General syllabus for Degree of Licentiate in Theoretical Philosophy

The syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Arts at Gothenburg University on 26 November 2015. 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 Theoretical Philosophy is entitled to request to take the Degree of Licentiate in Theoretical Philosophy 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 Theoretical Philosophy. Theoretical Philosophy examines the nature of external reality, our knowledge of that reality, as well as different ways of representing that knowledge in language and thought. Research within Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Gothenburg can be divided into three principal groups: (meta) metaphysics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. From a methodological perspective, all research within the subject can be described as research in analytical philosophy.

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**
More specifically, for taking the Degree of Licentiate in Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Gothenburg it will also include:

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

– demonstrate the ability to work as a researcher and teacher in theoretical philosophy at university level; as a lecturer in subjects outside academia of relevance to theoretical philosophy and with advanced information processing in the form of investigatory, preparatory and analytical work within both public and private sectors,

– demonstrate the ability to plan, fund, implement and lead independent research projects,

– demonstrate the ability to plan and give courses at first and second levels within more than one of the areas of theoretical philosophy.
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 theoretical philosophy requires:

1. 30 higher education credits in theoretical philosophy as a second-cycle subject, 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.

3. Admission and selection
Admission to third-cycle studies in theoretical philosophy 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:

- A Master’s (60 and/or 120 credits) dissertation in Theoretical Philosophy worth a minimum of 15 higher education credits, or other project at the equivalent level and scope that documents the corresponding skills and abilities,
- A Bachelor’s essay and/or advanced study project in Theoretical Philosophy written at advanced or second-cycle level; or other projects at the equivalent level and scope that document the corresponding skills and abilities,
- Official transcripts for studies in theoretical philosophy or the equivalent at first, advanced and second-cycle level,
- A project draft of maximum 3 000 words in which the applicant states the research area in which the applicant wishes to work; what the applicant’s work in this area can be expected to contribute to the research front; why the planned research project is suitable for the intended department; which theories, methods and materials are likely to be used and how work with the project can be structured,
- References and/or letter of recommendation.

The written projects (including project draft) that are included with the application are
evaluated based on the following quality criteria:

- Suitable subject demarcation, relevant research question(s),
- Suitable command of the subject and structuring of the thesis,
- Suitable use of language, formalities,
- Academic quality,
- Independence.

In addition to the above, the project draft is also evaluated based on:

- Feasibility within the scope of a doctoral studentship,
- Possibility for the Department to offer supervisor with suitable knowledge within the research area of the application.

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 Theoretical Philosophy 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 studies include of a course component worth 45 higher education credits. The credits are divided as follows. The more in-depth content of each component (with the exception of the compulsory course in teaching and learning in higher education) is decided in consultation between the third-cycle student, their supervisor and examiner. The course components are generally examined in smaller parts.

**Research-oriented specialisation** (20 hecr): The component include a specialisation in one or more of the classic areas of research in theoretical philosophy (alternatively, in one or several areas of research in one or more closely related subjects) and intends to provide broadened knowledge and deepened skills directly relevant to the doctoral student’s thesis work. Potential areas of study are decided in consultation with the supervisor. Specialisation in the subjects closely related to theoretical philosophy may only take place if a qualified examiner is available.

**Advanced general orientation** (15 hecr): The component includes an advanced general orientation in one or more of the classic areas of research in theoretical philosophy (alternatively in one or more areas of research closely related to theoretical philosophy) and
aims to provide the third-cycle student with advanced general knowledge of theoretical philosophy. Subjects studied under this heading may not be of direct relevance to the doctoral student’s thesis work.

**Pedagogical and research-focused skills** (10 hecr): This course is compulsory and comprises three components:

(i) **Basic course in teaching and learning in higher education** (5 hecr): compulsory university-wide course which should be taken during the first year of the doctoral studies, unless specific reasons exist.

(ii) **Pedagogical practice** (2,5 hecs): compulsory course in pedagogical practice, with specific focus on teaching theoretical philosophy. Includes practice in lesson planning, verbal and visual presentation techniques, examination and student supervision.

(iii) **Research practice** (2,5 hecr): A component that practices the communication of individual academic results or the results of others in written and/or oral form for presentations in seminars, conferences or workshops; alternatively for publications in international journals. As a part of this component, the third-cycle student also practices writing project applications.

Within the framework for the pedagogical and research-oriented practice ((ii) and (iii) above), the third-cycle student is also expected to reflect upon and acquire deepened knowledge of relevant research and teaching ethics. In both components the doctoral student also practices what is known as the “third task” – presenting and interested audience with either individual research or the research of others in a pedagogical and accessible way.

The examination of components or aspects of the course held outside of the Department shall assess whether the accompanying course requirements have been met. Suitable examination methods for additional components are determined by the supervisor or other examiner. Where courses or course components are examined through seminar participation or other forms of practical exercise, the examiner shall ensure that the third-cycle student’s performance is clearly documented in the individual study plan.

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 takes place in regular meetings with the supervisor, and also in the form of recurring presentations at the Theoretical Philosophy 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.