinary research for the future, but agree with the committee that further clarity as regards the different degrees should be addressed.

As regards other aspects, we consider that the evaluators address a number of factors that are well in line with the department's ongoing work in connection to RQ20, which includes defining a special research strategy (a clearer orientation concerning research). The Committee states correctly that the programme is, despite its ambitions to take a broader view, still very traditional viewed in comparison to other law faculties in the Nordic countries, although there is a clear focus on the areas of law of particular importance to business, which seems to be the overall *raison d'être* of the programme.

We also share the view of the Committee that the programme has a potential for further development towards a more articulated cross-disciplinary approach, especially within LUSEM.

We will integrate the evaluators' views and suggestions in the work with the new research strategy as well as a new doctoral program (mission statement, visions for further internationalization, standards of research excellence, strategy for attracting increased funding for LL.Ds/PhDs, strategy as to development of courses and collaborations with other universities, plan for ensuring the continuous competences of the supervisors, institutional framework supporting project management, career planning path, research integrity policy, etc). We will also create better possibilities for more regular self-evaluation of the doctoral program for the future.

Jörgen Hettne

Andreas Inghammar

Annamaria Westregård