

GENERAL STUDY PLAN FOR THE THIRD-CYCLE PROGRAMME IN BUSINESS STUDIES

1. Educational goal

In order to attain a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must achieve the following goals:

Knowledge and comprehension

- show broad knowledge within, and a systematic understanding of, the research area of business studies, and demonstrate deep and topical expert knowledge of a special area within this research area;
- have deep knowledge of general scientific methods and of methods used within the research field of business studies in particular

Proficiency and ability

- show proficiency in scientific analysis and synthesis and the ability to independently identify, scrutinise and evaluate new and complex phenomena, research topics and situations within the research field of business studies
- show the ability, within the discipline of business studies, to critically, creatively, independently and with scientific exactitude identify and formulate problems and questions, to employ adequate methods when planning and engaging in research and other vocational undertakings, to execute projects within set time frames, and to scrutinise and evaluate such work
- produce a dissertation which demonstrates his or her ability to make a substantial scholarly contribution within the research field of business studies
- demonstrate the ability to authoritatively present and discuss research in the field of business studies, in national as well as in international contexts, in an academic setting or in society as a whole
- show the capacity to identify needs for further knowledge within the research field of business studies
- prove him- or her self qualified as researcher and teacher and in other professional contexts show him- or herself capable of contributing to the development of society and promoting the education of others

Value judgements and attitudes

- show intellectual independence, scientific integrity, and the ability to make research-ethical judgements; and
- show insight into the possibilities and limits of the science, its role in society, and the responsibility that humans have for how the science is used

In order to attain a licentiate degree, the doctoral student must fulfil the following:

Knowledge and comprehension

- demonstrate general knowledge and understanding of the research area business studies, which includes topical expert knowledge of a particular area within this field
- show his or her familiarity with scientific method in general and with methods used in the research area of business studies in particular.

Proficiency and ability

- show the ability to identify and formulate problems within the field of business studies, critically, independently, creatively, and with scientific accuracy; to plan and with appropriate methods complete a research project of limited scope;
- demonstrate the ability to present and discuss research and research results in business studies, in a clear manner, both in written and spoken form, in national as well as in international contexts, in dialogue with the academic community and with society as a whole, and
- prove him- or herself possessed of the qualities needed independently to participate in research and development work, as well as work independently in other highly skilled professions.

Value judgements and attitudes

- show the ability to make research-ethical judgement concerning his or her own research
- demonstrate an ability to recognise his or her own need of additional knowledge and take responsibility for his or her further development of knowledge in the research area of business studies

Local learning objectives

In addition to the general learning objectives of the licentiate- and doctoral degree, the third-cycle student must after finishing the education

- show broad knowledge within the field Politics, economy and the organisation of society (knowledge and understanding)
- be able to independently apply this knowledge in analyses of areas relevant to these subjects (proficiency and ability)

2. Entry requirements

Those who fulfil the general as well as the specific qualifications for the third-cycle study programme are eligible to enter the programme. The applicant must, furthermore, possess whatever other skills are necessary for the successful completion of the educational programme.

2.1 General entry requirements

An applicant possesses the basic qualifications for admission into the third-cycle study programme if he or she has completed a general educational programme and attained a Master of Arts Degree, at least, or who has, in some other educational system inside or outside of Sweden, acquired equivalent skills.

Those who, before July 1 2007, have fulfilled the general entry requirements for the third-cycle study programme shall thereafter be considered qualified to enter such a study programme, but only until the end of June 2015.

Under special circumstances, the faculty board may exempt an applicant from fulfilling special qualification requirements.

2.2 Special entry requirements

An fully qualified applicant has the equivalent of 90 HEI credits in business studies, has successfully completed second-cycle studies in business studies, or has achieved the same qualifications outside of Sweden or by previously taking some equivalent degree. Under special circumstances, the faculty board may exempt an applicant from fulfilling special qualification requirements.

3. Admission

Applications for acceptance to the third-cycle study programme must be submitted to Södertörn University. The rules of admission can be found in the admission regulations for the third-cycle study programme at Södertörn University.

If no special circumstances apply, admissions to the third-cycle study programme must take place at one time, collectively, rather than occur on a one-by-one basis. This is the case not only for doctoral studentships but for all types of doctoral positions. This procedure promotes competition and strengthens the legal rights of the individual applicant.

The application must have attached a curriculum vitae, papers and other documents to which the applicant intends to refer, as well as, where relevant, a brief sketch of the themes informing the intended dissertation.

Admission to the third-cycle study programme is based not only on fulfilment of entry requirements but also on an evaluation of the applicant's ability to benefit from an education at the third-cycle level.

During the evaluation of an applicant's eligibility, special emphasis is placed on the previously completed written academic work (research papers) that is submitted. On the basis of the research papers (in cases when such have been submitted), the research plan, and other documentation, the applicant's independence and originality when it comes to formulating and analysing problems, his or her ability to problematise, theoretical and methodological awareness, systematics and stringency, scientific maturity and critical attitude, as well as demonstrated ability to work within set time frames, are evaluated. Should several applicants have equally good qualification, an applicant of the under-represented gender will be given preference.

In connection with acceptance to the graduate school BEEGS, the research plan is evaluated according to its anchorage in the graduate school's specific geographical area, i.e., its orientation towards the Baltic nations and/or East Europe.

The board of supervisors must furthermore, when presented with proposals for the acceptance of applicants, determine whether due attention has been given to research-ethical concerns; to the proposed time- and financing plan; and whether the total supervisory competence is adequate to provide the doctoral student with good and professional supervision and relevant expertise. The board of supervisors will, further,

judge whether the doctoral student is familiar with what a third-cycle education at Södertörn University entails. Finally, the board of supervisors must take into account the applicant's willingness and ability to participate in and actively contribute to the research environment within the discipline.

The actual evaluation of the applicants is organised through the discipline's board of supervisors. The board can, at a preliminary stage, carry through a scrutiny of an applicant's formal qualifications and fulfilment of entry requirements. This is done by a delegation that is appointed by the discipline's board of supervisors. Where appropriate, the board's delegation will cooperate with the graduate school BEEGS or with the leader of the research project that proposes to sponsor the doctoral student. The delegation will also scrutinise the applicant's formal entry qualifications. The board of supervisors is debriefed by the delegation during the process. The delegation then prepares a well-motivated, written proposal for ranking the applicants.

Subsequently, the board of supervisors prepares the question of application for consideration. Selection between applicants is made on the basis of the criteria mentioned above. The board will rank a limited number of applicants in one elite group. Representatives of doctoral students already accepted by the discipline may be present during these preparations.

When an elite group has been separated from among the applicants, personal interviews must be conducted. This will give the board of supervisors the opportunity to acquire complementary information. First and foremost, however, the interview is to serve as a means of acquainting the applicant with the research environment within the discipline and the area.

In connection with the selection procedure, an individual study- and financing plan is established for the applicants that are put forward for acceptance. The final proposal must also include suggestions for principal supervisor and assistant supervisor. These suggestions are confirmed by the board of supervisors at the conclusion of the doctoral student's first term. Note, here, that the board of supervisors, after consultation with the doctoral student, may appoint alternative supervisors at a later time. When this process of preparation is concluded, the final proposal is delivered to the authoritative instance or instances determined by the faculty board.

4. The main content of the third-cycle educational programme

The course of study at the third-cycle level shall comprise 240 HEI for a doctoral degree, and 120 HEI for a licentiate degree. The third-cycle programme for a doctoral degree in business studies comprises four years of full-time study and consists of a set of courses making up a total of 75 HEI credits, and a doctoral dissertation worth 165 HEI credits.

Third-cycle studies in business studies that terminate with a licentiate degree comprise two years of full-time study; the set of courses answers for 45 HEI credits; the licentiate essay is worth 75 HEI credits.

Obligatory courses:

The obligatory courses consist of a number of courses which are common to all disciplines in the area (30 HEI credits).

Truth, Construction and Subjectivity: Contemporary Issues in the Theory of Scientific Knowledge (7.5 HEI credits)

Theories of Organisations and Institutions (7.5 HEI credits)

Qualitative Research Methods (7.5 HEI credits)

Quantitative Research Methods (7.5 HEI credits)

Optional courses:

All other courses are optional. They are selected in consultation with the student's supervisors and with special attention to their relative appropriateness to the doctoral student's dissertation work. Among the optional courses that will be offered within the discipline of business studies are:

Decision Making (7.5 HEI credits)

Financial and Management Accounting (7.5 HEI credits)

Entrepreneurship (7.5 HEI credits)

Marketing Theories (7.5 HEI credits)

Optional courses may be taken at other seats of learning within or outside Sweden, or as special courses at the student's own seat of learning. The courses offered include third-cycle courses given at BEEGS by international guest researchers. To these will be added courses given by teachers from one or more of the disciplines that are part of the area.

Optional courses worth a total of 15 HEI credits may be taken as reading courses, adjusted to the dissertation subject matter. These are determined in consultation with the supervisors and the director of the third-cycle study programme.

5. The design of the third-cycle educational programme

Students at the third-cycle level will combine studying for courses and working on their dissertation. The first year is characterised by intense studying for courses; nonetheless, the doctoral student must start work on his or her dissertation work in very good time. The results of this work must be presented at the discipline's research seminars. During the first year, the student must present his or her dissertation plan or introductory memorandum. Thereafter, the doctoral student must present his or her work to the discipline's research seminar at least two more times. The doctoral student must continuously discuss with his or her supervisors how work on the dissertation is progressing.

For each doctoral student, at least two supervisors will be appointed. One of these shall be principal supervisor, and carry the greater part of responsibility for the student's education, including his or her dissertation work. The second will function as assistant supervisor. If necessary, additional supervisors may be appointed. The principal supervisor shall ordinarily be employed at Södertörn University. The supervisors must have doctoral degrees and the principal advisor must have the qualifications required for appointment to the position of docent. At least one of any doctoral student's supervisors must have completed the doctoral-student supervisor training programme.

If a doctoral student so requests, he or she may change supervisor. No reasons need be given in support of this request.

An individual study plan must be established for each doctoral student. The individual study plan must include a time plan for the doctoral student's education, information on the organisation of the doctoral student's supervision, a description of whatever other undertakings the doctoral student, the supervisors and/or the institution (or the graduate school BEEGS) have during the student's education, and whatever else it is essential if the student's education is to progress in a satisfactory manner.

At least once a year, the director of the third-cycle study programme and the board of supervisors cooperate in checking up on the individual study plan. In connection with this follow-up, the supervisors must report on how the student's education is progressing. The board of supervisors can, after consultation with the doctoral student and the supervisors, suggest that changes be made in the individual study plan.

The director of the third-cycle study programme, the head of the department and the prefect of the school must confirm, in writing, that they are acquainted with the individual study plan and with any changes made in it.

Normally, the following procedure is followed before a dissertation is publicly defended. When the supervisors judge that the doctoral student only needs around 60 HEI credits in order to complete his or her period of studies, a review group is appointed, consisting of the student's supervisors and an additional member of the board of supervisors. This group will issue recommendations concerning the further course of dissertation writing.

When the doctoral student has composed a coherent manuscript, a so-called trial disputation is held, where the manuscript in question is defended at a research seminar. After the manuscript is further revised, a group of evaluators is appointed from among the members of the board of supervisors. These determine if and when the dissertation manuscript is ready to be presented at a public defence ceremony.

6. Examination

Each course within the third-cycle study programme concludes with a written or oral exam. The exam is graded either pass or fail. The grade is determined by a teacher (examiner) who is specially appointed by the head of the department. The following categories of teachers may be appointed examiners in the third-cycle study programme: professors, docents and senior lecturers. The same categories of teachers can become members of the discipline's board of supervisors.

A doctoral student, who at some other institution of higher education has passed courses that are part of the third-cycle study programme may, after being admitted to the programme, request that these credits be applied towards his or her degree, pending the approval of the director of the third-cycle study programme and after consultation with the supervisors. The same is the case for courses that are given as part of the university's shared offering of courses, or courses arranged at another faculty at some other university or institute of higher education.

The application of course credits shall be approved by the discipline's director of the third-cycle studies programme, and confirmed by the area board.

Second-cycle courses, though no more than 30 HEI credits, can be counted towards the degree. If this is done, the student's period of education – and period during which the student is financed - is shortened to a corresponding degree.

The doctoral thesis must either take the shape of a single, coherent scientific work (monographic dissertation) or be a compilation dissertation, consisting of scientific research papers, framed and given coherence by an introduction and summary (a so-called coat).

Ordinarily, at least two of the research papers in the compilation dissertation and one of the papers in a licentiate essay must be accepted for publication in a referee-reviewed scientific journal. However, as is the case for the monograph dissertation, the decisive criterion is the evaluation of the scientific quality of the compilation dissertation as a whole.

Dissertations, and research papers within a compilation dissertation that have several authors, can count towards a licentiate or doctoral degree only if it is possible to distinguish each author's particular contributions.

The subject matter of the dissertation and the language in which it is written are to be decided in consultation with the doctoral student's supervisors. A dissertation that is not written in English must include an appended English-language summary.

The doctoral dissertation must be defended orally in a public defence of the doctoral thesis. The vice-chancellor will determine the time and place of the defence. It must be scheduled within the regular term. The vice-chancellor can, upon receipt of a special request, give dispensation to allow the defence to take place at some other locality or some other time. The defence and the dissertation must be announced in good time (at least three weeks) before the day on which the defence is scheduled to take place.

The defence of the dissertation shall be led by chairperson. At the defence an examiner shall be present who evaluates the dissertation's scientific quality. The examiner must at least have the qualifications required for appointment to the position of docent. The department submits a proposal on the defence chairperson, examiner and examining committee to the discipline's board of supervisors, which then makes the decision on these matters. The examining committee decides on a grade for the dissertation. The examiner has the right to be present at the meetings of the examining committee and participate in the deliberations, but not in its decision-making. The same is the case for supervisors and the chairperson of the defence.

Ordinarily, the examining committee consists of three members, one of whom must be appointed chairperson. The composition of the committee is normally as follows: one member from student's own department at Södertörn University, one member from another department within Södertörn University, and a member from another seat of learning. Those who have been appointed supervisors for the doctoral student may not be included in the committee. The committee must appoint a chairperson from among its members. It is desirable that an examining committee have an equal gender division. Thus, the examining committee should include both women and men, unless there are particular reasons for not doing so.

A dissertation shall be judged and given a grade of either pass or fail. When grading the dissertation, the examining committee considers both the content of the dissertation and the defence of this dissertation at the public defence. Neither in the evidence nor in the examining committee's minutes shall there appear any motivation for the grade of pass. A member of the examining committee who wishes to enter a reservation against the decision of the majority can note his or her dissident opinion in the committee minutes or in other documentation of the deliberations, but not in the degree certificate.

Ordinarily, the student shall have earned all credits required for the degree before the disputation defence takes place.

7. Acceptance to third-cycle studies for a licentiate degree

The discipline of business studies does not have a particular application procedure for third-cycle studies that terminate in a licentiate degree. Rather, the licentiate exam can be taken as part of the doctoral exam.

The licentiate exam comprises a total of 120 HEI credits, divided as follows:

- courses worth 45 HEI credits
- 75 HEI credits which are earned through a scientific essay.

The scientific essay shall be scrutinised by an examiner during a seminar which is scheduled to take place during the school term. The examiner must have a doctoral degree, at least, as well as good knowledge of the area and methods essential to the essay. The essay must be made available to the university school, the area, and at the library of Södertörn University at least two term weeks before the seminar takes place.

The essay's grade will be determined by an examining committee consisting of three teachers, of which at least one is a professor; the other members shall have, at least, a doctoral degree. The examiner may be a member of the committee.

The examiner and the examining committee are appointed by the board of supervisors in consultation with the head of the department. Courses and essay will be graded either pass or fail. Otherwise, the same regulations apply, where applicable, to the licentiate degree as to the doctoral degree in business studies.