

## General syllabus regulations for doctoral studies

Policy document:	Click and enter heading
Classification	Regulations
Registration number	Ö 255/2023
Decision makers	REB
Responsible of Document	Dean
Last Decision Date	09/05/2023
Validity Period	Indefinitely but should be reviewed by 2027-12-31
Documents Replaced	Ö 525/2018
Related Documents	-
Short Summary	Describes how a general syllabus for doctoral studies is created and what it should contain.

## Table of Contents

Regulations for the general syllabus for doctoral studies.....	1
Introduction .....	3
Content of the general syllabus for doctoral studies.....	3
A general syllabus for doctoral studies at the Swedish Defence University must include the headings (1-8) listed below. ....	3
1. Validity.....	3
2. Subject Description.....	3
3. Educational Goals.....	3
4. Eligibility and Prerequisites.....	4
5. Announcement and Admission.....	5
6. Education Content and Structure .....	5
7. Transitional Rules .....	7
8. Miscellaneous.....	8

## Introduction

A general syllabus for doctoral studies serves as a framework for third-cycle education.

According to the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), for each subject offered in research education, there must be a general syllabus for third-cycle programmes. In addition, the board, vice-chancellor, and Research and Education Board of the Swedish Defence University have decided on complementary rules.

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the general syllabus for third-cycle programmes must include the main content of the education, requirements for special eligibility, and other necessary regulations. At the Swedish Defence University, the general syllabus for third-cycle programmes must include regulations regarding merit assessment and selection, the structure of the education, and the possibility of completing a part of the education with a licentiate degree.

General syllabus for third-cycle programmes for research education are determined by the Research and Education Board following a proposal from the head of department after deliberation by the subject council. They apply to doctoral students admitted to the subjects of research education at the Swedish Defence University.

## Content of the general syllabus for third-cycle programme

A general syllabus for third-cycle programmes at the Swedish Defence University must include the headings (1-8) listed below.

Some of these headings include suggested words and phrases that should serve as guidance in the preparation of a general study plan. The wording can be edited as needed, but all topics covered by the proposed wordings should be included in any edited version.

### 1. Validity

This heading specifies the date from which the general syllabus for third-cycle programs is valid. The decision-making body, decision date, and revision date(s) are indicated in the table on the first page of the document.

### 2. Subject Description

This heading provides a brief description of the subject of the research education.

### 3. Educational Goals

This heading specifies the goals of the education.

The goals of the education are always as stated in the degree regulations described in the Higher Education Ordinance (Annex 2, Doctoral Degree), and must be followed verbatim. The goals can only be tailored to the specific subject to a limited extent.

The research education in (*subject*) leads to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The research education can also lead to a Licentiate Degree in Philosophy, but the Licentiate Degree is not mandatory for the Doctoral Degree.

#### 4. Eligibility and Prerequisites

This section describes basic and specific eligibility requirements. To be admitted to doctoral education, the applicant must have the basic and specific eligibility and, according to Chapter 7, Section 35, be assessed to have the necessary abilities to benefit from the education.

##### 4.1 Basic Eligibility

Mandatory:

Basic eligibility for doctoral education is granted to individuals who, in accordance with Chapter 7, Section 39 of the Higher Education Ordinance, have:

1. Obtained an advanced-level degree,
2. Completed course requirements of at least 240 higher education credits, including at least 60 higher education credits at an advanced level, or
3. Acquired essentially equivalent knowledge through other means, either within or outside the country.

The Faculty of Doctoral Studies may decide on exemptions from basic eligibility for individual applicants based on special reasons, after consultation with the subject council. The subject council's proposal must be accompanied by comprehensive justification and supporting documents.

##### 4.2 Specific Eligibility

The requirements that pertains to the specific subject are stated here. According to Chapter 7, Section 40 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the requirements for specific eligibility must be essential for the student to be able to benefit from the education. The requirements may pertain to:

1. Knowledge from higher education or equivalent education,
2. Specific professional experience, and
3. Necessary language skills or other conditions required by the education.

*Mandatory:*

A passing grade for English 6 is a specific eligibility requirement. For applicants who do not have grades from a Swedish upper secondary school or a degree from international education, a certificate of eligibility equivalent to English 6 from an internationally recognized language test (TOEFL, IELTS, or Cambridge ESOL) is required in accordance with the criteria. Any exceptions to the certificate requirements are regulated by the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR).

## 5. Announcement and Admission

This section explains the admission procedure, assessment criteria, and administrative and subject guidelines (*beredning*). The admission of doctoral students is carried out according to the admission regulations of the Swedish Defence University.

The Swedish Defence University strives to admit doctoral students annually by announcing available positions at a predetermined time.

Primary consideration is given to applicants who attain employment as doctoral candidates. Doctoral students must have funding in the form of employment as a doctoral candidate or other funding in accordance with the admission regulations of the Swedish Defence University.

### 5.1 Assessment Criteria and Selection Criteria

This section specifies the selection process regarding the assessment criteria to be applied when evaluating the applicant's ability to benefit from the education. According to Chapter 7, Section 41 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the selection must be made among applicants who meet the requirements for basic and specific eligibility, taking into account their ability to benefit from the education. The Research and Education Board determines the assessment criteria to be applied when evaluating the ability to benefit from the education, after which the Subject Council (or a group appointed by it) prepares the case.

Example criteria may include the quality and independence of written works, grades, breadth, depth, and relevance of advanced-level education, relevant work experience, ability to actively participate in the research environment, etc.

In cases of admission restrictions, selection must be made among the applicants. The basis for selection is the applicant's qualifications at the time of application. The decisive selection criterion is the ability to benefit from doctoral education. However, previous education or professional experience that could count towards the program's total credits should not give the candidate preferential treatment over other applicants in the selection process.

## 6. Education Content and Structure

This section describes the overall structure of the education. The allocation of credits for coursework and thesis components should be specified. The provision of an overview of the distribution of mandatory and elective courses/examinations is recommended.

Postgraduate education leading to a doctoral degree comprises four years of full-time study (240 credits). Education leading to a licentiate degree comprises two years of full-time study (120 credits). Studies can be conducted on a part-time basis, at least halftime, and can extend up to eight years for a doctoral degree or four years for a licentiate degree. The doctoral student also has the right, but not the obligation, to complete a licentiate degree (120 credits) as a stage in the doctoral education leading to a doctoral degree.

Doctoral students at the Swedish Defence University shall have the opportunity to undergo a course in Higher Education Pedagogy (7.5 credits or equivalent), either as part of the courses specified in the general syllabus for third-cycle programmes or as part of institutional duties.

#### *6.1 Individual Study Plan*

At the beginning of the studies, the doctoral student, in consultation with the supervisors, shall establish an individual study plan outlining the commitments of the university and the doctoral student, as well as a timetable for the doctoral student's education. The individual study plan shall be reviewed annually. In consultation with the supervisor, the director of doctoral education, and the immediate supervisor, the doctoral student plans the level of activity for the studies during the semester.

Procedures for establishing and revising individual study plans are specified here. For further information, refer to the FHS Regulations for Individual Study Plans.

#### *6.2 Supervision and Other Resources*

This section provides information about supervision. Guidelines for supervision in doctoral education are specified in the FHS regulations.

The individual study plan should specify the tasks and responsibilities of each respective supervisor. The doctoral student is entitled to receive 80 hours of supervision per year for full-time studies. The supervision includes assistance in regards to the direction of the studies and the research, as well as support throughout the process.

A doctoral student who requests it shall be allowed to change supervisors. The application for a change of supervisor should be submitted to the director of doctoral education, who will prepare the matter for the decision by the head of department. In cases where the director of doctoral education is the supervisor of the doctoral student, the application should be submitted to the head of department.

#### *6.3 Courses and Other Mandatory Components, Examination, and Credit Transfer*

For courses at the Swedish Defence University, there shall be course syllabi specifying the goals, content, and credit allocation. Literature courses shall be handled in accordance with the decision of the Department of Military Studies as described in the doctoral student handbook. The credit transfer for courses taken at other faculties and universities is determined by the director of doctoral education for the respective subject of doctoral education. The individual study plan specifies which courses the individual doctoral student shall undertake and be able to count towards the degree.

Examinations and mandatory seminars included in doctoral education and the thesis shall be assessed as pass or fail. The examiner for the coursework part shall be a professor or other teacher with the qualifications of a docent.

This section specifies the courses included in the education and the opportunities for credit transfer. Doctoral students can transfer a maximum of 60 credits from approved courses, preferably at an advanced level in a subject relevant to the doctoral education. Under special

circumstances, courses at the undergraduate level can be credited. The credits transferred should not be part of the eligibility requirements applicable at the time of admission.

Credit transfer can also be granted for doctoral level education at another institution. The doctoral student applies for credit transfer to the director of doctoral education. An extract from Ladok (student registry system) should be attached to the application. The director may request additional supporting documents, such as course syllabi and reading lists. The director makes decisions regarding credit transfer. If the director is the main supervisor, decisions regarding credit transfer are made in consultation with the dean. The funded duration of the education is shortened accordingly, following the principle of one week per 1.5 credited higher education credits.

Active participation in seminars can constitute a mandatory component during parts of the doctoral education, equivalent to a credit-bearing course.

#### *6.4 Doctoral Thesis and Public Defense*

Under this heading, information is provided regarding how the doctoral thesis should be structured as well as any associated requirements. The thesis can be presented either as a unified cohesive work (monograph thesis) or as a collection of scientific papers accompanied by an introductory summary that contextualizes the individual parts (compilation thesis). Additionally, the requirements for the quality and extent of the introductory summary (cover) in a compilation thesis should be specified.

The doctoral thesis is defended in a public defense. The thesis is graded as either approved or failed, with the grade assigned by an examination board.

This heading also specifies matters pertaining to the dissertation in regards to the opponent, examination board, and grading. General regulations concerning the dissertation can be found in Chapter 6, Sections 33-35 of the Higher Education Ordinance, as well as in local regulations for dissertations.

#### *6.5 Licentiate Thesis and Licentiate Seminar*

Under this heading, information is provided on how the licentiate thesis should be structured and the requirements that must be met. Furthermore, it should specify the requirements for the quality and scope of, for example, the introductory summary (*kappa*) in a compilation thesis.

The licentiate thesis is defended in a public dissertation. The thesis is graded either pass or fail, and the grade is determined by an examination board.

This heading also includes information on the requirements for the licentiate seminar. Specific regulations for the licentiate examination can be found in the local regulations for dissertations.

## **7. Transitional Rules**

This heading describes transitional rules that apply when certain elements of a previous general syllabus remain valid after a new general syllabus plan has been adopted.

## 8. Miscellaneous

Under this heading, additional instructions are provided that do not fit into headings 1-7. For further guidance, refer to the current decision and delegation framework, local regulations at FHS, and applicable legislation.