

Rules for Doctoral (Third-Cycle) Education

Inledning

Doctoral education is regulated nationally by the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. These are supplemented by rules set by Dalarna University.

Rules for doctoral education at Dalarna University combine national and local rules that govern doctoral education at Dalarna University. In addition to these rules, reference in this document is made to central governing documents for doctoral education at Dalarna University.

In a simple and comprehensive way, this document aims to present the rules to prospective and current doctoral students, supervisors, university school management, and other members of staff who work with issues relating to doctoral education. It is also intended for people who work outside Dalarna University and who in some form or another are involved with doctoral education.

Each university school may have its own specific instructions that its doctoral students and supervisors need to follow. These cannot conflict with the rules in this document or other central governing documents and administrative procedures.

When decisions are made that affect doctoral education, this document will be updated. The latest version of this document can always be found on Dalarna University's *medarbetarwebben* (staff website) in the section titled *Styrdokument*. This is the English translation of the Swedish original. In all questions of interpretation, the Swedish version is the one that applies.

General Syllabus

Specific Instructions

- Description of Subject
- Learning Outcomes
- Eligibility and Selection
- Supervision
- General Description of the Structure of the Programme
- Individual Study Plan
- Thesis
- Courses
- Degree Awarded
- Degree Requirements

Admission

- Validation of Prior Learning for Admission to Doctoral Education
- Financing of Studies

Individual Study Plan

- Deviation from the Individual Study Plan

Supervision

- Required Competence – Supervisors
- Doctoral Student-Supervisor Relationship
- Change of Supervisor

Courses

- Course Syllabus
- Course Literature (Reading List)
- Reading Course
- Admission

Transfer of Credit

- Transfer of Credit for Courses/Other Components
- Transfer of Credits for Thesis/Other Doctoral Work
- Decision on Credit Transfer

Assessment

- Assessment – Courses for the Degree of Licentiate and Degree of Doctor
- Assessment – Licentiate Thesis
 - Licentiate Thesis
 - Preliminary Review
 - Application and Decision – Licentiate Seminar
 - Announcement, Reproduction, and Distribution of the Licentiate Thesis
 - Licentiate Seminar
 - Licentiate Thesis – Grade
- Assessment – Doctoral Thesis
 - Doctoral Thesis
 - Preliminary Review
 - Application and Decision - Public Defence
 - Announcement, Reproduction, and Distribution of the Thesis
 - Public Defence
 - Doctoral Thesis - Grade

Conflict of Interest

Web-Based Public Defences and Licentiate Seminars

Approved Leave from Studies

Non-Completion of Studies

General Syllabus

According to the Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 6, Section 26), each subject that offers doctoral (third-cycle) education must have a general syllabus (*allmän studieplan*). Doctoral (third-cycle) subject areas are established where Dalarna University has degree-awarding powers at the doctoral level according to the principles stated in the document *Regler för inrättande av forskarutbildningsämne* and manual for the application.

The following regulations on the content of the general syllabus have been designed taking into account the requirements for a general syllabus according to the Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 6, Section 27), where it states that: “A general syllabus must state the following: the main content of the study programme, specific entry requirements and any other necessary regulations”. The Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) recommends that what is normally required for the degree and the distribution between the course component and the thesis component should be stated.¹

General syllabuses for doctoral (third-cycle) subjects must be available in both Swedish and English. In all questions of interpretation, the Swedish version is the one that applies. Responsibility for the preparation of the general syllabus lies with the director of the doctoral programme in question and decisions are made by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN).²

Specific Instructions

The general syllabus must contain the following headings and the content that is described under each one.

Description of Subject

- The doctoral subject must be defined and described in general terms and its limits must be clearly defined.
- The connection between the doctoral subject and the area that can award degrees must be defined.

Learning Outcomes

The outcomes of the doctoral programme must be stated as expected study results. The outcomes are divided into general learning outcomes as stated in the System of Qualifications and specific outcomes that apply to the doctoral subject area in question.

General Learning Outcomes

- Here provide the outcomes as set out in the Higher Education Ordinance for the Degree of Licentiate and the Degree of Doctor.³

Eligibility and Selection

The general syllabus must take into account the document *Admission Regulations – Doctoral (Third-Cycle) Education* under the following headings:

General Entry Requirements

A person meets the general entry requirements for doctoral (third-cycle) courses and study programmes if they have

¹ Rekommendationer för utbildning på forskarnivå (REK 2011-3).

² Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C 2021/1036

³ The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:10), Annex 2 - System of Qualifications

1. *been awarded a second-cycle (Master's) qualification,*
2. *satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second-cycle, or*
3. *acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.*⁴

Specific Entry Requirements

Specific entry requirements mean those specific for admission to the doctoral subject area. According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the stated specific entry requirements must be essential for a student to be able to assimilate (i.e., learn from) the course or study programme. These requirements may comprise

1. *knowledge from one or more higher education courses and study programmes or corresponding courses and study programmes,*
 2. *specific professional or vocational experience, and*
 3. *necessary language skills or other conditions determined by the course or study programme.*⁵
- Describe here that to be admitted to doctoral studies in the doctoral subject area in question, the applicant must meet the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements and be considered in other respects to have the ability to assimilate (i.e., learn from) the course or study programme.⁶

Selection

The Higher Education Ordinance states that selection between applicants must consider their ability to assimilate the course or study programme and that the higher education institution decides which assessment criteria will be used in determining the ability to assimilate the course or study programme.⁷

The assessment criteria are:

1. *personal suitability*
 2. *previous study results with special emphasis on the quality of degree projects/theses at the second-cycle (Master's) level*
 3. *ability to communicate in both spoken and written English*
 4. *other credentials*
- Here describe the selection process and the criteria used to determine which applicant(s) will be admitted to doctoral education.

Supervision⁸

- State here that for each doctoral student there must be a principal supervisor and at least one co-supervisor⁹ and what requirements are placed on their research competence, supervisor competence and other qualifications.
- Information is to be provided about the doctoral student's right to receive supervision.
- It must be made clear that the Head of School appoints a supervisor at the time of a decision on admission or at the latest at the start of studies.

⁴ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 39

⁵ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 40

⁶ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 35

⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 41

⁸ For more information, see under the section headed "Supervision" in this document.

⁹ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 28

- It must be clear that there can be a change in supervisor whenever the doctoral student or supervisor initiates it, with reference to *Rules for Doctoral (Third-Cycle) Education*.

General Description of the Structure of the Programme

- Here information is given about how the Degree of Licentiate comprises 120 credits and how the Degree of Doctor comprises 240 credits. Information is also given about how many of these credits are for compulsory courses and how many are for the thesis component.
- Information must be given about which compulsory quality reviews are to be carried out during studies, such as mid-way reviews (*halvtidsseminarium*), 50% seminars, and final seminars.
- It must be stated that a person may be employed as a doctoral student for a total of no more than eight years, but that this can be extended if special grounds exist. Special grounds can be leave of absence because of illness, leave of absence for service in the Swedish defence forces, or an elected position in a trade union or student organisation, or parental leave.¹⁰
- It must be stated that the doctoral student may teach and perform other departmental duties to a maximum of 20 % of their total study time and that they must be compensated with a corresponding extension of study time.¹¹

Individual Study Plan

- Here there must be a general description of what the individual study plan should contain and whether there are special requirements for the content for the doctoral subject area in question.
- It must be stated that significant deviations from the individual study plan may result in the doctoral student being denied access to university resources. This is outlined in the Higher Education Ordinance.¹² Describe the procedures for how significant deviations are dealt with.

Thesis

The thesis work is central when it comes to assessing whether the doctoral student has achieved the outcomes of their programme. Before a decision on the licentiate seminar and/or public defence, the thesis work must therefore be reviewed to see that it meets the scope and quality that correspond to two/four years of doctoral studies. This review process may have a slightly different structure depending on the doctoral subject area and the academic discipline. However, regardless of the design of the review process, independent (free from bias) peer review must always have taken place in the final phase of the review process.

- Here the requirements are described in terms of scope and quality of a licentiate thesis or a doctoral thesis.
- The various stages in the final phase of the review process of the thesis work and the final thesis manuscript must be clearly described.
- A thesis can be written in the form of a monograph or a compilation thesis with a number of scholarly articles. It must be clear which of these is the case for the doctoral subject area in question.

Courses

Courses in a doctoral programme are either compulsory or elective.

- Here the course requirement for the licentiate thesis and doctoral thesis must be given.

¹⁰ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 5, Section 7

¹¹ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 5, Section 2

¹² Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 30

- The compulsory courses must be listed. The individual study plan must specify the courses that are to be included in the doctoral student's programme.

The compulsory course content must include research data management, research ethics, academic integrity, and good research practice.

Degree Awarded

State the full name of the degree that is awarded upon completion of the programme.

Degree Requirements

To be awarded the degree, the doctoral student must receive a grade of Pass in the courses listed in the individual study plan and for the licentiate thesis or doctoral thesis.¹³

See information about assessment in the section headed Assessment in this document.

- Here state that the licentiate thesis must be defended at a public seminar and the doctoral thesis at a public defence and that the doctoral student receives either a Fail (*underkänd*) or Pass (*godkänd*).
- Guidelines for the composition of the examining committee and their competence requirements (external reviewer, examiner or examining committee and chairperson of the public defence/licentiate seminar, as well as substitutes) must be presented.¹⁴
- It is to be stated here if the doctoral subject area has special requirements when it comes to assessment and/or the set-up of the licentiate seminar and public defence.
- Here state the time by which the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN) must, at the latest, make a decision on how, when, and where (etc.) the licentiate seminar, or public defence, will take place.

¹³ Lokal examensordning för Högskolan Dalarna, C 2021/833

¹⁴ For guidelines for composition and competence requirements, see the section headed "Assessment" in this document.

Admission

Decisions relating to admission are made by the higher education institution.¹⁵ The document titled *Admission Regulations – Doctoral (Third-Cycle) Education* regulates admission to doctoral studies at Dalarna University and is decided by the University Governing Board.

Decisions on admission to a doctoral studentship cannot be appealed.¹⁶

Validation of Prior Learning for Admission to Doctoral Education

A person who lacks formal qualifications for admission to doctoral education at Dalarna University can reference their prior learning instead. The director of the doctoral programme is responsible for the validation process and carries out the evaluation in consultation with the Head of Subject (*ämnesansvarig*)/the review panel (*beredningsgrupp*). The Head of School then makes the formal decision, at both the preliminary and final stage, on whether the applicant to doctoral education meets both the general entry requirements and specific entry requirements through a validation of their prior learning. Procedures are regulated in the document titled *Handläggningsordning för validering av reell kompetens för behörighet till utbildning på forskarnivå*.¹⁷

Financing of Studies

For Dalarna University to be able to admit an applicant to doctoral education, the applicant must have acceptable funding for the entire period of study.¹⁸ More detailed regulations about the financing of doctoral education at Dalarna University can be found in *Admission Regulations – Doctoral (Third-Cycle) Education*.

¹⁵ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 37

¹⁶ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 12, Section 2

¹⁷ Handläggningsordning för validering av reell kompetens för behörighet till utbildning på forskarnivå, C 2024/776

¹⁸ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 34

Individual Study Plan

The Higher Education Ordinance states that an individual study plan must be drawn up for each doctoral student and that this must include the obligations of the doctoral student and the higher education institution as well as a timetable.¹⁹ The individual study plan is drawn up using a special form by, jointly, the doctoral student and the principal supervisor, after which it is approved by the Head of School (*prefekt*) by the latest three months after the start of studies.²⁰ The document titled *Anvisning för individuell studieplan (ISP) på forskarnivå* describes what an individual study plan should include.

The individual study plan must be reviewed regularly and amended by the higher education institution as necessary and after consultation with the doctoral student and their supervisors.²¹ The director of the doctoral programme is responsible for ensuring that there is at least one follow-up per year.

Deviation from the Individual Study Plan

If a doctoral student significantly neglects their obligations according to their individual study plan, the Vice-Chancellor must decide whether the doctoral student should lose their right to supervision and other educational resources. Before such a decision is made, the doctoral student and their supervisor must be given the opportunity to address the issue. The assessment must be made on the basis of their statements and any other available information. The assessment must also consider whether the higher education institution itself has kept its commitments according to the individual study plan. The decision must be in writing and must provide reasons.²² The Head of School is responsible for preparing the matter.²³ Procedures are regulated in the document titled *Handläggningsordning för indragning av handledning och andra resurser för doktorand*²⁴.

The resources may not be withdrawn for any period in which the doctoral student has been appointed to a doctoral studentship or is receiving a doctoral grant.²⁵

A decision to withdraw resources for a doctoral student's education according to Chapter 6, Section 30 and a decision that a doctoral student may not have resources restored according to Chapter 6, Section 31 may be appealed.²⁶

¹⁹ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 29

²⁰ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

²¹ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 29

²² Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 30

²³ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

²⁴ Handläggningsordning för indragning av handledning och andra resurser för doktorand, C 2024/1149

²⁵ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 30

²⁶ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 12, Section 2

Supervision

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that doctoral students must be offered supervision and acceptable conditions for study.²⁷ The Higher Education Ordinance also states that for each doctoral student there must be one principal supervisor and at least one co-supervisor²⁸ and a maximum of three co-supervisors. The principal supervisor has main responsibility for supervision and should support research planning and the research process. The co-supervisor should have complementary skills.

The Head of School appoints the principal supervisor and co-supervisor at the time²⁹ of the decision on admission or, at the latest, at the start of studies.

Required Competence – Supervisors

One supervisor is appointed to be the principal supervisor and this person must be, at minimum, docent. Co-supervisors must hold, at minimum, the Degree of Doctor. All supervisors must have completed supervisor education. In those cases where someone lacks such education, a plan to complete such education must be in place. At least one supervisor must have such education at the start of the doctoral student's programme. In cases where the principal supervisor is not employed by Dalarna University, at least one co-supervisor must be a Dalarna University employee. The principal supervisor must have good knowledge of the School's education and research activities, as well as of national and local regulations that regulate doctoral education.

Doctoral Student-Supervisor Relationship

The relationship between supervisor and doctoral student should be professional. There may be no family relationship or other close relationship between the doctoral student and the supervisor. Two people who have a close relationship or a family relationship may not be part of the same supervisor group. Supervisors and doctoral students must avoid the development of private relationships that risk putting the parties in and triggering situations of conflict of interest. Another example is between supervisors supervising the same doctoral student. If a private relationship does develop, it is the responsibility of the supervisor and the doctoral student to take the initiative to change supervisor as soon as possible.

Change of Supervisor

Situations can arise that mean the supervisor needs to relinquish responsibility or that the doctoral student wants to change their supervisor.

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, a doctoral (third-cycle) student must be allowed to change supervisor upon request.³⁰ They do not need to provide a reason. Examples of requests to change supervisor may result from a change in specialisation of the thesis work or the fact that the collaboration between the supervisor and doctoral student is not working out. The right of a doctoral student to change their supervisor is subject to various restrictions, such as the availability of competent staff, economic factors, and so forth. The doctoral student does not have the right to choose

²⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 34

²⁸ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 28

²⁹ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

³⁰ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Section 28

a supervisor.³¹ A request for a change of supervisor can only be made once per calendar year unless special reasons exist.

Requests for a change of supervisor are to be made in writing and are to be addressed to the director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*), who prepares the matter in dialogue with the doctoral student and supervisor and proposes a new supervisor. This proposal is put forward for a decision by the Head of School. After the decision on a change of supervisor has been made, a revised individual study plan must be drawn up stating the new supervisor.

In cases where the doctoral student is unable to follow the individual study plan, the director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*) may, as a measure to increase the chances of the doctoral student completing their programme, take the initiative to replace the supervisor. The director of the doctoral programme prepares the matter in dialogue with the doctoral student and supervisor and proposes a new supervisor. This proposal is put forward for a decision by the Head of School.³²

³¹ Interpretation of the Higher Education Ordinance by the Higher Education Appeals Board (ÖNH), decision 2006-03-17, reg.nr 451-462-05. Confirmed by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket (HSV) in report 2008:5R *Fakultetsnämndernas tillsyn över utbildningen på forskarnivå ur rättssäkerhetsperspektiv*

³² Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

Courses

The Higher Education Ordinance does not regulate the content of courses in doctoral programmes. Nor does the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) in its recommendations for doctoral education concern itself with the course component more than that its scope should be regulated by the general syllabus. The requirements for course syllabuses are thus not regulated in the same way as for first- and second-cycle level.

Course Syllabus

At Dalarna University, the same requirements are set for course syllabuses at the doctoral level as for lower levels because course syllabuses along with the general syllabuses and individual study plans are central to the management and quality of doctoral programme. They are also necessary for the legal documentation of the content of a degree and for decisions on credit transfer in doctoral education.

Responsibility for the preparation (*beredning*) of course syllabuses and the withdrawal of syllabuses for doctoral courses lies with the course coordinator (*ämnansansvarig*) of the doctoral programme that includes the course in question. Responsibility for the preparation of university-wide courses rests with a course coordinator from the relevant doctoral programmes. The Vice-Chancellor decides on the university school responsible for a specific course instance for university-wide doctoral courses.³³

The University Faculty Board (UFN) decides on and withdraws syllabuses.³⁴

The course syllabus is written in Swedish and the Swedish version is the one that applies in situations of interpretation. If the language of the course is Swedish, the course syllabus must include an English summary that covers, at minimum, the learning outcomes. If the language of the course is not Swedish, then the course syllabus must be translated into English. Dalarna University uses British English. The English translation of all course syllabuses must be proofread to check for correct language before they are considered final.

Changes to a course syllabus that affect course content, learning outcomes, forms of learning, or forms of assessment in a current course are permitted on condition that students have given their consent and that no student has completed the course.

Minor revisions, such as spelling corrections, grammar corrections, and incorrect translations to an existing course syllabus, are permitted and are referred to then as corrections. Decisions on corrections are made by the Head of School without the need for preparation (*beredning*) and review. The correction is made manually in the education database (*utbildningsdatabasen*) by the senior administrator (*institutionsadministratör*) of the respective School. In the event of revisions that are more extensive than a correction, a new syllabus must be prepared by the course coordinator (*ämnansansvarig*) and adopted according to the same procedure as with a new syllabus.

The course is identified by its course code, which is provided by Ladok personnel.

The syllabus should be finalised at least one month before the closing date for applications.

³³ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

³⁴ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

A course syllabus must contain the following information:

Table 1. Doctoral course syllabuses – content and comments

Headings	Comment:
Course Title	Give these in both Swedish and English.
Number of Credits	
Date	Give the dates of decisions, revision, and validity of the syllabus (if relevant)
Level	Doctoral (third-cycle) level
Learning Outcomes	<p>Give the learning outcomes here.</p> <p>The requirements for each degree (qualification descriptors) are stated in the Higher Education Ordinance as specific outcomes formulated as expected learning outcomes.³⁵ The learning outcomes of a course must thus relate to the outcomes of the degree and demonstrate progress from the Master’s (second-cycle) level. The objectives of the programme must be formulated as expected learning outcomes.</p> <p>The learning outcomes should make clear what the doctoral student, upon completion of the course, should have knowledge and understanding of, and in active verbs what the doctoral student is expected to be able to do in relation to this content. State the outcomes under the following headings depending on relevance to the course: Knowledge and Understanding; Competence and Skills; and Judgement and Approach.</p> <p>It must be possible to assess the learning outcomes.</p>
Course Content	<p>State the main features of course content here. The text must be written so that it does not include implicit outcomes. If the content description is too detailed, it can result in the syllabus quickly becoming outdated.</p> <p>If the course consists of credited modules or defined modules, this must be stated.</p>
Assessment	<p>Here state the forms used to assess the doctoral student’s performance and the forms for how the final grade is set.</p> <p>Assessment that has several parts registered in Ladok must each have a set number of credits so that each can be reported in Ladok.</p>
Grades	<p>Here give the grading scale used in the course.</p> <p>As a grade for the entire doctoral (third-cycle) course, the grading scale Fail or Pass is recommended.</p> <p>The learning outcomes of the course constitute the minimum for a grade of Pass. Grading criteria should not be stated in course syllabuses.</p>
Entry Requirements	<p>State here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the course has been adapted for a special category of doctoral student, • the entry requirements, • if the course is open to applications from students who have not been admitted to doctoral studies,

³⁵ The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:10), Annex 2 - System of Qualifications

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if there is a group of doctoral students that has priority admission or that can be admitted subject to place availability.
English Translation – Course Outcomes	If the language of the course is Swedish, there must be a summary in English that covers, at minimum, the learning outcomes. If the language of the course is English, this heading is omitted and, instead, the entire syllabus must be an English translation.
Course Code	
Subject	Information here states which doctoral (third-cycle) subject area the course is included in.
Other Information	Provide other information of significance.

You can find a course syllabus template in the Dalarna University template library (*mallbibliotek*).

Course Literature (Reading List)

The list of course literature must be finalised at the same time as the syllabus; however, in the event of revisions to the list that do not lead to revisions to the syllabus, a new list is drawn up that includes the syllabus file number (*diarienummer*) that is dated and signed by the course examiner.

A valid list of course literature for a doctoral course must be available no later than one month before the start of the course.

Reading Course

The elective course component of the doctoral programme allows individual students or groups of students to complete a reading course that does not include teacher-led teaching. The design and specialisation of a course should be judged to be relevant to the general syllabus, the thesis, and the individual study plan as a whole. The Head of Subject (*ämnansansvarig*) approves the syllabus for the reading course according to points 2-7 in the text that follows the instructions below. In cases where the Head of Subject is the principal supervisor, the course syllabus is to be approved by the Head of School.

Certificate (*intyg*) for reading course – content:

1. This hereby certifies that Name of Student (*personnummer*) has completed an individual reading course and achieved a Pass grade.
2. Title of course in Swedish and English
3. Number of credits
4. Level
5. Brief description of the learning outcomes and course content
6. Assessment
7. Grading scale U-G
8. Grades
9. Date course starts
10. Date course ends
11. Date grade set
12. Name of examiner
13. Examiner's signature

Reading courses must be included in the individual study plan and their completion must be documented. The certificate (*intyg*) is signed by the course examiner (usually the principal supervisor),

who is appointed by the Head of School³⁶, and is then submitted for registration in Ladok as an individual load.

Admission

The director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*) is responsible for the selection and admission of applicants. Admission to courses must comply with the following general selection criteria:

1. doctoral students admitted to Dalarna University
2. doctoral students employed at Dalarna University who have been admitted to another higher education institution
3. doctoral students admitted to another higher education institution
4. other applicants

³⁶ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

Transfer of Credit

Pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance, students who have successfully completed a course or study programme or who have acquired knowledge and skills in a vocational or professional capacity are entitled to transfer credits for these. The University must review whether credits can be awarded for prior education or prior professional or vocational experience. This does not apply, however, if there is a substantial difference between the courses or study programmes. Credits may only be awarded to someone who is a student, unless otherwise stated in a statute or ordinance.³⁷

The Head of School makes the decision on the transfer of credit after review by the Head of Subject for the doctoral subject.³⁸

The individual study plan must contain information about the transfer of credit for courses, course modules, thesis work, and other achievements.

Transfer of Credit for Courses/Other Components

Apart from the required courses in the doctoral programme, students can receive credit for successfully completed courses; parts of courses and modules; other forms of education; and/or professional activities. It is also possible to receive credit for parts of a course that the student has yet to complete in full provided that the module(s) transferred for credit has (have) been successfully completed.

In some cases with courses that are stated in the individual study plan, course content may not correspond fully with the objectives in the general syllabus for the doctoral programme or the description of the project in the individual study plan. In such cases, only some of the course credits can be accredited towards the degree.

Only courses that are not used to satisfy the entry requirements for the doctoral programme can be considered for credit transfer.³⁹ Across the board, credit transfer of excess components, such as the second year of a two-year Master's degree, is not allowed. Apart from this, there are no restrictions on the extent to which courses in the doctoral programme can be accredited.

Decisions on credit transfer must be made for each individual course, taking into account the degree requirements and the intended learning outcomes of the doctoral programme in accordance with the system of qualifications, the general syllabus, and the individual study plan.

There is a special application form for credit transfer applications. A course syllabus (or other description of the course) must be submitted along with the application form as well as certification demonstrating successful completion of the course.

- A course (or part of a course) at the doctoral level that was completed at the University as part of a doctoral programme cannot be transferred for credit.
- A course (or part of a course) at the doctoral level that was completed at another higher education institution as part of a doctoral programme must be transferred for credit for it to be included in the doctoral degree.

³⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 6, Sections 6-8

³⁸ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

³⁹ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 7, Section 39

- A course (or part of a course) at the undergraduate (first-cycle) or Master's (second-cycle) level must be transferred regardless of whether it was completed at Dalarna University or another university for it to be included in the doctoral degree.

Transfer of Credits for Thesis/Other Doctoral Work

Thesis work and other work can also be counted towards a Degree of Licentiate and a Degree of Doctor at Dalarna University. This must be presented in the individual study plan.

Thesis work that a student completed in another doctoral programme before they transferred and were admitted to Dalarna University can be included in the doctoral degree at Dalarna University. A doctoral student who has been admitted to Dalarna University's doctoral programmes can use previously collected material and papers in their thesis work, provided that the student has the right to use them.

Conference participation, research stays at other institutions, research contacts, seminar participation, and so forth are normally included in doctoral education and considered necessary for a successful thesis and the training of researchers. Because these activities are not credit-bearing in doctoral programmes at Dalarna University, they cannot be transferred for credit. That said, they are still to be noted in the individual study plan.

Decision on Credit Transfer

Decisions on credit transfers can be appealed⁴⁰: see Appeals Against Decisions in this document.

⁴⁰ Higher Education Ordinance, (1993:10), Chapter 12, Section 2

Assessment

Assessment here refers to the assessment of all components of a course, including assessment of modules and assessment of the licentiate or doctoral thesis.

Assessment – Courses for the Degree of Licentiate and Degree of Doctor

The assessment of doctoral (third-cycle) courses is done at an individual level. Each Dalarna University course must have an appointed examiner.⁴¹ The examiner for university-wide courses is appointed by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN). For other doctoral courses, the Head of School appoints the examiner. Which courses are to be included in the degree is regulated by the doctoral student's individual study plan: some of these courses are compulsory in accordance with the general syllabus for the doctoral programme that the doctoral student has been admitted to. To be awarded the degree, the doctoral student must have passed all compulsory courses and have the number of course credits as stated in the general syllabus. Decisions on how many credits from approved courses and modules can be transferred to the degree are made by the Head of School.⁴²

Assessment – Licentiate Thesis

The defence of the licentiate thesis must take place at a public seminar. The licentiate seminar must be led by a chairperson, who must be a person independent of the supervisors and the doctoral student. There must be an external reviewer (*opponent*) and an examiner or an examining committee of at least three members, as well as a substitute for the examining committee. The examiner and the committee members, as well as a substitute, must be either a docent or a professor. The external reviewer cannot be employed at Dalarna University; however, the examiner must be employed at Dalarna University and no more than one member of the examining committee may be employed at Dalarna University. Deviations from this are possible in exceptional cases if the appointed substitute who is employed at Dalarna University needs to step in. Both genders should be represented on the examining committee. The requirements for a grade of Pass (*godkänd*) for a Degree of Licentiate are stated in the general syllabus for each doctoral subject.

Licentiate Thesis

The design of the thesis must be in accordance with good academic practice.

The licentiate thesis can be either a monograph or a compilation of academic papers/articles with an introductory/summarising chapter (*ramberättelse*) or summary. The general syllabus regulates whether a monograph and/or compilation is acceptable.

The licentiate thesis must be written in Swedish or English. It should include a summary in both Swedish and English.

Preliminary Review

The final version of the thesis manuscript must be reviewed by an independent (no conflict of interest) reviewer, and an opinion on the thesis must be submitted according to the procedures established in the respective general syllabus.

⁴¹ See *Regler för kompetenskrav för ämnesansvarig och examinator på grund-, avancerad- och forskarutbildningsnivå, programansvarig på grund- och avancerad nivå, samt studierektor för forskarutbildningsämne*, C 2023/1565

⁴² Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

Application and Decision – Licentiate Seminar

Date and venue for the licentiate seminar. Licentiate seminars should normally take place during working hours between 7 January and Monday of the week before Midsummer and between 15 August and 21 December. More than one licentiate seminar or one public defence in the same field of doctoral studies should, in normal circumstances, not take place on the same day.

The principal supervisor proposes the composition of the external reviewer, examiner or examining committee, substitute for the examining committee and chairperson to the director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*), who prepares the matter for a decision. Decisions about the licentiate seminar, including who will be the external reviewer (*opponent*) and examiner, alternatively the examining committee and chairperson, are made by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN) ⁴³ no later than the time specified in the general syllabus for the respective doctoral subject. The outcome of the preliminary review and documented conflict of interest assessment must be attached to the application to the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN). The traditional *spikning* may only take place after a decision has been made by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN).

Changes to the title, date, external reviewer (*opponent*), examining committee, substitute, and chairperson for the licentiate seminar require a new decision by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN).

Minor changes to the licentiate thesis that do not need to be approved by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN) after a decision has been made on the licentiate seminar are as follows:

- Changes to titles that do not change the essential meaning of the title – for example, changes to word order, and the addition or removal of punctuation marks and of single words that are not significant.
- Changes and additions to the order of authors that do not affect the position of the doctoral student in this order.
- Changes to the order of the articles/academic papers in the compilation thesis.

Changes to the title must be reported to the Office of Marketing and Communication as well as to the university library.

Announcement, Reproduction, and Distribution of the Licentiate Thesis

When the decision on a licentiate seminar has been made, the place and time, its title, and the names of the doctoral student, external reviewer (*opponent*), and examiner or examining committee must be announced on the Dalarna University website and in the calendar.

No later than three weeks before the licentiate seminar, a link to the thesis in DiVA must be made available on the university website (*spikning*). The doctoral student must then also distribute the thesis to the external reviewer (*opponent*) and examiner or the members of the examining committee.

Licentiate Seminar

The structure of the licentiate seminar may vary between doctoral programmes. Guidelines for how the seminar is to be organised/structured are presented in Guidelines for the Licentiate Seminar in this document. Any specifications are stated in the general syllabus for the respective doctoral subject.

⁴³ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

The licentiate seminar may be held in Swedish or English. The language is decided on with primary regard to the respondent, external reviewer (*opponent*), and examiner, and with secondary regard to the expected audience.

Licentiate Thesis – Grade

Grades for licentiate theses must be decided by an examiner or an examining committee that has at least three members. In cases where there is an examining committee, the committee must decide who the chairperson of the meeting will be. The examining committee is in the position to make a decision when all members are present.

The examiner must consult with the external reviewer (*opponent*), the principal supervisor, and the co-supervisor before a decision on the grade is made. However, the decision is an individual one made by the examiner. In cases where there is an examining committee, the external reviewer, the principal supervisor, and the co-supervisor have the right to be present at the examining committee meeting and to take part in deliberations, but not in the decision. The examining committee decides among itself who the chairperson of the meeting will be. The committee's decision is based on the opinion that most people agree upon.

The licentiate thesis must be assessed and awarded the grade of either Fail (*underkänd*) or Pass (*godkänd*). When a grade is being set, the content of the thesis and the defence must be taken into account.

The grading report must contain information about the date of the licentiate seminar, the title of the thesis, the name of the doctoral student, the doctoral subject, the name of the examiner/the examining committee, the name of the external reviewer (*opponent*), and the awarded grade.

Assessment – Doctoral Thesis

Doctoral theses must be defended at a public defence. The public defence must be led by a chairperson who must be a person independent of the supervisors and the doctoral student, and there must be an external reviewer and an examining committee that has at least three members as well as a substitute for the examining committee. The three members of the examining committee, as well as one substitute, must be either docents or professors, and the external reviewer (*opponent*) must have at least a Degree of Doctor. The external reviewer should not be employed at Dalarna University and at most one examining committee member may be employed at Dalarna University. Deviations from this are possible in exceptional cases if the appointed substitute who is employed at Dalarna University needs to step in. Both genders should be represented in the examining committee. The requirements for a grade of Pass (*godkänd*) for a public defence are stated in the respective general syllabus for the doctoral subject.

Doctoral Thesis

The thesis must be written in accordance with good academic practice. The thesis can be written as a monograph or compilation thesis of articles with an introductory/summarising chapter (*ramberättelse*) or summary. A compilation thesis should normally consist of four papers of which at least two papers must have been accepted for publication or have been published in a scholarly journal with a peer review procedure. The general syllabus regulates whether a monograph and/or compilation is acceptable.

The thesis must be written in Swedish or English. It must include a summary in both Swedish and English.

Preliminary Review

The thesis must undergo a preliminary review by an independent (no conflict of interest) reviewer, and an opinion on the thesis must be submitted according to the procedures stated in the general syllabus for the doctoral subject in question.

Application and Decision – Public Defence

Date and venue for the public defence. The public defence must take place during standard working hours between 7 January and Monday of the week before Midsummer and between 15 August and 21 December. More than one public defence or one licentiate seminar in the same field of doctoral studies should not, in normal circumstances, take place on the same day.

The principal supervisor proposes the external reviewer (*opponent*), the examining committee, a substitute for the examining committee, and the chairperson to the director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*), who prepares the matter for a decision. Decisions about the public defence, including who will be the external reviewer (*opponent*), the examining committee, substitute on the examining committee, and chairperson, are made by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN) no later than the time specified in the general syllabus for the respective doctoral subject. The outcome of the preliminary review and documented conflict of interest assessment must be attached to the application to the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN). The traditional *spikning* may only take place after a decision has been made by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN).

Changes to the title of the thesis, date, external reviewer (*opponent*), examining committee, substitute, and chairperson of the licentiate seminar/public defence require a new decision by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN).

Minor changes to the doctoral thesis that do not require approval from the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN) after a decision has been made on the public defence are as follows:

- Changes to titles that do not change the essential meaning of the title – for example, changes to word order, and the addition or removal of punctuation marks and of single words that are not significant.
- Changes and additions to the order of authors that do not affect the position of the doctoral student in this order.
- Changes to the order of the articles/academic papers in the compilation thesis.

Changes to the title must be reported to the Office of Marketing and Communication as well as to the university library.

Announcement, Reproduction, and Distribution of the Thesis

When a decision on the public defence has been made, the place and time, title of the thesis, name of the doctoral student, external reviewer (*opponent*) and members of the examining committee must be published on the Dalarna University website and in the calendar.

No later than three weeks before the public defence, a link to the thesis in DiVA must be made available on the University's website (*spikning*). The doctoral student must then also distribute the thesis to the external reviewer (*opponent*) and examining committee.

With a public defence, enough copies of the doctoral thesis must be available at the University for a satisfactory examination of the thesis to be possible at the time of the public defence.

Public Defence

The structure of the public defence may vary between the doctoral subjects. Any specifications are stated in the general syllabus for the doctoral subject. Guidelines for the structure and process of the public defence are presented in Guidelines for the Public Defence in this document

The public defence may be held in Swedish or English. The language is decided on with primary regard to the respondent, external reviewer (*opponent*), and committee members, and with secondary regard to expected listeners.

Doctoral Thesis – Grade

The grade for a doctoral thesis must be decided on by an examining committee. The examining committee decides among itself who will be the chairperson of the meeting. The examining committee is in a position to make a decision when all members are present. The committee's decision is based on the opinion that most members agree on.

The external reviewer (*opponent*), principal supervisor, and co-supervisor have the right to be present at the examination committee meeting and to take part in deliberations, but not in the decision.

The doctoral thesis is awarded either the grade of Fail (*underkänd*) or Pass (*godkänd*). When a grade is being set, the content of the thesis and the defence of the thesis must be taken into account.

The examining committee's report (*protokoll*) must contain information about the date of the public defence, the title of the thesis, the name of the doctoral student, the doctoral subject, the names of the chairperson and other members of the examining committee, the name of the external reviewer (*opponent*), and the grade. Any written reservation must be registered in the *diariet*.

Conflict of Interest

The conflict of interest provisions in Sections 16-18 of the Swedish Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900) apply upon the appointment of an external reviewer (*opponent*) and an examining committee. Anyone aware of a circumstance that can be assumed to constitute a conflict of interest must immediately report this.

The following circumstances normally constitute grounds for a conflict of interest in relation to the doctoral student, principal supervisor, and co-supervisor:

- Conflict of interest exists in the case of scholarly and research cooperation and co-production that have taken place at any time over the most recent five years. A co-authored article is enough to be considered co-production. Participation in joint research projects is enough to be considered research/scholarly collaboration, regardless of whether or not there is any co-production. There is a risk of conflict of interest in the case of previous employment at the same higher education institution.

Conflict of interest may exist for more than five years in cases of close collaboration, such as a doctoral student-supervisor relationship.

Web-Based Public Defences and Licentiate Seminars

These guidelines have been drawn up so that public defences and licentiate seminars can be held in web-based format, either in their entirety or in part. These guidelines follow the directives issued by the Swedish Higher Education Authority. Web-based format can be used in such cases where the external reviewer (*opponent*) or members of the examining committee, as a result of special circumstances, are prevented from physically attending the public defence or licentiate seminar. The following basic guidelines apply:

- A public defence/licentiate seminar must be public, which means that it must be held in a lecture hall/room in which an audience can attend. If the lecture hall/room is closed to the public, there must be clear instructions in the announcement of the public defence or licentiate seminar as to how interested parties can attend the public defence or licentiate seminar electronically.
- The respondent and chairperson must be present in the lecture hall/room.
- External reviewers (*opponents*) and members of the examination committee can attend digitally if it is not possible or appropriate for them to come to the room where the public defence or seminar is to be held.

If the external reviewer (*opponent*) and/or one or more of the grading committee members will be attending digitally, the following applies:

- Everyone present in the lecture hall/room must be able to see and hear all those who are attending online.
- Everyone who is attending online must be able to see and hear the respondent, the presentations being given in the hall/room, and everyone who is speaking in the hall/room.
- For everyone who is attending online, direct telephone contact must be possible between a contact person (appointed by the University) and the person in question. (This is so that any technical problems that may arise can be dealt with.)
- If a digital room is used for the examination committee's meeting, this must be closed to everyone other than those that the chairperson decides to allow to come in.

The external reviewer (*opponent*) must be able to view and hear the respondent, and the opponent and respondent must be able to communicate with each other throughout the public defence. At least three members of the examining committee (permanent or substitute) must be able to take part in the entire public defence. If there are technical problems that mean that the above is not possible, the public defence must be either repeated or postponed. The relevant School is responsible for the web-based event and receives support for this from the Office of Education and Research Services. Any departures from the above guidelines are decided by the University Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN).

Approved Leave from Studies

Approved leave from studies is intended to be for a limited period of time with the intention that the doctoral student will return to their studies after the break.

If there are special reasons, the University can decide that a student admitted to a course or programme may take an approved leave from studies. An approved leave from studies comes when a doctoral student reports a break in studies to the University. The approved leave from studies must be for a specific period.

Special reasons for being granted an approved leave from studies may be social, medical, or other special circumstances, such as caring for children, military service, or student union work.

The Head of School makes the final decision on whether to approve a leave from studies with the director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*).⁴⁴

Prior to resuming studies, the doctoral student, together with the supervisor, must update the individual study plan and submit it to the director of the doctoral programme (*studierektor*).

Non-Completion of Studies

Non-completion of studies is the termination of doctoral studies that means that the doctoral student must reapply for admission if they decide they want to resume their studies.

Doctoral students can report their non-completion of studies and request that they be removed as a registered student.

To be able to resume studies, the doctoral student must reapply.

⁴⁴ Rektors och verksamhetschefers delegationer vid Högskolan Dalarna, C2021/1036

Appeals Against Decisions

The following decisions by the University on matters concerning doctoral (third-cycle) education may be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board (ÖNH) (Chapter 12, Section 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance, 1993:100):

- decisions on the transfer of credits for courses and study programmes or vocational activities,
- rejection of a student's application for exemption from a compulsory component on a course or study programme,
- a decision to withdraw study resources from a third-cycle student and a decision that a student is not to recover these resources,
- rejection of a student's request to be issued with a degree certificate or a course certificate.

Decisions by a disciplinary board on a suspension or warning may be appealed in a general administrative court.

Decisions by the University on matters concerning education in cases other than those mentioned above may be appealed to a general administrative court if it is permitted by a statute other than the Administrative Procedure Act.

Information – How To Appeal

If a particular decision can be appealed, information must be provided about how to do so. This also applies even when the request of the doctoral student has apparently been fully granted.

Information about how to appeal should read as follows:

In accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 12, Section 2), decisions on (specify what the decision refers to) may be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board (ÖNH). If the decision either in part or in full adversely affects the student, then they must be informed that they can appeal the decision and that the appeal must be in writing. Appeals must be addressed to the Higher Education Appeals Board but be addressed to Dalarna University and must be received within three weeks from the date on which the student received the decision. The appeal must state which decision is being appealed and which amendment to the decision is being requested.

The processing of appeals is regulated in accordance with the document on rules for complaints and appeals: *Regler för klagomål, omprövning och överklagan* (C 2021/825).

Guidelines for the Licentiate Seminar

1. The chairperson welcomes everyone and introduces the respondent, the external reviewer (*opponent*), and the examiner/members of the examining committee. The chairperson presents any relevant information about how the doctoral programme was conducted. The chairperson also presents the proceedings for the licentiate seminar.
2. The chairperson hands the floor to the respondent so that the respondent can present any errata (i.e., errors).
3. The licentiate thesis and its most important scholarly contributions in relation to other research in the field are presented. The chairperson, in consultation with the external reviewer (*opponent*) and respondent, decides whether it will be the external reviewer or respondent who will carry out the presentation, and this decision must be communicated well ahead of time. If the opponent is to carry out the presentation, then the respondent must be given the opportunity to comment on the external reviewer's opinion on the thesis. The presentation should be focused and concise.
4. The opponent discusses the thesis with the respondent by asking questions that allow the respondent to demonstrate their scholarly skills and ability to discuss the results. During this part of the licentiate seminar, other members of the audience may not take part in the discussion.
5. The chairperson gives the examiner (or examining committee) the opportunity to put questions to the respondent.
6. The chairperson gives the audience the opportunity to put questions to the respondent and to comment on the thesis.
7. The chairperson declares the licentiate seminar closed.
8. The examiner or the chairperson of the examining committee announces their decision as soon as it has been made.

Guidelines for the Public Defence

1. The chairperson of the public defence welcomes everyone and introduces the respondent, the external reviewer (*opponent*), and the members of the examining committee. The chairperson presents any relevant information about how the doctoral programme was conducted. The chairperson also presents the structure of the public defence.
2. The chairperson hands the floor to the respondent so that the respondent can present any errata (i.e., errors).
3. The thesis and its most important scholarly contributions in relation to other research in the field are presented. The chairperson, in consultation with the external reviewer (*opponent*) and respondent, decides whether it will be the external reviewer or respondent who will carry out the presentation, and this decision must be communicated well ahead of time. If the external reviewer is to carry out the presentation, then the respondent must be given the opportunity to comment on the external reviewer's (*opponent*) opinion on the thesis. Alternatively, the respondent presents the thesis and its most important scholarly contributions. In such cases, it can be left to the external reviewer (*opponent*) to place the thesis in a larger context. The presentation should be focused and concise.
4. The external reviewer (*opponent*) discusses the thesis with the respondent by asking questions that enable the respondent to demonstrate their scholarly skill and ability to discuss the results. During this part of the public defence, other members of the audience may not participate in the discussion.
5. The chairperson gives the members of the examining committee the opportunity to put questions to the respondent.
6. The chairperson gives the audience the opportunity to put questions to the respondent and to comment on the thesis.
7. The chairperson declares the public defence closed.
8. The examining committee meets in private and announces its decision on the grade as soon as it has been made.

