



Karlstad University  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Curriculum for Doctoral studies in Sociology

## Curriculum Approval

The curriculum was approved by the Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences on 2 June 2016.

General stipulations for PhD programmes are provided in the *Higher Education Act* and in the *Higher Education Ordinance*. The PhD programme is offered to the extent permitted by available funding.

### 1. General Information

In 1969, the Department of Sociology at Gothenburg University branched out to the Gothenburg affiliation Karlstad University College. In 1999 sociology was approved as a doctoral discipline in connection with the inauguration of Karlstad University. Today the sociology department runs research projects in the fields of critical age studies, organisation theory, resistance studies, and social movements. These projects accentuate a range of classic and modern sociological theories and concepts such as social capital, class, gender, sexuality, homosociality, emotion, ritual, to which doctoral students are effectively introduced in the research seminars on current sociological problems. The department also interacts with other disciplines at Karlstad University and other higher education institutions regarding doctoral courses and supervision.

In accordance with Karlstad University's equal opportunities policy, gender issues are addressed throughout the programme.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

#### 2.1 General Objectives

The general objectives of licentiate or doctoral studies in terms of knowledge and understanding, competence and skills, and judgement and approach are specified in the Qualification Ordinance (*Higher Education Ordinance, annex 2, SFS 2006:1053*):

#### ***Knowledge and understanding***

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle students 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.*

For a Degree of Doctor the third-cycle students shall

- *demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and*
- *demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.*

#### ***Competence and skills***

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle students shall

- *demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, independently and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake a limited piece of research and other qualified tasks within predetermined 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 in general, and*
- *demonstrate the skills required to participate independently in research and development work and to work independently in some other qualified capacity.*

For a Degree of Doctor the third-cycle students shall

- *demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations independently and critically*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, independently and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work*
- *demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research*
- *demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and*
- *demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.*

### **Judgement and approach**

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle students shall

- *demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her 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 or her ongoing learning.*

For a Degree of Doctor the third-cycle students shall

- *demonstrate intellectual independence and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and*
- *demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.*

### **Licentiate thesis/doctoral thesis**

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis of at least 60 credits.

For a Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.

## **2.2 Subject Specific Objectives**

The subject specific aims of doctoral studies in Sociology at Karlstad University are as follows:

The aim of doctoral studies in sociology is that students develop skills in scientific analysis and in conducting independent research relating to social structures, processes and actors. On completion students should be able to demonstrate theoretical and methodological knowledge, experience of theoretical analysis and concrete research, firm grasp of central sociological

theories and perspectives as well as broad knowledge of social conditions and the potential of sociological research.

Doctoral studies in sociology also prepare students for an academic career and for professional investigative work in private and public organisations.

### **3. Admission Requirements**

*Applicants to doctoral studies must meet the general admission requirements as well as the specific admission requirements and be judged to have the ability otherwise required to pursue the programme successfully (Higher Education Ordinance, Ch.7, § 35).*

#### **3.1 General eligibility**

*A person who has earned a master's degree of at least 240 ECTS credits of which at least 60 ECTS cr are studies at master's level, or who in some other way in the country or abroad has acquired largely equivalent knowledge has general eligibility for admission. If there are special reasons for doing so, the higher education institution may grant an individual applicant exemption from the general eligibility (Higher Education Ordinance, Ch.7, § 39).*

#### **3.2. Special eligibility**

A person who has completed courses in sociology totalling at least 120 ECTS cr, of which 30 ECTS cr are Master-level credits has special eligibility for admission to doctoral studies in sociology. A person who, in some other way in the country or abroad has acquired equivalent knowledge, also has special eligibility.

### **4. Admission Procedure**

Applications for admission to doctoral studies are processed in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the Board of Karlstad University.

### **5. Selection**

Candidates will be selected on the basis of their assessed capacity to successfully complete a programme at the doctoral level. In the ranking and selection of the candidates, special attention will be paid to previous study records, the quality of previously performed research or development work, especially at Master's level. Special consideration will also be given to the candidates proposed research area, supervision capacity and to the candidate's intention to be present and participate in the disciplinary research environment.

### **6. Content and Outline**

The doctoral programme can lead to a doctoral or licentiate degree. The doctoral degree requires four years of study, the equivalent of 240 ECTS credits, and the licentiate degree two years or 120 ECTS credits.

The studies include course work as well as independent thesis work. To earn a doctoral degree, the candidate must complete 60 ECTS credits of course work and 180 ECTS credits of thesis work. To earn a licentiate degree, the candidate is required to complete 30 ECTS credits of course work and 90 ECTS credits of thesis work.

#### **6.1 Courses**

Mandatory courses for all doctoral students at Karlstad University must be included in the programme to the extent required by local regulations.

#### *Subject Specific Courses*

The subject specific requirements include required courses and specialisation courses.

For a **Licentiate** degree the following courses are required:

- Research methodology, 7.5 ECTS cr
- Classical and contemporary sociological theories, 7.5 ECTS cr
- Theory of science, 7.5 ECTS cr
- Specialisation courses (optional), 7.5 ECTS cr.

10 ECTS cr including qualitative method 5 ECTS cr and quantitative method at least 5 ECTS cr

For a **Doctor's** degree the following courses are required:

- Theory of science, 7.5 ECTS cr
- Research methodology, 15 ECTS cr, including qualitative method 7.5 ECTS cr and quantitative method 7.5 ECTS cr
- Classical and contemporary sociological theories, 15 ECTS cr
- Specialisation courses (optional), 22.5 ECTS cr.

Specialisation courses for both degrees are chosen in conjunction with the advisor and the examiner. On the examiner's approval, credits can be transferred from basic and specialisation courses completed in other disciplines and/or universities.

## 6.2 Doctoral and Licentiate Thesis

Doctoral students are required to write a thesis for a doctoral or a licentiate degree, either as a monograph or as a compilation thesis. Candidates are required to defend their licentiate thesis at a seminar and their doctoral thesis at a public examination. Further information is provided in the policy documents "Regulations on Doctoral Thesis and Public Defence Procedures" and Requirements" and "Regulations on the Licentiate Thesis".

The dissertation topic is chosen in consultation with the advisor and the examiner. If the thesis is produced in collaboration with others, the individual candidate's contribution must be clearly indicated.

## 6.3 Supervision

Doctoral students are entitled to advisors in accordance with the principles stated in the current policy document at Karlstad University.

## 6.4 Individual Study Plan

Each doctoral student must draw up an individual study plan in conjunction with the advisors within six months. The plan should include a realistic estimate of time for course work, thesis work and supervision as well as an introduction to the proposed research field, problem, aim, methodological and theoretical frames, and relevant ethical considerations.

The individual study plan is subject to continual written revision (at least once a year). The revisions are entered into the university's ISP template.

## 6.5 Examination

Doctoral students are examined in accordance with the requirements of each individual course syllabus. Doctoral or licentiate dissertations are examined in accordance with the *Higher Education Ordinance* (Ch.6, §§ 33-34) and Karlstad University's current policy document.

**6.6 Revisions**

Previous versions of the curriculum were approved on:

14 June 2007, dnr FAK3 2007/219

24 Oct 2011, DEK3 74/2011

12 Dec 2012, dnr FAK3 2007/219

2 June 2016, dnr HS2016/415, valid for students admitted from 31 Dec 2015, and for previously admitted students if they wish.