General syllabus for Degree of Licentiate in Theory of Science

The syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Arts at Gothenburg University on 26 October 2017. 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.


Here the term ‘doctoral student’ is used for a third-cycle student.

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

Title of qualification and teaching and research duties

The degree obtained is the Degree of Licentiate in Theory of Science. Theory of Science studies and analyses the activities and creation of knowledge in different research areas. Theory of science also examines the place of research in society and the role academic methods and findings play in processes of social change, in addition to questions of research politics and ethics.

1. Objectives

1.1 General national objectives

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

Knowledge and understanding

For the 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 the 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 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 independently participate in research and development work and to independently work in other qualified activities.

Judgment and approach
For the Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral 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 their own ongoing learning.

1.2 Subject-specific and supplementary objectives

Knowledge and understanding
For the Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall:

– demonstrate familiarity with a variety of theories and methods used in theoretical research in the sciences.

Competence and skills
For the Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall:

– demonstrate his/her ability to independently complete a research task by writing and defending a licentiate thesis,

– demonstrate the ability to critically reflect on his/her own activities.

2. Entry requirements
Admission to the programme requires that the applicant fulfils the general and specific entry requirements provided in Chapter 7 of the 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 Theory of Science requires:
1. 30 higher education credits in a second-cycle in Theory of Science, at least 15 of which
   must be from a degree project or equivalent knowledge,
2. the type(s) of Swedish and English skills needed to be able to benefit from compulsory
   parts of the course and to be able to actively participate in seminars and similar activities.
   Third cycle students who do not speak Swedish as a first language are expected to acquire
   good skills in the language during their time as a doctoral student.

3. Admission and selection
Admission to third-cycle studies in Theory of Science 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 course or 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: originality, the complexity of the subject and confidence in
   the methodological and linguistic implementation.
2. A project draft in which the applicant stipulates a research domain that he/she
   would like to develop, justifies its relevance and discusses which theories,
   methods and materials would be relevant. The project draft is assessed on the
   basis of the following criteria: choice of theory, method and empirical data
   for the research task, the expected knowledge contribution from the project,
   links to international research, viability and relevance for the subject. The
   project draft also provides supporting information for assessing the
   Department’s supervisor competence within the research domain stipulated.
3. Others, such as references or letters of recommendation.

Admission and selection are also conditional on the Department’s supervisory resources
within the doctoral student’s research focus. Admission may also include an interview 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 for taking the Degree of Licentiate in Theory of Science
comprises 120 higher education credits and leads to a Degree of Licentiate.
The third-cycle programme consists partly of courses, which are examined incrementally, and partly of own research work, which is to lead to a scholarly thesis.

The student shall participate in seminar activities within the confines of her or his education and, unless there are special reasons, participate in Department-wide activities.

4.1 Courses
The programme consists of a course part comprising 45 higher education credits of which 25 higher education credits comprise compulsory courses for the subject, namely:

1. Classical Themes in Theory of Science: natural sciences, 7.5 higher education credits
2. Science studies, 7.5 higher education credits
3. Ethics, society, lifelong learning and responsibility, 2.5 higher education credits

and either

4. Classical Themes in Theory of Science: humanities, 7.5 higher education credits
or

5. Modern Theory of Science, 7.5 higher education credits

Other courses are chosen in consultation with supervisors. They can be chosen amongst the third-cycle courses arranged within the theory of science as well as those organised by other departments and faculties.

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

Examination:

The course coordinator chooses the most suitable examination method for the courses included in third-cycle studies. Performance is evaluated with a grade of either Pass or Fail.

If a doctoral student requests credit transfer from previous education, this shall be specified in the individual study plan (see 6.1).

4.2 Licentiate thesis
The thesis comprises 75 higher education credits

The doctoral student is expected to provide regular reports on her or his thesis work. This obligation is primarily fulfilled by writing thesis chapters that are presented at Department seminars.

A licentiate thesis is 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 doctoral 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 doctoral 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 doctoral 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 doctoral student who so requests is entitled to change supervisors.

6. Individual study plan
An individual study plan, which shall be finalised by no later than two months after commencement of studies, shall be drawn up by the doctoral student and supervisor, in consultation with the doctoral examiner, in connection with admission.

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

Doctoral students, supervisors and doctoral examiners shall affirm in writing that they have read the individual study plan and any revisions made.

6.1 Credit transfer
When the individual study plan has been established, the doctoral 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 another course. In addition, the following applies:

(i) A doctoral 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 doctoral student who has completed part of her or his third-cycle education while he or 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 or 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 planned date of taking the Degree of Licentiate.

7. Transitional provisions
Doctoral students admitted before 1 January 2016 may, following consultation with supervisors, request permission from the Head of Department to transfer this programme syllabus. The individual study plan must then be updated.