

Guidelines for doctoral studies at the University of Gävle

Swedish version of the guidelines was approved by the University Board of Education and Research, 2025-09-09, revised by chair's decision.

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Introduction

These guidelines are intended to provide support on matters concerning the organisation and management of doctoral studies at the University. It covers regulatory frameworks as set out in both national legislation and internal institutional processes. These guidelines summarise relevant regulations and aim to support operations by enabling a shared understanding and a cohesive institutional approach to doctoral studies. Importantly, the guidelines offer support in areas not explicitly covered by existing regulations. Due to these dual functions, the language used in the document will vary accordingly.

These guidelines were coordinated and prepared by the University Management Office (Ledningskansliet) in collaboration with relevant subject-matter experts and functions. The document is formally approved by the University Board of Education and Research (UFN).

This document incorporates elements of previously established central and local procedures related to doctoral studies.¹

Scope

These guidelines are intended to be a resource for internal and external stakeholders, including (but not limited to) doctoral students, supervisors, heads of department, examiners, members of examining committees, and external reviewers.

List of abbreviations, legislation, governing documents, and decisions

Abbreviations used in this document

Faculties

AHA = Faculty of Health and Occupational Studies

ATM = Faculty of Engineering and Sustainable Development

AUE = Faculty of Education and Business Studies

Departments

AKE = Division of Communications and External Relations

EPI = Division of Finance, Planning and Procurement

UBS = Division of Educational Support

¹ Central rutin för kvalitetssäkring av utbildning på forskarnivå, HIG-STYR 2019/150, Rutin för utbildning på forskarnivå vid Akademin för hälsa och arbetsliv, HIG-STYR 2021/116, Rutin för utbildning på forskarnivå vid Akademin för teknik och miljö, HIG-STYR 2022/117, Rutin för utbildning på forskarnivå vid Akademin för utbildning och ekonomi, HIG-STYR 2023/87

Boards and Committees at the University of Gävle

AKN = Faculty Education and Research Board

HST = University Board

KOF = Committee for Good Research Practice

UFN = University Board of Education and Research

National Board and Committee

Npof = Swedish National Board for Assessment of Research Misconduct

Terms for Study Plans

ASP = General Study Plan

ISP = Individual Study Plan

RISP = Revised Individual Study Plan

Relevant laws and regulations referenced in this document

- The Swedish Administrative Procedure Act
- The Higher Education Act
- The Higher Education Ordinance
- Ordinance on Students' Unions

Governing documents referenced in this document

Please note that the document listed below are in Swedish.

- Akademiefens besluts- och delegationsordning, HIG-STYR 2022/104
- Antagningsordning för grund-, avancerad- och forskarnivå, HIG-STYR 2023/83
- Arbetsordning för Högskolan i Gävle, HIG-STYR 2021/103
- Arvode för bedömning och examination vid utbildning på forskarnivå, HIG-STYR 2025/291
- Examensbeskrivning, HIG-UTB 2019/146
- Föreskrift om disputation och betyg på doktorsavhandlingen, HIG-STYR 2025/99
- Lokal Examensordning, HIG-STYR 2019/116
- Rektors arbetsordning, HIG-STYR 2022/104
- Rektors besluts- och delegationsordning, HIG-STYR 2022/104
- Rutin för chefsbeslut, HIG-STYR 2023/155
- Rutin för disciplinnämnden, HIG-STYR 2023/30
- Rutin för rekrytering- och meriteringsprocessen för lärare, HIG-STYR 2020/158
- Rutin för indragning av doktorands resurser, HIG-STYR 2022/115
- Rutin vid misstanke om avvikelser från god forskningssed, HIG-STYR 2019/151
- Rutin för styrdokument, HIG-STYR 2023/68
- Studentrepresentation vid Högskolan i Gävle, HIG-STYR 2024/78
- Styrdokumentstruktur, HIG-STYR 2023/67

Approved governing documents can be found either in the University's case management system (diary/register), on the [intranet](#), or on [the external website](#) (all in Swedish). For assistance with searching the case management system, please contact the Registrar, registrator@hig.se.

Individual decisions referenced in this document

Please note that the document listed below are in Swedish.

Bedömningsgrunder för urval för utbildning på forskarnivå, HIG-UTB 2025/242

- Lokalt avtal om lönestege för doktorander, HIG-STÖD 2024/94, HIG-STÖD 2025/135
- Innehåll i ISP, HIG-UTB 2024/745
- Innehåll i ASP, HIG-UTB 2025/241
- Obligatoriska kurser för utbildning på forskarnivå, HIG-UTB 2025/243
- Obligatoriska seminarier vid utbildning på forskarnivå HIG-UTB 2025/244

Individual decisions can be retrieved from the University's case management system (diary/registry). For assistance with searching the system, please contact the Registrar, registrator@hig.se.

Structure of governing documents

The University has adopted a formal structure for governing documents together with a specific procedure aimed at organising internal regulations according to predefined document types. This structure aims to clarify responsibilities, actions to be taken, methods of implementation, and decision-making authority.

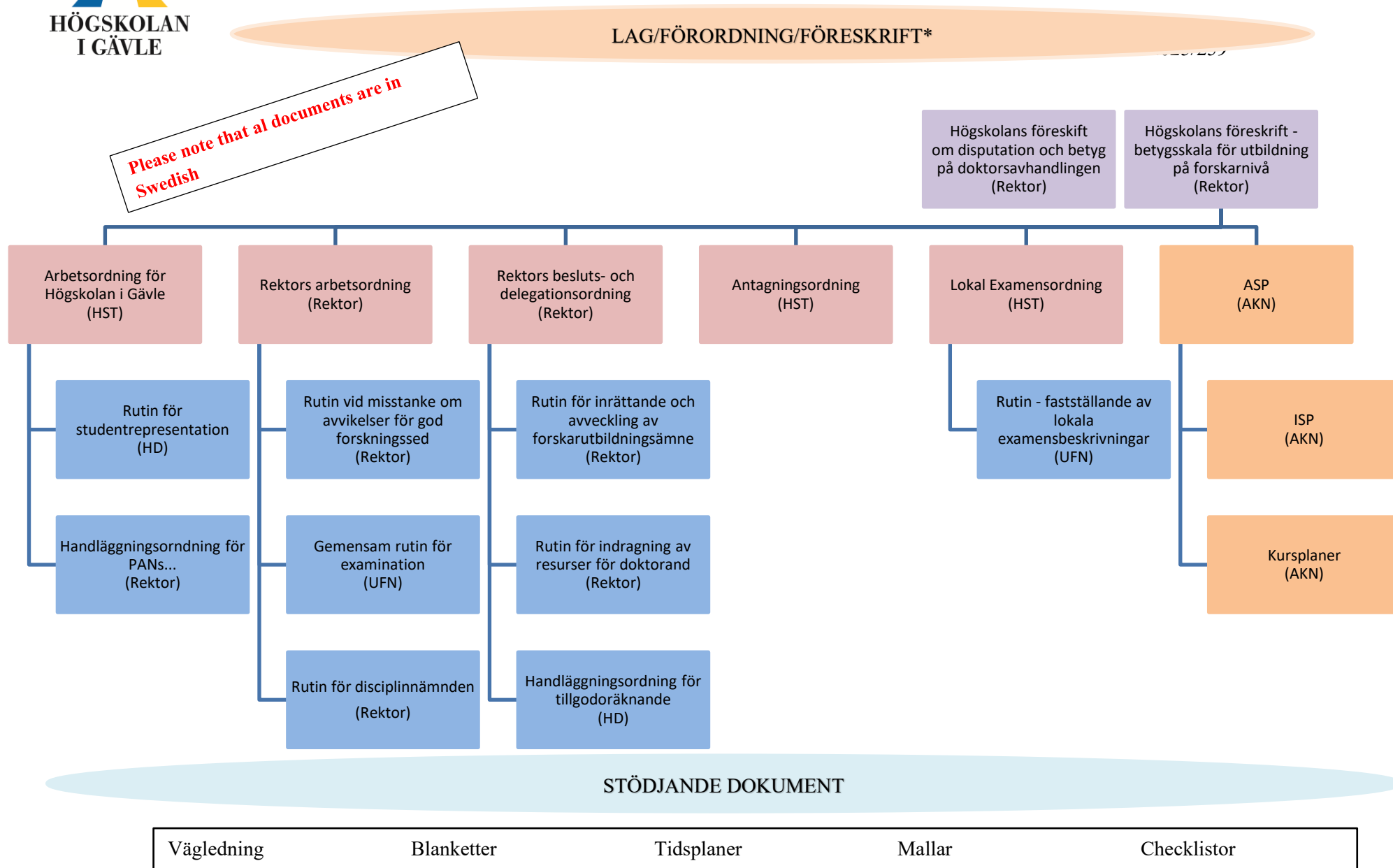
In addition to applicable laws and regulations, doctoral studies at the University are governed by internal governing documents. Supplementary documents provide further support. These guidelines summarise various regulations, checklists, registration forms, and templates.

An overview of the structure for doctoral studies documents is provided on the following page. The colour-coding indicates the type of document:

- **Purple** = Regulations issued by the University
- **Pink** = Regulatory systems
- **Blue** = Procedures
- **Orange** = Foundational and binding requirements (with uncertain status)²
- **Light blue** = Guidance documents

Each document also indicates the responsible decision-making body or authority (in parentheses).

² [UKÄ 2023: Föreskrifter inom högskolan](#)



Roles and bodies in doctoral studies

Dean of faculty

The dean of faculty is the highest decision-making officer within the faculty and is appointed by the Vice-chancellor. The Vice-chancellor's rules of procedure and the Vice-chancellor's decision-making and delegation procedures describe the dean of faculty's duties. Regarding doctoral studies, the dean of faculty is, for example, responsible for:

- appointing examiners at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels and decides on any changes*
- appointing heads of subject
- appointing the director of doctoral studies
- making decisions on the employment of doctoral students

*) This means that the dean of faculty appoints the examiner for courses with assessed modules in doctoral programmes.

Faculty education and research boards

The Vice-chancellor has decided that alongside the University Education and Research Board (UFN), three subordinate local boards are to be established — one at each faculty. The Vice-chancellor's rules of procedure and the decision-making and delegation procedures³ state that the overarching task of the faculty education and research boards (AKN) are to make collegial decisions on each faculty's education and research activities, based on the quality standards, criteria, and procedures established by the UFN. In matters concerning doctoral studies, the AKNs are specifically responsible for:

- admitting doctoral students to doctoral programmes
- appointing principal and assistant supervisors
- establishing, revising, and discontinuing course syllabi and reading lists⁴
- establishing and revising individual study plans (ISP)
- establishing and revising general study plans (ASP) *
- appointing examiners, discussants, and chairs for licentiate seminars
- appointing members of examination committees, external reviewers, and chairs for public defences

*) An exception applies if a general study plan leads to a degree for which the degree-awarding powers span multiple faculties. In such cases, the matter is to be referred to the UFN for decision.

³ HIG-STYR 2022/104

⁴ Reading lists are not part of the decision

When appointing supervisors, the number of assistant supervisors must be determined. The number of supervisors must be included in the proposal to the AKN and coordinated with the head of department. The number of assistant supervisors may vary between doctoral students.

Head of department

The University Board has decided⁵ that the University's faculties should consist of departments established by the Vice-chancellor upon proposal from the dean of faculty. The Vice-chancellor has in turn decided⁶ that each department is to be managed by a head of department, appointed by the dean of faculty.

The head of department is responsible for leading operations within the department, directly under the dean of faculty, and for implementing decisions. As such, the head of department holds overarching responsibility for all education conducted at the department. The head of department is then the line manager for doctoral students whose doctoral studies are funded by a doctoral studentship. If the dean of faculty has delegated the authority to employ doctoral students⁷, the head of department is responsible for such appointments. Beyond that, the head of department holds no formally regulated duties related to doctoral studies. Nevertheless, due to the head of department's overarching responsibility, and in alignment with established educational processes, the role includes clearly defined responsibilities related to doctoral studies. For example, the head of department should initiate the admission process, regardless of the form of funding. Typically, the process starts following a proposal from an employee who has secured external funding, but it may be based on other operational needs. Moreover, the head of department must ensure that compulsory courses for the doctoral programme are offered and that the doctoral student has a good working environment.

Doctoral student

The Swedish Higher Education Ordinance states that a doctoral student is a student who is admitted to and pursues doctoral studies.⁸ The ordinance stipulates both that a doctoral student may hold a doctoral studentship at the University⁹ and that applicants with other forms of funding¹⁰ may be admitted under certain conditions. The requirements for admission to doctoral studies are not only regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance, but also by the University's admission regulations for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies. Further details are provided below under the heading *Process for doctoral studies*.

⁵ HIG-STYR 2021/103

⁶ HIG-STYR 2022/104

⁷ Dean of faculty's decision-making and delegation framework, HIG-STYR 2022/104

⁸ chapter 1, section 4

⁹ chapter 5, section 1

¹⁰ chapter 7, section 36–37

Only those who are to be admitted or have already been admitted to doctoral programmes can be granted a doctoral studentship. A doctoral student who holds a doctoral studentship must primarily devote their time to their doctoral studies. However, before the doctoral degree is awarded, they may engage in teaching, research, and administrative tasks, amounting to no more than 20 per cent of their working hours.¹¹

The doctoral student is required to carrying out their studies and other duties included in their employment—regardless of whether the employer is the University or another organisation. Moreover, the doctoral student must, together with their supervisor, develop their individual study plan (ISP), follow it up and, if necessary, revise it. The doctoral student must also participate in a follow-up meeting with the relevant director of doctoral studies approximately six months after admission and again at the halfway point of their studies. For further information on these follow-up meetings, see the section on the ISP.

The doctoral student's ultimate goal is to present a doctoral thesis at a public public defense, which, in addition to the Higher Education Ordinance, is regulated in one of the steering documents at the University and you can find in a english translation; Guidance English translation of regulation about doctoral thesis and grading system. The thesis itself can consist of either a monograph or a compilation thesis. A monograph is structured as a book with chapters, and a compilation thesis consists of a number of scientific articles that are held together in terms of content by an introductory text (cover). Different subject traditions usually determine the type of thesis work that is to be produced.

Doctoral student collegium

At each faculty, doctoral students may organise a doctoral student collegium. Traditionally, these are formed to strengthen and develop the academic environment as well as to promote a positive academic and psychosocial working climate. The collegium itself decides what matters they want to address. While not formally regulated, the University encourages the establishment of such collegia. The doctoral student collegium may be compared to a student or staff association.

Examiner and examining committee

The Higher Education Ordinance¹² requires that each course has an appointed examiner, whose task is to award grades for completed coursework. Thus, grades for examinations forming part of doctoral studies must be set by a teacher appointed as examiner by the University. The Vice-chancellor's rules of procedure state that the dean of faculty should appoint the examiner for the assessment of doctoral course modules. In the decision and delegation procedure, the Vice-chancellor has in turn delegated authority to the AKN at each faculty to appoint an examiner for the assessment of a licentiate thesis and to appoint an examining committee for the assessment of a doctoral thesis (further details below).

¹¹ chapter 5

¹² chapter 12, several sections

Examiner for the licentiate seminar

Based on the regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance and the Vice-chancellor's decision and delegation procedure, the Vice-chancellor has established that an examiner is responsible for awarding the grade for the licentiate thesis. The appointed examiner cannot be one of the doctoral student's supervisors. The examiner may also act as chair of the licentiate seminar, if disciplinary traditions allow such an arrangement. The examiner's role during the licentiate seminar is described in more detail below in section *The licentiate seminar*.

Examining committee

The Swedish Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 6, section 34 states: "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."¹³ According to the University's regulation on public defences and the grading of doctoral theses,¹⁴ the grade for a doctoral thesis must be decided by an *examining committee* consisting of three members and one alternate member. The regulation also specifies the required qualifications for the members of the committee. In accordance with the Vice-chancellor's rules of procedure and delegation of authority, the relevant AKN appoints the examination committee.

Remuneration for service on the examination committee is regulated in [Arvode för bedömning och examination vid utbildning på forskarnivå].

In some disciplinary traditions the examining committee conducts a preliminary review of selected parts of the doctoral student's thesis prior to the public defence. Such a preliminary review is not stipulated in the University's regulations. However, should the faculty or the subject so desire, the tradition of preliminary review may be followed.

Reviewers for the mid-way review and final seminar

At key quality-assurance checkpoints—the mid-way review and the final seminar—specific reviewers must be appointed. These reviewers must hold a doctoral degree and possess solid subject-specific expertise. Their role is to support the continued development of the doctoral project, and they are expected to provide a written statement to the doctoral student after the seminar. Further information is available under the sections *Mid-way review* and *Final seminar* below.

For the mid-way review, it is customary for at least one reviewer to be from another university, and for one to be from the University. When recruiting reviewers, an even gender distribution should be sought.

¹³ chapter 6, section 34

¹⁴ sections 8–9

For the final seminar, at least one external reviewer should be from another university, according to academic convention.

If a reviewer holds the title of *docent* or *professor*, they may also serve as a full or alternate member of the examining committee at the public defence.

Remuneration for assignments as a reviewer is regulated in [Arvode för bedömning och examination vid utbildning på forskarnivå].

Principal and assistant supervisors

The role of supervisor is complex and this section focuses on the more formal requirements and tasks associated with the role of supervisor. For more support and guidance, anyone who already has experience of, or is planning to take on, a supervisory role is offered the opportunity to take an internal doctoral supervisor course. More information about the course and its content can be found in the University's learning and development portal.

The supervisory role is regulated by the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance,¹⁵ the University's admission regulations, and the Vice-chancellor's rules of procedure. Each doctoral student must have one principal supervisor and at least one assistant supervisor. During the admission process, the selection committee prepares proposals for supervisors. When a decision on admission is made, the relevant AKN appoints the principal and assistant supervisors.

At the University, proposals for supervisors in the admission process are prepared by the relevant preparatory group. The head of department deals with matters concerning resources and competence.

According to the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure, supervisors must have subject expertise in the field in which the doctoral studies are to be pursued. If the planned doctoral project is interdisciplinary, the supervisors' competencies should be complementary. At least one of the supervisors must be active within the research environment where the doctoral student will carry out their doctoral studies. Moreover, at least one supervisor must be employed by the University of Gävle. To foster a supportive environment for the doctoral student, it is generally advisable that at least one of the supervisors is employed by and active at the University of Gävle while another one may be affiliated.

Doctoral students are entitled to supervision throughout their doctoral studies unless the vice-chancellor, acting pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance,¹⁶ decides otherwise (see also the section *Further relevant matters – withdrawal of resources*). The extent of supervision must correspond to the doctoral student's needs. According to University practice, the indicative standard is that total supervision from all supervisors should comprise around two hours per week. This includes

¹⁵ chapter 6, section 28

¹⁶ chapter 6, section 30

written feedback, such as comments on manuscripts, and email communication. Holding a formal supervision meeting once a month may serve to promote both academic quality and progress in the doctoral studies. Doctoral students have the right to change the composition of their supervisory team during their programme. Further information is provided below in the section *Further relevant matters – request to change supervisor*.

Principal supervisor

To be appointed as a principal supervisor at the University, one must hold at least docent-level qualifications and have completed doctoral supervision training. The vice-chancellor's rules of procedure state that the principal supervisor holds overall responsibility for the supervision and is specifically responsible for:

- preparing, reviewing, and revising the ISP in collaboration with the doctoral student
- ensuring that plagiarism checks are carried out on the thesis
- proposing a discussant, chair, and examiner for the licentiate seminar
- proposing an external reviewer, chair, and examining committee for the public defence

According to established working procedures and processes, the principal supervisor is required to:

- provide subject expertise during the admission process, the establishment and announcement of doctoral positions, and the selection process
- plan, implement, and provide information about the quality assurance seminars determined by the UFN as outlined in the current ASP
- recruit reviewers for the mid-way seminar and final seminar in consultation with the head of subject, serve as the contact person, and ensure that agreements are drawn up
- act as the contact person for the discussant, chair, and examiner of the licentiate seminar, and ensure that agreements are drawn up
- act as the contact person for the external reviewer, chair, and examining committee for the public defence, and ensure that agreements are drawn up

Assistant supervisor

To be appointed as an assistant supervisor at the University, one must hold a doctoral degree and have completed doctoral supervision training. The vice-chancellor's rules of procedure state that the responsibilities of the assistant supervisor should be determined in dialogue with the line management of the core activities (dean of faculty/head of department) and the principal supervisor. Nothing prevents consultation with other functions, such as the head of subject.

Furthermore, the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure state that the role of the assistant supervisor is to be determined in dialogue with the line organisation of the core activities and the principal supervisor.

Supervisors' collegium

Within each faculty, supervisors may establish a supervisors' collegium. Traditionally, the aim of such a collegium is to support and develop supervisory practice through mutual exchange and discussion. The collegium itself determines what matters they want to address. While the supervisors' collegium is not regulated, the University encourages the use of such a forum.

External reviewer

According to the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance,¹⁷ a doctoral thesis must be defended orally at a public defence, at which an external reviewer must be present. The external reviewer does not have an examining function but supports the examining committee in forming a well-rounded assessment of the quality of the thesis and of the doctoral candidate's ability to defend their work and engage in scholarly discussion.

When appointing an international external reviewer, the principal supervisor should inform them of the relevant procedures and assessment criteria applicable in Sweden.

The vice-chancellor has delegated authority to appoint external reviewers to the relevant AKN. The principal supervisor is responsible for nominating a candidate for this appointment. The role of the external reviewer is also regulated in the University's provisions on the public defence and grading of the doctoral thesis. No further internal regulations apply to the external reviewer. The prevailing internal practice prescribes that the rules regarding the role of the external reviewer also apply to the discussant at the licentiate seminar.

Remuneration for duties performed as opponent is regulated in [Arvode för bedömning och examination vid utbildning på forskarnivå].

Chair of the licentiate seminar

According to the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure and delegation of authority, the relevant AKN is responsible for appointing the chair of the licentiate seminar. The chair is responsible for leading the seminar. In the absence of specific regulations regarding this role, the University has chosen to apply the provisions for the chair of the public defence as set out in the University's internal regulation on the public defence and the grading of the thesis. The chair of the licentiate seminar may also serve as the examiner, if such a combination of roles is allowed by established disciplinary traditions.

Chair of the public defence

According to the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure and delegation of authority, the relevant AKN is responsible for appointing the chair of the public defence. The chair is responsible for leading the

¹⁷ chapter 6, section 33

defence proceedings. This role is regulated by the University's internal regulation on the public defence and the grading of the thesis.

Student and doctoral student representative (Ombud)

The University employs a student and doctoral student representative (ombud),¹⁸ who provides support in matters relating to complaints or concerns about study-related issues. Doctoral students may contact the ombud via email at doktorandombud@hig.se.

Director of doctoral studies

The vice-chancellor has decided¹⁹ that each doctoral programme or group of programmes is required to have a director of doctoral studies. The director of doctoral studies is appointed by the dean of faculty, who also determines the scope of the assignment. The role is performed within the scope of a regular academic post, typically for a period of three years, with the possibility of extension. The vice-chancellor regulates the duties of the director of doctoral studies. These duties are:

- to hold overall responsibility for doctoral studies processes
- to provide support to doctoral students, supervisors, and line managers in matters concerning regulations and procedures for doctoral studies
- to prepare, review for formal compliance, and submit doctoral studies matters for decision

Description of assignment

Below is a detailed description of the director of doctoral studies' duties. This description can facilitate consistent handling of various matters and support the director of doctoral studies. The director of doctoral studies operates under the authority of the dean of faculty, head of department, chairs of the collegial boards, and in collaboration with heads of subject and supervisors, and bears overall responsibility for doctoral studies. The overarching responsibility means that the director of doctoral studies is expected to:

- Participate in the initial stages and preparation of the admission process, regardless of study funding, with the dual purpose of contributing knowledge of relevant regulations and processes and ensuring that "everything is in order." The extent of this participation is determined in dialogue with the head of department responsible for the doctoral position announcement and may vary from case to case. The director of doctoral studies may either take part in the selection committee or provide support on specific issues.
- Conduct quality and formal compliance reviews of decision-making documents prior to approval of the establishment of doctoral positions, to ensure that "everything is in order."

¹⁸ The appointment process for student and doctoral student representatives varies between higher education institutions. In some cases, the students' union acts as the employer.

¹⁹ HIG-STYR 2022/104.

- Be responsible for the final preparation and act as presenter when the dean of faculty is to make the decision to establish a doctoral position.
- Be responsible for the final preparation and act as presenter when the AKN is to decide on admission of doctoral students, appointment of principal and assistant supervisors, and, where applicable, changes of supervisor.
- Be responsible for the final preparation and act as presenter when the dean of faculty is to make the decision to employ a doctoral student. If the dean of faculty has delegated decision-making authority further, the matter should be presented to the designated authority.
- Be involved in the induction of doctoral students.
- Conduct follow-up meetings with doctoral students.
- Support doctoral students and/or supervisors in the event of conflicts arising in the educational context. If long-term conflicts are deemed to hinder the doctoral student's ability to complete the programme, the doctoral student's line manager and the chair of the AKN should be informed.
- Coordinate and disseminate information on the faculty's doctoral courses and support heads of department in the overall planning of which compulsory and elective doctoral courses are to be offered each semester.
- Support the collegium in drafting and revising general syllabi.
- Conduct quality and formal compliance reviews of decision-making documents prior to approval of ISP/RISP to ensure that "everything is in order."
- Be responsible for the final preparation and act as presenter when the AKN makes decisions on ISPs/RISPs.
- Be responsible for the final preparation and act as presenter when the AKN makes decisions on the notification of the licentiate seminar.
- Be responsible for the final preparation and act as presenter when the AKN makes decisions on the notification of the public defence.
- Support the dean of faculty in preparing cases relating to the withdrawal of resources for a doctoral student.
- Take part in the evaluation and review of doctoral studies.

The dean of faculty may, when appointing the director of doctoral studies, assign additional faculty-specific duties. These should be specified in the appointment decision.

University Education and Research Board

The University Board has established the University Education and Research Board (UFN) and delegated to the vice-chancellor the authority to define its remit and composition. The vice-chancellor has established that UFN, together with three subordinate faculty boards, constitutes the University's collegial board structure.

UFN's overarching responsibility is to ensure the quality of the University's educational and research activities. The main functions of the board are to:

- systematically review the quality of education and research and to propose and follow up on areas for improvement
- establish quality requirements, criteria, and procedures for the initiation, implementation, discontinuation, and review of the University's education and research activities
- contribute to the evaluation and development of the University's overall quality assurance system
- establish and revise general syllabi leading for degrees where the degree-awarding powers spans more than one faculty
- classify third-level courses

In addition, it is UFN that prepares proposals for the establishment and discontinuation of a doctoral subject area for decision by the vice-chancellor.

UFN is to cooperate with the faculty education and research boards, the line management of the core activities, and the support services.

Head of subject

At the University, each subject must have a head of subject whose responsibilities include:

- leading the development of the subject within education and research
- representing the subject both internally and externally
- leading quality development within the subject
- providing expert knowledge of the subject in internal processes and in matters concerning admissions at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels
- reviewing proposals for course syllabuses, study programmes, and ISPs to ensure subject relevance and research connection
- preparing proposals for ASP

The vice-chancellor's rules of procedure further establish that the head of subject is to be appointed by the dean of faculty and that the role should be performed within the framework of a regular academic post, as a rule for a term of three years. The possibility of extension and the scope of the assignment is decided by the dean of faculty.

Thus, the head of subject is involved in many aspects of doctoral studies, including the admissions process, and should be part of the selection committee. Additionally, the head of subject acts as an expert in assessing entry requirements for admission to doctoral studies, in dialogue with the admissions unit at UBS. Further duties are described in detail below.

When the head of subject is also the principal or assistant supervisor, the dean of faculty may appoint another person to carry out the tasks that would otherwise be performed by the head of subject for the relevant doctoral student. When such tasks are reassigned, there is no need to confer a formal title.

Process for doctoral studies

Within the framework of the University's degree-awarding powers for doctoral studies granted to the University by the Swedish Higher Education Authority, the University has established doctoral subject areas. The vice-chancellor decides to establish a doctoral subject area, while the relevant AKN decides on the subject's ASP. Next, a needs analysis should be conducted. The form of funding for the doctoral studies influences the subsequent process. Regardless of the form of funding, a doctoral position must be established and an admissions process take place. However, the form of funding for the doctoral studies determines which regulations apply concerning the advertisement and information about the intended admissions.²⁰ For example, if a doctoral student is financed through employment by another employer, the University is not required to advertise or inform about the admission. The various steps in doctoral studies are described in more detail below.

General Study Plan (ASP)

The Higher Education Ordinance²¹ stipulates that an ASP is a requirement.²² According to the Ordinance, the ASP must specify the main content of the programme, requirements for specific eligibility, and any other necessary regulations. On this basis, UFN has in individual decisions specified the required content of an ASP: selection criteria, compulsory course content, and seminars. A template for the ASP has been developed in accordance with the current regulatory framework and has been approved by the Chair of UFN. Following the template ensures that the ASP complies with the applicable regulations.

In addition to the provisions in the Higher Education Ordinance, the vice-chancellor has, by delegating tasks and decision-making authority, established the process for developing and approving new and revised ASPs:

1. The subject representative for the relevant subject prepares a draft ASP.
2. The ASP is approved by the respective AKN.²³

The version of the ASP in force when a doctoral student was admitted to doctoral studies applies throughout the duration of their studies. However, a doctoral student may request to follow a later version.

The current ASP for each doctoral student is available at hig.se and is attached to the digital ISP.

²⁰ HF chapter 7, section 37

²¹ chapter 6, section 26-27 Digital ASPs are managed in Ladok

²² Digital ASPs are managed in Ladok

²³ If the ASP leads to a degree where the degree-awarding powers span more than one faculty, the decision is made by the UFN.

Requirements when admitting doctoral students

The number of doctoral students that may be admitted may not exceed the number that can be offered satisfactory supervision and acceptable study conditions.²⁴ Available resources must always be assessed on a case-by-case basis, as doctoral studies can be funded in various ways. The Higher Education Ordinance regulates the funding of doctoral studies.²⁵ Moreover, the University's internal regulations concerning study funding are outlined in the admission regulations for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies. The regulations governing doctoral student employment are set out in the Higher Education Ordinance.²⁶

What constitutes satisfactory supervision is defined in the Higher Education Ordinance²⁷ and in the University's internal regulations, as set out in both the admission regulations for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies and the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure. More details about regulations concerning the supervisor's role are provided on pages 9–10 in this document.

²⁴ chapter 7, section 34

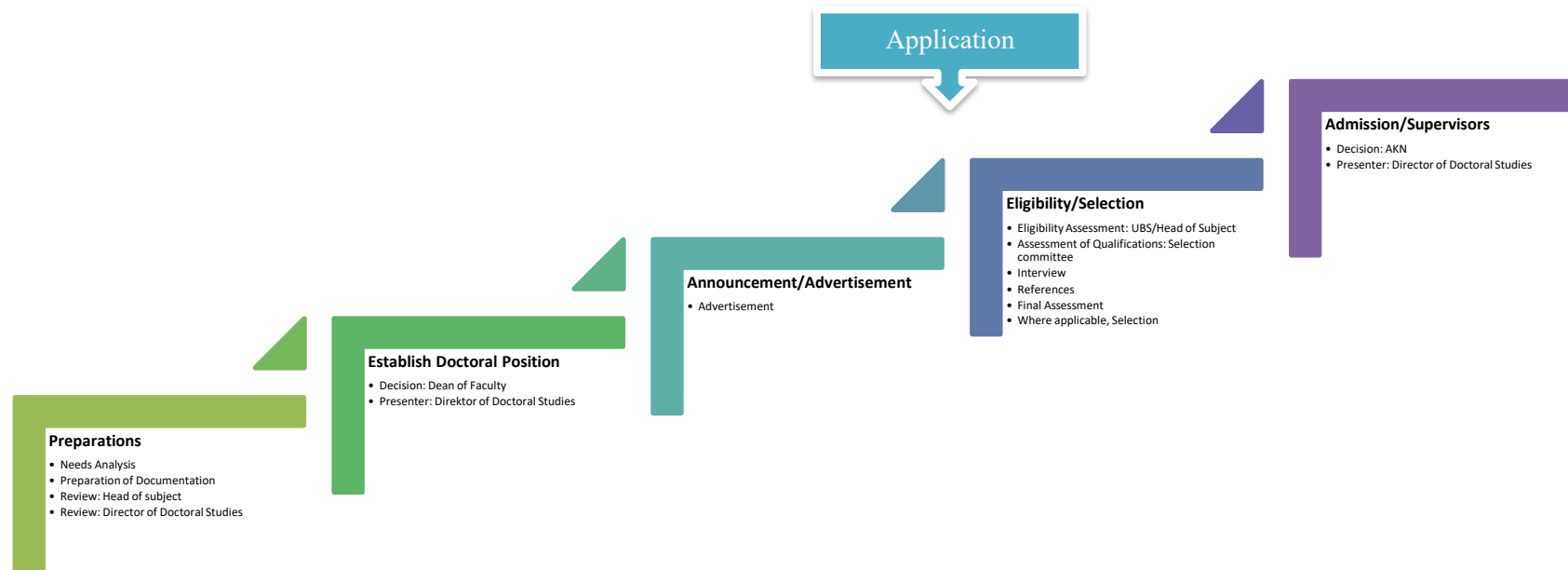
²⁵ chapter 6, sections 25 –36 and chapter 7, sections 34 –41

²⁶ chapter 5

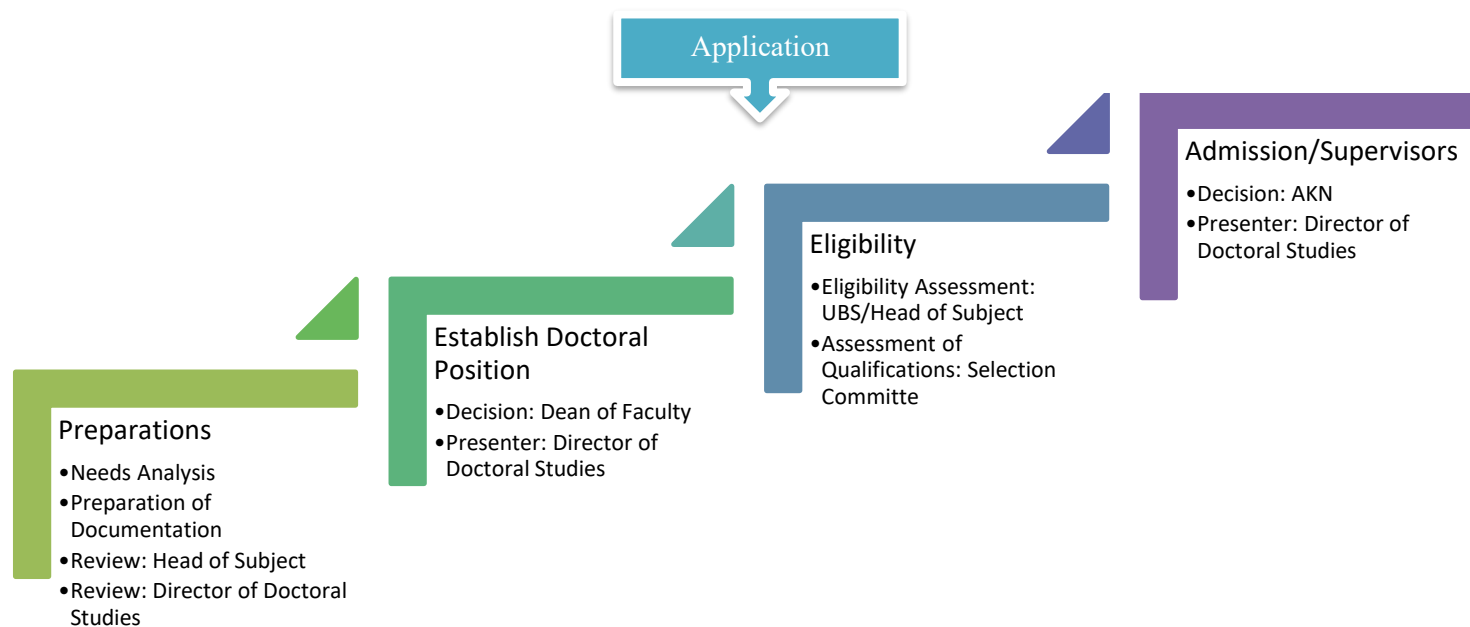
²⁷chapter 6, section 28

Admission process

Process map – when the University is required to advertise a doctoral position



Process map – when the University is not required to advertise a doctoral position



Initial preparations

This section applies regardless of the formal requirement to advertise the doctoral position.

The rationale for recruiting a doctoral student can vary depending on the circumstances. In some cases, a researcher applies for external funding and includes one or several doctoral students in the proposal. In others, an approved research school application may need doctoral positions, or the aim may be to enhance a research team. Thus, the needs analysis may be initiated at different stages depending on the specific situation.

Establishing a doctoral position is a strategically important decision; it is a significant investment for the organisation, and a long-term commitment. Ahead of announcing and filling a doctoral position, documenting a needs analysis is vital to specify the organisational needs, educational outcomes, and the requirements for the candidate in terms of qualifications, experience, and personal traits. This documentation then serves as a basis for subsequent stages in the process. The type of funding available for the doctoral student also impacts the process.

A student admitted to doctoral studies may be funded either through a doctoral studentship²⁸ at the University or through another form of funding,²⁹ such as:

- employment with an external organisation (“externally employed doctoral student”)
- continuation of doctoral studies previously carried out at another university,
- other comparable exceptional circumstances, or
- a scholarship.

For doctoral students funded by means other than a doctoral studentship, there is no formal requirement to advertise the position or announce the planned doctoral position.³⁰ However, the University may still advertise the position if there are good reasons to do so, for example to increase the pool of applicants or when several positions are involved.

This stage aims to facilitate the preparation of the decision to establish a doctoral position, to ensure suitable conditions for the doctoral student, and to safeguard collegial quality assurance in the admission process. The head of department is responsible for managing and coordinating the admission process and appoints a selection committee. This group may include the head of department, the proposed principal supervisor (if already identified), and the head of subject. The proposed principal supervisor should primarily outline the intended research project. The head of subject, in turn, should primarily ensure the quality of the admission process and contribute with subject-specific expertise, particularly regarding the competencies needed in the supervisory team. Thus, the head of department decides if the director of doctoral studies should form part of the selection committee or offer consultation and support on specific matters. The extent of such participation is determined on a case-by-case basis. The head of department may also decide to include

²⁸ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 5, chapter 7

²⁹ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 5, chapter 7

³⁰ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 7, sections 36—38

other functions—such as a teacher or another individual suitable for the specific research project—in the selection committee. Importantly, the form of funding may influence the composition of the selection committee and determine the type of support required from EVL.

Both the head of subject and the director of doctoral studies have a reviewing role prior to the decision. The director of doctoral studies is also responsible for the final preparation of the case and its presentation for decision. The process allows for flexibility. Depending on needs and the departments' experience and circumstances, strategic dialogue and consultation with other roles—such as the faculty management team or the AKN—may be useful before a decision is made. The faculty leadership determines if this is necessary.

The needs analysis should preferably be documented using the established template (Appendix 1). The needs analysis supports the next step in the process, which can preferably be carried out in parallel.

In the continued admission process, the preparatory group should put forward proposals for supervisors. The head of department should ensure that matters concerning resources and competence are addressed in the preparation of potential candidates, while the faculty board formally appoints the supervisory team. The head of department determines the scope of the assignment in dialogue with those concerned.

For support in planning and analysing the financial conditions, contact the financial controller at the Division of Finance, Planning and Procurement (EPI). For support with the planning and analysis of the admission process—for example regarding general and specific entry requirements—contact the admissions officer at the Division of Educational Support (UBS). For support in planning and analysing matters related to potential funding through a doctoral studentship, contact an HR specialist at the Division of Human Resources.

Funding of doctoral studies

Doctoral position at the University

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that the University may offer specific positions for doctoral students to enable them to pursue their doctoral studies.³¹ The regulation requires that the student must be admitted before being employed.³² The doctoral student's work duties and framework for the employment are outlined in chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

Grants

A doctoral student with grant-based funding, with documented guarantee of funding for the entire duration of the programme, should, upon application, be employed as a doctoral student when, according to the relevant ISP, there are three full-time years remaining towards a doctoral degree.³³

³¹ chapter 5, section 1

³² chapter 5, section 3

³³ chapter 5, section 4

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, this does not apply if the vice-chancellor has decided to withdraw the doctoral student's resources under Section 30 of chapter 6 of the Ordinance.

The Higher Education Ordinance also outlines exceptions to these provisions.³⁴ Section 4a states that the employment requirement for a doctoral student with a grant does not apply if the grant is provided within the framework of:

1. an aid and capacity building programme in which grants are an accepted form of funding with reasonable terms and conditions and the admitting higher education institution has insight into these terms and conditions and how the grant is paid, or
2. a programme funded by the European Union or other partnerships, in which grants with reasonable terms and conditions comprise an accepted form of funding and where requirements for funding through employment are a barrier to the admitting higher education institution's participation.

If the funding is provided through a grant granted within the framework of an aid and capacity-building programme or a programme funded by the European Union, an agreement between the University and the funding entity providing the grant must be submitted with the admission application.

If a doctoral student is to be financed through grants and you need support, contact the University's legal counsel at the University Management Office or an HR specialist at the Division of Human Resources.

Employment with another employer (externally employed doctoral student)

When admitting a doctoral student whose studies are funded through employment with another employer, (externally employed doctoral student), the faculty must ensure that an agreement is established with the employer. The agreement must be signed by the dean of faculty, in accordance with the vice-chancellor's delegation of decision-making authority, before the admission decision is made. The agreement should state that it only applies on the condition that the doctoral student is admitted.

The agreement must clarify:

- that the doctoral student will receive a salary and social benefits that are at least equivalent to those offered under a doctoral studentship at the University
- that the funding covers the entire study period and that the employee is granted sufficient time within their employment to pursue their studies at the intended rate of study

³⁴ chapter 5, section 4

- whether the funder imposes specific requirements regarding the doctoral student's academic progress, and if so, that these requirements are compatible with legislation and the legal rights of the doctoral student

A template agreement is available. Contact the University's legal counsel at the University Management Office to access the template and/or for further support regarding agreements for externally employed doctoral students.

When planning a doctoral student position for an externally employed doctoral student, the identity of the prospective doctoral student is as a rule known. If so, the individual in question may be involved in preparing the research plan before the doctoral position is established. The research plan will then be developed further before the admission decision.

Ongoing doctoral studies at another university

When a doctoral student has commenced their studies at another university, the University may, without a new admission process, decide to allow the doctoral student to transfer, continue their studies, and complete their doctoral degree at the University. This is only permitted if the University holds degree awarding powers in the relevant doctoral subject area and if the doctoral student has pursued most of their doctoral studies within that specific area at the other university.³⁵

Similar special grounds

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that the University may also refrain from advertising the doctoral position if there are "similar special grounds", meaning grounds similar to where a doctoral student is employed by another organisation or already has commenced doctoral studies at another university.

If it is unclear whether similar special grounds apply, the University should advertise the position.

Establishing a doctoral position

This section applies regardless of the formal requirements for advertising the doctoral position.

Preparation

Based on the needs analysis, the head of department, or another individual assigned by the head of department, completes the application to establish a doctoral position. The [designated form](#) (in Swedish), "Establishing a Doctoral Position," must be used for the application. The reason why the head of department is assigned responsibility for the preparation is to make it clear to the decision-maker that the matter is supported by the line management and that the necessary conditions for establishing a doctoral position and studentship have been secured.

³⁵ Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 7, section 38

This step can preferably be undertaken alongside the preparation of the needs analysis and the reviews performed by the head of subject and the director of doctoral studies.

Review prior to the decision to establish a doctoral position

Before the matter is submitted for decision, the head of subject and the director of doctoral studies must review the final documentation from different angles. In accordance with the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure, the head of subject is responsible for reviewing the relevance of the subject area and the research basis of the application. The director of doctoral studies is to conduct quality and formal compliance reviews and ensure that all required materials are in place prior to the decision.

If the head of subject and/or the director of doctoral studies find that the documentation requires additions or adjustments, such changes should be addressed in dialogue between all parties involved.

Effective communication between the parties involved enables that all steps in this preparatory process can be handled in parallel and completed without unnecessary delay.

Decision to establish a doctoral position

In accordance with the vice-chancellor's decision-making and delegation procedures, it is the dean of faculty who decides whether to establish a doctoral position. The director of doctoral studies presents the case at the decision meeting.

The purpose of the decision to establish a doctoral position is to ensure that the necessary prerequisites for the doctoral student's future studies are in place. When making this decision, the following general aspects should be considered:

- the availability of a sound and supportive research environment for doctoral studies
- requirements and expectations of the programme
- research ethics considerations
- the financial resources

In addition, the following should be assessed in relation to the specific project:

- the scientific suitability and feasibility of the project
- the suitability of the appointed supervisors
- the relevance of the supervisory team for the intended research project

The decision to establish a doctoral position must include a clearly stated rationale in accordance with the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act.³⁶ For support in this matter, please contact the University's legal counsel at the University Management Office.

³⁶ Section 32

Student influence is ensured in this decision-making process, as students are given the opportunity to be represented³⁷ at the decision meeting headed by the dean of faculty.

Advertising the doctoral position

This section applies in cases where the University is formally required to advertise the doctoral position, as well as when the position is advertised despite no formal obligation to do so.

When advertising a doctoral position, regulations set out in the Higher Education Ordinance apply as well as the admission regulations for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies. For example, the position must be advertised at least three weeks before the application deadline both nationally and internationally. The advertisement can also be published through channels such as the University's external website, other websites, or social media.

Even when the University is not formally required to advertise, advertising or informing about the intended doctoral position may be advantageous, for example, when several positions are involved. Such measures may also broaden the pool of applicants.

For further support in the admission process, please contact UBS.

Advertisement

This section applies in cases where the University is formally required to advertise the doctoral position, as well as when the position is advertised despite no formal obligation to do so.

The advertisement should be based on the current ASP and the developed needs analysis and is to be prepared by the selection committee for the specific call. The advertisement must include a specification of the requirements for the doctoral position in question, clearly outlining the competencies across all relevant areas that are essential for the position. The aim here is to ensure that the student will be able to successfully pursue their doctoral studies.

The advertisement must include:

- a description of the project and the doctoral subject area in which the doctoral student will be active
- general entry requirements³⁸
- specific entry requirements³⁹
- selection criteria (basis of assessment)⁴⁰

³⁷ According to internal regulations in the procedure for managerial decisions, students have the right to appoint representatives.

³⁸ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 7, section 39, Admission regulations, individual decision by UFN and current ASP

³⁹ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 7, section 40, Admission regulations, individual decision by UFN and current ASP

⁴⁰ Admission regulations and current ASP

- competencies and personal qualities required to succeed in the role and to benefit from doctoral studies (see example below)
- additional desirable qualifications and experiences considered an advantage for the doctoral student's ability to benefit from an education at doctoral level
- practical conditions and other requirements

The primary focus of the advertisement should be on describing the research project.⁴¹

In addition to the general and specific entry requirements and personal qualities, other skills or qualifications may be desired but not requirements for eligibility. These are referred to as desirable qualifications and experiences and must be clearly defined in the advertisement.

Application

This section applies regardless of the formal requirements for advertising the study place.

The applicant applies to:

- the programme via the application form on the University's website (*under development*)

Eligibility

This section applies regardless of any formal requirements to advertise the doctoral position.

Beyond the provisions of the Higher Education Ordinance,⁴² general and specific entry requirements, along with selection procedures, are regulated by the University's Admission Regulations for bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes, as well as by individual decisions taken by the UFN. All regulations pertaining to the specific doctoral subject area are set out in the adopted ASP.

UBS carries out an assessment of the entry requirements for admission to doctoral programmes, based on the ASP. The relevant head of subject then carries out a peer-review. The selection committee assess the candidate's qualifications and ability to benefit from the education. All assessments must be appropriately documented.

If the doctoral position has not been advertised, the following three steps—selection, interview, and reference checks—can be omitted.

Selection

This section applies in cases where the University is formally required to advertise the doctoral position, as well as when the position is advertised despite no formal obligation to do so.

⁴¹ Denna ska tas bort

⁴² Chapter 7, sections 39—41

If the doctoral position has been advertised and there is a need to select among the applicants, the selection committee must base assessments on the selection criteria established by UFN⁴³ and that are set out in both the relevant ASP and the advertisement. The fact that an applicant may be eligible for credit transfer⁴⁴ of prior studies or professional experience must not give that applicant priority over others.

The selection committee's results and decision regarding which candidates are to be invited for interview must be documented appropriately and submitted as supporting material for the admission decision. The selection committee must also provide a justification for why candidates have been selected or rejected.

Interview

This section applies in cases where the University is formally required to advertise the doctoral position, as well as when the position is advertised despite no formal obligation to do so.

Before starting the selection and interview process, the selection committee needs to agree on which personal qualities are the most important ones.

Selected candidates are then invited to a personal interview, either on campus or online.

The head of department and the head of subject, or any other person deemed appropriate by the head of department, are responsible for conducting interviews and any practical skills assessments. The selection committee may also agree to involve additional individuals or functions in the process.

Reference Checks

This section applies in cases where the University is formally required to advertise the doctoral position, as well as when the position is advertised despite no formal obligation to do so.

Following the interview and any practical skills assessments, the head of department, or a person appointed by them, is responsible for conducting reference checks on the candidate(s) selected for further consideration.

Final Assessment

This section applies regardless of formal requirements for advertising the doctoral position.

Based on all relevant factors, a comprehensive assessment should be made. The director of doctoral studies is then responsible for preparing the case for the relevant AKN's admission decision. The various steps of the University's admission process ensure that the required risk assessment⁴⁵ is performed.

⁴³ HIG-UTB 2025/242

⁴⁴ Higher Education Ordinance ???

⁴⁵ Admission regulations for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels

Admission decision and appointment of supervisors

This section applies regardless of formal requirements for advertising the doctoral position.

When deciding on admission, it is important to ensure that the provisions of the Higher Education Ordinance⁴⁶ are met regardless of the form of study funding. This means that only as many doctoral students as can be offered adequate supervision and acceptable study conditions may be admitted. Moreover, any candidate admitted to doctoral programmes must meet the specific entry requirements determined by the University and must possess the ability required to benefit from the programme.

The relevant director of doctoral studies prepares the case and submits the necessary documentation to the relevant AKN via the form on the intranet. [The designated form](#) (in Swedish) on the intranet should be used. Supporting documents from the selection committee must be attached. If the doctoral student is an externally employed doctoral student, the agreement with the employer must be signed by the dean of faculty before the admission decision is made. The agreement is only valid on the condition that the doctoral student is admitted to the programme.

The director of doctoral studies also presents the case to the AKN, which, in accordance with the vice-chancellor's decision-making and delegation procedures, has the authority to decide on admissions to doctoral studies. The AKN also appoints the principal supervisor and assistant supervisor(s). The secretary of the AKN sends the decision for action to kurssupport@hig.se. This is so that education administrators can register basic information in accordance with the process for establishing an ISP.

As students are represented on the AKN, student influence is ensured in decisions on admission and the appointment of supervisors.⁴⁷

Decisions on admission to doctoral studies cannot be appealed.⁴⁸

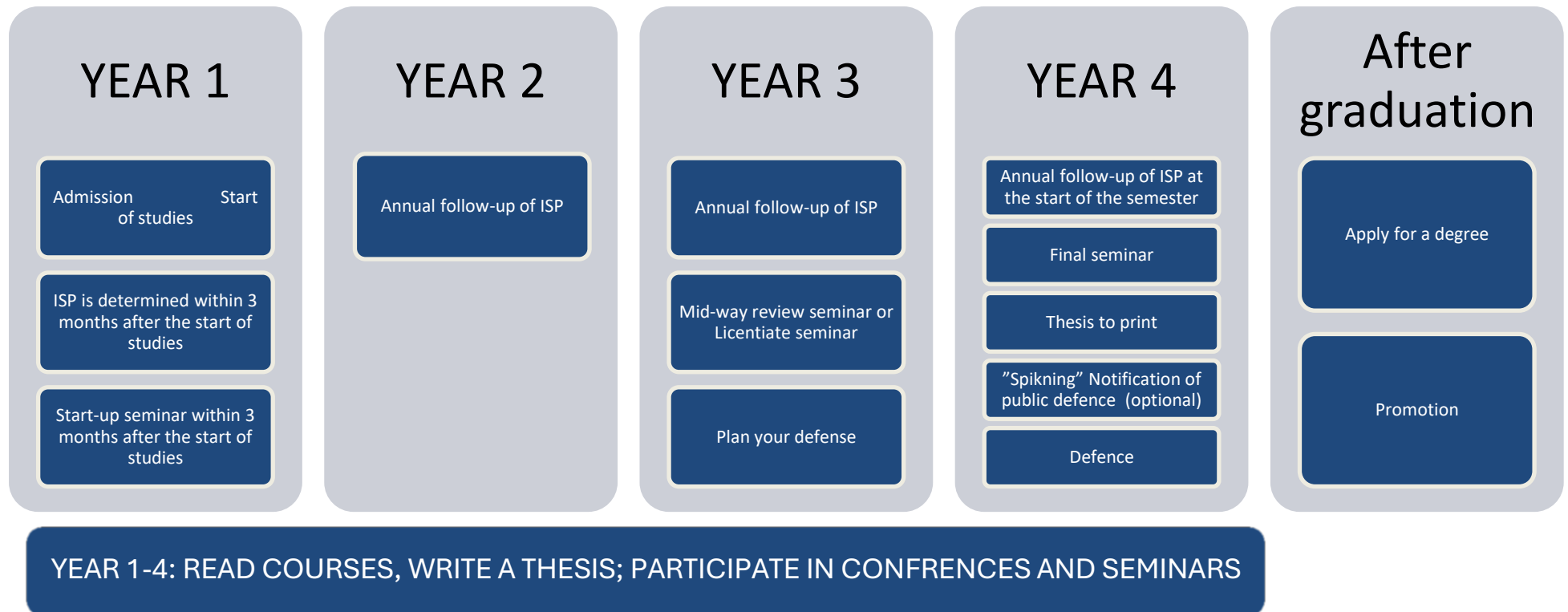
⁴⁶ Chapter 7, sections 34—35

⁴⁷ According to the Vice-chancellor's Rules of Procedure, students can appoint representatives to AKNs

⁴⁸ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 12, section 2 and Admission regulations for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels

Doctoral studies

Process from admission to public defence



Individual Study Plan (ISP)

The Higher Education Ordinance⁴⁹ stipulates that an ISP must be drawn up for each doctoral student; the ISP must clarify the commitments of both the doctoral student and the University and must include a timetable for the doctoral student's study programme. UFN has decided on the required content of an ISP at the University.⁵⁰ This decision is based on the templates provided by the Ladok Consortium. Consequently, an ISP at the University must include:

- Basic Information
 - o Personal details, admission information, degree type
 - o General syllabus (attached)
- Resources
 - o Supervisors
 - o Study activity and funding
- Interim goals and Learning Outcomes
- Thesis project
- Courses and Conferences
- Supervision Meetings
- Ethical Approvals
- Timetable

In addition to the instructions within the digital ISP, specific guidance for completing interim and learning objectives is provided below in Appendix 2. More supporting materials and detailed instructions for the various modules in the digital ISP can be found in Ladok.

When preparing the ISP, it is also planned whether the thesis will be a monograph or a compilation thesis.

Furthermore, the Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that an ISP must be approved after consultation with the doctoral student and their supervisors. At the University, the relevant AKN adopts the ISP, by delegation from the vice-chancellor. The process for preparing and approving the ISP is regulated by the vice-chancellor's decision⁵¹ and proceeds as follows:

1. A draft ISP is prepared by the principal supervisor in consultation with the doctoral student
2. The draft ISP is reviewed by the head of subject for the relevant subject area
3. The relevant director of studies carries out formalities and quality checks
4. The ISP is approved by the AKN after presentation by the principal supervisor

Immediately after the admission decision, the administrator at UBS initiates an ISP for the doctoral student. Information from the relevant ASP (including compulsory courses and seminars) and the admission records (including personal data, study funding, and the planned research project) should be

⁴⁹ Chapter 6, section 29

⁵⁰ HIG-UTB 2024/745

⁵¹ The Vice-chancellors Rules of procedure and decision-making and delegation framework

filled in. The principal supervisor then activates the ISP (step 1), and the doctoral student proceeds to develop the plan in dialogue with the supervisors.

Once the doctoral student has completed their part, the principal supervisor is notified⁵² that the ISP is ready for approval. Ladok specifies what checks the principal supervisor needs to perform before the ISP can be approved. Additional guidance on how to establish the ISP is provided by the [Ladok Consortium](#).

As soon as the principal supervisor has approved the ISP, the head of subject is notified that the ISP is ready for review (step 2) and approval (step 3). The head of subject's review focuses on the academic relevance and research basis of the proposed research project. Ladok specifies the elements to be checked before the subject representative can approve the ISP. Next, it should be forwarded for final review by the director of doctoral studies, who now performs a quality and formal compliance check and then prepares the case for a decision by the AKN (step 3).

The director of doctoral studies submits an excerpt of the proposed ISP to the relevant AKN via the [case submission form](#) (in Swedish). According to established practice, the final approval of the ISP (step 4) should take place within three months after the start of the doctoral student's studies. When the AKN considers the proposal, the following should be considered:

- The scientific level and feasibility of the research plan
- The quality and coherence of the proposed individual papers and their potential to collectively meet the requirements for a licentiate or doctoral thesis
- The selection of courses and how they contribute to the depth and breadth of the doctoral studies
- The learning activities planned to ensure that the degree learning outcomes will be met

Once the AKN has made its decision, the board's secretary ensures that the decision is recorded and implemented in Ladok by finally approving the current version of the ISP.

Revised Individual Study Plan (RISP)

The Higher Education Ordinance⁵³ stipulates that an ISP must be followed up and revised in consultation with the principal supervisor and the doctoral student. The University's practice is to revise the ISP annually for doctoral students with an activity level above 50%, until the doctoral student graduates. For doctoral students with an activity level of 50% or lower, revisions are made in time intervals corresponding to the activity level.. A revised individual study plan is called a RISP and is described as a new version in Ladok.

⁵² When a new version is being updated, you will find it on the start page for Ladok for Students. You may also receive an email notification. The page shows when the current task was started and gives you a shortcut to the page for your individual study plan.

⁵³ Chapter 6 section 29

Adjustments are made digitally in Ladok, and the revised plan is adopted following the same procedure as for the initial ISP. This means that the process for preparing and approving a RISP (a new version of the ISP) according to the vice-chancellor's decision,⁵⁴ is as follows:

1. The proposed RISP is prepared by the principal supervisor in consultation with the doctoral student
2. The proposed RISP is reviewed by the relevant head of subject
3. The draft ISP formalities and quality checks by the relevant director of studies
4. The RISP is adopted by the AKN after the presentation by the principal supervisor

When a revision becomes necessary, or when the regular annual review is due, the principal supervisor, the assistant supervisor (if applicable), and the doctoral student should jointly review and monitor the progression and outcomes. Any deviations from the plan must be documented. A new plan for the remaining study period is then drawn up, and the ISP/RISP, including appendices, is updated accordingly. Any revisions must be clearly indicated. After the mid-way review, the RISP must show if, and if so in what way, the reviewer's comments have been considered.

After the dialogue (step 1), the doctoral student updates the plan based on the outcomes of the discussion. Once the doctoral student has entered the revised plan into the system, the principal supervisor will receive a notification⁵⁵ that a RISP is available for approval. Ladok specifies what the principal supervisor must check before the revised RISP is reviewed by the head of subject. Further guidance on how to prepare an ISP/RISP is available at [the Ladok Consortium](#).

Once the principal supervisor has approved the updated RISP, the head of subject will be notified a RISP is ready for review (step 2) and approval (step 3). The review consists of assessing the subject relevance and research basis of the proposed research project. Ladok specifies what must be verified before the head of subject can approve the revised RISP. Once approved, the RISP is forwarded to the director of doctoral studies for a final quality and formal compliance review in preparation for the decision by the AKN (step 4).

The director of doctoral studies submits an extract of latest version of the proposed RISP to the relevant AKN via the [designated online form](#) (in Swedish). The board should consider then the following aspects:

- The scientific level and feasibility of the research plan
- The quality and coherence of the proposed individual papers and their potential to collectively meet the requirements for a licentiate or doctoral thesis
- The selection of courses and how they contribute to the depth and breadth of the doctoral studies

⁵⁴ The vice-chancellor's rules of procedure and decision-making and delegation framework

⁵⁵ When a new version is being updated, you will find it on the start page for Ladok for Students. You may also receive an email notification. The page shows when the current task was started and gives you a shortcut to the page for your individual study plan.

- The learning activities planned to ensure that the learning outcomes will be met

Once the AKN has made its decision, the board's secretary ensures that the decision is recorded and implemented in Ladok by approving the updated version of the ISP/RISP.

Additional guiding materials and instructions for each module are available in the digital ISP/RISP in Ladok.

No follow-up or revision of the ISP is required if the doctoral student is on an approved leave from studies. Further information is provided below in the section *Leave from studies and discontinuation*. When the doctoral student resumes active studies, a follow-up, and if needed, a revision should be carried out regardless of the student's level of activity.

Supervision meetings

During the doctoral programme, the principal supervisor must hold various types of supervision meetings with the doctoral student. These include start-up meetings, annual follow-up meetings, career development meetings, and any other meetings that the principal supervisor deems appropriate in relation to the progress of the thesis. After each meeting, the principal supervisor should briefly document what was discussed and agreed upon in the digital ISP.

Start-up meeting: An initial meeting where the doctoral student and the supervisor discuss the structure of the programme, expectations, and available resources.

Annual follow-up meeting: These meetings aim to review the doctoral student's annual progress and to discuss any necessary adjustments to the ISP.

Career development meeting: These meetings focus on the doctoral student's future career opportunities, both within and outside academia.

It is important to distinguish these supervision meetings from the follow-up meetings that the doctoral student holds with the relevant director of doctoral studies and with head of department in cases where the student holds a doctoral studentship. Guidance on these other types of meetings is provided below under the section *Further relevant matters*.

Supervision meetings should be regarded as an essential part of doctoral studies and may contribute to:

- Establishing, maintaining, and developing a long-term, positive, and constructive relationship between the supervisor and the doctoral student
- Clarifying expectations and roles at the beginning of and throughout the doctoral programme
- Supporting realistic scheduling for the doctoral programme

Supervision meetings are held by the supervisor and should be well-prepared. Each meeting should follow a structure that has been agreed upon in advance; the doctoral student and the principal supervisor should together decide on themes and topics.

Suggested templates for supervision meetings are available in the document: [Guide för handledningssamtal.pdf](#)

Courses

Any course fees, travel, and accommodation costs related to courses within the framework of the doctoral studies should be covered by the faculty.

Course Literature

The cost of course literature for the doctoral studies is handled in different ways depending on the form of study funding, local practice at each faculty, and, in some cases, decisions made at subject level. What applies in each individual case is determined through dialogue.

Compulsory quality assurance seminars

During the doctoral programme, the doctoral student must participate in compulsory quality assurance seminars to secure and strengthen the quality of the thesis. These seminars do not include examinable course components.

UFN has decided⁵⁶ that the following seminars are compulsory at the University:

- Start-up seminar
- Mid-way review seminar
- Final review seminar

The compulsory seminars for the individual doctoral student should be specified in the current ASP.

Start-up seminar

UFN's decision states that the doctoral student must present and discuss their research plan at a seminar within three months of admission to doctoral programme.

The established practice is that the purpose of the project, research questions, methodology, previous research, chosen theoretical perspectives, and a timeline for any sub-projects should be presented and discussed at the seminar.

More information can be found under the section *Planning the Implementation* in the ISP.

Mid-way review seminar

UFN's decision states that doctoral students admitted with the doctoral degree as their intended final qualification must present and discuss both their completed and planned work on their thesis at a mid-

⁵⁶ HIG-UTB 2025/243

way review seminar. At this point, approximately half of the doctoral programme should be completed. Alternatively, the doctoral student may conduct a licentiate seminar.

Final seminar

UFN's decision states that the doctoral student admitted with the doctoral degree as their intended final qualification must present and discuss the final thesis at a final seminar before the Public defence of doctoral theses. The seminar is preferably planned about six months before the planned public defense.

Planning of the compulsory seminars in the ISP

The planning of the doctoral student's compulsory seminars should be documented in the current ISP or revised RISP, under the heading Module and Learning Outcomes. The principal supervisor is responsible for initiating and planning the seminars together with the doctoral student.

When the supervisor and the doctoral student decide that it is time to hold a seminar, the principal supervisor proposes an examiner and consults the head of subject. The head of subject then approves the timing of the seminar and the examiner's participation. The supervisor and the head of subject thus share the responsibility for ensuring that the doctoral student is prepared and that the process follows established procedures.

The principal supervisor, or another person designated by the supervisor, chairs and leads the seminar. The seminar must be open to the public.

Once the head of subject has approved the seminar, the principal supervisor informs the relevant faculty secretary, who in turn manages the announcement, room booking, and other practical arrangements related to the seminar.

Who does what:

The doctoral student's role in the planning is to, together with the main supervisor, draw up a plan for implementation in the digital ISP/RISP.

The supervisor;

- in consultation with the subject representative, ensure that the doctoral student is ready to implement the seminar
- plan the implementation of the seminars with the doctoral student, assistant supervisor and subject representative
- consult with subject representative on a proposal for the time of implementation
- propose examiners (mid-term and final seminar) and consult the proposal with the subject representative
- send the necessary documentation* to the examiners (customary two weeks before the seminar)
- ensure that listeners are invited
- be the chairman at the seminar, or the person appointed by him/her

Head of subject;

- in consultation with the main supervisor, ensure that the doctoral student is ready to carry out the seminar
- approve the date for carrying out the seminar
- approve the examiner

The Academy Secretary handles advertising, room bookings and other practical administration connected to the seminar.

*) required documentation:

- Current thesis work
- Current ASP
- Ethical permit (if available)

Dialogue on academic writing

Prior to the mid-way and the final review seminars, the doctoral student and the supervisor must review and analyse the written material together. Here, the plagiarism detection tool *iThenticate*, which generates a report, should be used. The library provides support and offers information on how to perform the review and interpret the report. The report then serves as the basis for a discussion between the doctoral student and the supervisor concerning academic writing, including source management, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and copyright. The purpose of this activity is to strengthen the doctoral student's knowledge of academic writing in relation to research integrity.

The fact that the review in *iThenticate* has been conducted must be recorded in the digital ISP in Ladok. While the report should not be included in the documents submitted to the appointed reviewers, the doctoral student must be prepared to answer questions related to academic writing and plagiarism during the seminar.

Review of the thesis prior to the mid- and final review

After the mid-review/final review seminar, the reviewers approved by the head of subject submit a written statement. A template for the statement is available on the [University's website](#). The reviewers' statements should be sent to registrator@hig.se. The external reviewer may either sign the statement digitally before submission or choose not to sign, as it is considered an incoming document which makes signing unnecessary. However, the internal reviewer must always sign the statement digitally before submission.

The registrar then records the document(s) in the diary and forwards them to UBS for registration in Ladok. If an external reviewer's fee must be paid, it should also be forwarded to the faculty secretary.

More information regarding the role of the reviewer and required qualifications can be found below in the section *Roles and organisations – reviewer at the mid-way review seminar and final review seminar*.

Degree

The degree of licentiate and the degree of doctor are regulated by the system of qualifications,⁵⁷ the University's local degree regulations, the approved qualification descriptor, as well as the ASP and the ISP. A description of the various stages involved in the process, along with the procedures for the degree examinations, are provided below.

Licentiate Seminar

In the absence of specific regulations concerning the licentiate seminar, the University has chosen to apply the same regulations that govern the public defence of doctoral theses. This means that doctoral students who are awarded a licentiate degree—either as the completion of their studies or as an intermediate degree⁵⁸—are required to present and defend their licentiate thesis at a public licentiate seminar.

Subject-specific traditions may provide guidance as to whether both final seminars and licentiate seminars should be held. The quality assurance checkpoints (seminars) and degrees are stipulated in the current ASP.

The University's regulations concerning the public defence and grading of doctoral theses specify periods during the year when a disputation is permitted to take place. Licentiate seminars may be held no later than 15 June and no earlier than 1 September. The specified dates apply unless there are special grounds warranting otherwise. If so, the AKN may decide to waive the restrictions on dates set out in the regulations. Further information is provided below in the section on the notification of the licentiate seminar.

Plagiarism checks prior to licentiate seminar

The vice-chancellor's delegation of authority stipulates that the principal supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a plagiarism check is conducted on the licentiate thesis. In practice, however, the University library carries out the plagiarism check using the *iThenticate* tool. The library is the system owner of *iThenticate* and provides guidance on both how to perform the plagiarism check and how to interpret the resulting report.

The material to be submitted—comprising the introductory thesis summary of a compilation thesis (kappa) and any unpublished individual papers—must be sent to gup@hig.se no later than ten weeks prior to the licentiate seminar (if the thesis go to print). Further information can be found in the checklist and timeline in Appendix 3.

The principal supervisor is responsible for forwarding the plagiarism report together with the library's recommendations for interpretation to the examiner and the discussant, preferably at the same time as

⁵⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, appendix 2

⁵⁸ Local degree regulations, HIG-STYR 2019/116

submitting the licentiate thesis and other related documents. The principal supervisor may delegate the task of sending these materials to someone else.

The plagiarism report is to be used as supporting documentation in the examiner's assessment of the licentiate thesis. Should the examiner suspect plagiarism in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Ordinance concerning disciplinary measures, a report must be submitted to the University's vice-chancellor.⁵⁹ The report is submitted via the Disciplinary Board's [form](#) available on the University's website.

In such a case, the licentiate seminar should not be held until the matter has been fully investigated. Depending on which parts of the licentiate thesis are subject to suspected plagiarism, it may be appropriate to report the matter to the KOF and the Npof, as well as to the University's Disciplinary Board. Further guidance on how to handle suspected plagiarism or misconduct is provided below in the section *Suspected misconduct*.

Printing and publication of the licentiate thesis

The licentiate thesis may either be printed or published solely in electronic form in DiVA. Printing is carried out in collaboration with the Thesis Production service at Uppsala University Library. Further information and support can be found on the University's [intranet](#).

Notification of conducting a licentiate seminar

The principal supervisor is responsible for initiating and planning the licentiate seminar together with the doctoral student. When the supervisor and the doctoral student decide that the time is appropriate for the licentiate seminar, the principal supervisor, in consultation with the head of subject and the relevant director of doctoral studies, proposes suitable candidates to serve as the examiner, the discussant, and the chair of the seminar. The chair may be the same person as the examiner. Once the proposed candidates have accepted the assignments, the examiner must fill out a declaration of conflict of interest that is available on the web. The completed declaration of conflict of interest is sent to the main supervisor. The main supervisor must document contact information for the proposed candidates and the reasons for the decision. A template for documentation is available on the intranet.

When the main supervisor has received the declaration of conflict of interest, the required documentation from the doctoral student and documented contact information for the proposed candidates and the reasons for the decision, the main supervisor sends all the documentation to the relevant director of doctoral studies for review. The director of studies then reports the matter to the AKN for decision via the appropriate notification [form](#) to the AKN for a decision.

In order to appoint an examiner, opponent and chair of the seminar, it is the University's routine that the AKN is given access to documentation on the motives and basic information of proposed candidates, the current statement from the examiners at the final seminar, the latest draft of the thesis work and the completed declaration of conflict of interest. This is to ensure that everything is in place

⁵⁹ Chapter 10, section 9

to be able to carry out the licentiate seminar and thereby decide to appoint candidates to the positions of examiner, opponent and chair of the seminar.

In addition to the above documentation there must, if applicable, be documentation regarding the need for:

- any need to depart from the date restrictions
- any need for the discussant and/or the examiner to attend remotely

The University's regulations on the public defence of doctoral theses specify the permissible dates and grounds for remote participation. These stipulate that the discussant or members of the examining committee may participate remotely if there are special grounds justifying such measures. Thus, the AKN has the authority to determine whether special grounds justify deviations. It is therefore advantageous to consider such matters and identify any such needs before the application to conduct the licentiate seminar is submitted.

What counts as special grounds is assessed on a case-by-case basis. One example of a justified need to deviate from the date restrictions could be when a doctoral student is expected to conduct the licentiate seminar in the following semester but is unable to return to Sweden. In such cases, the licentiate seminar may take place during the summer period, if practically feasible. An example of a justified need for remote participation could be when a member of the examining committee is unable to attend in person due to a prior commitment at another location on the specified date.

The date is arranged in agreement between the involved parties. Even if no need for deviation is identified, it is a good idea to submit a proposed date as part of the supporting documentation to AKN.

Further information regarding remote participation and the management of urgent situations is provided in the section *Partial participation via remote access*.

The documentation that the main supervisor must send to the director of studies and that the director of studies after review must send to the academy board is:

- Completed declaration of conflict of interest (completed by examiner)
- Documentation material regarding candidates as examiner, opponent and chair of the licentiate seminar (completed by principal supervisor)
- Latest draft of the thesis work (doctoral student ensures that the documentation is saved in PDF format)
- Current statement from the examiners at the final seminar (completed by examiner)
- Documentation regarding the need to deviate from the date restriction (to be prepared by the principal supervisor if necessary)
- Documentation regarding the need for opponent and/or examiner to participate remotely (to be prepared by the principal supervisor if necessary)

Scheduling the licentiate seminar

As outlined above, there are restrictions regarding when a licentiate seminar may be held. The general rule is that licentiate seminars are to be held between 1 September and 15 June. Owing to the holiday period, no seminars are normally scheduled between 16 June and 31 August. Deviations from these dates may be permitted due to special grounds, as described above.

The licentiate seminar may be held as soon as the principal supervisor considers the licentiate thesis to be completed, and AKN has appointed the examiner, the discussant, and the chair.

The documentation to be sent to the members of the examination board is:

- Printed thesis
- Certificate – the doctoral student's contribution for each part of the work
- Ethical permit (if available)
- iThenticate report
- Current ASP The documentation to be sent to the opponent and chair of the public defense is:
- Final licentiate thesis

A checklist and timeline for the licentiate seminar process are provided in Appendix 3.

Conducting the licentiate seminar

In the absence of specific regulations concerning the licentiate seminar, the University has chosen to apply the same regulations that govern the public defence of doctoral theses.

A recommended structure for the licentiate seminar is provided in Appendix 4.

Examination and grading

Following the seminar, the examiner, the discussant, and the doctoral student's principal supervisor conduct an examining committee meeting. The principal supervisor and the discussant have the right to express their views and may be part of the discussion regarding the grade but may not participate in the decision making.

The following questions can guide the examiner in the assessment:

1. Does the licentiate thesis (the introductory thesis summary and individual papers, or the monograph) meet the expected standards of quality and scope for a licentiate thesis within the subject?
2. Does the licentiate thesis contribute new knowledge to the subject area?
3. Does the doctoral student in discussion with the discussant demonstrate the ability to answer questions and to reflect on the significance of their results within the research field, to a satisfactory level?

The examiner's assessment and decision should be documented in the minutes of the examination meeting, which the examiner must sign. A template for the minutes is available on the [University's website](#).

The grade should be announced immediately following the decision. The signed minutes should be handed to the chair of the seminar, or to a person appointed by the chair, who is responsible for forwarding the document to the registrar for registration and archiving. The registrar then distributes the document to UBS for registration in Ladok and to the faculty secretary for payment of fees to the parties involved.

Public defence of doctoral theses

Applicable regulations stipulate that a doctoral student admitted to doctoral (third-cycle) studies with the objective of obtaining a doctoral degree must present and defend their thesis at a public defence. The University's regulations on the public defence and the grading of doctoral theses govern the following aspects:

- Date and venue (§1)
- Notification of the public defence (§§2–3)
- Chair of the defence (§4)
- External reviewer (§5)
- Grading scale (§6)
- Grading process (§7)
- Examining committee (§§8–9)
- Examining committee meeting (§§10–11)
- Decision of the examining committee (§§12–13)
- Remote participation (§14)

An English version of the regulations is provided in Appendix 8.

The quality assurance checkpoints (seminars) and the examinations required should be specified in ASP.

Plagiarism checks prior to the public defence

The vice-chancellor's delegation of authority stipulates that the principal supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a plagiarism check of the thesis is conducted. In practice, the check is performed by the University Library using the *iThenticate* software.

The doctoral student must submit the comprehensive introductory summary (kappa) and any unpublished papers to gup@hig.se no later than ten weeks prior to the scheduled date of the public defence. The University Library is the system owner of *iThenticate* and provides detailed information on how to perform the plagiarism check and interpret the report produced. Further details are available in the checklist and timeline in Appendix 6.

The principal supervisor is responsible for forwarding the plagiarism report together with the library's recommendations for interpretation to the examining committee and the external reviewer, preferably at the same time as submitting the licentiate thesis and other related documents. The principal supervisor may delegate this task of to someone else.

The plagiarism report is to be used as supporting documentation for the examining committee's assessment of the thesis. If the committee suspects plagiarism in accordance with the disciplinary provisions of the Higher Education Ordinance, a report should be submitted to the vice-chancellor⁶⁰ via the [form](#) on the Disciplinary Board webpage on the University's website. The public defence should not take place until the matter has been investigated.

In cases where research misconduct is suspected, a report may need to be submitted not only to the Committee for Academic Misconduct (KOF) and the National Board for Assessment of Research Misconduct (Npof), but also to the University's Disciplinary Board.

Further guidance on how to handle suspected misconduct or plagiarism is provided below under the section *Suspected misconduct*

Printing and publishing the thesis

The thesis must be printed and published electronically in DiVA. The thesis is printed in collaboration with the Thesis Production service at Uppsala University Library. Further information and support are available on the University's [intranet](#).

Application to conduct the public defence

The principal supervisor is responsible for initiating and planning the public defence together with the doctoral student. When the supervisor and the doctoral student agree that the thesis is ready for public defence, the principal supervisor prepares a proposal for the external reviewer, members of the examining committee, and the chair of the public defence, in consultation with the head of subject and the relevant director of doctoral studies. Once the proposed candidates have confirmed that they will undertake the assignments, the director of doctoral studies ensures that the proposal is submitted to the AKN for a decision. The appropriate [form](#) should be used.

In addition to the documentation regarding the proposed examining committee, external reviewer, and chair of the public defence, relevant documentation should, if applicable, also be provided regarding:

- any need to deviate from the stipulated dates
- any need for the external reviewer and/or examining committee members to attend remotely via link

Regulations regarding the permissible dates and remote participation are set out in the University's guidelines on public defence of doctoral theses. These stipulate that the AKN has the authority to decide whether special grounds justify such deviations. It is therefore advantageous to consider such matters and identify any such needs before the application to conduct the public defence is submitted.

What counts as special grounds is assessed on a case-by-case basis. One example of a justified need to deviate from the date restrictions could be when a doctoral student is expected to conduct the public defence in the following semester but is unable to return to Sweden. In such cases, the public defence

⁶⁰ Chapter 10, section 9

may be held during the summer period, if practically feasible. An example of a justified need for remote participation could be when a member of the examining committee is scheduled to be in another location on the date in question and cannot attend in person.

The scheduling of the date is agreed upon in dialogue between the involved parties. Even if no need for deviation is identified, it is still preferable to submit a proposed date as part of the supporting documentation to the AKN.

Further information regarding remote participation and the management of urgent situations is provided in the section *Partial participation via remote access*.

Public defence procedure

The regulations governing the public defence stipulate restrictions regarding when a public defence may take place. The general rule is that the defence is to be held between 1 September and 15 June, due to the summer holiday period. Exceptions may be granted if special grounds apply; see the information above regarding such cases.

Otherwise, a public defence may be held when the principal supervisor considers the doctoral thesis to be completed, and AKN has formally approved the proposed date.

According to the Higher Education Ordinance,⁶¹ a doctoral thesis must be defended orally at a public defence. Thus, it must be open for anyone to attend. The University's internal regulations further stipulate that the defence should as a rule be held on campus at the University of Gävle, unless special grounds justify a different location.

A checklist and timeline for the conduct of the public defence are provided in Appendix 5.

Procedure of the public defence

The procedure for the public defence is regulated by the Higher Education Ordinance and by the University's internal governing documents, which include the University of Gävle's regulations on public defence and grading of doctoral theses.

Appendix 6 presents a recommended procedure for conducting the public defence.

Examination and grading

The grading system, the grades to be used, and the principles for grading are set out in the University's regulations,⁶² which also govern the examination committee meeting, the examining committee and its decision-making procedure.

⁶¹ Chapter 6, section 33

⁶² Sections 6—7

When planning the structure of the examination committee meeting, the following questions may be considered:

1. Does the thesis (the comprehensive introductory summary (kappa) and the individual papers, or the monograph) meet the quality and scope expected of a doctoral thesis within the subject area?
2. Does the thesis contribute new knowledge to the subject?
3. Does the doctoral student demonstrate the ability to engage in discussion with the external reviewer, respond to questions, and discuss the significance of their results within the research field to a satisfactory standard?

The decision-making procedure for the examining committee is regulated in the University's regulations, which state that the decision must be based on a majority vote, documented in a written protocol and signed by all members. The regulations also stipulate that if the thesis is awarded a failing grade, the decision must be justified. Moreover, they provide guidance on how to handle a dissenting opinion or a member's reservation against the majority decision.

A protocol template is available on the [University's website](#). The grade should be announced immediately following the decision. The signed minutes is then handed over to the chair of the defence, or a person appointed by the chair, who is responsible for forwarding the document via internal mail to the registrar for official recording and archiving. The registrar will then forward the minutes to UBS for registration in Ladok and to the faculty secretary for payment of fees to the parties involved.

Remote participation

The University of Gävle's regulations on public defence and the grading of doctoral theses stipulate that the external reviewer and/or members of the examining committee may participate remotely via video link, provided there are special grounds for doing so.

In the absence of specific regulations concerning licentiate seminars, the University applies the same rules as those governing public defences. Accordingly, the discussant and/or examiner may participate remotely in licentiate seminars provided there are special grounds for doing so.

If circumstances requiring remote participation are known when applying for the licentiate seminar or public defence, this must be indicated in the application. After consultation with the doctoral student and principal supervisor, the AKN will determine whether these circumstances constitute special grounds for remote participation. If so, the doctoral student must be fully informed of any elements of remote participation in the licentiate seminar or public defence.

If an urgent situation arises that may otherwise lead to the seminar or defence being cancelled, the chair of the licentiate seminar or public defence has the authority to decide whether it can still go ahead with elements of remote participation. The decision should be made after consultation with the doctoral student and principal supervisor, and, if possible, after conferring with the chair of the AKN.

The same routines and procedures apply as if the seminar or defence were conducted on campus.

Appendix 6 presents a recommended procedure for conducting the public defence.

Conflict of interest in licentiate seminars and public defences

Grounds for disqualification are regulated by the Swedish Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900).⁶³ Examples of conflicts of interest in examining seminars may include situations where the external reviewer, examiner, or member of the examining committee:

- Has previously been involved in a doctoral student-supervisor relationship with the doctoral student's supervisor.
- Has a family connection or a close personal relationship with the doctoral student or their supervisor.
- Has collaborated on scholarly publications with the doctoral student or their supervisor within the past five years (exceptions may be granted if special grounds apply).
- Has participated in joint research projects with the doctoral student or their supervisor within the past five years (exceptions may be granted if special grounds apply).

Any individual who may have a conflict of interest is responsible for disclosing this conflict. The rules regarding conflicts of interest are intended to have a preventive effect. What is most important is to uphold public trust in the University. When the University assesses if a conflict of interest exists, it is thus the public's perception that is decisive. How the individual in question perceives their own impartiality or objectivity is not important here. More information and guidance on conflicts of interest can be found in [Vägledning vid handläggning av ärende](#) (Swedish).

Communication

Communication regarding upcoming licentiate seminars and public defences is normally handled by the relevant faculty.

Communication concerning research results, such as published individual papers, may be disseminated both internally and externally by the University. Published papers are usually identified through searches in **DiVA** conducted by AKE. Employees and doctoral students are also encouraged to bring interesting ongoing work to AKE's attention. AKE determines both the content of any communication and the choice of communication channels.

Further relevant matters

Further components of the doctoral programme

Both the University and the doctoral student share responsibility for ensuring a sound physical and psychosocial study environment. The University's efforts to promote a safe and healthy study and work environment are managed and followed up through systematic work environment management

⁶³ Sections 16—18

in the student work environment group. The University has appointed a doctoral student ombudsperson to provide support in this area.

Active participation in various networks, both within the doctoral student's own discipline and across other fields, can greatly enrich the doctoral experience. These networks may include fellow doctoral students as well as junior and senior researchers. Participation in the public defences of other doctoral students also enhances the doctoral experience. Time allocated to such activities may be included in the doctoral study period.

International mobility and academic exchange are also considered important components of doctoral studies. The opportunities available may vary depending on the subject area. The principal supervisor or the director of doctoral studies can provide information about what applies to the specific subject or refer the doctoral student to the appropriate contact person.

Application for change of doctoral subject

The application for change of doctoral subject is submitted to the AKN, via the relevant director of studies, by the doctoral student. The application is written in dialogue with the principal supervisor.

The application must contain information about:

1. who it concerns, name/personal identification number/department
2. reason for the change
3. current doctoral subject area
4. new doctoral subject area,
 - a. when the date for the change is proposed to take place
 - b. whether the doctoral student is qualified for the new doctoral subject area

The application must be accompanied by: RISP adapted to the new doctoral subject, thesis project plan for the new doctoral subject, the head of department's certificate that the financial conditions for the change of subject are fulfilled.

The doctoral student sends the documentation to the relevant director of studies who prepares the case and submits it via the [form](#) to the AKN for decision.

Requests for Change of Supervisor

In accordance with the vice-chancellor's decision, the AKN appoints supervisors. The doctoral student has the right to request a change of supervisor.⁶⁴

The doctoral student should contact the relevant director of doctoral studies, who will then prepare the matter for decision. The director of doctoral studies consults with the current supervisors and the head of subject before assisting the head of department in preparing a proposal for a new supervisor.

⁶⁴ Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6, section 28

The director of doctoral studies submits the matter of changing supervisors to the AKN. for a decision.

The following information is required to reach a decision.:

- details of the doctoral student concerned (name/personal identity number/doctoral subject/registration number)
- details of the current supervisors
- name of the supervisor proposed to step down and the end date of their appointment
- proposed new supervisor (name/contact details/academic title/affiliated institution)

Introduction to doctoral studies and academic traditions

The introduction is an important part of the doctoral programme, as it helps create the conditions for a supportive study environment and a smooth induction into the academic traditions of the discipline. Therefore, it is essential that the introduction begins as soon as possible after admission.

All doctoral students, regardless of their source of funding, must be offered an introduction. Part of the introduction is of a more practical nature and is arranged by the head of department, while subject-specific aspects are the responsibility of the academic leaders connected to the doctoral student's programme (the principal supervisor, the head of subject, and the director of doctoral studies).

The head of department is responsible for coordinating the introduction and to make sure that the doctoral student is provided with an IT account and access card. Then the head of department arranges an initial meeting for all relevant parties. At this meeting, the doctoral student should be informed about the doctoral programme in the discipline, opportunities for teaching, pedagogical and collegial support, and ways to build teaching experience. Specific questions concerning the doctoral programme and the academic traditions within the field are also discussed. Meeting notes should be recorded and circulated to all participants. A suggested framework for these introductory discussions is provided in Appendix 7.

Student representation and influence

During the doctoral programme, students can influence both their programme and their working environment. This can be achieved by participating in course and study programme evaluations and by serving as student representatives for doctoral studies on the University's boards, committees, and councils. Doctoral students may also contribute to working groups and evaluation committees where student representation is specifically required, for example, in collegial reviews of doctoral study programmes.

Strong student engagement and a supportive working environment are vital to ensure the continued development and quality of doctoral study programmes. Student influence and work environment issues are a shared responsibility between the University's staff and its students, regardless of the level of study.

The Student Union is formally responsible for appointing all student representatives. Further information on student representation and how to apply to become a student representative is available at hig.se.

Student representation is regulated by the Swedish Higher Education Act, the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance, the Student Union Ordinance, as well as internal governance documents, including Arbetsordning för Högskolan i Gävle, Rektors Arbetsordning, Rutin för studentrepresentation och Rutin för chefsbeslut.

Follow-up meetings between the doctoral student and the director of doctoral studies

The director of doctoral studies must provide ongoing support to doctoral students and should therefore hold an individual meeting with each doctoral student approximately six months after admission and again at the midpoint of their studies. These meetings aim to ensure that doctoral student's initial phase of study has progressed satisfactorily. Moreover, they provide an opportunity to raise questions or concerns that may be difficult to express in writing in the ISP. The meetings should address all aspects of the ISP as well as the doctoral student's study environment. Supervisors may not participate in these meetings.

Reporting Study Activity and Study Funding

Each semester, Statistics Sweden (SCB), on behalf of the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ), collects data on all doctoral students and doctoral degrees from universities and higher education institutions across Sweden. This data is used to update the national higher education register, which underpins official statistics. Among other things, the statistics track trends over time in admissions, active students, funding, credit transfer, and doctoral degrees awarded.

Participation in this data collection is mandatory, and the University is legally required to submit this information. Some data can be retrieved directly from Ladok by administrators at the UBS, while other data must be provided by each individual doctoral student. The information required from doctoral students concerns study activity and funding. Each semester, administrators at UBS send a form (*under development*) for reporting study activity and study funding to each doctoral student. Once completed, the form should be returned to the administrator, who compiles the data and submits the University's report to Statistics Sweden (SCB).

Sometimes it is difficult to know how the activity should be calculated, for example if you have been on sick leave or parental leave for part of the time. For support with the calculation, contact the University's operations controller at EPI, Krister Ågren.

Working environment for doctoral students with doctoral studentship funding

Employment

For doctoral students funded through a doctoral studentship, the line manager is the head of department. In addition to departmental duties, which are described on the next page, these doctoral students are expected to participate in departmental and faculty meetings.

Doctoral students with a doctoral studentship are offered a shared workspace, and the exact location depends on the department's available facilities and office space. In all other respects, the University's general procedures and policies regarding workplace design apply.

Any course fees, travel, and accommodation costs for courses that are part of the doctoral programme should be covered by the faculty. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, participation in courses should take place within Sweden, and no per diem allowance is provided. Travel time is counted as part of the doctoral study period. The same travel policies apply to doctoral students with a doctoral studentship as to other university employees.

Workplace induction for new doctoral employees

For doctoral students with a doctoral studentship as their source of funding, it is important that an appropriate workplace induction is provided to support a positive working environment. Appendix 8 provides guidance on key topics that should be covered during the induction process.

Salary progression for doctoral students

Doctoral student salaries follow a salary progression structure based on a [local agreement](#) (Swedish). Salary progression is performance-based. The student's progress is assessed in dialogue between the principal supervisor and the doctoral student. This assessment forms the basis for the supervisor's request for a salary adjustment for the doctoral student in question. For support, look at [vägledning inför lönejustering för doktorand](#) (Swedish). The [application form](#) should be submitted to the relevant head of department. The salary framework for doctoral students is reviewed as part of the regular salary review process.

Departmental duties for doctoral students with a doctoral studentship

Doctoral students funded through a doctoral studentship may be assigned up to 20% of full-time working hours to carry out other duties, typically involving undergraduate teaching at the University. The aim is to support the doctoral student's pedagogical and communication skills as part of their professional development. If there are no departmental teaching or administrative needs, the doctoral student may devote 100% of their time to their own research studies.

To enhance their teaching skills during their programme, doctoral students are recommended to complete a course in higher education pedagogy or otherwise demonstrate equivalent skills acquired through prior experience. Such a course should preferably be taken as early as possible after starting the programme. These courses can be found via the University's internal learning and development portal (HPC).

The head of department of the doctoral student should plan the departmental duties together to ensure a balanced workload.

There is no guarantee that departmental duties will be evenly distributed throughout the study period. Some periods may involve a greater amount of departmental work than others, but this should be balanced over time so that the overall workload does not exceed 20% of doctoral students' total working hours. Doctoral students must not be assigned overtime within the scope of departmental duties.

Performance and development review

The head of department should hold an annual performance and development review with doctoral students employed through a doctoral studentship. These discussions primarily concern departmental duties but also cover other aspects of the doctoral student's working conditions.

The performance and development review is distinct from both supervision meetings and the follow-up meetings with the director of doctoral studies.

Approved leave of absence and non-completion

According to the Higher Education Ordinance,⁶⁵ the total duration of a doctoral student's education may be extended for special reasons. Such reasons may include leave due to illness, military service within the total defence, official duties within trade unions or student organisations, or parental leave.

The doctoral student must personally apply for a leave of absence or non-completion. More information and instructions on how to apply can be found here: [Leave of Absence and non-completion](#).

UBS will process the application and forward it to the relevant head of department for further processing. If the source of funding is a doctoral studentship, the head of department must ensure that the approved leave period is deducted in Primula. For other types of funding, additional measures may be necessary. For example, if the student is an externally employed doctoral student, the employer should be contacted to determine if the relevant agreement needs to be adjusted.

A notification of non-completion constitutes a definitive decision to discontinue the programme. A termination record is entered in the student records system, Ladok. Should the student wish to resume their studies, a new application for admission to doctoral studies must be submitted and processed through open competition when a position becomes available.

Withdrawal of resources for doctoral students

If a doctoral student substantially neglects their commitments according to the approved ISP, the vice-chancellor makes the decision that the student is no longer entitled to supervision or other resources for their education, pursuant to chapter 6, section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance. The processing of such matters is governed by the University's routine for withdrawal of doctoral student resources.

⁶⁵ Chapter 6, section 29

The outcome may need to be handled differently depending on the form of funding. According to the Higher Education Ordinance,⁶⁶ resources must not be withdrawn during periods when the doctoral student is employed as a doctoral student or receives a doctoral grant.

Suspected research misconduct and academic dishonesty

As outlined earlier, plagiarism checks must be conducted using the *iThenticate* software before examination. The tool generates a report that must be submitted to the examiner and the examining committee ahead of the examination. If the analysis of the report gives rise to suspicion of plagiarism or other forms of misconduct, a formal report should be made. The report does not need to be submitted by the examiner; any employee of the University may report concerns either to the University's Disciplinary Board, to the Committee for Research Misconduct (KOF), or to the National Board for Assessment of Research Misconduct (Npof).

It is not always obvious how to proceed when plagiarism is suspected in a thesis. Should all cases be reported, or could the issues flagged in the plagiarism report be the result of misunderstandings or unfortunate phrasing? While there is no clear or straightforward guidance for these types of complex matters, personal judgement often serves as a valuable guide. Importantly, it is not the responsibility of the reporting person to determine whether the doctoral student acted with intent to deceive—that decision rests with the body receiving the report: the University's Disciplinary Board, KOF, or Npof.

To support colleagues who are considering whether to submit a report or not, and if so, to whom, brief information about each body is provided below. As a first step, employees at the University are encouraged to discuss the matter with their head of department and/or dean of faculty and to consult the applicable procedures and guidance documents. Support may also be sought from the University's legal counsel.

The University's Disciplinary Board

The role of the Disciplinary Board is regulated by the Higher Education Ordinance, which states that the board's primary function is to make decisions in cases concerning disciplinary measures against students. The process for handling reports and managing such cases is described in the University's Disciplinary Board procedure and its accompanying guidelines. These procedures require that the student must have acted intentionally for disciplinary measures to be applied. The board is therefore responsible for establishing whether the student's actions were deliberate.

It does not have to be the examiner who submits a report of suspected plagiarism. Any member of the University staff may file a report.

Committee for Good Research Practice (KOF)

The Committee for Good Research Practice (KOF) is regulated in the vice-chancellor's rules of procedure: the committee should prepare cases for the vice-chancellor's decision and assess whether a case should be classified as research misconduct or as another type of deviation from good research

⁶⁶ Chapter 6, section 30

practice. The University's Procedure for Suspected Deviations from Good Research Practice describes how to process reports and how such cases are to be handled.

It is not necessary for the examiner to submit a report of suspected deviation from good research practice. Reports may also be submitted by any employee of the University.

The National Board for Assessment of Research Misconduct (Npof)

The Act (2019:504) on Responsibility for Good Research Practice and the Examination of Research Misconduct defines research misconduct as: "a serious deviation from good research practice in the form of fabrication, falsification or plagiarism that is committed intentionally or through gross negligence when planning, conducting or reporting research."

A report of suspected research misconduct to Npof can be submitted in several ways. In its capacity as research principal, the University may refer a case to Npof. An individual person or another authority may also submit a report. Furthermore, Npof may initiate an investigation on its own, if information regarding suspected misconduct should come to its attention. Detailed information on the required documentation and the reporting process is available at www.npof.se.

Who does what - preparation, review and decision-making in various matters

ÄF= Head of subject, SR=Director of doctoral studies, ACB=Decision Head of faculty, HH=Principal supervisor AKN= Faculty education and research board

Type of case	Preparation *	Review	Decision
ASP	Head of subject	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: ÄF
Establish Doctoral Position	Head of department Selection committee	Review: ÄF Formalities and quality review: SR	Presenter: Director of doctoral studies
Admission to doctoral studies	Selection committee	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR
Appoint supervisors	Selection committee	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR
Employment as a doctoral student	Selection committee	Formalities and quality review: SR	Presenter: SR Decision: Head of department.
Change supervisor	Director of doctoral studies	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR
Courses	Faculty	Review: ÄF Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR
Examiner	Head of department	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: ACB Presenter: SR
ISP + RISP	Principal supervisor Doctoral student	Review: ÄF Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR
The start-, mid-way review and final seminar and reviewers	Principal supervisor Doctoral student	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decides to proceed
Proceed with licentiate seminary	Principal superv., Head of sub., Director of doctoral studies and Doctoral student	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR
Proceed with public defense	Same as above	Formalities and quality review: SR	Decision: AKN Presenter: SR

*) This indicates whether there is any formal regulation regarding who prepares a case. In addition, the faculty is free to decide how the preparation should be carried out, which roles to involve, and whether and how it should be embedded. Some faculties have established working forums in the form of preparation groups for handling specific types of cases to increase efficiency and coordination.

Appendix 1 – Needs analysis for establishing a doctoral position

Below are some examples of aspects that may be valuable to consider and clarify before making a decision:

Financial resources:

Does the proposed doctoral research fall within the relevant doctoral subject area and the area authorised in which the University holds degree-awarding powers?

Yes

No; if not, please explain why:

The supervisor's previous track record, suitability, availability, and competence to supervise:

The supervisory team and its relevance to the research project:

The doctoral student's opportunities for interaction and support from peers and researchers, as well as opportunities for international exchange and contacts:

Does the research project require ethical review?

Yes. If yes, an application for ethical review must be obtained

No

Externally employed doctoral student – is an appropriate agreement in place?

Yes

No

Other considerations:

Appendix 2 – Support for completing learning outcomes in the digital Individual Study Plan (ISP)

The qualification descriptors for third-cycle education are set out in Appendix 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance. These outcomes must be made concrete in the ISP into individual learning outcomes for the doctoral student. This is done by specifying them in relation to the subject, the focus of the doctoral research, and the student’s prerequisites. Such concretisation clarifies what the doctoral student is expected to learn during the programme and supports its implementation, as well as the planning of learning activities and examination.

Several individual learning outcomes can be formulated for each degree outcome; for some degree outcomes this is a necessary stage to ensure fulfilment.

Below is an example of how a degree outcome can be divided into several individual learning outcomes and how these, along with activities to achieve them, can be entered into the ISP:

Outcomes (according to the Higher Education Ordinance’s Degree Regulations)	Individual learning outcomes	Activities for achieving outcomes
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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.

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge and systematic understanding in occupational health science

1a. Course: Occupational Health Science, 10 ECTS, HiG

1b. Course: Advanced Occupational Health Science with focus on Health-Promoting Workplaces, 5 ECTS, HiG

1c. Supervise at least 2 undergraduate or advanced-level theses in occupational health science (or equivalent)

1d. Course: Organisational Psychology, 7.5 ECTS, Stockholm University

2a. Reading course on flexible work based on NiVA’s course "For a Healthy Digital Work Environment", 3 ECTS, NiVA Education and HiG

2b. Conduct literature searches and write partial works (I-IV) and the thesis overview (kappa)

2. Demonstrate advanced knowledge and systematic understanding of flexible work in relation to recovery and health

The outcome encompasses two aspects:

- Broad knowledge of, and a systematic understanding of, the research field; and
- advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field.

Against this background, two individual learning outcomes should be specified. Number these to clarify which activities relate to which outcome.

Please note that the outcomes should be specified in relation to the relevant research field and the specific focus of the thesis. The same applies to all outcomes, wherever this is possible and relevant.

Please note that the activities should be numbered to clarify which individual learning outcome each activity contributes to fulfilling.

An activity (e.g. a course) may sometimes contribute to fulfilling several individual outcomes. In such cases, indicate this as, for example, “1 and 2”.

Please also note that courses should be introduced with “Course” to improve readability. Specify the number of credits and the higher education institution. If a suitable course has not yet been identified, it is acceptable to write, for example, “Course in Grounded Theory (not yet determined)”.

Appendix 3 – Checklist and Timeline for the Licentiate Seminar

This appendix provides support in the form of a checklist and timeline for the steps that need to be taken before and after the licentiate seminar. The material is intended as a guide and can be slightly adjusted when needed. However, the timeline and the printing process for the licentiate thesis must be followed as they depend on the work schedule of Uppsala University's Thesis Production Service. The following page presents the same information in a Gantt chart for those who prefer to visualise the timeline in that format.

Timeline	Action	Responsible Party
> 16 weeks	Plan the date for the licentiate seminar	Principal supervisor, doctoral student
> 16 weeks	Contact the discussant, examiner, and chair	Principal supervisor
> 14 weeks	Submit notification of the licentiate seminar*	Director of doctoral studies
No later than 12 weeks	Order the production timeline from Uppsala University's Thesis Production Service ⁶⁷	Doctoral student
> 12 weeks	Book the venue and, if necessary, arrange for technical support	Faculty secretary
> 10 weeks	Submit the licentiate thesis for plagiarism check and language review <i>If the thesis is not going to be printed; allow five weeks</i>	Doctoral student
> 8 weeks	Submit the licentiate thesis for printing <i>If the thesis is to be printed</i>	Doctoral student
> 3 weeks	Send all materials, including printed copies, to the discussant, examiner and chair for the seminar	Doctoral student
> 3 weeks	Publish the licentiate thesis electronically in DiVA	University Library
Day of seminar	Conduct the licentiate seminar	All involved parties
After the seminar	Submit any errata for publication in DiVA	Doctoral student

* Proceed with the activities listed in the timeline also before the decision to hold the seminar has been formally made. To ensure that the timeline can be followed, the matter should be handled promptly by the AKN. The secretary of the AKN will distribute the decision to the faculty secretary, the University Library (via gup@hig.se), the AKE, and the UBS (degree administration).

⁶⁷ Only applies if the dissertation is to be printed.

Gantt chart

Activity	Responsible	v.16	v.14	v.12	v.10	v.8	v.3	v.0	v.-1
Contact the discussant, examiner and chair	Principal Supervisor								
Plan the date for the licentiate seminar	Principal Supervisor, Doctoral Student								
Submit the notification of intended licentiate seminar*	Director of doctoral studies								
<i>Order the timeline for printing from Uppsala Thesis Production⁶⁸</i>	<i>Doctoral Student</i>			<i>latest</i>					
Book the venue and arrange technical support if needed	Faculty Secretary								
Submit the licentiate thesis for plagiarism check and language review <i>If the thesis is not going to be printed; allow five weeks</i>	<i>Doctoral Student</i>								
<i>Send the licentiate thesis to print</i> <i>If the thesis is to be printed</i>	<i>Doctoral Student</i>								
<i>Send all materials, including printed copies, to the discussant and examiner</i>	<i>Doctoral Student</i>								
Publish the licentiate thesis electronically in DiVA	University Library								
Conduct the licentiate seminar	All involved								
Submit any errata for publication in DiVA	Doctoral Student								

⁶⁸ Only applies if the dissertation is to be printed

* Proceed with the activities listed in the timeline even before the decision to hold the seminar has been formally made. To ensure that the timeline can be followed, the matter should be handled promptly by the faculty education and research board. The secretary of the faculty education and research board will distribute the decision to the faculty secretary, the University Library (via gup@hig.se), the AKE, and the UBS (degree administration).

Appendix 4 – Procedure for the Licentiate Seminar

This recommendation can provide support when planning the licentiate seminar. The doctoral student, the principal supervisor, and the discussant decide together if the licentiate seminar should be held in Swedish or English. The seminar should last for at least 90 minutes.

1. **Introduction.** The chair of the seminar, who in some cases is also the examiner, welcomes all participants and introduces the respondent (the doctoral student), the discussant and announces the title of the licentiate thesis. The chair then provides an overview of the procedure for the licentiate seminar.
2. **Errata.** The respondent reports corrections, if there are any. Such corrections are listed in an errata sheet, which contains amendments to errors identified after the licentiate thesis has been published.
3. **Presentation.** First, the respondent presents the licentiate thesis. The discussant may then (optionally) provide an overview of the research field and place the licentiate thesis within a broader academic context.
4. **Discussion between the discussant and the respondent.** The discussant leads a critical academic discussion of the thesis with the respondent. The primary purpose of the discussion is to give the respondent the opportunity to defend their work and demonstrate their knowledge. The discussant plays a key role here by leading a critical, yet constructive, dialogue that allows the respondent to actively defend their thesis.

The discussant is expected to critically review all parts of the licentiate thesis, including the introductory summary and each individual paper. Both strengths and weaknesses of the thesis should be highlighted. The discussion should address theoretical as well as methodological aspects and explore how the results of the licentiate thesis can be situated within a wider academic framework.

5. **Discussion between the examiner and the respondent**
The examiner poses questions to the respondent.
6. **Questions from the audience.** The chair invites the audience to ask the respondent questions about the licentiate thesis.
7. **Examination committee meeting.** When the formal seminar has concluded, the examiner, discussant, and principal supervisor convene for the examination committee meeting. The examiner collects feedback and discusses the thesis and the seminar with the principal supervisor and the discussant before deciding on the grade

8. **Announcement of the decision.** The examiner announces the grade publicly after the examination committee meeting (verbally to the participants at the seminar). The decision is also formally recorded and entered into Ladok.

Appendix 5 – Checklist and Timeline for the Public Defence Process

Below is a checklist and timeline to support the preparations before and after the public defence. This material is intended to be a guide, so adjustments can be made if needed. However, the timeline and the printing process of the doctoral thesis cannot be altered, as these depend on timeframes stipulated by Uppsala Thesis Production. On the following page, the same information is presented in a Gantt chart for those who prefer a visual representation of the timeline.

Time	Action	Responsible
> 20 weeks before	Plan the date for the public defence.	Principal supervisor, doctoral student
> 20 weeks before	Contact potential external reviewer, examining committee members, and chair.	Principal supervisor
> 18 weeks before	Conduct the final seminar with external reviewer.	Doctoral student, supervisors
> 14 weeks before	Submit notification of intent to hold the public defence*.	Director of doctoral studies
No later than 14 weeks before	Order the production timeline from Uppsala Thesis Production for the printing of the thesis.	Doctoral student
> 12 weeks before	Book the venue and, if needed, request technical support.	Faculty Administrator
> 10 weeks before	Submit the thesis for plagiarism check and language review.	Doctoral student
> 8 weeks before	Submit the thesis for printing. ⁶⁹	Doctoral student
> 3 weeks before	Send all materials, including printed copies, to the external reviewer and the examining committee.	Doctoral student
> 3 weeks before	Notify date of public defence and publish the thesis electronically in DiVA.	Doctoral student
> 3 weeks before	Nail and publish the thesis electronically in Diva.	
Day of the public defence	Conduct the public defence.	All involved parties
After the public defence	Submit any errata list for publication in DiVA.	Doctoral student

** Proceed with the activities listed in the timeline even before the decision to hold the seminar has been formally made. To ensure that the timeline can be followed, the matter should be handled promptly by the AKN. The secretary of the AKN will distribute the decision to the faculty secretary, the University Library (via gup@hig.se), the AKE, and the UBS (degree administration).*

⁶⁹ Exact date is provided in the timeline

Gantt-schema

Action	Responsible	v.20	v.18	v.14	v.12	v.10	v.8	v.3	v.0	v.-1
Plan the date for the public defence.	Principal supervisor, doctoral student									
Contact potential external reviewer, examining committee members, and chair.	Principal supervisor									
Conduct the final seminar with external reviewer.	Doctoral student, supervisors									
Submit notification of intent to hold the public defence*.	Director of doctoral studies									
<i>Order the production timeline from Uppsala Thesis Production for the printing of the thesis.</i>	Doctoral student			<i>Latest</i>						
Book the venue and, if needed, request technical support.	Faculty Administrator									
Submit the thesis for plagiarism check and language review.	Doctoral student									
Submit the thesis for printing. ⁷⁰										
Send all materials, including printed copies, to the external reviewer and the examining committee.	Doctoral student									
<i>Notify date of public defence and publish the thesis electronically in DiVA</i>	Doctoral student									
“Spika” and publish the thesis electronically in Diva.	The library									
Conduct the public defence.	All involved parties									
Submit any errata list for publication in DiVA.	Doctoral student									

⁷⁰ Exact date is provided in the timeline

Appendix 6 – Procedure for the Public Defence

This recommendation provides support when planning the public defence procedure. The doctoral student, the principal supervisor, and the external reviewer decide together if the licentiate seminar should be held in Swedish or English. The seminar should last at least 90 minutes.

1. **Introduction.** The chair of the public defence welcomes everyone, introduces the participants, and announces the title of the thesis.
2. **Errata.** The doctoral student reports any corrections and may submit a list of errata containing corrections identified after the thesis was printed.
3. **Presentation.** The doctoral student begins by presenting the thesis. If the external reviewer so wishes, this presentation is followed by an overview of the research field and an explanation of how the thesis fits within a broader scientific context.
4. **Discussion between external reviewer and doctoral student.** The external reviewer leads a critical academic discussion regarding the thesis with the doctoral student. A key purpose of this discussion is to allow the doctoral student to defend their work and demonstrate their knowledge. The role of the external reviewer is to support this by leading a critical, yet constructive, academic discussion where the doctoral student is clearly given the opportunity to defend the thesis.

The external reviewer should critically review all parts of the thesis, including the introductory summary and the constituent papers. Both the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis should be highlighted. The discussion should cover both theoretical and methodological aspects, as well as how the results of the thesis can be situated within a wider research context.

5. **Discussion between examining committee members and doctoral student.** The chair invites the members of the examining committee to ask the doctoral student questions.
6. **Questions from the audience.** The chair invites the audience to ask the doctoral student questions about the thesis.
7. **Examining committee meeting.** When the defence is formally concluded, the examining committee members and the external reviewer convene together with the supervisors for the examining committee meeting. The meeting consists of two parts:
 - A discussion in which the external reviewer and supervisors also participate.
 - The grading decision, where only the members of the examining committee participate in the decision-making. However, the external reviewer and/or supervisors may attend if the committee deems it appropriate.

8. **Announcement of the decision.** The decision on the grade is publicly announced by the chair of the examining committee.

Appendix 7 – Suggested Discussion Points for the Introductory Meeting

Below are suggested discussion points to be covered during the doctoral student's introductory meeting.

1. Clarify roles
Head of department, supervisors, director of doctoral studies, head of subject, programme director, course coordinator, examiner, examining committee, reviewer, external reviewer, etc.
2. Information available online / governing and supporting documents (Director of doctoral studies)
3. Individual Study Plan (ISP) (Principal supervisor)
4. Doctoral courses (Director of doctoral studies)
5. Supervision time and supervision meetings (Principal supervisor)
6. Doctoral student collegium (Director of doctoral studies)
7. Student representation (Director of doctoral studies) including a review of the organisational bodies. *The student union appoints student representatives regardless of the level of education.*
8. Follow-up meetings between director of doctoral studies and doctoral Student (Director of doctoral studies)
9. The doctoral subject area (Head of subject)
10. Courses within the subject area and teaching opportunities (Director of doctoral studies)
11. Pedagogical support (Principal supervisor / head of department)
12. Pedagogical qualifications (Head of department)

If the introduction also concerns an employment:

13. The employment (Head of department)
14. Faculty-wide duties (if relevant) (Head of department)
15. Workplace and administrative systems (Head of department)
16. Conference participation and international exchange (Head of department)
17. Performance reviews and salary progression (Head of department)

Appendix 8 – English version of regulation – grading system

The Swedish version of the regulation is decided by the vice-chancellor. This English translation is for guidance only.

The University of Gävle’s regulations on the grading system to be used for examinations included in third-cycle courses and study programmes;

The University of Gävle has decided the following regulations on the grading system to be used for examinations included in third-cycle courses and study programmes, on the basis of Chapter 6 Section 32 The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100).

Grading system

1 § Examinations included in third-cycle courses and study programmes at the University of Gävle shall be graded with one of the grades pass or fail.

These regulations enter into force on September 1, 2025.

On behalf of the University of Gävle

Ylva Fältholm
Vice-Chancellor

Appendix 9 – English version of regulation – doctoral thesis

The Swedish version of the regulation is decided by the vice-chancellor. This English translation is for guidance only.

The University of Gävle's regulations on public defences and on grading of the doctoral thesis;

The University of Gävle has decided the following regulations on the grading system to be used and on public defences and grading in other respects, on the basis of Chapter 6 Section 35 The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100).

Public defence

Time and place

1 § During the spring semester, the public defence of the doctoral thesis shall take place no later than June 15. During the autumn semester, the public defence of the doctoral thesis shall take place no earlier than September 1. The dates apply unless there are special reasons.

The public defence shall take place on campus (at the University of Gävle), unless there are special reasons.

Announcement of the public defence

2 § The announcement of the public defence and the doctoral thesis shall be made no later than three weeks before the defence date.

3 § At the time of the announcement, the doctoral thesis shall be published electronically. The doctoral thesis shall also be made available in at least three copies at the University of Gävle's library no later than the date of the defence.

Chair of the public defence

4 § The public defence shall be led by a chair who shall be employed at the University of Gävle.

External reviewer

5 § The external reviewer shall not be working at the University of Gävle. The external reviewer shall be well versed in the research area of the thesis and be a professor or have docent competence, unless there are special reasons that justify a lower merit level.

Grading system and grading in other respects

Grading system

6 § The doctoral thesis shall be graded with one of the grades pass or fail.

Grading

7 § The grading shall take into account the content and quality of the thesis and the doctoral student's defence of the thesis.

Examining committee

8 § The decision on grade for the doctoral thesis is made by an examining committee. The examining committee is appointed separately for each doctoral thesis.

9 § The examining committee at a public defence shall consist of three members, and one reserve member. The committee shall appoint a chair from among its members. All members must be professors or have the scientific expertise equivalent to that of a docent, unless there are special reasons that justify that one of the members has a lower merit level. No more than one member may be an employee of the University of Gävle.

The examining committee meeting

10 § The examining committee's decision on the grade for the doctoral thesis is made at the committee's meeting, that shall take place immediately after the public defence. When three members of the examining committee are present, the committee has a quorum.

11 § The examining committee meeting is a two-step process:

1. The first part consists of the examining committee's dialogue with the external reviewer and supervisor; the reserve member may also participate.
2. The second part consists of the examining committee's deliberation and decision. The examining committee decides whether the external reviewer and/or supervisor may be present.

The examining committee's decision

12 § The examining committee's decision on the grade for the doctoral thesis shall be documented in minutes signed by all members of the examining committee. The decision of the committee shall be the majority opinion. If a doctoral thesis receives a failing grade, the examining committee must explain and justify the failing grade in writing.

13 § Member in the examining committee may enter a reservation against the majority decision by entering a dissenting opinion in the minutes. Such a dissenting opinion shall be submitted in writing to the chair of the examining committee no later than five working days after the public defence and attached to the minutes.

Digital participation

14 § The University of Gävle may decide that the external reviewer and/or members of the examining committee may participate digitally, if there are special reasons. The decision shall be made after consultation between the doctoral student and the supervisor.

These regulations enter into force on September 1, 2025.

On behalf of the University of Gävle

Ylva Fältholm
Vice-Chancellor