



UPPSALA  
UNIVERSITET

Reg. no UFV 2022/729

# Admission and Grading Regulations for Doctoral Studies at Uppsala University

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## Admission and Grading Regulations for Doctoral Studies at Uppsala University

The following admission and grading regulations for doctoral (third-cycle) studies were adopted by the University Board at Uppsala University on 25 September 2025. The admission and grading regulations apply from 1 October 2025 and replace the previous regulations (UFV 2022/729).

These regulations are based on Chapters 6 and 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance. In addition, the Vice-Chancellor has approved guidelines on doctoral studies. Disciplinary domain/faculty boards or equivalent bodies responsible for doctoral studies are to adopt further guidelines within their respective areas of responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quotations from the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance are taken from the translation on the website of the Swedish Council for Higher Education ([www.uhr.se](http://www.uhr.se)), with minor adaptations. In this translation of Uppsala University's regulations, the term 'third-cycle' used in the translation of the Higher Education Ordinance is replaced by 'doctoral'.

## Admission regulations for doctoral studies

The Higher Education Ordinance states as follows:

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 3:

Higher education institutions shall also ensure that the admission regulations are available.

The admission regulations comprise the regulations that apply at the higher education institution to applications, entry requirements, selection, and admission, as well as how decisions are made and how appeal can be made against them.

### Section 1. Application

The Higher Education Ordinance states as follows:

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 3, first paragraph, second sentence:

Higher education institutions shall ensure that those intending to begin a course or study programme have access to the information about it that is required.

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 37:

Decisions relating to admissions are made by the higher education institution. A person who wishes to be admitted to a third-cycle course or study programme shall apply within the time prescribed and in compliance with the procedures laid down by the higher education institution.

When a higher education institution intends to admit one or several doctoral students, information shall be provided by the higher education institution through advertising or some equivalent method. Information need not, however, be provided:

1. in the case of admission of a third-cycle student who is to complete the course or study programme within the framework of employment by an employer other than the higher education institution,
2. in the case of admission of a third-cycle student who has previously begun third-cycle studies at another higher education institution, or
3. if there are similar special grounds.

### Uppsala University:

The disciplinary domain/faculty board or an equivalent body with responsibility for doctoral studies is responsible for ensuring that the admissions process is transparent and competitive, with the exception of the cases specified above, and that the admissions process includes checking that funding can be guaranteed for the entire effective period of study and other resources for the entire duration of studies. This also applies to admission to doctoral studies intended to conclude with a licentiate degree.

Each faculty board must provide the following information about doctoral studies:

- the admission procedures,

- the time when places in doctoral programmes are advertised,
- the documents that must be attached to applications for admission,
- the structure of the programme,
- the funding arrangements for studies,
- the general syllabus for each subject.

The announcement that applications are being accepted for admission to doctoral programmes must be available locally and on the University website ([www.uu.se](http://www.uu.se)) at least three weeks before the deadline for applications. The announcement should also be disseminated as appropriate at national and international level.

Admission of doctoral students to an aid and capacity building programme can be exempted from the requirement of open advertisement with reference to the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 37, point 3, provided that the scholarship organisation applies and reports selection procedures.

## **Section 2. Entry requirements**

The Higher Education Ordinance states as follows:

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 35:

The requirements for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes are that the applicant

1. meets the general and specific entry requirements that the higher education institution may have laid down, and
2. is considered in other respects to have the ability required to benefit from the course or study programme.

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 39:

A person meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes if he or she:

1. has been awarded a second-cycle qualification,
2. has completed course requirements comprising at least 240 credits, at least 60 credits of which were awarded in the second cycle, or
3. has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

The higher education institution may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds.

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 40:

The specific entry requirements laid down shall be essential for students to be able to benefit from the course or study programme. These requirements may comprise:

1. knowledge from one or more higher education courses and study programmes or corresponding courses and study programmes,

2. specific professional or vocational experience, and
3. requisite language skills or other conditions determined by the course or study programme.

#### Uppsala University:

To meet the entry requirements under Chapter 7, Section 39, point 2, the 60 credits awarded in the second cycle (Master's level) must include a degree project worth at least 15 credits.

A decision that an applicant meets the entry requirements under Chapter 7, Section 39, point 3 may not be delegated to a level lower than a disciplinary domain/faculty board or an equivalent body with responsibility for doctoral studies.

It is the responsibility of the disciplinary domain/faculty board or equivalent body with responsibility for doctoral studies to determine the specific entry requirements in effect for each doctoral subject area. These requirements must be stated in the general syllabus for the doctoral subject area.

### Section 3. Selection

The Higher Education Ordinance states as follows:

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41:

In selecting between applicants who meet the requirements laid down in Sections 35 and 36 their ability to benefit from the course or the study programme shall be taken into account.

The higher education institution determines which assessment criteria shall be used in determining the ability to benefit from the courses and study programmes.

However, the fact that an applicant is considered able to transfer credits from prior courses and study programmes or for professional or vocational experience may not alone give the applicant priority over other applicants.

#### Uppsala University:

Assessment criteria must be specified in the general syllabus for the doctoral subject area. The same assessment criteria must be applied to admission irrespective of funding arrangements.

### Section 4. Admission

The Higher Education Ordinance states as follows:

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 36:

A higher education institution may admit applicants to third-cycle courses and study programmes who are appointed to doctoral studentships. The higher education institution may also admit applicants who have some other form of funding for their studies if it assesses that

1. funding can be guaranteed during the entire period of study, and

2. the applicant can devote enough time to their studies to enable their completion within four years in the case of a licentiate degree or a licentiate degree in the fine, applied and performing arts or eight years in the case of a PhD or a doctorate in the fine, applied and performing arts.

For an applicant funded by a scholarship, funding pursuant to point 1 of the first paragraph is regarded as guaranteed if the level of the scholarship is equivalent to the pay level for doctoral students regulated by a Swedish collective agreement or standard practice in the profession, after deductions for preliminary tax at source according to the tax table equivalent to the average tax rate for municipalities and regions and which is annually published by Statistics Sweden. If the applicant will alternate staying in Sweden and another country, the requirement for the level of the scholarship only applies to the time the applicant intends to stay in Sweden.

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 38:

A higher education institution that has received authorisation to award third-cycle qualifications within an area may permit a third-cycle student who has been admitted to some other university or some other higher education institution to transfer without a new admission process to the higher education institution and to continue his or her education and receive his or her qualification there. This only applies, however, if the third-cycle student has completed the major part of his or her third-cycle studies at the higher education institution in the area in which authorisation to award third-cycle qualifications has been granted.

What is said in the first paragraph is to apply similarly at a higher education institution that in having been granted the title of university is authorised pursuant to Section 11 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) to award third-cycle qualifications.

#### Uppsala University:

The disciplinary domain/faculty board or equivalent body with responsibility for doctoral studies decides on admissions of doctoral students to programmes intended to conclude with the award of either a licentiate degree or a doctoral degree. Most faculty-funded doctoral education should be devoted to education intended to conclude with a doctoral degree.

Admission for a licentiate degree may not be delegated to a level below the disciplinary domain/faculty board or equivalent body with responsibility for doctoral studies and requires a special explanatory statement (a planned two-stage model, in which the doctoral student is admitted for a licentiate degree to assess whether the student has the ability to take a doctoral degree, only after that offering the opportunity to continue towards a doctoral degree, must not be used). A doctoral student originally admitted to a programme concluding with the award of a licentiate degree may continue their studies towards a doctoral degree following the approval of a new application. A doctoral student who originally planned to conclude their education with a doctoral degree can conclude their studies with a licentiate degree.

A doctoral student can be given a part-time position at the request of the doctoral student, provided that the disciplinary domain/faculty board considers it appropriate.

The time spent studying for a licentiate degree or a doctoral degree may not be started or extended by the student *de facto* engaging in doctoral studies (as a 'shadow doctoral student') without being formally admitted.

When an applicant who has been granted admission needs a residence permit to stay and study in Sweden, the University reserves the right to revoke the admission decision if the person admitted does not hold a valid residence permit for their studies on the date when their studies are due to begin. The admission decision must include the reservation concerning revocation and indicate the date on which the studies begin.

A decision to revoke admission may not be delegated to a level lower than the disciplinary domain/faculty board or equivalent body responsible for doctoral studies.

## Grading regulations for doctoral studies

### Section 5. Examinations and thesis defence

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 32: Examinations that form part of third-cycle courses and study programmes shall be assessed in accordance with the grading system prescribed by the higher education institution.

The grade shall be determined by a teacher specially nominated by the higher education institution (the examiner).

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 33: The qualification descriptors for PhDs and doctorates in the fine, applied and performing arts lay down that an approved doctoral thesis is required for the award of these degrees.

The doctoral thesis shall be presented and defended orally in public. An external reviewer (opponent) shall be appointed for this presentation.

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 34: 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.

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 35: A higher education institution may issue regulations on the grading system to be used and on public defences and grading in other respects.

#### Uppsala University:

Examinations that form part of doctoral studies are to be graded either 'pass' or 'fail'.

Theses and essays included in compilation theses that have multiple authors can only be counted as part of a licentiate degree or a doctoral degree if it is possible to distinguish the contributions of the individual defending the thesis.

The grade awarded to a doctoral thesis is decided by an examining committee specially appointed for each individual thesis. The examining committee must consist of three or five members, most of whom must be taken from outside the department to which the doctoral student belongs. In cases where the committee consists of three members, a reserve should be appointed. The members of the examining committee should normally represent different legal genders. The examining committee is in quorum when all members are present.

A person who has been a supervisor of the doctoral student may not be on the committee. The committee must appoint one of its members as chair. The external reviewer and the supervisors have the right to participate in the meeting of the examining committee but must not be present for decisions.

A doctoral thesis will be awarded the grade 'pass' or 'fail'. The opinion on which the majority agrees will constitute the committee's decision. If a member of the examining committee has expressed a reservation against the decision of the majority, this is to be noted in the minutes or other decision document, but not on the degree certificate. The committee decides whether to give reasons for its decision. Any such explanatory statement must be attached to the minutes, but not to the degree certificate.

The disciplinary domain/faculty board or joint body for a faculty or disciplinary domain with responsibility for doctoral studies decides on the arrangements for licentiate seminars in its area.