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General study plan - Medical science

Established 25/10/2012 by the Faculty Board at the Faculty of Medicine

Linköpings universitet
Faculty of Health Sciences

GENERAL STUDY PLAN – MEDICAL SCIENCE

For research students admitted from 1 July 2007 onwards at the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), there is one third-cycle education subject: Medical science.

Third-cycle education with the aim of a doctoral degree involves four years (two years for a licentiate degree) of full-time studies after completing a degree at second-cycle level or completing course requirements totalling at least 240 higher education credits (HECs), of which at least 60 HECs must be at second-cycle level. For a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must have passed a scientific thesis worth at least 120 HECs. For a licentiate degree, the doctoral student must have passed a scientific paper worth at least 60 HECs.

After defending his or her thesis, the doctoral student must be able – independently, creatively and thoroughly – to plan, carry out and evaluate scientific studies, have good knowledge within his or her research subject and be able to communicate scientific results and subject knowledge with the scientific community and with society as a whole.

ADMISSION AND AUTHORISATION FOR EDUCATION AT THIRD-CYCLE LEVEL

ADMISSION

Issues relating to admission will be dealt with by the Research and Third-Cycle Education Board, in consideration of the provisions of the Swedish Higher Education Act and the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance. Each department has an admissions committee. The committee's duties include selecting applicants for third-cycle education. Admissions are prepared by the director of third-cycle education, with the support of the head of department at the relevant department, after the applicant has completed a public admission seminar. The assessment criterion for the selection of applications is the ability to assimilate education at third-cycle level.

On admission, the following shall be taken into account:

- A maximum of half the parts included in a thesis may be published/accepted for publication prior to admission for third-cycle education.
- Parts included in a thesis must not be published more than five years prior to admission for third-cycle education.
- A doctoral student appointment must not correspond to longer than full-time education at third-cycle level for four years. On admission, a position shall be taken on whether the applicant can devote enough of his or her time to education at third-cycle level so that it can be completed within eight years for a doctoral degree. This is certified by the supervisors and, where appropriate, by the operational manager or equivalent on appointment and when carrying out an annual follow-up.

AUTHORISATION

In order to be accepted for third-cycle studies at FHS, basic and specific authorisation are required.

Basic authorisation

Basic authorisation for education at third-cycle level requires:

- the completion of a degree at second-cycle level,
- the fulfilment of course requirements totalling at least 240 HECs, of which at least 60 HECs must be at second-cycle level, or
- the acquisition of essentially equivalent knowledge in some other way.

The University may grant exemption for individual applicants from the basic authorisation requirements if special reasons exist.

Specific authorisation

The requirement in order for students with foreign degrees to be accepted for third-cycle education at FHS is English language skills equivalent to passing a TOEFL test or a successful admission seminar carried out in English.

THE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THIRD-CYCLE EDUCATION

Third-cycle education with the aim of a doctoral degree involves four years (two years for a licentiate degree) of full-time studies after completing a degree at second-cycle level or completing course requirements totalling at least 240 HECs (120 HECs for a licentiate degree), of which at least 60 HECs must be at second-cycle level.

INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN

The individual study plan is the document that controls the specific focus of each individual doctoral student in his or her third-cycle education. The individual study plan is drawn up by the principal supervisor and the doctoral student in connection with applying for admission to third-cycle education. The individual study plan must be followed up at least once a year.

In addition to the information in the pre-printed form, the application must also include:

- A project plan for the doctoral student's research project, including background, objectives, methods, planned subprojects and significance.
- A funding plan for the entire period of third-cycle education, including a clear plan for both the doctoral student's support and the sources of funding (project number) to be used.
- A timetable that clearly states whether – and if so, how – the third-cycle education will be combined with other activities (e.g. teaching or clinical duties), when annual follow-ups will be carried out, and when the half-time seminar or licentiate degree and/or the doctoral degree are expected to be completed.

COURSES

For doctoral students admitted from 1 July 2007 onwards, the course requirement is 33 HECs. The course requirement for obtaining a licentiate degree is 18 HECs.¹

All courses included in the doctoral student's education must be detailed in the individual study plan. In the event of any changes, the individual study plan must be reviewed. Courses passed should be documented in Ladok.

On admission, the doctoral student can apply for accreditation of passed third-cycle education courses that have previously been completed at another university or university college. Likewise, knowledge and skills acquired in a professional capacity and through previous education can also be accredited.

The course requirements for doctoral/licentiate degree thesis defence are detailed below.

Third-cycle education module	Number of HECs	
	Doctoral degree	Licentiate degree
A1. Mandatory general science third-cycle education courses	11 HECs	11 HECs
For research students who will work with laboratory animals	5 HECs	5 HECs
A2. Elective science third-cycle education courses	7 HECs	-
B1. Subject-specific third-cycle education courses	9 HECs	4 HECs
B2. Other third-cycle education courses	-	-

¹ For doctoral students admitted before 1 July 2007, the requirement for obtaining a doctoral degree is 15 HECs. The requirement for obtaining a licentiate degree is 7.5 HECs.

C. Other modules for which credits are awarded, such as participation in international conferences, visits to other research teams/participation in series of seminars, journal clubs, etc.	6 HECs	3 HECs
TOTAL:	Doctoral degree: at least 33 HECs, 38 HECs for certain research students	Licentiate degree: at least 18 HECs, 23 HECs for certain research students

HALF-TIME SEMINAR

A half-time seminar is a mandatory, publicly advertised seminar at which the scientific work is discussed. The aim of the half-time seminar is to carry out a quality review of how the thesis project is progressing and of the doctoral student's progression, and to assist with the planning for the continued work.

The half-time seminar should be carried out no later than two years after admission for full-time studies (or no later than four years after admission for half-time studies), or once two articles have been submitted for publication.

THESIS

For a degree, the doctoral student must have passed a scientific thesis worth at least 120 HECs (doctoral degree) or 60 HECs (licentiate degree).

Most doctoral theses at FHS are compilation theses made up of at least two parts, usually more, but rarely more than four. At least two parts must be accepted/published in peer-reviewed journals with international circulation, or be "open access" publications with a peer-review procedure. The doctoral student must be the lead author of at least one of the accepted papers. A licentiate thesis should consist of two parts, of which one should be accepted or published.

The exact number of parts required depends on the quality and scope of the individual parts, and not least on the role played by the doctoral student in the creation of each part. There is no restriction on the number of theses a specific publication can be used in – the determining factor is whether the individual doctoral student has made a significant contribution to the work.

The parts should be complemented with a frame narrative written in English which, together with the component parts, constitutes the thesis. There is also the option of defending a monograph thesis.

TRANSITIONAL REGULATIONS

Doctoral students who started education at third-cycle level at FHS up until and including 31 October 2012 must complete their education at third-cycle level in accordance with the course requirements and focus specified in the general study plan under which the doctoral student was accepted. (N.B. Different general study plans apply for doctoral students accepted before and after 1 July 2007). This general study plan applies to research students accepted from 1 November 2012 onwards.

Doctoral students accepted prior to 31 October 2012 who so desire and who meet the authorisation conditions can change to the general study plan that applies from 1 November 2012 onwards. In this case, the individual study plan must be reviewed so that complete education in accordance with the intentions of the general study for the subject and the overall rules for the education can be achieved.

REGULATIONS FOR EDUCATION AT THIRD-CYCLE LEVEL

The general study plan, dated 25/10/2012, makes reference to the Rules for education at third-cycle level at Linköping University's Faculty of Medicine – the Faculty of Health Sciences, established by the Faculty Board for the Faculty of Medicine on 27/09/2012.