



HÖGSKOLAN  
DALARNA

# **General Syllabus for the Doctoral Programme in Educational Work**

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Responsible for updates: Director of Doctoral Programme

**DALARNA UNIVERSITY**  
**Doctoral Programmes Board (*Forskarutbildningsnämnden – FUN*)**

## **1. Description of Subject**

The doctoral (third cycle) subject *Educational Work* concerns itself with institutional pedagogical practices within preschool, school and higher education. Teaching, learning, care and the promotion of development are its central objects of knowledge, and these are viewed as integrated processes. Their interrelationships are the focus of this research field, and studies in this field have a foundation in didactic questions. Also included in the subject are studies of the material and organisational conditions for these objects of knowledge: for example, studies of teaching environments, as well as studies of different designs of teaching, education and learning. Other central aspects of this research field are questions about educators', children's and students' experiences and understanding of teaching, learning, care and development, and the pre-existing requirements of these objects of knowledge. Added to this is the development of related theories and methods for studies of educational practices: this forms a significant component of the doctoral subject. What characterises the subject is its practice-oriented interdisciplinary approach with a focus on teaching and learning in different school forms and subject areas. The subject thus forms the common knowledge base of the teaching profession and corresponds with the area for the degree.

## **2. Learning Outcomes for Doctoral Programmes**

### **2.1 General Learning Outcomes**

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

#### **Degree of Doctor**

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

For the Degree of Doctor, the third-cycle 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 third-cycle 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 third-cycle 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.

### **Degree of Licentiate**

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

For a Degree of Licentiate, the third-cycle 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 third-cycle 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 third-cycle 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 Degree of Licentiate (120 credits) or the Degree of Doctor (240 credits). A condition for admission to doctoral studies is that the applicant has either been offered a doctoral position at Dalarna University or holds another position that allows them to undertake doctoral studies. Upon admission, a funding agreement must be drawn up by the doctoral student's employer or equivalent. This must state that the employer or other party agrees that the studies are compatible with possible continued part-time work with the employer.

Doctoral positions are advertised nationally and on occasion also internationally. The Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*) prepares the advertisement, taking into account the

General Syllabus for Educational Work, before a decision is made by the Head of the School of Teacher Education.

### 3.2 Qualifications

To be admitted to doctoral studies in Educational Work, the applicant must meet both the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements, and must be deemed to have the ability required to benefit from the programme.

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

An applicant meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle (doctoral) courses and study programmes if they:

1. have been awarded a second-cycle (Master's) qualification,
2. have satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second-cycle, or
3. have acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or another country.

#### *Specific Entry Requirements*

To be admitted to third-cycle (doctoral) studies in Educational Work, the applicant must have:

1. completed an independent thesis at the second-cycle (Master's) level of at least 15 credits,
2. completed a professional teaching degree,
3. at least two years of professional teaching experience, and
4. the requisite language skills in Swedish and English, both spoken and written.

Students who have acquired equivalent knowledge in other ways in Sweden or another country can be admitted to the doctoral programme after review.

### 3.3 Selection

Selection from among applicants who meet both the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements must be made by taking into account their ability to benefit from the doctoral education and is based on the following assessment criteria:

- previous study results
- quality of previous scientific productions
- quality of the research plan included as part of the application, or equivalent
- ability to communicate in both spoken and written English
- personal suitability
- other credentials

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. (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41).

### 3.4 Supervision

For each doctoral student, two to three supervisors must be appointed. At least one of the supervisors must be employed at Dalarna University. All supervisors must have completed supervisor training or must complete such training as soon as the opportunity arises at their own or another university. Supervisors must hold at minimum a degree of doctor. One of the supervisors is appointed as the main supervisor and must be qualified at minimum as associate professor (*docent*). The Director of Doctoral Programme prepares the proposal on supervisors

and presents this to the Head of the School of Teacher Education. The provisional appointment of the Principal Supervisor (*huvudhandledare*) is made at the time the doctoral student is admitted to the programme. The formal appointment is then made of both the Principal Supervisor and the Co-supervisor (*biträdande handledare*) at the point when the individual study plan is established, which must take place no later than three months after the start date of studies. Supervision and the supervisor relationship are reviewed by the Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*) at the same time as the annual review of the individual study plan. Doctoral students in full-time studies are guaranteed 128 hours of supervision per year.

A change in supervisor can take place whenever the doctoral student or supervisor initiates a request (see *Regler för byte av handledare* HDa 1.2-2019/1008) or upon the initiative of the Director of Doctoral Programme. Any time there is a change in supervisor, it is the Director of Doctoral Programme who prepares the matter for the Head of School (*prefekt*), who in turn makes the decision on the matter. Decisions on the withdrawal or reinstatement of supervision and other resources for doctoral students are prepared by the Head of School and are made by the Vice-Chancellor (*rektor*).

## 4. Programme Description

### 4.1 General

The Degree of Doctor in the field of Educational Work comprises 240 credits with a course component comprising 75 credits. Of these 75 credits, 45 credits are for compulsory courses and 30 credits are for elective courses. There is an independent research project comprising 165 credits, which is presented in the form of a thesis. The Degree of Licentiate comprises 120 credits with a course component comprising 45 credits. Of these 45 credits, 30 credits are compulsory courses and 15 credits are for elective courses. There is an independent research project comprising 75 credits, which is presented in the form of a thesis.

The doctoral student's texts must be discussed at the following seminars:

**Planning Seminar (*planeringsseminarium*).** The supervisors and doctoral student discuss who to appoint as the reviewer (*granskare*). The reviewer, who must hold a doctoral degree, can be from Dalarna University or can be external. The supervisors and doctoral student put their proposal for the reviewer to the Director of Doctoral Programme, who makes the final decision. The seminar is held when the equivalent of 10 percent of the doctoral thesis or licentiate thesis has been completed.

**Mid-Way Seminar (*mittseminarium*).** The Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*) appoints two reviewers (*granskare*) (one external and one from Dalarna University) upon proposal from the supervisor and doctoral student, who have consulted on the matter. The reviewers must hold doctoral degrees. The seminar is held when the equivalent of 50 percent of the doctoral thesis or licentiate thesis has been completed. In cases where the doctoral student has completed a degree of licentiate and chooses to continue their studies towards a degree of doctor, the mid-way seminar is replaced by a planning seminar.

**Final Seminar (*slutseminarium*).** The Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*) decides who to appoint as the external senior reviewer (*granskare*) for the doctoral thesis and as the external reviewer, who holds a doctoral degree, for the licentiate thesis upon proposal by the supervisors and doctoral student, who consult on the matter. The seminar is held when the equivalent of 90 percent of the doctoral thesis or licentiate thesis has been completed.

After each review seminar (*avstämningsseminarium*), the reviewer(s) (*granskare*), supervisors and doctoral student meet both to summarise the main points of view and suggestions that have emerged and to indicate the direction of future work. Any changes in the doctoral student's planning are entered into the individual study plan ahead of the annual review.

A person may be employed as a doctoral student for a total of no more than eight years (Degree of Doctor) and four years (Degree of Licentiate), which means that the rate of study for doctoral studies must be at least 50 percent of full-time. This may be extended if special grounds exist: for example, leave of absence because of illness, leave of absence for service in the Swedish defence forces, an elected position in a trade union or parental leave (Higher Education Ordinance, chapter 5, section 7). The doctoral student may teach and perform other departmental duties to a maximum of 20 percent of their total study time and must be compensated with a corresponding extension of study time.

#### 4.2 Individual Study Plan

No later than three months after admission, the doctoral student and supervisors must draw up an individual study plan using the special form designed for this purpose. This is in accordance with *Instruktion för individuell studieplan (ISP) för doktorand antagen vid Högskolan Dalarna*. The individual study plan is an important legal document that regulates the obligations of both the University and the doctoral student. It also serves as a foundation throughout the doctoral student's studies. The individual study plan is reviewed by the Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*), and this is then presented to the Head of School (*prefekt*) for a decision.

The individual study plan must:

1. state the names of the Principal Supervisor (*huvudhandledare*) and the Co-supervisor (*biträdande handledare*),
2. specify the organisation of the supervision, including the number of supervision hours the doctoral student has, and how these hours are allocated to the Principal Supervisor (*huvudhandledare*) and the Co-supervisor (*biträdande handledare*),
3. include a timetable for the doctoral student's studies, a preliminary title of the thesis, and a description of planned work and research ethics considerations,
4. include a plan of doctoral courses that are to be included in the upcoming academic year as well as a record of successfully completed courses,
5. include a report of the amount of departmental duties at the University, and
6. describe other academic work, such as participation in seminars, conferences and research stays at other higher education institutions.

The Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*) is responsible for ensuring that the individual study plan is reviewed once per academic year or more frequently if necessary, and that it is also adjusted to the extent necessary in consultation with the doctoral student and their supervisor.

Significant deviations from the individual study plan may result in the doctoral student being denied access to university resources. This is outlined in the Higher Education Ordinance. At the annual review, the Principal Supervisor must assess whether the doctoral student is following the individual study plan. If the Principal Supervisor deems a deviation to be significant, then the Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*) must allow the doctoral student the opportunity to address, in writing, the supervisor's report. If the Director of Doctoral Programme determines there to be reason to withdraw resources, then the matter

must be handed over to the Head of School, who then hands over the matter to the Vice-Chancellor for a decision.

#### 4.3 Doctoral Thesis/Licentiate Thesis

The research project that the doctoral student will complete as part of their doctoral studies in Educational Work is to be an independent project that the doctoral student designs and completes on their own with support from their supervisors. A doctoral thesis comprises 165 credits, and a licentiate thesis comprises 75 credits. The thesis can be written in the form of a monograph or a compilation thesis. In the case of a compilation thesis for a degree of doctor, the normal requirement is four peer-reviewed scientific publications (of which at least two have been accepted for publication through standard peer-review procedures) and a so-called *kappa* (introductory chapter). For the licentiate degree, the normal requirement is at least two peer-reviewed scientific publications (of which at least one has been accepted for publication through standard peer-review procedures) and a *kappa*. The *kappa* of the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis must clearly state what the doctoral student's contribution is and, where applicable, what the contributions of other authors in the articles, or equivalent, are that have been included in the thesis.

The doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis in Educational Work must be written in Swedish or English. The doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis that has been written in English must contain a summary in Swedish, and the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis that has been written in Swedish must contain a summary in English. The summary must be written in such a way that a reader without knowledge in the field is able to gain a clear understanding of the purpose and main content of the thesis, the scientific methods and theoretical tools, and the results achieved. Reference must be made to the different chapters/papers (articles and manuscripts) that form part of the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis.

The thesis work is central when it comes to assessing whether the doctoral student has met the goals of their doctoral studies. Prior to a decision on the defence/licentiate seminar, the thesis work must therefore be reviewed to see that it meets the scope and quality that correspond to four years/two years of doctoral studies. When the principal supervisor determines that the thesis is essentially complete and that the doctoral student in all other ways meets the degree outcomes as outlined in the general syllabus, the doctoral student and principal supervisor (*huvudhandledare*) submit an application for the defence/licentiate seminar in which they propose a chairperson, opponent and examining committee members as well as the date for the defence/licentiate seminar. The application is prepared by the Director of Doctoral Programme (*studierektor*), and FUN then makes the decision. Before FUN makes a final decision on the date for the defence/licentiate seminar, the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis must be previewed by two external senior researchers with sound competence in the field of Educational Work. The response of these two researchers is limited at this point: either they recommend that the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis is ready to be both published and put forward for examination, or they advise against this. The doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis is then defended orally at a public defence/licentiate seminar with an opponent and an examining committee in accordance with university guidelines.

#### 4.4 Courses

Doctoral courses are taught at Dalarna University and are either compulsory or elective. The compulsory courses are taken for the most part at Dalarna University, while electives can be taken at either Dalarna University or other universities. Elective courses are selected in consultation with supervisors and, in cases where they were taken at other higher education institutions, must receive credit transfer. The person in charge of credit transfer determines

whether the completed courses or components of courses can be transferred for credit and suggests that FUN makes the decision on this. The individual study plan specifies the courses to be included in the doctoral student's education.

The compulsory course component comprises 45 credits for a Degree of Doctor in Educational Work. The compulsory courses are as follows:

*Introduction to Research in Educational Work*, 5 credits  
*Epistemology and Research Ethics*, 7.5 credits  
*Intellectual Challenges – Formulating and Investigating a Problem*, 5 credits  
*Scientific Methods for Research in Educational Work*, 10 credits  
*Research in Educational Work – Theoretical Perspectives*, 7.5 credits  
*Research Communication for Societal Development*, 4 credits  
*Academic Writing and Speaking in English*, 6 credits

The compulsory course component comprises 30 credits for a Degree of Licentiate in Educational Work. The compulsory courses are as follows:

*Introduction to Research in Educational Work*, 5 credits  
*Epistemology and Research Ethics*, 7.5 credits  
*Scientific Methods for Research in Educational Work*, 10 credits  
*Research in Educational Work – Theoretical Perspectives*, 7.5 credits

## **5. Examination and Degree Requirements**

Before the defence, a senior external opponent, who should be well-established in the subject of Educational Work, and an examining committee made up of three senior academics, of which at least one is from Educational Work, are appointed. Two members of the examining committee cannot be employed at Dalarna University and one must be employed at Dalarna University. A reserve for the examining committee is appointed who can replace a member in the event of their absence. For the licentiate seminar, a senior external opponent is appointed as well as an examining committee made up of three members who each holds a doctoral degree: at least one must be a senior academic, at least one must be an external recruitment, and at least one must hold a doctoral degree or be a senior academic in the subject of Educational Work. A reserve for the examining committee is appointed who can replace a member in the event of their absence. The doctoral defence and the licentiate seminar are led by a chairperson in accordance with *Regler för examination på forskarnivå vid Högskolan Dalarna*. The thesis is awarded the grade of either Fail or Pass. For the degree, the doctoral student must achieve a Pass (*Godkänt*) in the compulsory and elective courses in the doctoral programme and their defence must also achieve a Pass (*Godkänt*).