



Admission Regulations at the University of Skövde ¹

- regulations for admission to third-cycle (doctoral) studies

The admission regulations were finalised by the Board of Governors on the 5th of December 2023, and takes effect on the 1st of January 2024.

Dnr HS 2024/127

¹ This is a translation of the Swedish version (Antagningsordning vid Högskolan i Skövde – föreskrifter för antagning till utbildning på forskarnivå, registration number HS 2023/783). In the event of any discrepancy, the Swedish version of this document shall prevail.

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1 General

The legislative texts that regulate admissions can be found in Higher Education Act, chapter 1, which regulates what knowledge third-cycle (doctoral) courses and study programmes should be based on (section 9a), as well as delegation administrative tasks relating to study programmes that lead to a joint degree with another higher education institution (section 18), the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 7, sections 34-41, with regulate admissions to third-cycle studies.

This admission regulation includes the Higher Education Ordinance's regulations on access to third-cycle course and study programmes (chapter 7, sections 34-41) and the local regulations within this area at the University of Skövde.

The processes for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes and doctoral studentship are closely linked. National and local regulations related to doctoral studentship are described in the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 5 and the "Appointment Procedure at the University of Skövde." (Anställningsordningen vid Högskolan i Skövde)

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 12, decisions regarding the admission and doctoral studentship cannot be appealed.

2 Funding

2.1 National regulation in the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 7)

General provisions

Section 34

The number of third-cycle students admitted to third-cycle courses and study programmes may not exceed the number that can be offered supervision and otherwise acceptable conditions for study and who have student finance under Section 36. Ordinance (2006:1053).

Section 35

For admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes, the applicant must

1. meet the general and specific entry requirements that the higher education institution has prescribed, and
2. be considered in other respects to have the ability required to assimilate the course or study programme.

Ordinance (2010:1064).

Section 36

A higher education institution may admit an applicant to third-cycle courses and study programmes who is appointed to a doctoral studentship. The higher education institution may also admit an applicant who has 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 doctorate or a doctorate in the fine, applied and performing arts.

For an applicant with funding via a grant, funding under item 1 of the first paragraph is regarded as guaranteed if the grant 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 published annually by Statistics Sweden. If the applicant will alternate time in Sweden and another country, the requirement for the level of the grant only applies to the time the applicant intends to be in Sweden.

Ordinance (2019:1014).

2.2 Local regulations at the University of Skövde

Admission to doctoral studies occurs only if funding is secured.

Doctoral studies are funded through employment, either through a doctoral studentship or other employment at the University. Alternatively, doctoral students may have a doctoral studentship or other employment with another employer. Scholarships are not used as funding.

The school concerned is responsible for ensuring that doctoral student employees at the University have secured funding for the entire intended study period. For doctoral students employed by an employer other than the University, the Dean must ensure that a contract is in place to secure funding for the entire study period.

The starting point should be that applicants are admitted to studies leading to a doctoral degree. If admission is to be granted for studies leading to a licentiate degree, the rationale for this must be clearly justified. This is to prevent a two-step model where students intending to pursue a doctoral degree are admitted to studies leading to a licentiate degree and then potentially continue towards a doctoral degree. A student admitted to studies leading to a licentiate degree who subsequently wishes to continue with studies towards a doctoral

degree must submit a new application that is assessed in the usual manner.

3 Admission and application

3.1 National regulations of the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 7)

Section 37

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

When a higher education institution intends to admit one or more third-cycle students, information must be provided by the institution through advertising or some equivalent method. Information need not, however, be provided

1. when admitting 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. when admitting a third-cycle student who has previously begun third-cycle studies at another higher education institution, or
3. if there are similar special grounds.

Ordinance (2006:1053).

Section 38

A higher education institution that is entitled 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 to the institution without a new admission process and to continue their courses and study programmes and graduate there. However, this only applies if the third-cycle student has completed the major part of their third-cycle studies at the institution in the area in which entitlement to award third-cycle qualifications is granted.

What is stated in the first paragraph must also apply if a higher education institution has been granted the title of university and is entitled to award third-cycle qualifications under Section 11 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434).

Ordinance (2010:1064).

3.2 Local regulations at the University of Skövde

As is evident from the ordinance text, the University is the admissions authority for all education at the University, i.e. is responsible for admission takes place and for how it takes place.

3.2.1 Process for admission of a doctoral student funded through employment at the University

When admitting a doctoral student whose funding is through employment at the University, the process follows these steps:

- **Advertisement**

A group for admission and recruitment is formed. The group includes the relevant Subject Coordinator in third-cycle education, at least one of the intended supervisors, the relevant Director of PhD Studies, the relevant Head of School (or Head of Division), and an Human Resources specialist.

Representatives from the Student Union and the trade unions have the right to be present and express their views at the group's meetings.

The eligibility requirements and assessment criteria for selection specified in the advertisement should align with the regulations for the admission process outlined in these guidelines and in the University's general syllabus for the relevant third-cycle course and study programme (see sections 4 and 5).

- **Selection**

The selection among eligible applicants should consider the applicants' ability to benefit from education in the specific subject of the doctoral studies (see section 5).

- **Admission**

The Dean makes decisions regarding admission to the relevant third-cycle courses and study programme. The admission process is preceded by an application submitted on a form available on the University's website. The relevant Director of PhD studies coordinates the admission process and is also the presenter at the Dean's decision on admission.

- **Employment**

The Head of School makes decisions regarding the doctoral studentship.

3.2.2 Process for admission of a doctoral Student funded through employment with another employer

When admitting a doctoral student whose funding is through employment with an employer other than the University, the process is as follows:

- **Admission**
The Dean makes decisions regarding admission to the relevant third-cycle courses and study programme. The admission process is preceded by an application submitted on a form available on the University's website. The relevant Director of PhD Studies coordinates the admission process and is also the presenter at the Dean's decision on admission.

3.2.3 Admission of doctoral students to courses

Admission of doctoral students registered at the University to third-cycle courses occurs through local admission. Admission can only take place for courses with a minimum of three eligible applicants. Doctoral students admitted to third-cycle course and study programmes at other higher education institutions in the Nordic region or partner universities may be admitted to courses subject to availability.

Admission of doctoral students registered at the University to second-cycle courses is regulated by the "Admission Regulations at the University of Skövde – regulations for admission to first- and second-cycle courses and study programmes", (Antagningsordning vid Högskolan i Skövde, föreskrifter för antagning till utbildning på grundnivå och avancerad nivå).

In the event of resource withdrawal, doctoral students may not be admitted to courses at the higher education institution. Doctoral students no longer have the right to participate in courses, seminars, and similar activities organized by the University. This is regulated in the University's guidelines for withdrawal of resources for doctoral students.

4 Entry requirements

4.1 General entry requirements

4.1.1 National regulations of Higher Education Institution Ordinance (chapter 7)

Section 39

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

1. been awarded a second-cycle qualification,
2. satisfied the 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 higher education institution may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds. Ordinance (2010:1064).

4.1.2 Local regulation at the University of Skövde

In the assessment of general entry requirements, it should be evaluated whether the applicant, in their education, has achieved such breadth and depth that it can form the foundation for the third-cycle courses and study programmes.

Exceptions to the general entry requirement may be granted to applicants who have not completed all components of an education of at least 240 higher education credits but whose completed education includes second-cycle courses at totaling at least 60 higher education credits, including an degree project related to the intended third-cycle course and study programme.

When assessing foreign qualifications, the principles for the evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications by the Swedish Council for Higher Education (Universitets- och högskolerådet) should be applied.

4.2 Specific entry requirements

4.2.1 National regulations of the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 7)

- **Section 40**

The stated specific entry requirements must be essential for a student to be able to assimilate 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. necessary language skills or other conditions determined by the course or study programme.

Ordinance (2006:1053).

4.2.2 Local regulations at the University of Skövde

Specific entry requirements should be outlined in the general syllabus for respective subjects (Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 6, section 27).

For specific entry requirements, the first- and second-cycle education is necessary within a particular subject and at a specific level or scope, for third-cycle course and study programme to be conducted, may be required. Additionally, proficient knowledge of English may be required, allowing the student to comprehend mandatory English-language literature, as well as write and defend their thesis in English. Requirements for proficiency in Swedish may also be imposed.

5 Ranking and selection

5.1 National regulations of Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 7)

- **Section 41**

Selection between applicants who meet the requirements stated in Sections 35 and 36 must consider their ability to assimilate the course or study programme.

The higher education institution decides which assessment criteria will be used in determining the ability to assimilate the course or study programme.

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

Ordinance (2010:1064).

5.2 Local regulation at the University of Skövde

Selection among eligible applicants should be based on their ability to benefit from the education within the subject of the relevant study programme. The assessment criteria, as outlined in the general syllabus, should be relevant to the applicants' ability to achieve the objectives of the degree. The objectives are described in the Higher Education Ordinance, appendix 2, the University's Local System of Qualifications, and the general syllabus.

The last sentence in section 41 aims to ensure that the possibility of transfer does not, in practice, become a condition for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes. It also aims to prioritize applicants who are assessed to be able to complete a doctoral degree in less than four years systematically. It also aims to counteract a

system with so-called shadow doctoral students. It does not, however, exclude the possibility that an applicant with possible credit transfer still beats applicants without this possibility, if they are otherwise deemed to have a greater ability to benefit from the study programme.

6 Miscellaneous

6.1 Approved leave from studies, non-completion and withdrawal of resources

An approved leave from studies is intended for a limited time with the intention to resume doctoral studies after the break. A non-completion is a definitive decision to conclude one's doctoral education. If a doctoral student significantly neglects their commitments according to the individual study plan, the Vice Chancellor may decide to withdraw the doctoral student's resources.

6.1.1 Approved leave from studies

According to the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 6, section 29), doctoral students have the right to an approved leave from studies due to illness, parental leave, service within the total defense, or for trust assignments within trade unions and student organizations. Doctoral students with a doctoral studentship can request to pursue studies part-time, but not with an activity level lower than 50 % (chapter 5, section 3a, Higher Education Ordinance).

The Dean, in consultation with the relevant Head Division, can grant a study break for other reasons after assessing the potential impact of the break on the education's timeframe and the project's relevance.

6.1.2 Non-completion

A notification of non-completion is a definitive decision to discontinue education. A doctoral student wishing to interrupt their studies must voluntarily request deregistration. If they later wish to resume their studies, they must submit a new application for admission to doctoral studies.

6.1.3 Withdrawal of resources

According to the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 6, section 30), the Vice-Chancellor may decide to withdraw a doctoral student's right to supervision and other resources. This may occur if the doctoral student substantially neglects their commitments according to the individual study plan.

This is regulated in the University's guidelines for the withdrawal of resources for doctoral students.

7 The document is valid from

This admission regulation is applicable from the 1st of January 2024. The revision replaces the previous admission regulation from the 15th of December, 2022 (dnr HS 2022/860).