



**GUIDELINES**

Reference Number: GIH 2023/122  
Replace No: GIH 2021/12  
Date: 2023-02-07  
Decided by: The Education and  
Research Board  
Decision date: 2023-03-21  
Validity: Until further notice

# Guidelines for third- cycle education



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## **GUIDELINES FOR THIRD-CYCLE EDUCATION**

This document is a translation. In case of a discrepancy between the Swedish original and the English version of the decision, the Swedish version will prevail.

The guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education are in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) chapters 5–7 and are approved by the Education and Research Board, UFN. The guidelines constitute clarifications of the Higher Education Ordinance and describe the conditions that apply to the planning and implementation of third-cycle education at the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, GIH.

### **Outcomes and prerequisites for third-cycle education**

Doctoral students at GIH are admitted to third-cycle education in the subject area of sport sciences. Admission to third-cycle education primarily regards the degree of doctor, but admission to third-cycle education for a licentiate degree is accepted. It is possible to continue third-cycle studies for a degree of doctor after completing a licentiate degree, but a renewed application must be submitted.

Outcomes for third-cycle education are stated in the System of Qualifications (Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 2) and in the general study syllabus for the third-cycle subject area.

### **Responsibility for third-cycle education**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 2, sections 2–3, responsibility for third-cycle education ultimately rests with the board of governors and the vice-chancellor.

The board of governors establishes third-cycle subject areas. The subject area of sport sciences is currently established at GIH.

In accordance with the vice-chancellor's delegation of authority, the responsibility for third-cycle education has been delegated to the Education and Research Board, and the heads of the departments.

The Education and Research Board establishes general guidelines for third-cycle education and approves the general study syllabus of the subject area. The board is also responsible for quality assurance of third-cycle courses and study programmes in accordance with the established quality assurance system.

The head of department responsible for third-cycle education plans and implements the courses and study programmes. The mutual rights and obligations existing between a department and a doctoral student are stated in the individual study plan.

### **General study syllabus**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6, sections 26–27, a general study syllabus is required for each subject in which third-cycle courses or study programmes are offered. The general study syllabus shall indicate the main content of the study programme, specific entry requirements and any other regulations required.

The general study syllabus in the subject area of sport sciences states a description of the subject area, outcomes, entry requirements, programme content and structure, and grades for third-cycle education.

The general study syllabus is approved by the Education and Research Board.

### **Individual study plan**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6, section 29, an individual study plan shall be drawn up for each doctoral student. This plan shall contain the undertakings made by the doctoral student and the higher education institution and a timetable for the doctoral student's study programme. According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the plan shall be adopted after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors, and be reviewed regularly.

The individual study plan shall be drawn up within three months after enrolment. The intended template shall be used. The plan shall ensure the fulfilment of the outcomes for the degree of doctor or licentiate stated in the System of Qualifications (Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 2) and follow the regulations in the general study syllabus for the third-cycle subject area.

The individual study plan shall be reviewed on a yearly basis. The head of department responsible for third-cycle education approves individual study plans and decides about revisions.

### **Advertisement of doctoral positions and admission to third-cycle education**

Rules for notification of doctoral positions and admission to third-cycle education are stated in the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 7, sections 34–41.

Before advertising a doctoral position, the head of department where the doctoral student will be employed shall ensure that there is an acceptable funding plan for the entire period of study, sufficient supervision in terms of both time and competence, and available resources to complete the studies.

Third-cycle education that is entirely or partly funded by GIH shall be announced in accordance with GIHs admission regulations. Exemptions from the previously stated is regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 7, section 37.

The board of governors has established rules for assessment and selection criteria for admission to third-cycle education in GIHs admission regulations. The head of department responsible for third-cycle education decides about admission to third-cycle education and exemptions from the general entry requirements if there are special grounds (if applicable).

It is possible to admit doctoral students to a latter part of a third-cycle programme. For example, the applicant may have completed a licentiate degree or begun his or her third-cycle studies at another higher education institution.

## **Funding for third-cycle studies**

Conditions for funding of third-cycle studies are stated in the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 5, sections 3–4 and chapter 7, sections 34 and 36. These sections state requirements for funding of third-cycle studies that have to be met before admission, and possible forms of funding other than doctoral studentships. Funding shall be guaranteed during the entire period of study, and the doctoral student shall be able to devote enough time to his or her studies to enable their completion within four years in the case of a licentiate degree or eight years in the case of a doctoral degree.

Doctoral students admitted to third-cycle education at GIH are normally appointed to doctoral studentships. The level of funding follows a salary scale for doctoral students.

If a doctoral student is employed by an employer other than GIH (other higher education institution, public authority, or company), an agreement or other form of binding document shall be drawn up between GIH and the funding body in order to ensure that funding and other resources for the doctoral project will be provided during the entire period of study. The agreement shall ensure that the doctoral student can devote enough time to his or her studies to enable their completion within the stated time frame. The level of funding shall at least follow the salary scale for doctoral students.

If funded by a scholarship, a doctoral student may be admitted if funding can be guaranteed during the entire period of study, and the doctoral student can devote enough time to his or her studies to enable their completion within four years in the case of a licentiate degree or eight years in the case of a doctoral degree. This means that the applicant on average shall be able to devote time to his or her studies at least 50% of a full-time post. GIH only accepts scholarships that are unconditional with regards to the study performance of the doctoral student. Admission of doctoral students funded by scholarships shall be preceded by an agreement between GIH and the funding body. The agreement shall provide reasonable conditions.

The head of department where the doctoral student is to be employed is responsible for the doctoral student during the entire period of study with regards to ensuring that funding, supervision and other resources are guaranteed during the entire period of study.

## **Supervision**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 6, section 28, at least two supervisors shall be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. A doctoral student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor.

The requirement for appointment as a supervisor for third-cycle education is a completed doctoral degree or equivalent. The principal supervisor shall be appointed as docent or professor, and at least one of the supervisors shall be employed at GIH. If the doctoral studentship is financed by GIH, the principal supervisor must be employed at GIH if there are no special grounds. The principal supervisor shall have completed an academic teacher training course about supervision within third-cycle education that is equivalent to the requirements for appointment as a docent.

Supervisors are appointed at the time of admission. Conflicts of interest shall be considered when appointing a supervisor. Both men and women shall be represented within the group of supervisors if there are no special grounds.

Supervision within third-cycle education is funded with 100 hours ("klocktimmar") for each academic year and full-time doctoral student, distributed between the principal supervisor and the other supervisors. In case of a decreased study activity below 100 per cent, the time for supervision is reduced correspondingly.

The individual study plan states the amount of time, the disposition and the forms of supervision, and the division of labour between the supervisors.

A doctoral student is entitled to supervision for the entire period of study as long as the doctoral student does not notify non-completion or the vice-chancellor decides to withdraw the resources pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 6, section 30.

A decision to change supervisor shall be handled quickly and consider the educational situation of the doctoral student.

The supervisors shall inform of conditions that may impact the supervision, for example if he or she intends to leave his or her position. If the supervisors or the doctoral student and the supervisors involve in a private relationship, the supervisor shall withdraw from the appointment immediately.

The Education and Research Board states general rules for supervision at third-cycle level in these guidelines. The head of department responsible for third-cycle education appoints supervisors, decides to change a supervisor and approves the division of labour between the supervisors stated in the individual study plan. The principal supervisor is responsible for the planning and implementation of the doctoral student's education. The role of supervisor includes the overarching responsibility incumbent on the entity authorising the research for ensuring that the research is conducted in accordance with good research practice (SFS 2019:504, Section 5).

### **Compulsory seminars**

Third-cycle education at GIH shall include certain compulsory seminars that aim to ensure that the outcomes for third-cycle education will be fulfilled. These seminars are half time review after two years of full-time study, and quality review before public defence or licentiate seminar during the last year of the third-cycle studies. Mid-way review is not applicable for the doctoral programme for a licentiate degree.

Two reviewers are appointed for the mid-way review and the quality review, one internal and one external reviewer. The reviewers shall have the qualifications required for appointment as a docent or equivalent, if no special grounds exist. Gender equality shall always be observed in the appointment of reviewers.

The head of department responsible for third-cycle education appoints reviewers for the compulsory seminars and decides on matters regarding their implementation.

### **Employment of doctoral students**

Regulations for employment of doctoral students (doctoral studentships) are stated in the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 5, sections 1–7.

An appointment is renewed for one year at a time.

Those appointed to doctoral studentships shall primarily devote themselves to their studies. Doctoral students may, however, work to a limited extent with educational tasks, research and administration (departmental duties). Before a doctoral degree has been

awarded, however, duties of this kind may not comprise more than 20 per cent of a full-time post and shall be accounted for in the individual study plan.

### **Examination and transfer of credits**

Examination is conducted in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6. Regulations about courses, credit-bearing activities, and grades are stated in the general study syllabus for the third-cycle subject area.

Examiners within third-cycle education are appointed by the head of department responsible for third-cycle education.

Transfer of credits within third-cycle education is regulated in the general study syllabus and GIHs credit transfer regulation (“Tillgodoräknandeordning”).

### **Qualifications for a licentiate degree**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the doctoral student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis in order to obtain a licentiate degree. The licentiate thesis shall be defended orally during a public licentiate seminar.

The date and the place for the licentiate seminar is decided by the vice-chancellor of GIH and shall be announced no later than three weeks before the seminar. The seminar shall in normal cases take place during the semester if no special grounds exist. The language of the licentiate seminar shall be Swedish or English. The thesis shall be available at GIH no later than three weeks before the licentiate seminar.

The licentiate thesis shall be based on an independent research project and be written in the form of a compilation of research articles, essays or reports with a summarizing chapter, or in the form of a monograph thesis. The number of research articles in a compilation thesis may vary, but the extent shall in total correspond to two years of third-cycle full-time study, and demonstrate a high scientific quality. At least one research article shall be published or accepted for publication in international peer-reviewed journals. The remaining research articles should be submitted to international peer-reviewed journals. The extent and quality of a monograph thesis shall be of a corresponding level.

The thesis may be written in Swedish or English. Licentiate theses written in Swedish shall include a summary in English, and vice versa.

If the doctoral student reproduces materials or formulations from previous publications or theses (e.g. degree project) in a monograph or a compilation thesis, this shall be indicated by a reference and, where applicable, citation. This principle also applies to the publications and theses included in the licentiate thesis.

A chair leads the licentiate seminar. The principal supervisor or supervisor of the doctoral student should not be appointed chair, since the chair may be required to serve as examiner if the external reviewer or the examiner is absent.

The head of department responsible for third-cycle education shall appoint an external reviewer and an examiner for the licentiate seminar. The external reviewer shall be appointed as a docent or equivalent, and work within a relevant field of research at a

higher education institution other than GIH. An external reviewer with the qualifications required for a doctoral degree may be appointed if special grounds exist. Special grounds exist primarily if the person has subject knowledge within the research field that is considered to be of particular relevance for assessing the licentiate thesis. The examiner shall at least be appointed as a docent or equivalent. The external reviewer and the examiner shall not have conflicts of interest in relation to the doctoral student or the supervisors. Gender equality shall be observed in the appointment of external reviewer and examiner.

The examiner decides the grade of the licentiate thesis. The external reviewer and the supervisors may attend the discussions about the grade, but not partake in the decisions about the grade. The grade shall be based on the thesis and the oral defense of the thesis. The grade is stated with the expressions pass or fail at GIH.

## **Qualifications for a doctoral degree**

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the doctoral student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a doctoral thesis in order to obtain a doctoral degree. The doctoral thesis shall be defended orally during a public defense (Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6 section 33).

Date and place for the public defense of the doctoral thesis is decided by the vice-chancellor at GIH and shall be announced no later than the time of notification of the public defense (“spikning”). Notification of the public defense shall take place no later than three weeks before the public defense. The notification of the thesis and the public defense should in normal cases take place during the semester if no special grounds exist. The thesis shall be available at GIH no later than three weeks before the public defense.

The doctoral thesis shall be based on an independent research project and be written in the form of a compilation of research articles, essays or reports with a summarizing chapter, or in the form of a monograph thesis. The number of research articles in a compilation thesis may vary, but the extent shall in total correspond to four years of third-cycle full-time study, and demonstrate a high scientific quality. At least two research articles shall be published or accepted for publication in international peer-reviewed journals. The remaining research articles should be submitted to international peer-reviewed journals. The extent and quality of a monograph thesis shall be of a corresponding level.

The thesis may be written in Swedish or English. Doctoral theses written in Swedish shall include a summary in English, and vice versa.

If the doctoral student reproduces materials or formulations from previous publications or theses (e.g. degree project) in a monograph or a compilation thesis, including material from a licentiate thesis to be used in a doctoral thesis, this shall be indicated by a reference and, where applicable, citation. This principle also applies to the publications and theses included in the doctoral thesis.

A chair leads the public defense. The principal supervisor or supervisor of the doctoral student shall not be appointed chair, since the chair may be required to serve as a member of the examining committee if the external reviewer or one of the appointed members of the examining committee is absent.



The language of the public defense shall be Swedish or English. A faculty examiner (external reviewer) shall be appointed for the public defense (Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6 section 33). An examining committee decides the grade of the doctoral thesis. The head of department responsible for third-cycle education appoints the external reviewer and the examining committee.

The external reviewer shall at least be appointed as a docent or equivalent, and work within a relevant field of research at a higher education institution other than GIH. An external reviewer with the qualifications required for a doctoral degree may be appointed if special grounds exist. Special grounds exist primarily if the person has subject knowledge within the research field that is considered to be of particular relevance for assessing the doctoral thesis. The members of the examining committee shall have the qualifications required for appointment as a docent or equivalent.

Two of the members of the examining committee shall be elected among lecturers/researchers at a higher education institution other than GIH (cf. the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6 section 34). The third member shall be elected among lecturers/researchers at GIH. Both women and men shall be represented in the examining committee. The members of the examining committee shall not have conflicts of interest with doctoral student or supervisors. The examining committee shall appoint a chair within the committee to lead the discussion about the grade. The external reviewer and the supervisor may attend the meeting of the examining committee, but not partake in the decisions about the grade.

An examining committee decides the grade of the doctoral thesis. The grade shall be based on the thesis and the oral defense of the thesis. The grade is stated with the expressions pass or fail.

### **Withdrawal of resources**

Regulations for withdrawing resources and for recovering entitlement to resources are stated in the Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6, sections 30–31.

According to Higher Education Ordinance chapter 12, section 2, paragraph 6, these decisions may be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board.

Procedures for withdrawing resources follow an established process regulated in the document *Administrative procedure for withdrawal of supervision and other resources in third-cycle education*.

### **Non-completion and deregistration of a doctoral student**

A doctoral student may be deregistered at their own request; this refers to the situation when a doctoral student's doctoral education is discontinued. Anyone wishing to resume their studies must re-apply for admission.