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Annex to: Decision by the vice-chancellor on 18 December 2018.

## Guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education 2019

### Entry into effect

These guidelines enter into effect on 1 February 2019. The Guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education 2015, reg. no SLU ua.2015.1.1.1-2467 will then cease to apply.

### Transitional provisions

Doctoral students admitted to third-cycle courses or programmes before 1 July 2015 are subject to the guidelines in force at the time they were admitted. A doctoral student admitted before 1 July 2015 can change over to the new guidelines following a request submitted to the faculty board. However, the new university-joint guidelines always apply to the subject matter of Chapter 7: *Procedure when a course or programme is unsatisfactory.*

### Contacts

A doctoral student or supervisor who has questions about education at doctoral level has several options. As a first step, contact the head of department, or the contact person/director of studies for doctoral education. Each faculty also has at least one faculty director of studies who can answer any questions. A doctoral student can ask the doctoral student ombudsman or the PhD Council for advice and assistance. Another option is to contact the doctoral education officer at the faculty office for suggestions on who to contact. Contact information can be found at <https://internt.slu.se/en/support-services/education/doctoral-education1/>.

## 1. General information

Third-cycle education is governed nationally by the *Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) (HEO)*. These guidelines are based on chapter 6 (HEO) and set out procedures and division of responsibility in third-cycle education. Quotations from overarching provisions such as ordinances and decisions of the SLU Board are given in *italics* in text boxes in these guidelines. Other text represents SLU guidelines.

The vice-chancellor is responsible for third-cycle education. The guidelines in this document are decided by the vice-chancellor.

All operational decisions, except the withdrawal of the right to supervision and other educational resources under HEO, ch 6, s 30, are delegated to the relevant faculty board.

In its delegation of authority (reg. no. SLU ua.Fe.2013.1.1.1-4911) the board has decided that, among other things, it is incumbent on the faculty board to:

- *decide on the subjects in which to offer doctoral education, having first obtained the vice-chancellor's opinion;*
- *assume overall responsibility for the quality of third-cycle education;*
- *admit doctoral students to doctoral-level programmes in accordance with the admission regulations;*
- *assume responsibility for ensuring that third-cycle programmes are carried out in accordance with the guidelines decided by the vice-chancellor.*

The faculty board is entitled to delegate decisions within the roles set out above to the dean, deputy dean, vice-dean or other member of the faculty board or to a body established by the faculty board of which the dean, deputy dean or other member of the faculty board is chair.

Doctoral student representatives tasked with monitoring on councils and boards may be allowed to prolong their study period (also known as prolongation). The vice-chancellor reimburses the doctoral student's department for the prolongation costs for certain assignments specified in the vice-chancellor's decision SLU ua 11.5-3817/04.

Link to page with governing documents relating to doctoral education:

<https://internt.slu.se/en/support-services/education/doctoral-education1/documents/>.

## 2. Recruitment and admission

The admission regulations for third-cycle education at SLU (reg. no. SLU.ua 2018.1.1.1-930) govern advertising of places, applications, entry requirements, selection, the admissions process, how admissions decisions are made as well as employment as a doctoral student and other forms of paid engagement.

## 3. Joint programmes leading to a double or joint degree

SLU's policy and instructions for joint degrees (corporate identity no. SLU ua SLU.ua. 2020.1.1.1-3432) sets out regulations and procedures for establishing joint programmes leading to double or joint degrees. The document also describes the national and SLU-specific requirements for establishing joint programmes.

## 4. Supervision

***HEO, ch 6, s 28** At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. The doctoral student is entitled to supervision during his or her studies unless the vice-chancellor has decided otherwise by virtue of Section 30. A doctoral student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor.*

### SLU Guidelines

When a student is admitted, the faculty board appoints a minimum of two and a maximum of four supervisors for each doctoral student, one of them to be the principal supervisor. The faculty board can appoint more than four supervisors after assessing reported reasons to do so.

The faculty board decides on change of supervisor. Applications may be made either by an individual doctoral student or by a doctoral student and supervisor together.

If a principal supervisor is to be changed, the faculty board must determine how the programme can be completed, and propose a new principal supervisor. Following negotiations with the parties concerned, the faculty board decides the new principal supervisor and new ISP (individual study plan) no later than three months after the doctoral student applied for a change.

If an assistant supervisor is to be changed, the faculty board decides on this following consultation with the parties concerned.

Chapter 7 gives a detailed explanation of the implications of withdrawal of the right to supervision, and the procedure before a withdrawal decision is made.

*A principal supervisor must:*

1. be admitted as a docent or professor;

2. be employed by SLU;
3. be employed at the same department as that to which the doctoral student has been admitted;
4. have documented training in supervision methodology equivalent to the training required to be admitted as a docent at SLU.

A *supervisor* must:

- guide the doctoral student in practical as well as theoretical matters and keep themselves informed of the student's scholarly and practical progress;
- strive to create the best possible conditions for scientific discussions between the doctoral student and the supervisor and other members of faculty;
- guide the doctoral student in their choice of method, literature searches and overview, publishing and national as well as international networks;
- maintain a professional attitude in order to promote equality and prevent any form of discrimination;
- not accept more doctoral students than they can provide adequate supervision for;
- be well informed about SLU regulations and policies for third-cycle education.

The *principal supervisor* is responsible for ensuring that:

- the research project that serves as the basis for the thesis work is of good quality and reasonable scope;
- adequate resources are provided during the programme;
- follow-ups of the programme, including a pre-examination, are carried out according to the regulations;
- public defence of the thesis and/or licentiate seminar are prepared and carried out according to regulations;
- they take part in continued professional development regarding supervision methodology by taking courses offered at e.g. SLU.

If the principal supervisor has a fixed-term position as an adjunct professor, for example, at least one of the assistant supervisors must be employed at the same department as that to which the doctoral student has been admitted, and have documented training in supervision methodology.

The faculty board may grant exemption from criterion 3 if at least one of the assistant supervisors is employed at the same department as that to which the doctoral student has been admitted.

The faculty board may grant exemption from criterion 4. However, normally a plan for training in supervision methodology should be adopted at the same time. The training plan is to be adopted following consultation with the responsible administrative division.

If the principal supervisor is expected to retire during the doctoral student's period of study, or if it may be expected for other reasons that the person in

question will be prevented from being the principal supervisor during the entire programme, one of the assistant supervisors must be employed at the same department as that to which the doctoral student has been admitted, undergo training in supervision methodology before the first principal supervisor leaves their post, and be expected to be admitted as a docent or professor at SLU.

If the principal supervisor will be on leave of absence for more than six months, the faculty board must appoint an acting principal supervisor or ensure that the principal supervisor holds a position equivalent to at least 10 per cent at the department during the leave of absence. If a principal supervisor leaves SLU, the faculty board must immediately appoint a new principal supervisor.

Assistant supervisors at SLU must hold a doctoral degree. At least one of the assistant supervisors must be employed at SLU.

If the head of department and the director of studies for doctoral education are part of the same group of supervisors, an additional supervisor must also be part of the group.

Both sexes must be represented in the supervisors' group. Following application, the faculty board may waive this requirement if there are particular reasons for doing so. Two persons having a close personal relationship (e.g. married, cohabiting or close relatives) may not belong to the same supervisors' group. The doctoral student and the supervisor, that is both the principal and the assistant supervisor, may not have a close personal relationship.

## 5. Scope and content of the programme

**HEO Qualifications Annex; degree descriptors:** *A Degree of Doctor is awarded after the third-cycle student has completed a study programme of 240 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered. A Degree of Licentiate is awarded either after a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of at least 120 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered, or after a third-cycle student has completed one part comprising at least 120 credits of a study programme intended to conclude with the award of a Doctoral, if the higher education institution decides that a Degree of Licentiate of this kind may be awarded at the institution.*

**HEO, ch 5 s 7** *A person may be appointed to a doctoral studentship for a total of eight years. The total employment period may, however, not exceed the time corresponding to full-time third-cycle study for four years. For courses or study programmes to be concluded with the award of a licentiate degree or a licentiate degree in the fine, applied and performing arts the total employment period may not exceed the time corresponding to full-time third-cycle study for two years. The time spent studying by the third-cycle student while not appointed to a doctoral studentship shall be deducted from these periods.*

## SLU Guidelines

### 5.1 Scope

A degree of Doctor can be awarded when a doctoral student has completed a study programme comprising four years' net study time (240 credits) in a third-cycle subject.

A degree of Licentiate can be awarded when a doctoral student has completed a study programme covering two years' net study time (120 credits) in a third-cycle subject, provided the degree is described in the general syllabus for the subject.

The net study time is based on the date of admission and the time devoted to third-cycle study (registered annually as activity in Ladok), and is not always the same as the time employed as a doctoral student.

A doctoral student who wishes to discontinue their studies before they have been awarded a qualification must apply for this in writing to the faculty office. Before the discontinuation is registered, the doctoral student should be offered guidance by the doctoral student ombudsman. The doctoral student should also be informed of the fact that if they wish to resume their studies at a later date, they must be readmitted according to the guidelines and admission regulations in force at the time.

### 5.2 Third-cycle education subjects

**HEO, ch 6, s 25** A university or higher education institution entitled to award third-cycle qualifications shall determine the subjects in which third-cycle courses and programmes may be offered.

## SLU Guidelines

The SLU board has decided that, following consultation with the vice-chancellor, the faculty board will decide the subjects in which third-cycle courses and programmes will be offered.

Doctoral education subjects:

- are based on research subjects with a clear publishing profile and developed methodology;
- have a critical number of possible assistant supervisors;
- have more than one senior researcher who fulfils the criteria for principal supervisors;
- have a research environment with sufficient depth and scope so that the doctoral students encounter different perspectives and specialisations in the discipline/field;
- have a critical scope and quality of external research networks;
- have the potential to involve more doctoral students in the future.

### 5.3 General syllabuses

**HEO, ch 6, s 26** *For each subject in which third-cycle courses or study programmes are offered a general study syllabus is required. Ordinance (2010:1064).*

**HEO, ch 6, s 27** *A general study syllabus shall indicate the following: the main content of the study programme, specific entry requirements and any other regulations required.*

#### **SLU guidelines**

The main content of the course or programme should be described briefly in the general syllabus. The general syllabus must also contain information on any:

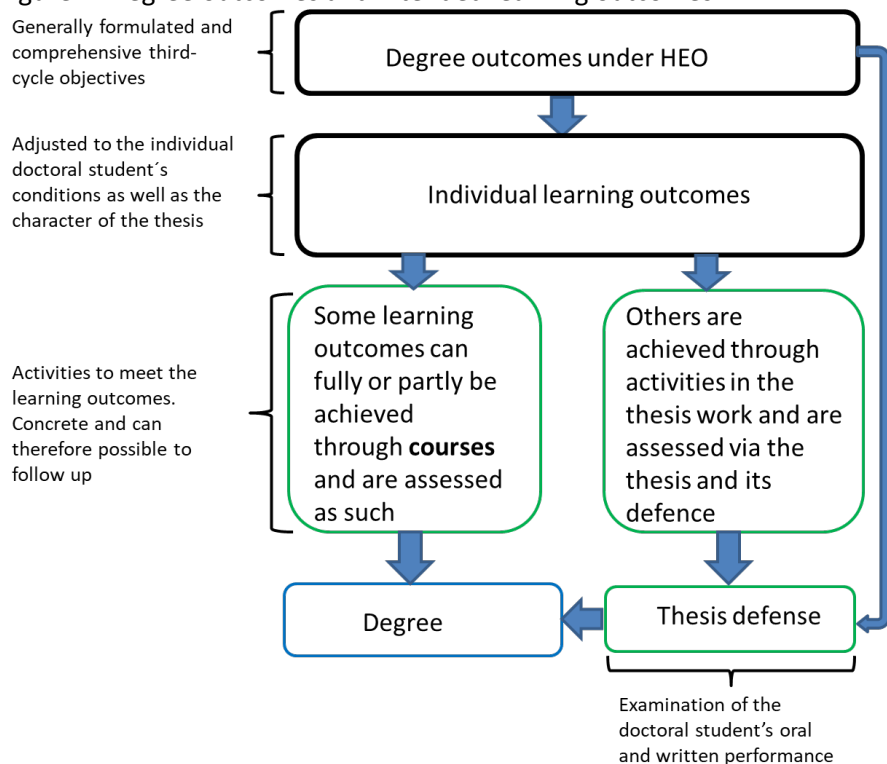
- specific entry requirements;
- opportunities to obtain a degree of Licentiate;
- opportunities to present a thesis in the form of a monograph, see chapter 5.5;
- additional requirements for the compilation thesis, see chapter 5.5.1;
- specific requirements for monograph theses, see chapter 5.5.2;
- additional credit requirements for the degree, see chapter 5.6;
- compulsory procedures in conjunction with the annual follow-up, see chapter 6.2.2.

General syllabuses are approved by the faculty board.

### 5.4 Third-cycle degree outcomes and intended learning outcomes

The Qualifications Ordinance, which forms part of the Higher Education Ordinance, sets out degree outcomes; see chapter 9.2 for the educational criteria to be met for the award of a degree. The outcomes describe knowledge and proficiency to have been achieved by the doctoral student in order to receive the degree.

Figure 1: Degree outcomes and intended learning outcomes



## 5.5 Scope of thesis work

**HEO Qualifications Annex; degree descriptors:** For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis of at least 60 credits.

### SLU guidelines

A thesis may take the form of a compilation of papers (articles or manuscripts) or a monograph. The faculty board may exclude the possibility of presenting the thesis as a monograph. If so, this must be evident from the general syllabus for the subject. A thesis must be written in English, or in Swedish if this is relevant for the subject. All doctoral theses at SLU, including theses resulting from a joint degree programme, must be published in the SLU journal *Acta Universitatis agriculturae Sueciae* and registered electronically in the SLU publication database (Vice-Chancellor's decision reg. no. SLU ua 18.9-2650/02); see instructions at <https://www.slu.se/en/subweb/library/publish-and-analyse/register-and-publish/publishing-doctoral-and-licentiate-theses/>.



The cover of joint degree programme theses can be adjusted to the requirements of the partner university, but the first page of the cover must include the SLU logo and the title of the Acta journal. The specific Acta journal serial number and ISSN must be included on the cover. The cover must clearly state if any of the introductory pages of the theses are the result of a joint degree as well as which universities have been involved. If the thesis is published outside of SLU, the publication location must be clearly stated.

#### 5.5.1 Compilation theses

In addition to the papers included, a compilation thesis must include a summarising chapter, in which the doctoral student places their work in an international scientific context with the help of a literature review of the subject and a synthesis of the papers included in the thesis. The thesis section must be checked using the Ouriginal plagiarism checker.

A compilation thesis must include an abstract written in popular science style in English and Swedish. If the doctoral student does not speak Swedish, the faculty board is responsible for ensuring that the Swedish popular science presentation is translated correctly.

The quality of all papers included in a compilation thesis must be such that they can be published without major reworking in international peer-reviewed scientific journals or are of similarly good quality, recognised within the discipline.

The following minimum requirements must be met by a compilation thesis for a Degree of Doctor:

1. The thesis must include at least three papers.
2. The doctoral student must be the first author or equivalent of at least two of the papers.
3. At least one of the papers must have been accepted for publication or have been published in a peer-reviewed international scientific journal.

The following minimum requirements must be met by a compilation thesis for a degree of Licentiate.

1. The thesis must include at least one paper.
2. The doctoral student must be the first author or equivalent of at least one of the papers.

The faculty board may stipulate further requirements for a pass grade in the general syllabus for the subject.

The principal supervisor is responsible for determining whether the doctoral student has achieved the degree outcomes; see chapter 5.4, and for ensuring that the thesis is of good quality recognised within the discipline. Upon application (see chapter 8.2), the faculty board decides whether the thesis can be defended at a licentiate seminar or public defence of a doctoral thesis, respectively.

Where the principal supervisor decides that the thesis and doctoral student are ready for a licentiate seminar or defence of a doctoral thesis, even though the formal requirements have not been met, they must apply to the faculty board for an external pre-examination. The application must explain the reason why the requirements have not been fulfilled.

### 5.5.2 Monograph theses

All doctoral students writing a monograph thesis must hold a final seminar no earlier than nine months before the planned date for defence of the thesis or licentiate seminar.

If the monograph thesis is written in Swedish, it must have a summary in English.

The doctoral student must present their work, answer questions and discuss comments at the final seminar. An evaluator must participate in the final seminar. The evaluator is appointed by the head of department, or the deputy head of department in cases where the head of department is the supervisor. The evaluator must either be admitted as a docent or possess scientific skills considered by the faculty board to be equivalent to that required to be admitted as a docent in the relevant subject. The evaluator may not be employed at the same department as the doctoral student. A supervisor or other person with a conflict of interest may not be an assessor.

The evaluator must make a written evaluation of:

1. the quality of the doctoral student and the thesis in relation to the qualitative targets;
2. the prospects of completing the thesis according to timetable.

The evaluator's written assessment must be attached to the application for defence of the thesis or for the licentiate seminar.

The faculty board may stipulate pass grade requirements for monograph theses in the general syllabus for a subject.

Monograph theses must be checked using the Ouriginal plagiarism checker. The principal supervisor is responsible for assessing whether the doctoral student has achieved the degree outcomes, and for ensuring that the thesis is of good scientific quality recognised within the discipline. Upon application (see chapter 8.2), the faculty board decides whether the thesis can be defended at a licentiate seminar or public defence of a doctoral thesis, respectively.

If the principal supervisor decides that the thesis and doctoral student are ready for defence of the thesis, even though the evaluator at the final seminar strongly questioned the prospects of the thesis being completed according to timetable, the principal supervisor must apply to the faculty board for an external pre-examination. The application must address the evaluator's assessment.

### 5.5.3 External pre-examination procedure

External pre-examination is only necessary if the principal supervisor decides that the thesis and doctoral student are ready for the licentiate seminar or the defence

of the thesis, even though the formal requirements are not fulfilled (see 5.5.1) or if the principal supervisor decides that the thesis and doctoral student are ready for the defence of the thesis even though the evaluator at the final seminar strongly questioned the prospects of the thesis being completed according to timetable (see 5.5.2). Pre-examination must be carried out by at least two persons each of whom has been admitted as docent or possesses scientific competence considered by the faculty board to be equivalent to that required to be admitted as a docent in the relevant subject. The pre-examiners may not be employed at the same faculty as the doctoral student. One of them may be a member of the examining committee at the public defence of the thesis.

The pre-examiners must assess whether the thesis is of sufficiently good scientific quality to be defended. In the case of a compilation thesis both the summarising chapter and the constituent papers must be included in the assessment.

Each pre-examiner documents their assessment, comments and suggested improvements in a signed report. The report must be prepared in accordance with a common university template and sent to the doctoral student and principal supervisor. The doctoral student must respond to criticisms and make necessary improvements. The principal supervisor must prepare a written statement in which they summarise the doctoral student's approach to comments to the effect that the thesis is insufficient or needs to be supplemented. The statement must be attached to the application for defence of the thesis.

## 5.6 Courses

*HEO, ch 6. s 32 Examinations that form part of third-cycle courses and study programmes shall be assessed in accordance with the grading system prescribed by the higher education institution.*

*The grade shall be determined by a teacher specially nominated by the higher education institution (the examiner).*

### **SLU guidelines**

Third-cycle programmes must include both general basic courses and subject courses. The degree must include at least:

- 30 credits in the form of courses for a degree of Doctor;
- 15 credits in the form of courses for a degree of Licentiate.

The general syllabus for a specific third-cycle subject may specify a higher minimum number of HEC. It is possible to require up to 120 credits for a degree of Doctor, and up to 60 credits for a degree of Licentiate.

In order to be awarded a doctoral or licentiate degree at SLU, the doctoral student must have studied credit-awarding courses in theory of knowledge and research ethics. These courses should e.g. cover rules regarding cheating and plagiarism.

The general basic courses support the doctoral students' personal development and foster general knowledge and proficiency in statistics, philosophy of science,

research ethics, information competence, communication and pedagogy, for example. The aim of third-cycle subject courses is to provide broader or deeper knowledge of subjects.

All third-cycle courses at SLU must have a syllabus in accordance with the following content: entry requirements, scope, intended learning outcomes, purpose, content, method of instruction, timetable and pass grade requirements. Courses must include an element of personal performance, where newly-acquired knowledge and proficiency are tested and applied in a suitable pedagogical form.

All syllabuses for SLU third-cycle subject courses must be approved by the faculty board, and all syllabuses for SLU basic courses must be approved by the Council for PhD Education (Fur). Syllabuses must then be registered in Ladok. The course date must be registered no later than six months before the start of the course.

Courses (examinations) are assessed with the grades pass or fail.

For a course to be included in a degree, it must be given at doctoral level, organised by a university and have a syllabus, or corresponding documentation, that fulfils the SLU criteria (above). Other types of courses with an approved syllabus may be included in the qualification following approval by the faculty board.

The examiner must be employed at the responsible or jointly responsible department. Exceptions can be made for contracted courses where the examiner is employed by another higher education institution. As of the academic year 2008/09, all examiners working must have taken an assessment and grading course. In order to be appointed examiner, one of the following options must be met:

**Option 1a**

The person is employed as a teacher in accordance with SLU's new appointments procedure: professor, visiting professor, adjunct professor, senior lecturer, associate senior lecturer, adjunct senior lecturer or lecturer and adjunct lecturer.

**Option 1b**

The person is employed as a teacher in accordance with SLU's former appointments procedure: professor, adjunct professor, senior lecturer, adjunct senior lecturer, lecturer, adjunct lecturer, research associate, part-time or visiting lecturer.

**Option 2**

The person is not employed as a teacher, but has the following: a Degree of Doctor; an indefinite-period employment which requires a doctoral degree or corresponding expertise; relevant teaching expertise which corresponds to the requirements for employment as a senior lecturer.

The examiner must have (at least) a Degree of Doctor within a relevant field. Examiners are appointed by the head of department and are responsible for ensuring that course content and level follow the stipulated course syllabus. The examiner establishes assessment criteria and is responsible for assessing the students' achievements.

The principal supervisor suggests courses that may be included in the degree. The faculty board approves the degree, including its constituent courses.

### 5.6.1 Crediting of courses completed before admission

**HEO, ch 6, s 6** *If a student at a higher education institution in Sweden has successfully completed a higher education course or study programme, she or he is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for a course or study programme at another higher education institution. This does not apply, however, if there is a substantial difference between these courses or study programmes. The same applies for students who have successfully completed a course or study programme*

- 1. at a university or higher education institution in Denmark, Finland, Iceland or Norway or a signatory to the Council of Europe's Convention of 11 April 1997 on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Swedish Treaty Series 2001:46), or*
- 2. at Nordiska högskolan för folkhälsovetenskap (NHV — The Nordic School of Public Health).*

**S 7** *A student is entitled to transfer credits from a course or study programme other than that laid down in Section 6 if the nature and extent of the knowledge and skills cited by the student are such that they correspond on the whole to the course or study programme for which the credits are to be recognised. A student may also be given credit for corresponding knowledge and skills acquired in a vocational or professional capacity.*

**S 8** *The higher education institution shall assess whether credits can be awarded for the prior course or study programme or professional or vocational experience.*

*Credits may only be awarded to those who are students unless otherwise provided by statute or ordinance.*

### **SLU guidelines**

A course completed before admission to a third-cycle programme can only be credited if this is justified by the individual study plan, which means that standardised transfer of credits may not be made from previous studies. Crediting of courses does not mean that the programme will be shorter than four years of net study time for the degree of Doctor, or two years for the degree of Licentiate.

Programmes/courses completed before the applicant has been admitted to a third-cycle programme may not be credited if:

- they were included in a Master's degree or other corresponding or lower qualification;
- they are courses at first-cycle or second-cycle level required for eligibility for third-cycle studies.

Credits from first- or second-cycle courses can, following approval by the faculty board, be transferred. If approved, the number of credits must be listed in the decision. The number of credits must be adjusted considering that the requirements for doctoral students are higher than for students at lower levels.

## 6. Planning and follow-up of the programme

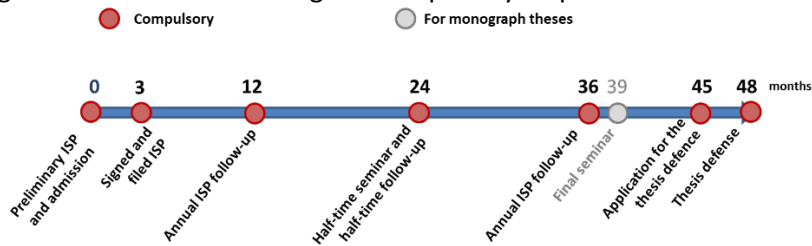
**HEO, ch 6, s 29** An individual study plan shall be drawn up for each doctoral student. This plan shall contain the undertakings made by the doctoral student and the higher education institution and a timetable for the doctoral student's study programme. The plan shall be adopted after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors.

The individual study plan shall be reviewed regularly and amended by the higher education institution to the extent required after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors. The period of study may only be extended if there are special grounds for doing so. Such grounds may comprise leave of absence because of illness, leave of absence for service in the defence forces or an elected position in a trade union or student organisation, or parental leave.

### SLU guidelines

Planning and follow-up involve a number of compulsory steps (Figure 2), and must be documented with the help of the individual study plan.

Figure 2. Timeline illustrating the compulsory steps.



### 6.1 Individual study plan (ISP)

All doctoral students must have an individual study plan (ISP). A university-joint template must be used to create ISPs. ISPs have three parts:

1. Information on the doctoral student registered in Ladok.
2. Planning, which includes:
  - a. a research plan for the thesis work;
  - b. a timetable for all four (two) years;
  - c. a funding plan for all four (two) years;

- d. a commitments document setting out the tasks to be carried out by the doctoral student and supervisor respectively over the coming year so that the programme will develop as planned.

### 3. Follow-up

The research plan, timetable and funding plan are planning tools, and may be amended as necessary.

By signing the commitments document, the supervisor and doctoral student undertake to do their best to meet the commitments. If a serious conflict arises between the supervisor and the doctoral student, the commitments document forms an official basis for efforts to resolve the conflict.

The commitments document must be signed by the principal supervisor and the doctoral student no later than three months after admission. After this, the ISP is signed by the head of department, or the deputy head of department in cases where the head of department is the supervisor. The entire ISP must then be filed by the department, except at the LTV Faculty, where filing is done at faculty level.

## 6.2 Planning and follow-up of the programme

### 6.2.1 Annual follow-up

The annual follow-up of the ISP should be done by the doctoral student and the supervisor after one actual year of study has passed. The follow-up should take place at a formal meeting, and must be based on the general syllabus for the third-cycle subject, an up-to-date extract from Ladok and the correct version of the ISP.

The follow-up must relate to the individual intended learning outcomes and the following must be assessed:

- How is the programme progressing?
- Can the programme be completed as currently planned?
- What action can be taken to improve the programme?
- What is planned for the coming year?

The follow-up is documented in the ISP. The principal supervisor and the doctoral student sign the commitments document. The ISP is signed by the head of department, or the deputy head of department in cases where the head of department is the principal supervisor. After this, the ISP is filed by the department, except at the LTV Faculty, where documentation is carried out at faculty level. The signing implies that the commitments section is valid and will remain valid until replaced by a new ISP. The ISP, including the commitments, must be followed up and revised within a year from the date it was signed.

Individual departments/subjects may draw up additional procedures involving seminars and discussions in conjunction with the annual follow-up. If they are compulsory, these procedures are governed by the general syllabus for the third-cycle subject.

The faculty board must regularly follow up how follow-up and revision of the doctoral students' individual study plans are carried out at the departments as well as which measures have been taken in cases where follow-ups indicate deficiencies in the programme.

#### 6.2.2 Half-time seminar and half-time follow-up

After two years' net study time but before the half-time follow-up, the doctoral student must hold a departmental seminar at which they display sufficient ability to:

- orally present their thesis work;
- discuss and analyse general and specific methods within the subject area;
- independently discuss and analyse their findings.

The oral presentation must be assessed by a person who has been admitted as a docent or who possesses scientific competence considered by the faculty board to be equivalent to that required to be admitted as a docent in the relevant subject. A supervisor or other person with a conflict of interest may not be an assessor. Conclusions and comments from the assessment must be related to the individual intended learning outcomes and the nature of the subject, and must be discussed with the doctoral student in conjunction with the annual follow-up.

In conjunction with the half-time follow-up the supervisor, the doctoral student and a representative appointed by the faculty board must decide whether the general prospects of the programme and the thesis being completed at the department or under the research project are sufficiently good. If the prospects are not deemed to be sufficiently good, this should primarily be rectified through regular follow-up and planning. If this is not sufficient, please refer to chapter 7.



## 7. Procedure when a course or study programme is unsatisfactory

**HEO, ch 6, s 28** *At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. The doctoral student is entitled to supervision during his or her studies unless the vice-chancellor has decided otherwise by virtue of Section 30.*

*A doctoral student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor.*

**S 30** *If a doctoral student substantially neglects his or her undertakings in the individual study plan, the vice-chancellor shall decide that the doctoral student is no longer entitled to supervision and other study resources. Before such a decision is made, the doctoral student and the supervisors shall be given an opportunity to make representations. The case shall be considered on the basis of their reports and any other records available. The assessment shall take into account whether the higher education institution has fulfilled its own undertakings in the individual study plan. A written record of the decision shall be made, which is to include reasons for the decision.*

*Resources may not be withdrawn for any period in which the third-cycle student has been appointed to a doctoral studentship or is receiving a doctoral grant.*

**S 31** *If study resources have been withdrawn pursuant to Section 30, the doctoral student may, on application to the vice-chancellor, recover his or her entitlement to supervision and other resources. The doctoral student must then demonstrate convincingly, by presenting prospective study results of considerable quality and scope or in some other way, that he or she can fulfil his or her remaining undertakings in the individual study plan.*

### **SLU guidelines**

If the faculty board determines that an individual doctoral student's programme or conditions for the programme have serious deficiencies, or if any of the parties so request, the faculty board must act.

Examples of serious deficiencies in third-cycle programmes:

- Serious shortcomings in the knowledge and proficiency of the doctoral student that have been revealed by follow-ups but that have not been remedied.
- Supervision has repeatedly and to a large extent failed to meet the requirements in these guidelines.
- One of the parties has repeatedly failed to meet their commitments under the ISP without valid reason.
- There have been repeated failures to follow up the programme under chapter 6.2 of these guidelines without valid reason.

If the deficiencies cannot be remedied using ordinary planning and follow-up procedures, a new and more detailed individual study plan must be drawn up.

This new ISP must be followed up regularly at short intervals; the result of the follow-ups must be reported to the faculty board.

The head of department and the faculty board are responsible for providing adequate supervision for the doctoral student. If the use of the new ISP does not remedy the deficiencies, and the faculty board decides that the principal supervisor has not met their commitments, a change of supervisor must be decided.

If the use of the new ISP does not remedy the deficiencies, and the faculty board decides that the doctoral student has not met their commitments, further investigation will be necessary. Relevant documentation (all ISPs, any follow-up reports, etc.) must be included in the file on the matter. With the support of the Legal Affairs Unit and other experts, the faculty board must investigate the matter and give the parties involved the opportunity to express their views. If the doctoral student's mother tongue is not Swedish, and the student is not comfortable speaking English in such a delicate situation, the support of an interpreter must be provided if the student so requests. If, following this investigation, the faculty board decides that the doctoral student has substantially failed to meet their obligations, the faculty board will propose withdrawal of the right to supervision and other resources for the doctoral student. Documentation of the matter will then be collated so that it can be examined by SLU's head of legal affairs. The head of legal affairs' assessment will be included in the material forming the basis for the Vice-Chancellor's decision. A faculty board representative will present the matter to the vice-chancellor, who decides on withdrawal of the right to supervision under chapter 6, section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

## 8. Assessment

**HEO, ch 6, s 33** *The qualification descriptors for PhD's and doctorates in the fine, applied and performing arts lay down that an approved doctoral thesis is required for the award of these degrees.*

*The doctoral thesis shall be presented and defended orally in public. A faculty examiner (external reviewer) shall be appointed for this presentation.*

**S 34** *At least one of those participating in the grading of a doctoral thesis shall be someone who does not have a post at the higher education institution awarding the degree. Ordinance (2010:1064).*

**S 35** *A higher education institution may issue regulations on the grading system to be used and on public defences and grading in other respects.*

**The Administrative Procedure Act, section 16** *The person charged with handling a matter is disqualified:*

- 1. if the matter concerns himself or his spouse, parents, children, brothers or sisters or someone else who is closely related to him, or if he or someone closely related to him can expect extraordinary advantage or detriment from the outcome of the matter;*
- 2. if he, or anyone closely related to him is the legal representative of someone that the matter concerns or of anyone that can expect extraordinary advantage or detriment from the outcome of the matter;*
- 3. if the matter has been brought before the authority by an appeal against or the subordination of the decision by another authority or by reason of the supervision of another authority and he had taken part earlier under the auspices of the subordinate authority in the final handling of a matter concerning the same material issue;*
- 4. if there is some other special circumstance that is likely to undermine confidence in his impartiality in the matter.*

*[S2]Disqualification shall be disregarded where the question of impartiality is obviously of no importance.*

### **SLU guidelines**

Examination is carried out by an independent examining committee in conjunction with the public defence of the doctoral thesis for the degree of Doctor or licentiate seminar for the degree of Licentiate.

#### 8.1 Declaring conflicts of interest

There must be no conflicts of interest between the external reviewer or members of the examining committee and the doctoral student or supervisor. The following circumstances must particularly be taken into account in relation to the examining committee:

A conflict of interest exists for the following reasons:

- Two persons have collaborated scientifically or have co-produced scientific knowledge during the previous five years. Joint publication is an example of co-production. Reasons can be given for excluding a conflict of interest, e.g. where collaboration occurred within a scientific consortium in which joint publication does not necessarily imply a conflict of interest.
- In cases of close collaboration, there could be a conflict of interest even if the collaboration took place longer than five years ago.
- A supervisor-doctoral student relationship has existed, regardless of how long ago.

The external reviewer and examining committee members are under a duty to report a conflict of interest in relation to a doctoral student or supervisor. When an application is submitted for the public defence of a doctoral thesis, the examining committee and the faculty examiner should submit a signed declaration of conflicts of interest on the relevant form.

## 8.2 Application for defence of thesis/licentiate seminar

Thesis defence proceedings/licentiate seminars are held between 15 August and 15 June. Exemption from these time limits may be granted by the faculty board.

The faculty board decides the time and place of the thesis defence/licentiate seminar, and appoints a chair, examining committee and external reviewer (for defence only). Applications for defence of a thesis/licentiate seminar, signed by the doctoral student, the principal supervisor and the head of department, must be received by the faculty office no later than three months before the planned date of the defence/licentiate seminar.

Applications will only be approved for the following reasons:

- The programme meets the scope and content requirements set out in the guidelines.
- The programme meets the requirements set out in the general syllabus.
- Examinations have been held for all courses included in the degree and registered in Ladok before the defence/licentiate seminar. The faculty board may grant exemption for a planned or ongoing course.

The application must include:

- a CV and list of publications for any examining committee member who is not a docent or professor at a Swedish higher education institution;
- conflict of interest declarations submitted by all examining committee members and external reviewer (see chapter 8.1);
- written assessments submitted by evaluators at the final seminar for monograph theses (see chapter 5.5.2);
- pre-examination report (if any) and a statement by the principal supervisor (see chapter 5.5.3);
- a declaration of co-authorship.

The application for public defence of a thesis proposes a chair, external reviewer and examining committee composed of three or five members to the faculty board, which decides the matter. If the examining committee has three members, a reserve member must be appointed. The persons proposed must have accepted the engagement and signed a conflict of interest declaration before they are proposed to the faculty board. The principal supervisor and assistant supervisor may not be members or chair of the examining committee. Both sexes must be represented as full members of the examining committee. The faculty board may grant exemption if there are particular reasons for doing so.

The external reviewer must have a doctoral degree and the chair must be employed at SLU. Examining committee members must have doctoral degrees, and the majority of them must have been appointed as a docent or possess scientific competence considered by the faculty board to be equivalent to that required to be appointed as a docent in the relevant subject. The faculty board may grant exceptions in special cases to allow a member of the examining committee to sit on the committee even though they do not have a doctoral degree. The examining committee present at the defence of the thesis must have at least one member who does not work at SLU and who is employed at a university other than SLU. Only one member may be employed at the same faculty but not the same department as the doctoral student. A reserve member is appointed if the examining committee is to be composed of three members, and may be employed at the same department as the doctoral student.

The application for a licentiate seminar proposes a chair and examining committee composed of three members and a reserve member. The persons proposed must have accepted the engagement and signed a conflict of interest declaration before they are proposed to the faculty board, which decides the matter. The principal supervisor and assistant supervisor may not be members or chair of the examining committee. Both sexes must be represented as full members of the examining committee. The faculty board may grant exemption if there are particular reasons for doing so.

The chair of the licentiate seminar must be employed at SLU. Examining committee members must have doctoral degrees and at least one of them must be employed at a faculty other than the licentiate student's. One member may be employed at the same department as the licentiate student.

### 8.3 Preparation for a public defence or licentiate seminar

#### 8.3.1 Announcement

When the faculty board has approved an application for a public defence or licentiate seminar, the faculty office must announce the defence or seminar in an appropriate manner.

#### 8.3.2 Notification of the defence of a thesis

Doctoral theses and licentiate dissertations are announced by way of registration with the registrar no later than three weeks before the defence or licentiate seminar. When registered, the thesis must be published in the SLU publication

database. Registration takes place between 15 August and 1 July. Exemption from these time limits may be granted by the faculty board.

### 8.3.3 Information

Before a defence of a thesis, the faculty office must inform the examining committee members of:

- qualitative targets
- how the thesis defence file is to be prepared.

In addition, the faculty office must inform the external reviewer, author of the thesis and chair of their respective tasks and how the thesis defence files is to be prepared.

Before a licentiate seminar, the faculty office must inform the examining committee of:

- qualitative targets
- the procedure for conducting a licentiate seminar.

In addition, the faculty office must inform the author of the thesis and chair of their respective tasks and how the licentiate seminar is to be conducted.

## 8.4 Defence of a doctoral thesis

In the light of the degree outcomes, the examining committee present at the thesis defence must assess the thesis and the author's oral defence of the thesis. The external reviewer, examining committee, chair and author of the thesis must be physically present in the same room during the public defence of the doctoral thesis. If the defence of the thesis does not take place at one of SLU's sites, a video link should be set up. The external reviewer must facilitate the examining committee's assessment by engaging in discussion with the author of the thesis. Consequently, the thesis defence must be organised so there is time for:

- the author to present their thesis;
- the external reviewer to present the subject of the thesis, place the findings of the thesis in a wider context within the subject area, and question and thoroughly discuss the thesis with the author;
- the examining committee to discuss matters with the author;
- an open discussion in which the public are invited to participate.

The examining committee must meet immediately after the public defence of the thesis. The committee must appoint one of its members chair of the meeting. The chair of the thesis presentation, the external reviewer and the supervisors may attend the examining committee's meeting but should leave the meeting when the decision on the grade is to be taken. The grades possible are pass or fail. The decision is minuted using a university-joint template.

The chair must answer questions put by members and the external reviewer as to how the thesis defence is carried out, and is responsible for ensuring that the defence is conducted so the examining committee has the best possible opportunity to perform its duties, and the author has the best possible opportunity to show that they have met the qualitative targets.

### 8.5 Licentiate seminar

Using the qualitative targets, the examining committee present at the licentiate seminar must assess the thesis and the author's oral defence of their thesis. The licentiate seminar must be organised so there is time for:

- the author to present their thesis;
- the examining committee to question and thoroughly discuss it with the author;
- an open discussion in which the public are invited to participate.

The examining committee must meet immediately after the public seminar. The committee must appoint one of its members chair of the meeting. The chair of the licentiate seminar and supervisor(s) may attend the meeting of the examining committee, but must leave the meeting when the degree decision is to be taken. The grades possible are pass or fail. The decision is minuted using a university-joint template.

The chair must answer questions put by members as to how the licentiate seminar is carried out, and is responsible for ensuring that the seminar is conducted so the examining committee has the best possible opportunity to perform its duties, and the author has the best possible opportunity to show that they have met the qualitative targets.

## 9. Qualification

### 9.1. Application for a qualification

**HEO, ch 6, s 9** *A student who fulfils the requirements for the award of a qualification shall, upon request, be provided with a certificate.*

**HEO, ch 6, s 10** *In the certificate the higher education institution shall indicate*

1. 1. the title of the qualification
2. 2. the cycle in which it was awarded
3. 3. if the qualification forms part of a joint degree as laid down in Section 17 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434)
4. 4. the first and second-cycle courses taken for award of the qualification, and
5. 5. at which higher education institution the courses laid down in item 4 or corresponding third-cycle courses and programmes have been completed.

*A translation of the title of the qualification to one or several languages may be included in the certificate.*

**HEO, ch 6, s 10a** *A certificate shall be accompanied by a*

1. *diploma supplement that describes the study programme and its place in the educational system, and*
2. *in the case of a Higher Education Diploma in Vocational Education a diploma supplement that lists the qualified and relevant vocational expertise that formed the special entry requirements pursuant to Section 4 of the Ordinance on admission to programmes leading to the award of a Higher Education Diploma in Vocational Education (2010:2021) and the regulations issued in conjunction with that provision. The Swedish Council for Higher Education may issue more detailed specifications of the contents of a diploma supplement as laid down in item 1 above.*

**HEO, ch 6, s 11** *If a certificate is awarded for a study programme undertaken at more than one higher education institution, it shall be awarded by the institution at which it was completed by the student. This does not apply, however, if the higher education institutions involved have reached some other agreement or the higher education institutions shall jointly issue a joint degree pursuant to Section 17 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434).*

#### **SLU guidelines**

The doctoral student applies for a qualification to the responsible administrative division at SLU.

Before sending in the application, the doctoral student must check that:

- all courses have been completed and registered in Ladok;
- details of an approved doctoral/licentiate thesis and that the date of the thesis defence/licentiate seminar have been registered in Ladok;
- the title of the thesis/licentiate thesis is correct in Ladok. If the title is in Swedish, there must be an English translation.



A population registration certificate must be attached to the application ([www.skatteverket.se](http://www.skatteverket.se)).

## 9.2. Degree outcomes

### ***Degree of Licentiate***

#### ***Scope***

*A Degree of Licentiate is awarded either after a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of at least 120 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered, or after a third-cycle student has completed one part comprising at least 120 credits of a study programme intended to conclude with the award of a Doctoral, if the higher education institution decides that a Degree of Licentiate of this kind may be awarded at the institution.*

#### ***Objectives for a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall:***

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

- *demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.*

##### *Competence and skills*

- *demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake a limited piece of research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames in order to contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work;*
- *demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and*
- *demonstrate the proficiency required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity.*

##### *Judgement and approach*

- *demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of their own research;*
- *demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for their ongoing learning.*

#### ***Thesis***

*For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis of at least 60 credits.*

#### ***Miscellaneous***

*Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor must also apply for a Degree of Licentiate with a defined specialisation.*

***Qualifications Ordinance: Degree of Doctor***

***Scope***

*A Degree of Doctor is awarded after the third-cycle student has completed a study programme of 240 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered.*

***Objectives for the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall***

*Knowledge and understanding*

- *demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and*
- *demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.*

*Competence and skills*

- *demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically;*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work;*
- *demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research;*
- *demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general;*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and*
- *demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.*

*Judgement and approach*

- *demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and*
- *demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.*

***Research thesis (doctoral thesis)***

*For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.*

***Miscellaneous***

*Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Doctor with a defined specialisation.*