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Guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) courses and programmes at Luleå University of Technology

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1. Introduction

Third-cycle (doctoral) courses and study programmes at Luleå University of Technology (the University) are carried out in accordance with provisions in the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. These guidelines describe regulations, guidelines and practices for third-cycle courses and study programmes at Luleå University of Technology. The Vice-Chancellor's *Rules of Decision-Making and Delegation of Authority* regulate the decision-making procedures at the University.

2. Supervision

Each doctoral student must have at least two supervisors, one of which the principal supervisor and the others the assistant supervisors.

2.1 The supervisors' employment and qualifications

The principal supervisor of a newly admitted doctoral student must have a permanent employment of at least 50% of a full-time employment at the University. If the principal supervisor's employment at the University ends before the doctoral student graduates, they may, by decision of the head of department, remain as principal supervisor until the doctoral student has graduated.

The principal supervisor must have at least docent status. The assistant supervisor should have at least a doctoral degree or equivalent artistic qualifications. Attention must be given to gender balance when appointing supervisors.

If there is a change of supervisor during the doctoral student's third-cycle studies, the conditions above must be met.

2.2 Supervisor training

The Head of department is responsible for ensuring that all supervisors employed at Luleå University of Technology have completed the course Introduction to doctoral education (LTU Research supervision education, Module 1).

The Head of department is responsible for ensuring that at least one of the doctoral student's supervisors has completed:

1. the LTU Research Supervision Course,
2. Doctoral Supervision, Advanced Course (LTU Research supervision education, Module 3), or
3. equivalent training at another higher education institution.

External supervisors are offered the course Introduction to doctoral education.

2.3 The responsibilities of the supervisor

The principal supervisor is responsible for:

- designing the doctoral student's individual study plan for third-cycle studies and defining the doctoral student's research project in connection with the admission of and in collaboration with the doctoral student,
- supervising the doctoral student from a scientific/artistic and pedagogical point of view, based on the approved general syllabus for the research subject and the doctoral student's individual study plan,
- following up the individual study plan in collaboration with the doctoral student at least once a year prior to the adoption of the plan by the head of department,
- coordinating the collaboration between the supervisors, the doctoral student and, if the doctoral student is externally employed, a personnel officer,
- reporting the doctoral student's awarded credits,
- ensuring that the level of activity and financing are registered, and
- drawing up and revising the financial plan prior to the adoption of the plan by the head of department.
- verify that the degree objectives set out in the Higher Education Ordinance and the requirements specified in the general syllabus have been fulfilled prior to the application for a licentiate seminar or a public defence of the doctoral thesis.

The assistant supervisors are responsible for:

- contribute scientific or artistic knowledge and expertise in supervision.

2.4 The scope of the supervision

Supervision must be adapted to needs and may vary over time. The principal supervisor must provide a full-time doctoral student with at least 10 hours of supervision per semester through in-person meetings. At least once per semester, the doctoral student, the principal supervisor and the assistant supervisors should meet jointly to follow up and plan the studies.

3. Credit transfer of previous courses

A credit transfer application by the doctoral student must include courses and knowledge that are relevant to the doctoral student's third-cycle studies and that correspond to the knowledge requirements included in the general syllabus of the relevant research subject, the doctoral student's individual study plan and the qualitative targets in the Higher Education Ordinance. The application should be submitted close in time to the admission, as a decision on credit transfer early in the doctoral student's third-cycle studies facilitates the planning of content of the studies. The assessment of and decision on the scope of the credit transfer are made for each separate course.

Upon admission to a later part of the studies, the doctoral student applies for credit transfers of previously passed courses.

The chair of the relevant faculty board decides on possible credit transfers.

4. Departmental duties

Doctoral students employed at the University may carry out departmental duties. It is important that the doctoral student and the supervisor together with the head of department/head of division specify what is meant by departmental duties in terms of time and duties. In general, a doctoral student must, to a reasonable degree, be present at the department and participate in common activities (for example, department or division meetings) within the department/division, since participation in research groups and meetings is a part of the third-cycle studies. Anything in addition to the above is to be considered departmental duties, for example, teaching and other specific tasks.

When determining the scope of the teaching activities of the individual doctoral student, the required preparatory and supplementary work including examination must be given attention. This depends on the degree of difficulty and level of the course, the nature of the teaching and of the subject, the design and method of the teaching as well as the doctoral student's skills and experience of teaching a specific course or teaching within the field. The doctoral student must be given the opportunity to participate in the timetabling of the courses in which the student is to teach.

Before the doctoral student starts to teach or carry out other departmental duties, the time required for these duties must be included in the individual study plan (ISP). It is important that favourable conditions are created for a newly admitted doctoral student to begin their studies. Like the local working hours agreement for teachers at the University (ref. no. LTU-463-99), the departmental duties of the doctoral students must be planned on an annual basis and in collaboration with the individual doctoral student, the supervisor and the head of department/head of division. This is best done in connection with the update of the ISP. In the ISP, departmental duties are planned and followed up. The actual figure of the scope of the departmental duties is used for calculating the doctoral student's level of activity. The scope may be expressed as hours or as per cent. If the scope is expressed as per cent, it must be a percentage of the annual full-time working hours, currently 1,720 hours (according to Project Reporting at the University). The departmental duties of doctoral students employed full time at the University must not exceed 20% over time.

5. Examiner

Grades for third-cycle courses are decided by a specifically appointed examiner. The examiner must hold at least the qualifications of an associate professor and be employed by Luleå University of Technology. The examiner is responsible for the grading decision.

The examiner for third-cycle courses and the examiner for a licentiate thesis are appointed by the head of department, following consultation with the subject representative and the

director of third-cycle studies, under delegation from the Vice-Chancellor. The head of department may further delegate the decision to appoint an examiner to the third-cycle programmes coordinator.

6. Titles of qualification

Luleå University of Technology awards the following third-cycle qualifications:

- Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Science/Teknologie doktorsexamen
- Degree of Doctor of Philosophy/Filosofie doktorsexamen
- Degree of Doctor of Laws/Juris doktorsexamen
- Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business and Economics/Ekonomie doktorsexamen
- Degree of Licentiate of Science/Teknologie licentiatexamen
- Degree of Licentiate of Arts/Filosofie licentiatexamen
- Degree of Licentiate of Legal Science/Juris licentiatexamen
- Degree of Licentiate of Science in Business and Economics/Ekonomie licentiatexamen

The titles Degree of Doctor and Degree of Licentiate are normally followed by a specialisation suffix (for example, "...of Laws", "...of Arts", etc) corresponding to the disciplinary research domain within which the research subject is established. If there are special reasons, the qualification awarded to an individual doctoral student may include a specialisation suffix other than the specialisation suffix laid down in the general syllabus. The application for a different specialisation suffix is processed by the relevant faculty board (chair) or by the Vice-Chancellor. The head of department submits the application in connection with the admission of the doctoral student or as soon as there is a reason to assess whether the degree may include a specialisation suffix other than the specialisation suffix laid down.

The chair of the Board of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences makes the decision in cases where the doctoral student is admitted to a research subject belonging to the disciplinary research domain of humanities and social sciences and applies for the specialisation suffix "of Philosophy in Science" for the doctoral degree or the licentiate degree.

The chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science and Technology makes the decision in cases where the doctoral student is admitted to a research subject belonging to the disciplinary research domain of science and technology and applies for the specialisation suffix "of Philosophy" or "of Philosophy in Business and Economics" for the doctoral degree or the licentiate degree.

The Vice-Chancellor makes the decision in cases where the doctoral student wishes to be awarded a doctoral degree within a disciplinary research domain other than those existing at Luleå University of Technology. A licentiate degree is awarded only within the existing disciplinary research domains at the University.

The following criteria apply to assessments of applications for a specialisation suffix other than the specialisation suffix laid down for the specific disciplinary research domain to which the research subject belongs:

- The first-cycle/second-cycle degree awarded to the doctoral student.
- Qualification requirements for the admission to the research subject.
- The sphere of competence of the supervisors.
- Specialisation of the licentiate thesis/doctoral thesis.

7. Doctoral degree

7.1 Review of the thesis prior to the public defence

The review of the thesis prior to the public defence, in order to ensure that the work meets sufficient scientific quality and scope, is regulated in the general syllabus. If necessary, a review may be initiated following consultation between the supervisors, the head of subject, the doctoral student and, where applicable, the third-cycle programmes coordinator.

7.2 Application to defend the doctoral thesis

A doctoral student who wishes to defend their doctoral thesis must, after consultation with their supervisors, submit an application to the responsible head of department.

7.3 The organisation of the defence of the doctoral thesis

The principal supervisor proposes an external reviewer, members of the examining committee including one substitute, and a chair of the public defence. A presentation of the proposed external reviewer and the proposed members of the examining committee, including the substitute, together with their CVs, must be attached. The external reviewer, the members of the examining committee including the substitute, the principal supervisor and the assistant supervisors must complete declarations of conflict of interest in accordance with the template¹, and these must also be attached to the application. The proposal is approved by the head of department, but the chair of the relevant faculty board decides on the appointment of the external reviewer, the members of the examining committee including the substitute, and the chair of the public defence.

The following criteria apply to the organisation of thesis defences at Luleå University of Technology:

- The external reviewer must be an internationally recognized researcher within the subject area.
- The external reviewer, members of the examining committee and the substitute for a full member must have at least docent status.

¹ The template is available in *The handbook for third-cycle studies*, Luleå University of Technology.

- The external reviewer and the members of the examining committee must not be employed at Luleå University of Technology.
- More than one gender must be represented in the examining committee.
- The external reviewer and members of the examining committee must be physically present at the defence of the doctoral thesis.
- A substitute for a full member of the examining committee should work or otherwise be engaged at Luleå University of Technology, but not within the same research subject as the doctoral student, the principal supervisor or the assistant supervisors.
- A former or present supervisor cannot be an external reviewer or a member of the examining committee.
- Normally, the examining committee consists of three members. If the thesis is of such nature that three members cannot represent all perspectives of the thesis, within reasonable limits, it may be decided that the examining committee will consist of five members.
- If the defence of the doctoral thesis involves a title of qualification that has a specialisation suffix other than the one laid down in the general syllabus of the research subject, the examining committee must include at least one representative of the disciplinary research domain that comprises the normal specialisation suffix.
- The principal supervisor and the assistant supervisors must not act as chair of the defence.

Exemptions from the above may be granted if specific reasons exist. Such exemptions are granted following an application from the head of department. The head of department describes and justifies the specific reasons why an exception should be granted.

Applications for exceptions are processed restrictively. The Vice-Chancellor's *Rules of Decision-Making and Delegation of Authority* regulate the decision-making procedures at the University.

Exceptions may be granted from the following requirements only:

- The external reviewer, the members of the examining committee and the substitute for a full member of the examining committee must have at least docent status.
- The external reviewer or members of the examining committee must not be employed at Luleå University of Technology.
- A substitute for a full member of the examining committee should work or otherwise be engaged at Luleå University of Technology, but not within the same research subject as the doctoral student, principal supervisor or assistant supervisors.
- More than one gender must be represented in the examining committee.
- The external reviewer and members of the examining committee must be physically present at the defence of the doctoral thesis.

7.4 The doctoral thesis

A doctoral thesis produced at Luleå University of Technology may take the form of either a single coherent scientific work (a monographic thesis) or a number of scientific papers (a

compilation thesis). The general syllabus for each research subject describes which kind of thesis that the research subject requires.

Previous publications may be attached to a monographic thesis. A compilation thesis may be approved only if the different parts of the thesis are brought together in an introductory, summarising chapter (in Swe: kappa). The introductory chapter integrates the different parts of the thesis and specifies the contributions of the doctoral student. A compilation thesis consisting of one or several parts written by more than one author must specify, in the introductory chapter, the doctoral student's contributions to each part.

When the work is a compilation thesis of papers, it must contain a list of these papers. The list must indicate whether the papers are published, accepted, submitted or have the form of a manuscript. The titles and co-authors of the papers, and the journal or conference must also be included.

A doctoral thesis jointly written by two or more persons may be approved if the contributions of each author can be identified.

The doctoral thesis must be written in Swedish or in English.

The responsible department decides on the number of copies of the thesis to be printed. However, if the doctoral student so requests, they must be guaranteed at least 20 copies.

7.5 Time and venue of the defence of the doctoral thesis

The defence of the doctoral thesis must be held during normal working hours between 10 January and 20 June or between 1 September and 20 December. The venue of the defence of the doctoral thesis must be one of the campuses of Luleå University of Technology.

Exceptions from the above may only be granted after an individual assessment. The head of department justifies the specific reasons why an exception should be granted. Applications for exceptions are processed restrictively. The Vice-Chancellor's *Rules of Decision-Making and Delegation of Authority* regulate the decision-making procedures at the University.

7.6 Notification of the defence of the doctoral thesis

The defence of the doctoral thesis must be notified and the thesis published no later than three semester weeks before the thesis defence. The periods 20 December–10 January and 20 June–10 August may not be counted as part of the three weeks mentioned above.

Exceptions from the above must be specifically justified by the head of department. The head of department justifies the specific reasons why an exception should be granted. The Vice-Chancellor's *Rules of Decision-Making and Delegation of Authority* regulate the decision-making procedures at the University.

7.7 The public defence seminar

The defence of the doctoral thesis must be conducted in Swedish or English.

In case the appointed external reviewer is prevented from attending, the chair of the faculty board involved must, if time so allows, appoint a new external reviewer upon a proposal from the head of department. If an urgent situation arises during the thesis defence, one of members of the examining committee will be appointed external reviewer by, firstly, the chair of the faculty board involved, and, secondly, by the appointed chair of the defence. The examining committee is subsequently made complete by the appointed substitute. If a member of the examining committee is prevented from attending, the appointed substitute will become a full member of the examining committee. The chair of the faculty board involved must, if time so allows, appoint a new substitute upon a proposal from the head of department. If an urgent situation arises and the examining committee, as a result thereof, consists of only two persons during the thesis defence, an appropriate qualified substitute should be appointed by, firstly, the chair of the faculty board involved, and, secondly, by the appointed chair of the defence. The appointed substitute must comply with the rules and guidelines that apply to members of the examining committee.

After the public defence, the examining committee convenes to decide on the grade.

8. Licentiate degree

8.1 Application to hold a licentiate seminar

A doctoral student who wishes to hold a licentiate seminar must, after consultation with their supervisors, submit an application to the responsible head of department.

8.2 Organisation of the licentiate seminar

The principal supervisor proposes a discussant and an examiner. Within the disciplinary research domain of humanities and social sciences, a chair of the seminar is also proposed. An abstract of the licentiate thesis and information stating whether the scientific work has been designed as a monograph or as a compilation of articles must be attached.

In the case of a compilation of articles, the articles must be listed in accordance with the template², including the title, co-authors, journal or conference with the date of publication, acceptance or presentation, and the number of pages in the introductory chapter.

The head of department decides on the appointment of the discussant, the examiner and, where applicable, the chair.

² The template is available in *The handbook for third-cycle studies*, Luleå University of Technology

The following applies to the organisation of licentiate seminars at Luleå University of Technology:

- The discussant must hold at least a doctoral degree or equivalent artistic qualifications and must not belong to the same research subject at the University as the doctoral student or any of the supervisors.
- The examiner must hold at least docent or professor status and be employed by Luleå University of Technology.
- Within the disciplinary research domain of humanities and social sciences, the examiner may not be the same person as the principal supervisor or an assistant supervisor.
- Within the disciplinary research domain of science and technology, the examiner may be the same person as the principal supervisor.

The head of department is responsible for ensuring that the relevant faculty board, at chair level, is informed no later than eight semester weeks before the seminar of the decision regarding time and venue, the appointed examiner and discussant, and, within the disciplinary research domain of humanities and social sciences, also the appointed chair of the licentiate seminar.

8.3 Licentiate thesis

The independent research must result in a scientific thesis. The licentiate thesis must be of a scientific level that allows it to be included in a publication of good international standard, after a possible revision.

A licentiate thesis produced at Luleå University of Technology may take the form of either a monograph or a compilation of a number of scientific papers. The general syllabus for each research subject describes which kind of thesis that the research subject requires.

A licentiate thesis jointly written by two or more persons may be approved if the contributions of each author can be identified. The introductory chapter (“kappa”) integrates the different parts of the thesis and specifies the contributions of the doctoral student.

The licentiate thesis must be written in Swedish or in English.

The responsible department decides on the number of copies of the licentiate thesis to be printed. However, if the doctoral student so requests, they must be guaranteed at least 20 copies.

8.4 Time and venue of the licentiate seminar

The licentiate seminar is a public event and must be held during normal working hours between 10 January and 20 June or between 1 September and 20 December. The venue of the seminar must be one of the University campuses.

Exceptions may only be granted after an individual consideration. The head of department justifies the specific reasons why an exception should be granted. Applications for exceptions are processed restrictively. The Vice-Chancellor's *Rules of Decision-Making and Delegation of Authority* regulate the decision-making procedures at the University.

The seminar must be conducted in Swedish or English.

8.5 Notification of the licentiate seminar

The licentiate seminar must be notified and the licentiate thesis published not later than three semester weeks before the seminar. The periods 20 December–10 January and 20 June–10 August may not be counted as part of the three weeks mentioned above.

Exceptions from the above may only be granted after an individual assessment. The head of department justifies the specific reasons why an exception should be granted. Applications for exceptions are processed restrictively. The Vice-Chancellor's *Rules of Decision-Making and Delegation of Authority* regulate the decision-making procedures at the University.

9. Mid-seminar

The mid-seminar may replace the licentiate seminar and is regulated in the general syllabus of the research subject.

The mid-seminar is held when the doctoral student has reached approximately the halfway point of their third-cycle studies. Its purpose is partly to review and evaluate the work carried out so far, and partly to look ahead and assess whether the plan for the continued work is relevant and feasible.

If necessary, the seminar may result in revisions to the individual study plan. The overall objective is to enhance the quality of the doctoral thesis project.

A central component of the mid-seminar is to provide the doctoral student with the opportunity to develop their ability to compile, analyse, present and discuss their research and results in dialogue with others.

Responsibility for organising the mid-seminar rests with the department, and the format of the seminar is determined by the respective research subject.