



Blekinge Institute of Technology

# Third-cycle courses and study programmes

Introduction to third-cycle students

Academic and Administration Support Office  
2015-12-02



# Contents

General study plan .....	3
Admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes .....	3
Credit transfer of courses .....	4
Blekinge Student Union and Doctoral Students Committee .....	4
Doctoral studentship.....	4
Third-cycle student with other maintenance .....	5
Expectations on third-cycle students.....	5
Education period.....	6
Supervision.....	6
Teaching mentor .....	6
Individual study plan .....	7
Courses.....	7
Registration of study results .....	8
Activity and maintenance .....	8
Approved leave from studies .....	8
Non-completion of studies .....	8
Sickness- and parental insurance for third-cycle students with stipends.....	9
Degree.....	9
If a problem occurs .....	9
More information .....	9
Functions.....	9
Enclosure 1: Framework .....	9
• Admission regulations .....	10
• Admission and employment of doctoral students .....	10
• Directions individual study plan .....	10
• Lowest financial level for admission of doctoral students.....	10
• Program and action plan for quality work .....	10
• Regulations for change of supervisor.....	10



- Regulations for the public defence of a doctor’s thesis ..... 10
- Regulations for licentiate seminar ..... 10
- Regulations for the consideration of a doctoral student’s right to supervision and other resources ..... 10
- Regulations for doctoral students’ courses at BTH ..... 10
- Recommendations for doctoral students’ participation in first- and second-cycle courses..... 10
- Guidelines for the public defence of a doctor’s thesis and licentiate seminar ..... 10
- Guidelines for credit transfer of courses in third-cycle education..... 10
- Guidelines for the composition of grading committees at BTH (annex to Regulations for the public defence of a doctor’s thesis)..... 10
- Routines for yearly follow-up of individual study plan ..... 10
- Guidelines for appointment of principal supervisor and examiner at third-cycle education ..... 10
- Role descriptions in third-cycle education at BTH ..... 10
- Credit transfer regulations ..... 10
- Annex 2: Templates and forms ..... 11
  - Application for/Decision on admission to third-cycle education ..... 11
  - Template individual study plan for third-cycle education (enclosures: plan of department duties, funding plan, goal attainment of the education and form for credit transfer of courses from previous studies) ..... 11
  - Template for non-completion of studies, third-cycle education ..... 11
  - Application for changed supervisor constellation..... 11
  - Application: request for licentiate seminar..... 11
  - Application: request for public defence of a doctor’s thesis ..... 11



This document is intended to give guidance to the third-cycle education at BTH. All local documents which we refer to are listed last in this document and are found in their entirety at the BTH internal homepage [inside.bth.se](http://inside.bth.se). If you cannot reach the documents there you can contact the research administrators at the address [forskningforskarniva@bth.se](mailto:forskningforskarniva@bth.se).

## General study plan

For each subject offered as third-cycle education there is to be a general study plan. Among other things this is to contain a description of the course or programme contents, plan and the admission requirements for the course or programme.

## Admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes

To carry out third-cycle studies you need to be admitted to third-cycle education. Notification of vacant education places is done via [www.bth.se/jobb](http://www.bth.se/jobb) and the official notice boards of BTH. Applications for third-cycle education are done continuously during the academic year and are done in competition with others. She/he who is interested in starting third-cycle education should first contact a supervisor in the subject field in which she/he wishes to begin the studies. Admission to third-cycle education can sometimes lead to an employment as a doctoral student at BTH, a doctoral studentship, but an individual does not need to be employed at BTH to be admitted to the third-cycle education. At BTH there are, for example, third-cycle students who fund their research studies through stipends as well as with means from companies, county councils or municipalities (see further under *Third-cycle student with other maintenance*).

In order to be admitted as a third-cycle student the applicant is to fill in the form "Application/Decision about admission to third-cycle education". The application must enclose an individual study plan ISP, which is a preliminary work plan for the entire study route. The study plan is written by the applicant, the supervisor and the examiner jointly. If the application regards a licentiate degree, the study plan is to contain the planning to the licentiate degree and if it regards admission to a doctoral degree the planning is to reflect this. A funding plan also needs to be enclosed with the documentation; this can be found as an appendix to the individual study plan and is to be written by the concerned head of department. If the first-cycle degree has been taken at a different institution than BTH a copy of the degree certificate needs to be enclosed with the application. Please see "Admission regulations for Blekinge Institute of Technology", section of third-cycle education. If the applicant wishes to make a credit transfer of previous studies you will find enclosed with the ISP (Individual Study Plan) a form for the application for credit transfer (see further under *Credit transfer of courses*).

The application, the individual study plan containing the funding plan and possible copy of degree certificate are to be sent on to the Registrar. The administrator prepares the application for the decision of the concerned dean to either grant alternatively decline a third-cycle education place. At a granted application the administrator documents information regarding the admitted student's study route in the national system LADOK. A decision about granting



possible credit transfers from previous education is made in connection with the decision of establishing the first individual study plan. See further under *Credit transfer of courses*.

An application may refer to a Degree of Licentiate, a Degree of Doctor or a later part of the third-cycle studies. When a third-cycle student who has been admitted for a Degree of Licentiate has taken her/his degree, a non-completion of studies is registered in LADOK, that is, the individual has not any longer a third-cycle education place. Sometimes there may be a possibility for the individual to continue towards a Degree of Doctor in the same third-cycle subject area. A continuation towards a later part of the third-cycle education requires admission to these studies. An individual cannot be registered on two third-cycle educations at the same time; to admit someone to a later part of the third-cycle studies before a non-completion of studies has been registered is not an alternative.

## Credit transfer of courses

A third-cycle student who has already passed some of her/his third-cycle studies in another form or somewhere else may, on certain conditions, include this in her/his studies. The third-cycle student does not then need to be examined once more on this part of the studies. More information about credit transfer of courses in connection with admission to third-cycle education is found under "Credit transfer of first and second-cycle education and at admission to third-cycle education at Blekinge Institute of Technology".

When there is a need to obtain credits for certain studies, the third-cycle student can also make a credit transfer of first and second-cycle courses under ongoing third-cycle studies (see further under *Courses*).

## Blekinge Student Union and Doctoral Students Committee

The students' union at BTH is Blekinge Student Union. Among other things they have representatives in the Board of Governors, the Deans' Group and the Working Environment Committee who make decision about current third-cycle students and the third-cycle students' conditions. They also work at a national level through SFS, the Swedish National Union of Students, where examples of important issues are the third-cycle students' possibilities to representation and increased social security. They also help with support and guidance during the entire study period in both social and study-related matters. You are always welcome to contact both the Student Union and the Doctoral Students Committee and you readily reach them via the web page [www.bthstudent.se](http://www.bthstudent.se).

## Doctoral studentship

The form of employment for a doctoral student is regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance, 5 Chap. 2, 3 and 7 §§. For example it is stated here how much work in addition to the studies you may have within the framework of the employment at the institution (as a maximum twenty percent) as well as the possibility to a part-time employment (minimum fifty percent of full time).

All third-cycle students have the right to a total study period equivalent to full-time studies during four years for a Degree of Doctor, provided that the study results are attained in accordance with an individually established study plan. The employment is usually entered into and prolonged by one year at a time. If the individual is employed as a



doctoral student it is common to have, parallelly with the studies, departmental duties<sup>1</sup>. The study period is prolonged based on the teaching that the doctoral student carries out, however maximum 20 percent of full time, which means a maximal study period of five years within the framework of the doctoral studentship. It is important to revise the individual study plan in reference to changes, as for example pace of study, and to present reasons for changes of the stated point of time for the completion of the education period.

A doctoral studentship has the same benefits as a common employment. The salary for a doctoral student follows a doctoral ladder where the salary increases in step with the attained study results. The levels of the doctoral ladder are adjusted every year and follow the salary development of the Institute. The principal supervisor is responsible for the reporting of attained level for a salary increase to the Human Resources Office. You find more information in the BTH Staff Manual.

### Third-cycle student with other maintenance

The Higher Education Institution has, regarding admission to third-cycle education, made the judgment that the study funding is to be secured during the entire study period. For all third-cycle students, regardless of the source of funding of the third-cycle studies, the Institute at admission is to secure that the applicant can dedicate time enough to the education to complete it within four years regarding the Degree of Licentiate and eight years regarding the Degree of Doctor. The head of the concerned department is to confirm the funding. Decisions on admission to third-cycle students at BTH are made by the dean of the concerned faculty (The Higher Education Ordinance, 7 Chap. 36 §).

The Higher Education Ordinance does not regulate the situation if the study funding ceases after the admission of a student to third-cycle studies. The current interpretation is, however, that there is no absolute obligation for the higher education institution to fund an admitted third-cycle student if the originally planned funding complete ceases to exist. In a situation like that an assessment of possible financial obligations must be done in regard to the specific case and in reference to the current individual study plan, funding plan and possible agreements.

The same rules apply for third-cycle students with other maintenance as for employed doctoral students regarding admission, supervision, individual study plans, study follow-ups, courses and degree procedures.

Information about the lowest financial level for the admission of doctoral students is found on the web site.

### Expectations on third-cycle students

Unless another agreement is made, the third-cycle student is expected to:

- participate in and contribute to the research environment that the student forms part of,
- participate in possible research project meetings,
- carry out regular meetings and follow-ups in accordance with the examiner's and the supervisors' requests,
- have regular contact with her/his supervisors
- answer emails, text messages, etc., from the examiner and the supervisors speedily,
- if the third-cycle student is employed at BTH, the third-cycle student is expected to, in addition to the above, participate in and contribute to a functioning work environment at the department. This includes the departmental

---

<sup>1</sup> Other possible work for the Institute, for example engagement for the Student Union, is agreed upon separately.



duties that may occur, for example in the form of teaching, where the third-cycle student among other things is expected to be available for her/his students but also take part in department meetings.

## Education period

All third-cycle students have the right to a total education period corresponding to full-time studies during four years for a Degree of Doctor, regardless of the funding of the studies. Dependent on the pace of study the education period towards a Degree of Doctor can be extended to eight years. The third-cycle student should, as an average during the education period, commit to the third-cycle studies corresponding to a minimum of 50 percent of full time (the Higher Education Ordinance, 7 Chap. 36 §).

The education period starts from the date that in the application is given as the start of the studies. The education period can be prolonged if acceptable reasons exist, for example leave due to illness, duties in the Total Defence or commissions of trust in trade unions and student organizations or paternity leave (the Higher Education Ordinance, 6 Chap. 29 §).

All absence that leads to prolongation of the education period is to be reported to the supervisor.

In connection with the study follow-up each academic year it is important that the principal supervisor together with the third-cycle student follows up and makes sure that there remains education time to complete the education in accordance with the plan.

It falls on each individual third-cycle student to apply in writing for prolongation at the expiration of the education period. The education period and possible prolongation are determined by the dean. The head of department decides on possible prolongation of the employment period. However, BTH does not have any obligation to fund the prolongation as a consequence of a used up education period.

## Supervision

Every third-cycle student is entitled to supervision during her/his entire third-cycle education as long as the Vice-Chancellor with reference to 6 Chap. 30 § in the Higher Education Ordinance does not make a different decision. For every third-cycle student at least two supervisors and one examiner are appointed. One of the supervisors is appointed principal supervisor. The principal supervisor and the examiner must be professors, adjunct professors or docents at BTH. Together with the examiner and the third-cycle student the principal supervisor are to in their respective individual study plan concretize activities and study items with the purpose of securing goal attainment in accordance with the requirements of the System of Qualifications. The third-cycle student can from the dean request a change of supervisor. The procedure for this is established in "Regulations for change of supervisor".

"Regulations for the assessment of a third-cycle student's right to supervision and other resources" and "Role descriptions in third-cycle education at BTH" can also be found on the web site.

## Teaching mentor

Every third-cycle student who carries out teaching is to have a teaching mentor to receive support and advice in the planning and carrying out of her/his teaching (from the BTH program and action plan for quality work regarding first-



second- and third-cycle education 2015). You find more information in "Role descriptions in third-cycle education at BTH".

## Individual study plan

For each third-cycle student there is to be an individual study plan (ISP) which is a preliminary work plan for the entire study route. In connection with the application for admission to third-cycle education the third-cycle student together with the principal supervisor and the examiner are to draw up an ISP. If it regards admission to a Degree of Licentiate, the ISP is to contain a planning up to the Degree of Licentiate and if it regards admission to a Degree of Doctor the planning applies up to the public defence of the thesis. The plan is to contain the undertakings of the Institute and the third-cycle student and can be seen as a contract between the third-cycle student and the Institute regarding the contents and realization of the studies and function as a support for both third-cycle student and supervisors in the running activities of the third-cycle education. The individual study plan can also be seen as a tool where the third-cycle student's goals and attained results are concretized on the road to the degree in question. The third-cycle student, the principal supervisor, the supervisor and the examiner are all to sign the individual study plan. Template and directions for how to write the individual study plan are found on the web site (the Higher Education Ordinance, 6 Chap. 29§).

The studies are to be continuously followed up by the supervisors. The individual study plan should be updated at least once a year, usually and at the latest the last day of February. At the study follow-up, and in addition to the third-cycle student, the examiner and the supervisors, an external reviewer (outside the student's own department) should also participate. During the meeting the third-cycle student's results are to be discussed, and the time plan reviewed and revised in accordance with reality. It should be made clear when the education is planned to be completed. In the ISP, the third-cycle student is to present the calculated point in time for the end of the education and possibly also give information about a planned application for prolongation. It is important to revise the ISP based on changes in, for example, the pace of study and to give reasons for changes of the given point of time for the completion of the studies. The revised individual study plan is handed in to the Registrar and is established by the dean of the concerned faculty. More information is found in "Routines for yearly follow up and decisions regarding the individual study plan".

## Courses

In the third-cycle studies the third-cycle student takes courses on a running basis. The courses that the third-cycle student is to take are determined by the principal supervisor and the examiner in consultation with the third-cycle student at the drawing up and revision of the individual study plan. The amount of credits that need to be taken for respective third-cycle education is made clear from the general study plan of respective subject. As a third-cycle student you can take different types of courses.

Doctoral courses are often announced and searchable, and they are usually and primarily directed at third-cycle students at the students' own institution. There are also individual doctoral courses which the supervisor puts together for the individual or for a small group of third-cycle students, for example independent studies.

If the third-cycle student needs to study certain area,s this can be realized through first- and second-cycle courses to which the third-cycle student applies to as for a common course (via antagning.se) and can make the credit transfer to the third-cycle education. If the third-cycle student belongs to the group of persons liable to pay there is a special





routine that is to be followed, see "Recommendations for doctoral students' participation in first- and second-cycle courses".

Third-cycle students that are to participate in teaching need to take an introduction course in teaching and learning in higher education (3 higher education credits) before they begin to teach (from the BTH program and action plan for quality work regarding first-, second- and third-cycle education 2015). Information about the courses in teaching and learning in higher education are found at the web site of the Library.

## Registration of study results

When the third-cycle student has completed a course (regardless of which type of course), a course certificate alternatively a course description is to be sent to the administrator. The course description is to contain the course title in Swedish and English, the course contents and credits and date for examination. The course will be registered in LADOK.

When a third-cycle student who is liable to pay intends to take first- and second-cycle courses at BTH she/he is to take contact with the course coordinator. If the course is examined through a room examination, the third-cycle student can ask the administrator for a certificate which confirms that the person may take the examination. Upon completion of a course the examiner of the course reports it as a third-cycle course to the research administrator.

Contact the administrator to get a course certificate containing all reported third-cycle courses.

## Activity and maintenance

In connection with the end of a semester, the administrator reports activity and maintenance for all third-cycle students in LADOK. The activity and maintenance states how many percent of her/his time the third-cycle student has dedicated to third-cycle studies and how the studies are funded. The information is sent on to Statistics Sweden and the Swedish Higher Education Authority for statistical follow-ups.

If the activity for the current semester does not correspond to the planned activity indicated in the individual study plan (for example due to prolonged illness or paternity leave), this is to be communicated to the administrator.

Contact the administrator to get a registration certificate which shows that the third-cycle student is registered and active in the third-cycle education.

## Approved leave from studies

If the third-cycle student wishes to take a leave from her/his studies this is to be communicated to the supervisors. Inactive third-cycle students are contacted yearly and requested to send in a current individual study plan if they intend to go back to active studies. If they intend to remain inactive they are requested to send in a request for an approved leave from studies. This is valid maximum one year at a time.

## Non-completion of studies

If the third-cycle student intends to break off her/his studies prematurely, she/he is to apply for deregistration by filling in the form "Non-completion of studies, third-cycle education" and send this to the Registrar.



## Sickness- and parental insurance for third-cycle students with stipends

Through an agreement with the Kammarkollegiet, a higher education institution is to take out insurance for third-cycle students whose study funding is made up by stipends. The insurance enters into force when the third-cycle student's stipend falls out due to absence from studies at illness or parental leave. The insurance is not to grant compensation if the third-cycle student is entitled to corresponding compensation from any other insurance (the Higher Education Ordinance, 1 Chap. 11 c §). You find information about the insurance on the web site.

## Degree

Before completing the degree the third-cycle student and the supervisors should consider the regulations, guidelines and routines which are established for the purpose.

- Guidelines for the public defence of a doctor's thesis and licentiate seminar
- Regulations for licentiate seminar (includes template for application)
- Regulations for the public defence of a doctor's thesis ("External reviewer and grading committee at BTH" and "Template for application" are enclosed with this document)

## If a problem occurs

If a problem arises with connection to the third-cycle studies the third-cycle student should, in the first hand, contact her/his head of department. In the event of the head of department having a role in the matter, the third-cycle student is instead to turn to the dean of the concerned faculty.

## More information

For more information please see the web page of BTH for third-cycle education [inside.bth.se](http://inside.bth.se) or contact one of the administrators.

The Students' Union and the Doctoral Students' Committee are reached via [www.bthstudent.se](http://www.bthstudent.se)

## Functions

Dean at the Faculty of Computing, Professor [Claes Wohlin](#)

Dean at the Faculty of Engineering, Professor [Tobias Larsson](#)

Education and Research Administrator Anna Tinnert, email: [forskningforskarniva@bth.se](mailto:forskningforskarniva@bth.se)

Education and Research Administrator Tobias Ericsson, email [forskningforskarniva@bth.se](mailto:forskningforskarniva@bth.se)

Education and Research Administrator Karin Svahnberg, email [forskningforskarniva@bth.se](mailto:forskningforskarniva@bth.se)

## Enclosure 1: Framework

The following regulations and guidelines constitute the framework that together with, above all, the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance regulate the third-cycle education at Blekinge Institute of Technology.

The documents can be found in their entirety at the BTH intranet [inside.bth.se](http://inside.bth.se).



- Admission regulations
- Admission and employment of doctoral students
- Directions individual study plan
- Lowest financial level for admission of doctoral students
- Program and action plan for quality work
- Regulations for change of supervisor
- Regulations for the public defence of a doctor's thesis
- Regulations for licentiate seminar
- Regulations for the consideration of a doctoral student's right to supervision and other resources
- Regulations for doctoral students' courses at BTH
- Recommendations for doctoral students' participation in first- and second-cycle courses
- Guidelines for the public defence of a doctor's thesis and licentiate seminar
- Guidelines for credit transfer of courses in third-cycle education
- Guidelines for the composition of grading committees at BTH (annex to Regulations for the public defence of a doctor's thesis)
- Routines for yearly follow-up of individual study plan
- Guidelines for appointment of principal supervisor and examiner at third-cycle education
- Role descriptions in third-cycle education at BTH
- Credit transfer regulations



## Annex 2: Templates and forms

- Application for/Decision on admission to third-cycle education
- Template individual study plan for third-cycle education (enclosures: plan of department duties, funding plan, goal attainment of the education and form for credit transfer of courses from previous studies)
- Template for non-completion of studies, third-cycle education
- Application for changed supervisor constellation
- Application: request for licentiate seminar
- Application: request for public defence of a doctor's thesis