

GENERAL SYLLABUS FOR THIRD-CYCLE PROGRAMMES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

1. Qualitative targets

Third-cycle courses and programmes in Political Science at Södertörn University aim to provide autonomous and critically-minded researchers with the ability to provide autonomous contributions to the development of knowledge in Political Science. On completing the degree, these skills can also be used in a professional capacity.

On completing the degree programme, the doctoral student shall have acquired the following knowledge and abilities:

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate broad knowledge of Political Science and systematic understanding of the research field, as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and
- demonstrate specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the field of Political Science in particular.

Competence and skills

- demonstrate the capacity for analysis and synthesis in Political Science, as well that of reviewing and assessing new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically,
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues in the field of Political Science with scholarly precision, critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work,
- demonstrate through a thesis, the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge in the research field of Political Science through their own research,
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings in Political Science in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general,
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge in the research field of Political Science,
- demonstrate the capacity to support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.

Judgement and approach

- demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of Political Science, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

For the Degree of Licentiate, the student shall be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in Political Science, including current specialist knowledge in a limited part of this field, as well as knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of Political Science research in particular.

Competence and skills

- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively in the field of Political Science research, to plan and use adequate methods to conduct a limited piece of research
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss Political Science research and research findings in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity

Judgement and approach

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of their own research
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge.

Local intended learning outcomes

In addition to the intended learning outcomes for the licentiate and doctoral degrees, after completing the degree programme the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate broad knowledge in the area of Politics, Economy and the Organisation of Society (knowledge and understanding)
- be able to autonomously apply this knowledge in the analysis of an area that is relevant to the subject (competence and skills)

2. Entry requirements

A person is eligible for third-cycle education if they fulfil the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements. The applicant must also be assessed as possessing the necessary capability to complete the programme.

2.1 General entry requirements

A person meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes if they

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

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

2.2 Specific entry requirements

A person meets the specific entry requirements if they have knowledge equivalent to 90 credits in Political Science and a pass grade on a Master's level degree project in Political Science, or has acquired equivalent knowledge abroad or through a previously awarded degree. If there are special grounds, the Faculty Board may permit an exemption from the specific entry requirements for an individual applicant.

3. Admission and selection

Applications for admission to a third-cycle programme shall be submitted to Södertörn University. Admission regulations are stated in the Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University.

A curriculum vitae shall be appended to the application, as well as the texts and other documents that the applicant wishes to refer to and, where relevant, a short plan for the proposed thesis.

Admissions to third-cycle courses and programmes shall, except in exceptional circumstances, take place collectively. This not only applies to doctoral studentships, but also to other forms of doctoral positions. This is a procedure that promotes competition and strengthens the applicants' legal certainty.

Before deciding on admissions to third-cycle education, the subject's supervisory staff shall assess:

1. the applicant's merits and competence,
2. the quality of the research project,
3. the suitability and feasibility of the research project as a doctoral project,
4. the funding plan,
5. whether issues of research ethics have been considered, and
6. whether sufficient collected supervisory capacity exists to provide good and professional guidance and relevant expertise.

In addition to the entry requirements, admissions to third-cycle education are based primarily on the assessed ability to benefit from third-cycle studies.

On assessing the ability to benefit from the programme, special emphasis is placed on merits and the competence displayed in previous academic works (essays or articles). Based on the essays (where relevant), idea outline and other documentation, the autonomy and originality of the problem's formulation and analysis are assessed, as are the ability to problematise, theoretical and methodological awareness, systematics and stringency, scholarly maturity, critical approach and previously proven ability to comply with deadlines. Priority is given to the underrepresented gender in cases where merits are otherwise equal.

In association with admission to BEEGS, the research plan will also be assessed according to its links to the graduate school's specific geographic area; its focus on the Baltic states or Eastern Europe.

In addition, the supervisory staff should consider the candidate's desire and ability to participate in and actively contribute to the subject's research environment.

The actual review and selection of the applicants is organised via the subject's supervisory staff. At a preparatory stage the staff can conduct a review of the applicant's formal merits and qualifications in a working group that is appointed by the subject's supervisory staff. Where relevant, this working group cooperates with the graduate school, BEEGS, or person responsible for the project that has proposed admission using project funding. The working group also conducts a check of the candidate's formal qualifications. As work progresses, it is reported to the supervisory staff. The group then produces a written proposal for a ranking of the applicants, with reasoning.

The supervisory staff then process the issue. The applicants are selected using the selection criteria given above, and the staff rank a limited number of applicants in a leading group. A

representative of the doctoral students in the subject may be present during this process.

When a leading group of applicants is apparent, interviews should be conducted. These provide the opportunity for the supervisory staff to gather additional information. The primary aim of the interviews is to familiarise the applicant with the subject and the research area.

An individual study and funding plan is drawn up when the doctoral student commences their employment. A proposal is also made regarding the principal supervisor and other supervisor, which is confirmed by the supervisory staff at the end of the doctoral student's first semester. Note that the supervisory staff, after consultation with the doctoral student, may later appoint another supervisor. When this process is complete, the final proposal is submitted to the body decided upon by the Faculty Board.

4. The main content of the programme

The third-cycle programme in Political Science that concludes with a doctoral degree covers four years of full-time study and has a course component worth 75 credits and a doctoral thesis of 165 credits.

The course component is organised so that 45 credits (52.5 credits for doctoral students admitted to BEEGS) are compulsory courses and 30 credits are elective courses (22.5 credits for doctoral students admitted to BEEGS).

Compulsory courses

The compulsory courses consist of a number of courses common to the research area:

Research Design (7.5 credits)

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

Organisations and institutions (7.5 credits)

Qualitative Research Methods (7.5 credits)

Quantitative Research Methods (7.5 credits)

The following compulsory courses are offered in Political Science at third-cycle level:

Political Science Theory (7.5 credits)

The aim of the course is to critically and constructively review how various schools of thought in Political Science promote different assumptions and perspectives, and how these can result in the forming of different theories and results.

Doctoral students admitted via BEEGS have an additional compulsory course, namely *Contemporary Research into the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe* (7.5 credits).

Elective courses

Other courses are elective and are chosen in consultation with the supervisors and with particular consideration of what is suitable for the doctoral student's thesis work. Elective courses can be studied at other higher education institutions (HEI) in Sweden or abroad, or as special courses at the home HEI. The courses on offer also include the doctoral courses that are offered at BEEGS by international visiting researchers. In addition, some of these courses will be taught by teachers from one or more of the subjects included in the research area.

Elective courses worth no more than 15 credits can also be studied through independent study, adapted to the thesis' theme, which is decided in consultation with the supervisor and the subject's head of third-cycle studies.

5. Programme design

At third-cycle level, courses and thesis work shall be undertaken in parallel. Even if the first year is dominated by courses, the doctoral student shall start work on their thesis at an early stage. This work is presented at the subject's research seminars. Within one year of admission, the doctoral student shall present his or her thesis plan or introductory essay. After this, the doctoral student shall present at least two stages of the thesis at the subject's research seminars. The doctoral student shall conduct ongoing discussions with their supervisor about how studies are progressing.

Two supervisors are appointed for each doctoral student, of which one shall be the principal supervisor and have primary responsibility for the doctoral student's studies – including work on the thesis – and one other supervisor. If necessary, additional supervisors may be appointed. The principal supervisor shall normally be employed at Södertörn University. The supervisors shall have doctorates and the principal supervisor shall have a level of competence equivalent to associate professor. At least one of the doctoral student's supervisors shall have completed supervisor training.

A doctoral student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor. There is no need to provide a reason for the request.

An individual study plan shall be drawn up for each doctoral student. The individual study plan shall include a time plan for the doctoral student's education, information about how the doctoral student's supervision is organised, a description of the other obligations that the doctoral student, supervisors and school (or BEEGS) have during the period of study, and what is otherwise necessary for studies to be conducted in an effective manner.

The individual study plan is reviewed at least once per year by the subject's head of third-cycle studies in consultation with the supervisory staff. During the review, supervisors provide information about how studies are progressing. After consultation with the doctoral student and supervisors the supervisory staff may propose changes to the individual study plan. The revised study plan is presented to the research area's steering group and the Faculty Board.

The subject's head of third-cycle studies, the head of subject and the head of school shall certify in writing that they have read the individual study plan and the changes made to it. Doctoral students are entitled to supervision during the period their studies are funded, unless the vice-chancellor has decided otherwise with reference to the Higher Education Ordinance.

The period of study may only be extended if there are special grounds for doing so. Such grounds may be leave of absence because of illness, leave of absence for service in the defence forces or an elected position in a trade union or student organisation, or parental leave.

A doctoral student may participate in work at the school to no more than 20% of their total study period. The doctoral student shall be compensated for this with the equivalent extension to their period of study. The doctoral student is also expected to contribute to common activities at the school.

The following procedure is normally applied before the public defence of thesis. When the supervisors assess that the doctoral student has around 60 thesis credits remaining, a group of reviewers is appointed that includes the supervisors and another member of the subject's supervisory staff. This group issues recommendations for the continued work on the thesis.

When the doctoral student has completed a coherent manuscript, a test public defence is held in which the current thesis is defended at a research seminar. After additional work on the manuscript a group of reviewers from the supervisory staff evaluate if and when the thesis is ready to be presented at a public defence.

6. Examination

Each third-cycle course concludes with a written or oral examination. The examination can receive one of the following grades: Pass or Fail. The grade shall be determined by a teacher specially nominated by the head of subject (the examiner). The following categories of teachers may be appointed as an examiner in third-cycle education: Professor, associate professor and, in exceptional cases, permanently-employed senior lecturers. The supervisory staff includes professors and doctors who are permanently employed.

A doctoral student who has completed third-cycle courses at another unit at the university may, after admission, request a credit transfer for these after approval by the subject's head of third-cycle studies and after consultation with their supervisors. The same applies to courses offered at the university or courses organised at another faculty at another HEI. Credit transfer for courses shall be approved by the subject's head of third-cycle studies and validated by the body/bodies decided by the Faculty Board.

Credits can be transferred for courses at second-cycle level worth no more than 30 credits.

A doctoral thesis shall be either a unified and coherent scholarly work (monograph) or a compilation thesis that consists of academic papers, an introduction and summary that form summarising chapter.

At least one of the papers in a compilation thesis shall be accepted for publication in a peer review journal. Other contributions shall be reviewed in a scholarly form. However, just as with monograph theses, it is the overall assessment of the compilation thesis' scholarly quality that is the determining factor.

Theses and papers in compilation theses that are authored by several people may only be approved for licentiate or doctoral degrees if it is possible to differentiate the author's contributions.

The subject and language of the thesis are decided in consultation with the supervisors. A summary in English should be appended to a thesis in Swedish.

The doctoral thesis shall be presented and defended orally in public. The time and place for the public defence is decided by the vice-chancellor. It must take place during a semester. A decision regarding an exemption for a public defence in another place or at another time is taken by the vice-chancellor after special request. The public defence and thesis shall be announced in good time (at least three weeks) before the date of the public defence.

The defence shall be led by a chairperson. At the defence there shall be a faculty examiner who reviews the thesis' scholarly quality. The faculty examiner shall have at least associate professor level expertise. The supervisory staff, in consultation with the head of subject, propose the chair of the public defence, faculty examiner and examining committee. The decision is taken by the Faculty Board or another body appointed by the Faculty Board. The grade for a doctoral thesis shall be decided by an examining committee. The faculty examiner may be present at the meeting of the examining committee and participate in the discussion, but not in making decisions. The same applies to the supervisors and the chair of the public defence.

Normally, an examining committee in the subject has three members, of which one shall be appointed chair. The composition shall normally be as follows: one member comes from the subject at Södertörn University, a member comes from another subject at Södertörn University, and one member comes from the Political Science department at another HEI. A person who has supervised the doctoral student may not be a member of the examining committee. The committee shall itself appoint its chair. An even gender distribution shall be aimed for when appointing the examining committee.

A doctoral thesis shall be given one of the following grades: Pass or Fail. When grading, the content of the thesis and its public defence shall be considered. A motivation for the decision to award a Pass grade shall not be stated on the certificate or in the minutes of the examining committee. A member of the examining committee who wishes to register a reservation regarding the majority decision may have this noted in the minutes of the meeting or other documentation of the decision, but not on the degree certificate.

Normally, all course credits shall be completed before the public defence takes place.

7. Admission to third-cycle programmes for the purpose of earning a licentiate degree

Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 2 – Qualifications Ordinance

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis of at least 60 credits.

Local implementation regulations for third-cycle courses and programmes at Södertörn University

The following are the university-wide regulations for licentiate degrees. Steering groups for research areas for doctoral studies are otherwise tasked with creating their own routines for the examination of licentiate degrees.

- The Licentiate thesis shall be available at least 3 weeks prior to the examination.
- The Licentiate thesis does not need to be published in printed form unless there are special circumstances.
- The Licentiate thesis shall be reviewed by a faculty examiner and be defended publicly. The chair of the examining committee must have competence that is at least that of associate professor.
- No later than two semester weeks before the examination, a popular summary in Swedish of no more than one A4 page shall be emailed to nyhetsgruppen@sh.se, as a basis for press releases and news items on the university's website.
- After a completed public defence of thesis, the examining committee grade the thesis as either a pass or fail. Consideration must be paid to both the content of the thesis and its public defence.

Subject implementation regulations

Political Science has no specific admission to licentiate programmes, but a licentiate degree can be a stage of a doctoral degree.

A Licentiate degree covers 120 credits, as follows:

- Courses, 45 credits
- 75 credits for a Licentiate thesis.