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## Routine for withdrawal of resources for doctoral students

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## 1 Introduction

The Swedish Defence University strives to ensure a good recruitment process and training for doctoral students, so that the withdrawal of supervision and other resources does not have to be considered. Sometimes, however, it becomes necessary, and this routine is then intended to ensure that the preparation and decision-making process for the withdrawal of supervision and other resources takes place in an efficient and legally secure manner.

The Swedish Defence University's *Regulations for the Withdrawal of Resources for Doctoral Students* regulate the division of responsibilities. It refers to regulations that apply nationally, i.e. the Higher Education Ordinance. National governing documents can also include the Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900), decisions by the Higher Education Appeals Board and the Swedish Council for Higher Education (and the then Swedish National Agency for Higher Education).

At the Swedish Defence University, matters concerning the withdrawal of resources for doctoral students and the doctoral student's application for the recovery of the same are prepared by the director of studies for the third-cycle subject on behalf of the head of department. Prior to a decision by the Vice-Chancellor, the University Legal Officer, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, matters concerning the withdrawal of resources for the doctoral student and the doctoral student's application for the recovery of the same. The Vice-Chancellor makes decisions in collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor.

This routine regulates:

- preparation and decisions at subject level in matters concerning the withdrawal of resources for doctoral students,
- handling of the application from the doctoral student to regain supervision and other resources.

## 2 Applicable regulations

A doctoral student's right to supervision and other resources during their education, provisions on individual study plans and the Vice-Chancellor's authority to withdraw resources are regulated in Chapter 6 of the Higher Education Ordinance, section 29–31.

The Swedish Defence University's regulations state how often and by whom the individual study plans must be followed up (Ö523/2022).

At the Swedish Defence University, the withdrawal of resources for doctoral students is regulated in Ö 614/2024.



### 3 Situations in which resources may be withdrawn

It is only possible to withdraw resources for a doctoral student if the doctoral student significantly neglects his/her obligations according to the individual study plan (ISP). It is therefore important to have a clear and detailed individual study plan and regular reviews that are documented.

An investigation of the withdrawal of resources must be carried out if the doctoral student to a significant extent neglects his/her obligations under the individual study plan. Such cases may be, for example, if the doctoral student, despite access to adequate supervision and other necessary resources for the planned studies, has not demonstrated the ability to complete his/her doctoral education in a reasonable manner within a certain time.

When assessing whether resources should be withdrawn, it must also be taken into account whether the Swedish Defence University has fulfilled its obligations under the individual study plan.

Withdrawing resources for a doctoral student should be a last measure when all other possible solutions have been exhausted.

### 4 The meaning of decisions on the withdrawal of resources

A decision to withdraw resources for doctoral students means that supervisor resources, doctoral courses, workplace, computer, telephone, FHS account (including e-mail and access card) and access to other teaching resources are withdrawn.

A doctoral student whose resources have been withdrawn is still admitted to doctoral studies at the Swedish Defence University. The doctoral student has the right to pursue doctoral education on his/her own and also has the right to be examined, i.e. defend his/her thesis at a public defence or at a licentiate seminar.

### 5 When commitments in the ISP are not fulfilled

#### 5.1 Meetings with the supervisors

If the doctoral student neglects his/her obligations according to the individual study plan, the principal supervisor, with the help of other supervisors, must raise this with the doctoral student at an early stage. The principal supervisor must also inform the director of studies for the third-cycle subject on an ongoing basis.

The supervisors should introduce shorter time intervals for reconciliation with clear requirements for performance in a revised and established individual study plan. All measures, contacts with supervisors, the director of studies for the doctoral education subject and agreements with the doctoral student must be documented and followed up. If the doctoral student does not speak Swedish, the documentation should preferably be in English.



If the principal supervisor believes that the doctoral student continues to neglect his/her commitments despite the above measures, the matter must be handed over to the director of studies for the third-cycle subject. The director of studies is the one who continues to lead and coordinate the process.

#### **5.2 Consultation and timetable**

The director of studies shall consult with the head of department and the doctoral student's supervisor. The Dean and Pro Vice-Chancellor must be informed and may, if the Director of Studies so wishes, assist with advice on further handling.

The director of studies for the third-cycle subject draws up an overall timetable for the continued management. Any decision on the withdrawal of resources needs to be related to when the doctoral student employment is planned to be extended. Consideration must be given to the fact that consultation with the head of department and dean, any investigation by the university lawyer, etc., is accommodated within the time period.

## **6 Processing**

### **6.1 Investigation of the initiation of the process**

The director of studies for the third-cycle subject investigates, following a decision by the head of department, whether breaches of commitments in the ISP have occurred to such an extent that a process regarding the withdrawal of resources should be initiated. The director of studies for the third-cycle subject leads and coordinates the process further. The Research, Education and Student Affairs Division (FUS), the Student Union and the University Legal Officer must be informed.

The director of studies for the third-cycle subject may at any time, after consultation with the head of department, decide that the process shall be interrupted if the doctoral student's commitments in the ISP are fulfilled.

The Dean and r must be informed on an ongoing basis throughout the process.

### **6.2 Meetings with the department management**

In consultation with the head of department and any supervisor, the director of studies of the third-cycle subject

- Invite both the doctoral student and the supervisor(s) to a meeting to discuss the situation
- then hear both the doctoral student's and the supervisor's/supervisors' views on the matter
- ensure that the doctoral student is informed of the content of the meeting before the meeting and is given the opportunity to bring a representative
- Ensure that the meeting is documented and a copy of the notes is sent to all meeting participants. If the doctoral student does not speak Swedish, the documentation should preferably be in English.



Decisions at the meeting may be to:

- no further action needs to be taken, or
- Measures need to be taken, such as a revision of the individual study plan, extra supervision support or a change of supervisor. A revision of the individual study plan must include a timetable and content for the period remaining in the doctoral education.

It must be clear what commitments the various supervisors have and other resources that are available to the doctoral student.

### **6.3 Follow-up**

The director of studies for the third-cycle subject follows up on what has been decided together with the supervisors and documents the follow-up. Additional follow-up meetings and revisions may be necessary.

### **6.4 Request for resource reduction**

If the doctoral student continues to neglect his/her obligations according to the revised and approved individual study plan despite the above measures on the part of the subject, the head of department, in consultation with the third-cycle subject director of studies, shall request that the Vice-Chancellor decide on the withdrawal of resources for the doctoral student.

The request must contain a summary of how the doctoral student has materially neglected his or her obligations under the individual study plan. It must also be clear how the Swedish Defence University has fulfilled its obligations under the individual study plan and what measures have been tried or considered to resolve the situation that has arisen. The following documentation must be attached to the request.

- Summary of the case
- individual study plans, from the initial to the most recently established
- documentation of meetings for follow-up of ISP
- relevant email and other documentation
- description of other measures, in addition to those specified in the individual study plans, that have been tried or considered to solve the problem
- all supervisors' and examiners' assessments of the doctoral student's current results and ability to fulfil their commitments, and possibly other statements from supervisors
- any additional documents the supervisor refers to

The request is addressed to the principal with a copy to FUS.

### **6.5 Investigation by the principal**

On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, the University Lawyer investigates the request for the withdrawal of resources with the support of FUS, in collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor. In the investigation, the doctoral student and the doctoral student's supervisor must be given the opportunity to comment. The Vice-Chancellor makes decisions in collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor.



#### **6.6 The request is rejected**

If there are no grounds for the withdrawal of resources, it is the responsibility of the head of department at the department to which the doctoral student belongs to ensure that the doctoral student continues to have the resources to which the doctoral student is entitled and to consider other measures.

### **7 Impact on doctoral student employment and other livelihoods in connection with the withdrawal of resources**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, resources cannot be withdrawn during the time that the doctoral student is employed as a doctoral student.

If the head of department requests that the resources for the doctoral student be withdrawn, the employment should only be extended for the period within which the case of withdrawal of resources for the doctoral student is expected to be finally decided.

Once a decision on the withdrawal of resources for a doctoral student has gained legal force, the employment as a doctoral student shall not be renewed.

If a doctoral student is employed by an employer other than the Swedish Defence University, he or she must be informed of the decision.

If a doctoral student receives external scholarships to pursue doctoral studies, the Swedish Defence University must inform the external scholarship provider of the decision to withdraw the resources.

It is the responsibility of the department/subject to ensure that they receive the information.

### **8 Right to representation and translation**

A doctoral student has the right to be assisted by a representative who represents the doctoral student. Doctoral students who are unionized can contact the respective union for support and representative assistance. If the case concerns a doctoral student who does not speak Swedish, written documentation and statements must be translated so that he or she can exercise his or her rights, Section 13 of the Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900).

### **9 Application to receive supervision and other resources**

If the resources for the education have been withdrawn, the doctoral student may, upon application to the Vice-Chancellor, have his or her right to supervision and other resources restored, Chapter 6. Section 31 of the Bankruptcy Act. The doctoral student must then, by presenting an additional study result of noteworthy quality and scope or in some other way, make it probable that he or she can fulfil his or her remaining commitments under the individual study plan.



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On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, the University Lawyer investigates the request to recover resources with the support of FUS. An independent expert may be engaged to assist the investigation. The Vice-Chancellor makes decisions in collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor.