General Syllabus for Degree of Licentiate in Arabic

The syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Arts at Gothenburg University on 20 December 2016. It is complemented with the following documents, available via the website of the Faculty of Arts (www.hum.gu.se).

Instructions for Third-cycle Studies at the Faculty of Arts.


A third-cycle student admitted for third-cycle studies for taking the Degree of Doctor in Arabic is entitled to request to take the Degree of Licentiate in Arabic provided the requirements for courses and thesis specified in this syllabus are fulfilled.

Title of qualification and description of subject

This general syllabus is for the Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy in Arabic. The subject covers the Arabic language and its literature in cultural and social contexts.

1. Objectives

1.1 General national objectives

According to the Qualifications Ordinance, Appendix 2 of the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance, the objectives for the Degree of Licentiate are as follows:

Knowledge and understanding

For the 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 skill

For the 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 pre-determined 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 at large, and
– demonstrate the ability required to participate independently in research and development work and to work independently in other qualified activities.

Judgement and approach
For the Degree of Licentiate, the third-cycle student shall:
– demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of their 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/her own ongoing learning.

2. Entry requirements
Admission to the programme requires that the applicant fulfil the general and specific entry requirements provided in Chapter 7 of the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance.

2.1 General entry requirements
A person meets the general entry requirements under Chapter 7, Section 39 of the Higher Education Ordinance if he or she:
1. has been awarded a second-cycle qualification, or
2. has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 higher education credits of which at least 60 higher education credits were awarded in the second cycle, or
3. has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

2.2 Specific entry requirements
Admission to the third-cycle programme in Arabic requires:
1. at least 150 higher education credits in Arabic, 30 of which must be from the second cycle, or equivalent knowledge acquired in some other way in Sweden or abroad.
2. Two theses/essays in the subject area of Arabic, each corresponding to at least 15 higher education credits, or one thesis/essay corresponding to at least 30 higher education credits, of which at least one thesis/essay must have been written in the second cycle, or equivalent assignment(s) successfully completed in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

3. Admission and selection
Admission to third-cycle studies in Arabic is normally initiated by the Department announcing a call for doctoral studentships. Admission is conditional upon the studies being properly funded.

In selecting between applicants, their ability to benefit from the study programme shall be taken into account in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance. To facilitate the selection process, the applicant must submit:
1. Theses, degree projects and any publications. These are assessed based on the following criteria:
   - ability to autonomously identify and formulate a relevant research question,
   - ability to structure and carry out a study of relevance in relation to the given research field,
   - utilisation of theories and methods as well as methodological awareness,
   - analytical ability and self-reflexivity in relation to the work in question,
1. Independence and originality, ability to conduct an argumentation with consideration of the tenacity of the arguments, and ability to communicate objectively in writing.

2. A project draft in which the applicant describes his/her planned research project and the research domain he/she would like to develop, justifies its relevance and discusses which theories, methods and materials would be relevant. The project draft is assessed based on the following criteria:
   - ability to autonomously identify and formulate a relevant research question,
   - demonstrated familiarity with previous and current research in the area,
   - adequate choices of theories and methods as well as methodological awareness in relation to the study,
   - independence and originality,
   - feasibility within the framework of the programme.

A comprehensive assessment is made of the submitted material. Admission and selection are conditional on the Department’s supervisory resources within the third-cycle student’s research focus. Admission may also include interviews in addition to a review of qualifications submitted. Admission decisions are made by the Head of Department following preparation at the Department.

4. Programme disposition and content

The third-cycle programme in Arabic leading to a Degree of Licentiate comprises 120 higher education credits.

The programme consists partly of courses, which are examined incrementally, and partly of own research work, which is to lead to the presentation of a scholarly thesis.

The student is expected to participate in seminar activities within the confines of her or his education. He/she is also expected to participate in Department-wide activities, unless there are special reasons.

4.1 Courses

The programme consists of a course part comprising 60 higher education credits.

Compulsory courses (45 higher education credits)

Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Basic Course (5 higher education credits).

Literary Criticism, Literary Theory and Method or Linguistic Theory and Method (10 higher education credits). The course may consist of two sub-courses, each corresponding to 5 higher education credits.

Academic Writing and Publishing in International Outlets or Professionalisation in Arabic Linguistics (7.5 higher education credits)

Arabic Literature or Arabic Linguistic Research (22.5 higher education credits). The courses aim to provide broad knowledge in the fields of Arabic literature or Arabic linguistic research.

Elective courses (15 higher education credits)

Elective courses shall be determined in consultation with the third-cycle student’s examiner and supervisors.

The basic course in teaching and learning in higher education (5 higher education credits) should be completed during the first year of the programme.

If a third-cycle student requests credit transfer from previous education, this shall be specified in the individual study plan (see 6.1).
4.2 Licentiate thesis
The licentiate thesis comprises 60 higher education credits.

The third-cycle student is expected to provide regular reports on her/his thesis work. This obligatory is primarily fulfilled through presentation at Department seminars.

Licentiate theses are defended at a public seminar. Both the content and defence are considered in the assessment of the thesis. The thesis is graded with one of the grades Pass or Fail.

For more information, see Instructions for Third-cycle Studies at the Faculty of Arts.

5. Supervision
At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each third-cycle student: one principal supervisor and one assistant supervisor. At least one of the supervisors must be employed at the University of Gothenburg, normally at the third-cycle student’s home Department. At least one of the supervisors must be qualified for appointment to a readership (docent) and at least one of the supervisors must have completed supervisor training.

The third-cycle student is entitled to supervision at least as stipulated by the standard adopted by the Faculty Board (see Instructions for Third-cycle Studies at the Faculty of Arts).

A third-cycle student who so requests is entitled to change supervisors.

6. Individual study plan
In connection with admission, an electronic individual study plan shall be drawn up by the third-cycle student and his/her supervisors in consultation with the doctoral examiner. The document must be finalised no later than two months after commencement of studies.

The individual study plan shall be reviewed at least once a year. The review shall clearly identify the third-cycle student’s progression.

The third-cycle student, the supervisor and the doctoral examiner must confirm in writing that they have reviewed the individual study plan and any revisions made.

6.1 Credit transfer
When establishing the individual study plan, the third-cycle student may request that credits be transferred from past successfully completed second- or third-cycle education. Credits applied to fulfil the general or specific entry requirements may not also be applied towards the third-cycle degree, but must be replaced with other coursework. In addition, the following applies:

(i) A third-cycle student who has successfully completed a second-cycle course that is included as a compulsory or elective course at third-cycle level may request that the course be replaced with another course of the same extent in the individual study plan. This does not affect the duration of the programme for the Degree of Licentiate.

(ii) A third-cycle student who has completed part of his/her third-cycle education while he/she was enrolled as a third-cycle student at another higher education institution or in another subject may request that the part be applied directly to her/his degree without replacements. This reduces the duration of the study programme for a Degree of Licentiate in proportion to the credits transferred.

6.2 Timetable and funding plan
The individual study plan shall include a timetable and associated funding plan for the entire period of study, up to the date planned for the public defence of the thesis.
7. Transitional provisions
Third-cycle students admitted before 20 December 2016 may, following consultation with their respective supervisors, request permission from the Head of Department to transfer to this programme syllabus. The individual plan must then be updated.