



HÖGSKOLAN
DALARNA

General Programme Curriculum for the field of study: *Health and Welfare with Focus on Evidence-Based Practice* with a Doctoral Degree in the subject of *Health Sciences*

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DALARNA UNIVERSITY

Doctoral Programmes Board (FUN)

1. Description of Field of Study

The field of study *Health and Welfare with Focus on Evidence-Based Practice* concerns the work being done at both individual and societal levels to promote people's health and social well-being. Further, it concerns the enhancement of health- and welfare-related work through the development of knowledge, the summary and critical appraisal of knowledge, the implementation of evidence-based knowledge and the process evaluation of evidence-based practice. Evidence-based health and welfare work involves applying the best available scientific knowledge together with professional experience and an understanding of the individual client's situation, experience and preferences in order to reach decisions on what is to be done. The research within this field is by nature praxis-oriented.

The doctoral programme within the field of *Health and Welfare with Focus on Evidence-Based Practice* aims to develop the ability and skills of the doctoral student to create a basis for evidence-based knowledge and understanding through original studies, systematic literature retrieval, summaries and the critical appraisal of identified scientific knowledge. It further aims to develop the ability and skills of the doctoral student in terms of the way in which evidence-based knowledge and understanding can be implemented within the health and welfare sector, and the way in which its application can be evaluated.

The programme aims to develop the independence and ability of the doctoral student in: the application of scientific theory; in research design, research methods and data analysis using both quantitative and qualitative approaches; in research ethics; and in scientific presentation and communication. Upon completion of the programme, the student will be awarded a doctoral degree in the subject *Health Sciences* within the field *Health and Welfare with Focus on Evidence-Based Practice*.

2. Objectives for doctoral studies

2.1 General Learning Outcomes

In accordance with the System of Qualifications, Appendix 2, Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), the objectives of the programme are as follows:

Doctoral degree

Knowledge and Understanding

For the Degree of Doctor the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate broad knowledge 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 familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and Skills

For the Degree of Doctor the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues 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 dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively 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, and
- demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.

Judgement and Approach

For the Degree of Doctor the doctoral student shall

- 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 research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

Licentiate Degree

Knowledge and Understanding

For a Degree of Licentiate the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and Skills

For a Degree of Licentiate the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake a limited piece of research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames in order to contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss 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

For a Degree of Licentiate the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

3. Admission to the Programme

3.1 General

Admission is to either the Licentiate Degree (120 credits) or the Doctoral Degree (240 credits). The conditions for admission to the programme are either that the applicant has been offered a doctoral position at Dalarna University or that the applicant holds another position that allows doctoral studies to be undertaken.

Doctoral positions are advertised nationally and can also be advertised internationally. Admission is on a competitive basis.

3.2 Qualifications

To be admitted to the *Health and Welfare with Focus on Evidence-Based Practice* doctoral programme, the applicant must meet the general entry requirements and specific entry requirements and as such has what is required to complete the doctoral programme successfully.

General Entry Requirements (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 39)

To be admitted to third-cycle level (doctoral) studies, the applicant must have

1. completed a degree at the second-cycle level (a master's),
2. successfully completed courses amounting to at least 240 credits, of which at least 60 are at the second-cycle level, or
3. in some way, either in Sweden or in another country, gained equivalent skills.

The Graduate Studies Committee may, for an individual applicant, make exceptions in terms of the general entry requirements if there is good reason to do so.

Specific Entry Requirements

To be admitted to third-cycle level (doctoral) studies in *Health and Welfare with Focus on Evidence-Based Practice*, the applicant must have:

1. completed a degree at the second-cycle level in Health Sciences/Nursing, Social Work or an equivalent subject related to the field of Health and Welfare,
2. successfully completed a degree project (thesis) at the second-cycle level within the field of Health and Welfare, and
3. the required linguistic skills in English (and Swedish if relevant).

3.3 Selection

The employment profile shall be formulated by the Head of Research, Faculty Director and the Human Resources Department, with consideration given to the general programme curriculum. The selection of the candidate is undertaken by the Head of Research in consultation with the Health and Welfare's Doctoral Studies Board and with the Faculty Director.

Selection from among those candidates who meet the entry requirements shall be made on the basis of the candidates' ability to successfully complete the doctoral programme according to the following criteria:

- previous study results with weight given to the quality of the degree project (thesis) at the second-cycle level
- the ability to communicate in both written and spoken English
- personal suitability
- other merits

Admission to doctoral programme is processed by the

Health and Welfare's Doctoral Studies Board, which ranks applicants according to the selection criteria presented in the general programme curriculum.

The Doctoral Programmes Board makes a decision on admission based on the following: one, the collective evaluation of the applicant made by the Health and Welfare's Doctoral Studies Board; two, an interview and references; and three, a written assignment submitted by the applicant.

Before the decision is made on admission to the programme, the following will be assessed:

1. the quality of the Individual Study Plan (ISP) and whether or not it is feasible
2. whether issues of research ethics have been addressed
3. the financial plan
4. whether collective supervisor competence is adequate

3.4 Supervision

At least two supervisors will be appointed for the doctoral student. At least one of these will be an employee of Dalarna University. All supervisors shall have completed a supervisor course. One of the supervisors will act as Principal Supervisor and will be a Professor or Associate Professor. The Co- Supervisor(s) shall hold a doctoral degree. Once the application has been processed by the Health and Welfare's Doctoral Studies Board, as part of the admissions process, the Doctoral Programmes Board makes the decision on supervisors as part of the approval of the Individual Study Plan (ISP). This decision can be changed upon application by the doctoral student or his/her supervisor, or for other reasons. An application for a change in supervisor is processed by the Director of Doctoral Studies and is decided upon by the Doctoral Programmes Board. Doctoral students have the right to receive supervision amounting to 128 hours each year in accordance with the prescribed programme of 240 credits (120 credits for the licentiate degree).

4. Programme Description

4.1 General

The doctoral degree (licentiate) comprises four (two) years of full-time study, in total 240 (120) credits. The programme comprises a course component of 45 credits, of which 30 are compulsory and 15 are electives (doctoral degree), and for the licentiate, 30 credits, of which 20 credits are compulsory and 10 credits are electives. On top of this, there is a thesis component of 195 credits (doctoral degree) and 90 credits (licentiate).

The duration of studies may be extended if there is special reason, such as stated in the Higher Education Ordinance (chapter 5, section 7). Special reasons may be illness, leave of absence for service in the defence forces or an elected position in a trade union or student organisation, or parental leave.

4.2 Individual Study Plan (ISP) and Financial Plan

An individual study plan (ISP) that describes how the programme will be structured for the individual shall be drawn up in conjunction with admission. The ISP is designed together by the doctoral student and his/her supervisors, and shall make clear the areas of responsibility of each party, including the specific goals for the doctoral student and the expectations on the part of the supervisors. The ISP shall include:

1. the name of the Principal Supervisor and the Co-Supervisor(s)
2. a detailed description of how supervision will be organised
3. a schedule for the doctoral programme as well as a preliminary title for the thesis and a description of planned scientific work
4. a plan of the courses in the doctoral programme and a record of completed courses
5. a report of the amount of services performed within the organisation
6. a description of other scientific work/activities, such as participation in seminars, conferences and research visits to other institutes of higher education
7. a financial plan
8. a contract with the employer for the doctoral student, who is financed by, for example, a municipality, county council or region

The ISP is drawn up on a special form by both the doctoral student and the principal supervisor. It is reviewed by the Director of Doctoral Studies for the programme, and the Health and Welfare's Doctoral Studies Board, after which it is approved by the Doctoral Programmes Board. As an appendix to the ISP, there will be a financial contract/plan outlining the financial responsibility for the duration of the doctoral studies. In those cases where financing for doctoral studies comes from an employer other than Dalarna University, the manager of the company or organisation where the doctoral student is employed will support the ISP in its entirety, and in so doing attests to the fact that the programme may proceed as described.

The ISP is updated and reviewed on a yearly basis, unless stated otherwise in the ISP, and is sent to the Director of Doctoral Studies who is responsible for follow-up and for reporting to the Doctoral Programmes Board. If the Head of Research or the Doctoral Programmes Board so requests, follow-up will be conducted more often than on an annual basis. An approved and reviewed ISP as well as completed credits will be documented and archived.

Significant deviations from the ISP may result in the doctoral student being refused access to the University's resources, in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance. The Principal Supervisor shall, through the annual review, determine whether the doctoral student is following the ISP.

If the Principal Supervisor determines that the student's deviation from the ISP is significant, then the Director of Doctoral Studies shall give the doctoral student the opportunity to address the supervisor's report and shall thereafter submit a report to the Doctoral Programmes Board. If the Doctoral Programmes Board determines that there is reason to withdraw resources, then such reasons shall be presented to the Vice-Chancellor for decision.

Half time Seminar

At approximately the mid-way point of the programme, a half time seminar will be held. The purpose of this seminar is to review the work completed to this point as well as the plan for the remaining work up to the public defence of the thesis. The seminar is advertised publicly and the reviewers are selected by the Head of Research, based on suggestion from

supervisors. The seminar is carried out with the Principal Supervisor acting as Chairperson and with two reviewers who are not employees of the University, together with a reviewer from Dalarna University. At least two of the reviewers shall be Associate Professors or Professors. The reviewers, supervisors and doctoral student meet after the seminar to summarise the discussion and to decide upon a focus for the continuing work.

All scientific papers included in the thesis, as well as the Kappa (or all chapters in a monograph thesis) must have been presented in seminars during the doctoral programme.

4.3 Thesis

The doctoral thesis shall normally comprise a series of scientific papers and include a Kappa (i.e. introductory chapter) in Swedish or English. A doctoral thesis normally comprises four papers of scientific work; however, it is the scientific quality and the independent contribution to a body of knowledge of the work by the doctoral student that are evaluated, not the number of articles in the thesis. The thesis may also be in the form of a monograph.

The licentiate thesis normally comprises two or more scientific articles with an introductory chapter but can also be in monograph form.

4.4 Courses

The courses are run by the School of Education, Health and Social Studies or at other university schools or institutes. There must be a written course curriculum that presents the objectives of the course, the content of the course and the number of credits. The courses that are to be included in the doctoral programme must be specified in the ISP. The courses are either compulsory or elective. For every doctoral student, an examiner will be selected who will be responsible for assessing whether or not the courses can be transferred for credit.

Doctoral Degree

A doctoral degree comprises a course component of 45 credits, of which 30 credits are for compulsory courses.

Core Courses:

- General Principles of Scientific Work: Introductory Course, 7.5 credits
- Scientific Methods, 7.5 credits
- Systematic review, meta-synthesis and meta-analysis, 7.5 credits
- Implementation research in health and welfare practice, 7.5 credits

Elective courses are chosen based on the needs of the doctoral student and the focus of the thesis.

Licentiate Degree

The licentiate degree comprises a course component of 30 credits, of which 20 credits are for compulsory courses.

Core Courses:

- General Principles of Scientific Work: Introductory Course, 7,5 credits
- Scientific Methods, 7, 5 credits
- Systematic review, 5 credits

Seminars/Conferences

For the doctoral degree (licentiate degree), a maximum of 5.5 credits (2.5 credits) are given for active seminar and conference participation as part of the elective course credits, in accordance with the allocation below:

- 20 research seminars, 3,0 credits (10 seminars, 1,5 credits)
- Presentation at a research seminar, 1 credit (0.5 credits)
- Presentation with poster or oral presentation at a conference, 1.5 credits (1 credit)

5. Degree Requirements

Both doctoral studies and licentiate studies conclude with a public defence of the thesis. For the degree to be awarded, the student must have received passing grades for both the courses that form part of the programme as well as the doctoral thesis or licentiate thesis. The Director of Doctoral Studies, with support from the Principal Supervisor, checks and ensures that all formal requirements for the completion of the doctoral degree (licentiate degree) have been met. The Health and Welfare's Doctoral Studies Board will then recommend the public defence and the decision is made by the Dean. The Grading Committee conducts a review prior to this of the work to be included in the thesis before a decision is made about whether there should be a public defence.

Doctoral Degree

To be awarded a doctoral degree, the student requires 240 credits, of which 45 are from courses and the remaining 195 credits are for a doctoral thesis. To proceed to a public defence, at least two of the papers will have been published or accepted for publication in scientific journals with peer review.

The thesis will be presented orally in English or Swedish at a public defence led by a Chairperson, who must be either an associate professor or professor, and will involve an External Reviewer (Opponent) and a Grading Committee with three members, of which at least two members are not employed at Dalarna University. The External Reviewer shall hold a doctoral degree, and the members of the Grading Committee shall be Associate Professors or Professors. The External Reviewer, Grading Committee and Chairperson are appointed by the Doctoral Programmes Board. The Grading Committee makes the decision on whether the thesis will receive a passing grade or a failing grade.

Licentiate Degree

To be awarded a licentiate degree, the student requires 120 credits, of which 30 are from courses and the remaining 90 credits are for a licentiate thesis. To proceed to a public defence, a paper must be published in or accepted by a scientific journal with peer review.

All the core courses (20 credits) must be completed before a licentiate degree can be awarded. The thesis will be presented orally in English or Swedish at a public defence led by a Chairperson, who must be either an associate professor or professor, and the evaluation of the thesis is made by a Grading Committee that will have three members of whom at least two are not employed at Dalarna University. The members of the Grading Committee shall be Associate Professors or Professors. The Grading Committee and the Chairperson are selected by the Doctoral Programmes Board. The Grading Committee makes the decision on whether the thesis will receive a passing grade or a failing grade.