



Blekinge Institute of Technology

Third Cycle Education

Introduction to doctoral students



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I. Introduction

This document is intended to be a guide to third cycle education at BTH. All local documents that is referred to in the text can be found in its entirety at BTH's internal webb <https://bthse.sharepoint.com/>. If you can't access them there you can contact the research administrators via the address forskningforskarniva@bth.se.

2. Admission

To conduct third-cycle studies you need to be admitted to a doctoral level. The announcement of vacancies is made at www.bth.se/jobb and BTH's official bulletin boards. The application for a doctoral education can be sent in during the academic year and is in competition with others. Admission to a doctoral level can sometimes lead to an employment as a doctoral student at BTH but an individual does not need to be employed at BTH to be admitted to the doctoral level. At BTH there are, for example, doctoral students who finance their research studies through scholarships as well as with funds from companies, county councils or municipalities.

To be accepted as a doctoral student, the applicant fills in the form "Application on admission to third-cycle studies". A financing plan shall also be attached to the application; this should be written and signed by the relevant head of department. If a basic qualification has been completed at a university other than BTH, a copy of the diploma must be attached to the application.

The application, financing plan and if applicable a copy of the diploma is sent to the Registrar. The administrator prepares the application before the relevant Dean's decision to either grant or reject the application for third-cycle studies. When the application is granted, the administrator documents the data relating to the student's study plan in the study documentation system Ladok. Decisions on the accreditation from previous education are made with the decision to establish the first Individual Study plan.

The Application may aim towards a Licentiate degree, a doctorate degree or a later part of postgraduate education. When a doctoral student admitted to a Licentiate degree has completed his/her degree, a discontinuity is recorded in LADOK, that is, the individual no longer

has any place at the doctoral level. Sometimes there may be an opportunity to continue towards a doctorate in the same doctoral education subject. Continuation towards later part of doctoral education requires admission to this. You cannot be enrolled in two doctoral educations at the same time. To accept someone towards later part of doctoral education before interruption of education against a Licentiate degree is not an option.

Regulation of admission:

Higher Education Ordinance 7 chapt. 37 – 39 § §

Admission Order 2.6, 3.3, 3.6, 4.9, 6.7, 7.2, 9.3

3. Funding

At the doctoral level, the University has made the assessment that the study funding can be secured throughout the entirety of the education. For all doctoral students, regardless of the source of funding for the doctoral studies, the University shall at admission ensure that applicants can devote so much of their time to the training that it can be completed within four years in the case of a Licentiate degree and eight years in the case of a doctorate. The Head of the department concerned shall certify the funding.

Studies at the doctoral level at BTH will normally be financed by an employment as a doctoral student at the university. Applicants who have some other form of funding can also be admitted if it can be assessed that the funding can be secured throughout the education and that applicants can devote so much of their time to education that it can be completed within four years in the case of a Licentiate degree or eight years in the case of a doctoral degree.

Other forms of study funding include other employment at BTH, external employment with another employer or scholarship from an external funder. Self-financing in the form of own wealth, old-age pension or salary from own company is not accepted for admission to third-cycle studies at BTH.

The Higher Education Ordinance does not regulate what happens if the study funding ends after admission for a doctoral student. The current interpretation, however, is that there is no absolute obligation for the University to fund an accepted doctoral student if the original

planned funding ends. Therefore, in such a situation, an assessment of any financial obligation must be made on the specific case and based on the individual study plan, financing plan and any agreement.

The Same rules apply to doctoral students with other source of funding as for employed doctoral students regarding admission, supervision, individual study plans, study follow-up, courses and degree procedure.

Regulation of financing:

Higher Education Ordinance 7 Chapt. 34 – 36 §§

Rules for financing studies at doctoral level (BTH-1.2.1-0385-2018)

3.1 Employment as a doctoral student

The form of employment as a doctoral student is regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance. For example, the amount of work apart from the studies that is allowed as part of the employment at the University is specified (max 20 %) as well as the possibility of part-time employment (lowest 50% full-time).

All doctoral students are entitled to a total time for education equivalent to full-time studies of four years for a doctoral degree, provided that the results of studies are achieved in line with an individually prepared study plan. Employment as a doctoral student is time limited and is usually extended by one year at a time. If the individual is employed as a doctoral student, it is common to have departmental duties in parallel with the studies. The education period is extended based on the teaching that the doctoral student does, up to a maximum of 20% of full-time, which can lead to a maximum study period of five years within the framework of the doctoral student position. It is important to revise the individual study plan based on changes in, for example, the rate of study and to indicate reasons for changes at the specified time of the end of the training period.

A doctoral student employment has the same benefits as a normal employment. The salary of a doctoral student follows a doctoral ladder where wages increase in relation with the results achieved. The levels of the doctoral ladder are adjusted each year and follow the wage developments in higher education.

Regulation of Employment as a doctoral student:

Higher Education Ordinance 5 chapt. 2, 3 and 7 §.

Agreements regarding salary adjustments for doctoral students and certain salary adjustments at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH-2.4.2-0364-2018)

3.2 External Employment

External employment may involve employment at another institution as well as employment at a company or organization that BTH is in collaboration.

In all cases where third-cycle studies at BTH are funded by an external employment an agreement must be signed between the sponsoring employer and BTH. The Agreement shall at least regulate the level of funding, the time for funding and that the employee is allowed the working hours to be able to work on third-cycle studies so that it can be completed within the time (at least 50% of full-time service). Funding agreements shall be submitted with the application for admission to third-cycle studies.

Regulation of External employment:

Higher Education Ordinance 7 Chapt. 36 §.

Rules for financing studies at doctoral level (BTH-1.2.1-0385-2018)

3.3 Scholarship from external financier

Scholarship from external financier means that BTH is not the funder but the doctoral student has funding in the form of a scholarship from an organization, foreign university or similar. In order to ensure continuous funding, the scholarship donor shall be an official organisation, recognized as a scholarship donor, financier or similar.

A copy of the contract between the donor and the doctoral student, or a description of the grant terms certified by the relevant head of department, shall be attached to the application for admission.

Regulation of Scholarship from external financier:

Higher Education Ordinance 7 chapt., 36 §, 5 chapt., 4 §

Rules for financing studies at doctoral level (BTH-1.2.1-0385-2018)

4. Time of education and period of employment

All doctoral students have the right to a total time of education equivalent to full-time studies of four years for a doctorate, regardless of how they are financed. Depending on the rate of study, the time of education for a doctorate may be extended to eight years. The Doctoral student should, on average during the education, devote time to the doctoral studies corresponding to at least 50 % of full-time.

The time starts from the date specified in the decision on admission specified as the start of studies. The duration of the education may be extended if there are reasonable grounds for doing so, such as leave for sickness, service in the defence or for positions of trust in trade unions and student organizations or parental leave.

Employment as a doctoral student is time-limited and a person may be employed as a doctoral student for a total of eight years. However, the total period of employment may not be longer than that corresponding to full-time doctoral education for four years. For studies to be completed with a Licentiate degree, the total period of employment may not be longer than that corresponding to a full-time doctoral education for two years.

Period of employment starts from the date in the employment decision specified as the start of employment. The period of employment can be extended if there are reasonable grounds for doing so, such as leave for sickness, service in the defence or for positions of trust in trade unions and student organizations or parental leave.

All absences causing extensions of the education should be reported to the administration.

In connection with the follow-up of studies every year, it is important that the main supervisor together with the doctoral student follow up that there is time left to be able to complete the education according to plan.

It is each individual doctoral student's responsibility to request an extension in writing should the time of education be spent. The period of study and any extensions is decided on by the Dean. The Head of Department decides on any extension of the period of employment. BTH, however, has no obligation to finance the granted extension as a result of spent study time.

Regulation of time of education and length of employment:

Higher Education Ordinance. 7 Chapt. 36 §, 6 Chapt., 29 §, 5 Chapt., 7 §

Prolonging doctoral students with positions of trust (BTH-1.2.1-0163-2016)

4.1 Activity and source of funding

In connection with the end of each semester, the administrators reports on activity and source of funding for all doctoral students in LADOK. Activity and source of funding indicate the percentage of his/her time that the doctoral student has devoted to doctoral studies and how the studies are financed. Data are forwarded to Statistics Sweden and UKÄ for national statistical follow-up.

If the activity for the current semester does not correspond to the planned activity specified in the individual study plan (for example, due to long-term illness or parental leave), this should be communicated to the administrator.

4.2 Interruption of studies

If the doctoral student wishes to have a break in his/her studies, this should be communicated to the administrator. Interruption of studies on grounds other than sickness, parental leave or other causes that is regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 6, section 29 shall only be granted with great restrictiveness.

Inactive doctoral students are contacted annually and are asked to submit a current individual study plan if they intend to return to active studies. If they remain inactive, they are asked to submit a request for a study break. This is valid for a maximum of one year at a time.

4.3 Discontinuation of studies

If The doctoral student intends to discontinue his/her studies prematurely, he/she must inform to be unregistered by filling in the form "Study discontinuation, doctoral education" and send this to the Registrar.

5. Subject and General Syllabus

Universities that may issue third-cycle degrees shall decide on the subjects for third-cycle studies. BTH currently has eleven active subjects at a third-cycle level that doctoral students are admitted to. There must be a General Syllabus for each subject. The General Syllabus serves as a framework for the subject and include a description of the content of the training, the

arrangements and the requirements for admission to the education.

For each General Syllabus, the degree objectives for a doctorate and a licentiate degree are specified in the Higher Education Ordinance. The degree objectives must be met when a third-cycle degree is issued. The objectives describe knowledge, skills and abilities that the doctoral student must have attained for the degree.

It is incumbent upon each individual doctoral student to read the General Syllabus for his/her subject. The General Syllabus sets out the objectives to be achieved for a degree in the subject.

Regulation of General Syllabus:

Higher Education Ordinance 6 Chapt. 25– 27 § §, annex II Degree scheme

Process for the establishment and discontinuation of a third-cycle subject (BTH-1.2.1-0380-2018)

6. Individual Study Plan

For each research student there must be an individual study plan (ISP) which is a work plan for entire study time. After the application of admission has been granted to doctoral education, the doctoral student together with the main supervisor and examiner shall establish an ISP. If the admission is towards a licentiate degree, the ISP must include a plan up to the licentiate degree and if the admission is towards the doctoral degree the plan should be towards the dissertation.

The plan shall include the commitments of the university and the doctoral student and can be seen as a contract between the doctoral student and the university in terms of the content and implementation of the education and serve as a support for both doctoral student and supervisors in the ongoing work. The individual study plan can also be seen as a tool where the doctoral student's goals and achievements are specified concretely on the way to the current degree. Both the doctoral student, main supervisor, supervisor and examiner must sign the individual study plan. The template for the individual study plan with accompanying instructions can be found on the home page.

The studies should be continuously followed up by the supervisors. The individual study plan should be updated at least once a year, normally no later than the end of February. In addition

to the doctoral student, the examiner and the supervisor, a Senior Reviewer (chosen outside the doctoral student's department) should participate in the meeting. During the meeting, the research student's study results will be discussed, the timetable reviewed and revised. It must be clearly stated when the education is planned to be completed. The Doctoral student shall in the ISP present the estimated time for the end of the education and if necessary, inform about a planned application for extension. It is important to revise the ISP based on changes in for example the rate of study and to state reasons for changes made. The revised individual study plan is submitted to the Registrar and is established by the Dean of the faculty concerned.

Regulation of Individual Study Plan:

Higher Education Ordinance 6 Chapt., 29 §

Individual Study Plan for third-cycle studies (BTH-1.2.1-0353-2018)

7. Supervision

Every doctoral student has the right to supervision throughout his/her doctoral education if the Vice-Chancellor with the support of 6 Chapt. 30 § The Higher Education Ordinance doesn't decide otherwise.

At least two supervisors and one examiner are appointed for each research student. One of the supervisors is appointed as the main supervisor.

Main supervisor and examiner must be a professor, adjunct professor or docent at BTH. The Main supervisor together with the examiner and the doctoral student must, in each individual study plan, specify activities in order to ensure goal fulfilment in accordance with the requirements for the degree.

Supervisors can be added or changed during the doctoral student's study period. This is handled by the application for a change in the supervisor constellation.

Should the doctoral student find that the supervisory situation does not work for some reason, he/she can request to change supervisor. Process for this is determined in the Rules for changing of supervisor.

Should a doctoral student fail to meet his/her commitments in the Individual Study Plan, the Vice-Chancellor can decide that the doctoral student no longer have the right to supervision and other resources for the education. Process for this is determined in Rules for determining the doctoral student's right to supervision and other resources.

Regulation of Supervision:

Higher Education Ordinance 6 Chapt, 28 §

Guidelines for the appointment of the main supervisor and the Examiner (BTH-1.2.1-0287-2017)

Rules for change of supervisor (BTH-1.2.1-0221-2018)

Role descriptions in doctoral education at BTH (BTH-1.2.1-0302-2018)

Rules for examining the doctoral student's right to supervision and other resources (BTH-1.2.1-0095-2014)

Application for change of Supervisor Constellation (form)

8. Courses

During the doctoral studies, the doctoral students continuously study courses. What specific courses the doctoral student will study is decided by the main supervisor and the examiner in consultation with the doctoral student when drawing up and revising the individual study plan. The number of higher education credits that must be read for each subject is described in the general syllabus of each subject.

Doctoral courses are often advertised and searchable, usually they mainly turn to doctoral students at their own university. There are also individual doctoral courses that the supervisor creates for the individual or for a smaller group of doctoral students, e.g. reading courses.

If the doctoral student needs to study certain areas, this can be done through courses at first- and second cycle level, which the doctoral student registers for as a regular course (via antagning.se) and is credited in the doctoral education. If the doctoral student is liable for payment of study fees a special routine should be followed.

Doctoral students who are to participate in teaching, must attend a higher education introductory course (3 ECTS) before they can start teaching.

Regulation of Courses:

General Study plan for the subject

Rules for doctoral courses at BTH (BTH-1.2.1-0019-2016)

8.1 Accreditation of Courses

A doctoral student who has already taken a part of his/her doctoral education in another form or elsewhere may, under certain conditions, be able to accredit this in his/her education. The doctoral student does not need to be examined on this part of the course again. More information on accreditation of courses in connection with admission third-cycle education is available in the Order of Accreditation.

Regulation of Accreditation:

Order of Accreditation (BTH-1.2.1-0114-2018)

8.2 Registering the Courses

When the doctoral student has completed a course (regardless of the type of course), the course certificate or a course description must be sent to the administrators. The course description should include the name of the course in Swedish and English, the contents and credit of the course and the date of examination. The course will then be registered in LADOK.

When a doctoral student liable for the payment of study fees intends to study courses at the first- and second-cycle at BTH, he/she must contact the course coordinator. If the course is examined through written examination, the doctoral student can ask the administrators for a certificate confirming that he/she is allowed to take part in the exam. After completion of the course, the examiner for the course reports it as a doctoral course to the research administrator.

9. Expectations of doctoral students

Unless otherwise agreed, the doctoral student is expected:

- To actively and independently carry out his/her education within the framework of the net study time (2 years for a Licentiate degree and 4 years for a doctoral degree);

- To, together with the supervisor and the examiner, draw up and according to current procedures follow up the individual study plan;
- To continuously inform the supervisors of the progress of the education
- To participate in and contribute to the research environment in which the doctoral student is involved;
- To participate in any research project meetings;
- To carry out regular meetings and follow-ups in accordance with the wishes of the examiner and the supervisors;
- To have regular contact with his/her supervisors
- To answer email, messages etc. from the examiner and the supervisors promptly,
- If the doctoral student is employed at BTH, the doctoral student is expected to participate in and contribute to a working environment at its department. This includes the departmental duties that may occur e.g. in the form of teaching, where the doctoral student, among other things, is expected to be available to his/her students but also to participate in joint meetings of the department.

Regulation of Expectations of postgraduate students:

Role descriptions in doctoral education at BTH (BTH-1.2.1-0302-2018)

Individual Study plan for third-cycle studies (BTH-1.2.1-0353-2018)

10. Teaching Mentor

Every doctoral student who teaches at a first- and second cycle level must have a mentor to support and advise in the planning and implementation of his/her teaching.

Regulation of Teaching Mentor:

Blekinge Institute of Technology programme and action plan for quality work (BTH-1.2.1-0390-2018)

Role descriptions in doctoral education at BTH (BTH-1.2.1-0302-2018)

11. Senior Reviewer

Every doctoral student shall appoint a Senior Reviewer to check the commitments of both the doctoral student and the University in the Individual study Plan and when reviewing the

individual study plan, check that the supervision situation works for the doctoral student. The Senior Reviewer shall preferably be qualified as a docent and active at BTH but outside the doctoral student's department.

Regulation of Senior Reviewer:

Individual Study plan for third-cycle studies (BTH-1.2.1-0353-2018)

Role descriptions in doctoral education at BTH (BTH-1.2.1-0302-2018)

12. Insurance

As an accepted doctoral student, you are, like all students at universities in Sweden, insured during school hours and when traveling to and from school, by a general accident insurance.

As an employed doctoral student, you are like all employees at BTH insured through an occupational injury insurance and travel insurance. Externally employed doctoral students must have an adequate occupational injury insurance through their employer.

For scholarship funded doctoral students, BTH has signed an insurance that shall apply when the doctoral student's scholarship lapses due to absence from studies in sickness or parental leave. The insurance shall not give entitlement to compensation if the doctoral student is entitled to equivalent compensation under any other insurance.

Regulation of Insurance:

Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 1, Section 11

Kammarkollegiets terms for Personal Injury insurance for students

Kammarkollegiets terms for sickness and parental insurance for doctoral students with scholarships

13. Dissertation and Licentiate Seminar

Before the dissertation the doctoral student and supervisors must take into account the rules, guidelines and procedures established for this.

Regulation of Dissertation and Licentiate Seminar:

Template for the request of dissertation (BTH-1.2.1-0360-2018)

Template for report on Licentiate Seminar (BTH-1.2.1-0120-2014)

Fees for experts and opponents (BTH-1.2.1-0079-2018)

Dissertation Rules (BTH-1.2.1-0360-2018)

Rules at the Licentiate seminar (BTH1.2.1-0120-2014)

14. If you experience problems

If problems related to the doctoral education arise, the doctoral student should primarily contact his or her head of department. In the event that the prefect has a role in the case, the doctoral student should instead turn to the dean of the faculty concerned. The Doctoral student can also contact the PhD student Union is part of the student union, with the mission to monitor the rights of doctoral students.

15. Blekinge Student Union and PhD student union

Student Union at BTH is Blekinge student union. The student union is represented at, among others, the Board of Governors, the Deans Group, the Working Environment Committee. The student union also works at national level through SFS, Sweden's united student unions, where for example important issues are the opportunities for representation and increased social security for the doctoral students. The PhD student union helps with support and advice to doctoral students throughout the study period in terms of both social and educational issues. The PhD student union is represented in the Deans Group and the Board of Governors.

16. More Information

For more information see Information on postgraduate education at BTH's Intranet <https://bthse.sharepoint.com>, or on BTH's Student Portal <https://studentportal.bth.se>. You can also contact the research administrators via forskningforskarniva@bth.se.