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Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Curriculum for Doctoral Studies in Law

## Curriculum Approval

The curriculum was approved by the Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences on 7 February 2019. The doctoral programme is offered to the extent permitted by available funding. General stipulations for doctoral programmes are provided in the *Higher Education Act* and in the *Higher Education Ordinance*.

### 1. General Information

Doctoral programmes for awarding the degree of doctor in law and the degree of licentiate in law are offered at Karlstad University in the disciplines of *jurisprudence, civil law, tax law, international law, environment law, public law, procedural law, and criminal law*.

Karlstad University Business School cooperates with Linköping University and Örebro University on offering courses in law at the doctoral level.

### 2. Aims and Objectives

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

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

For a degree of **Licentiate** research students shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research, including current specialist knowledge in a defined part of the field and a deeper knowledge of scientific methods in general and of methods in the specific field of research in particular.

For a degree of **Doctor** research students shall

- demonstrate broad knowledge in and systematic understanding of the field of research, together with deep and up-to-date specialist knowledge in a defined part of the field of research; and
- demonstrate familiarity with research methods in general and with methods in the specific field of research in particular.

#### **Competence and skills**

For a degree of **Licentiate** research 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 delimited research project and other qualified tasks within specified time limits, in order to contribute to the development of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work;
- demonstrate the ability to clearly present and discuss research and research results in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts; and
- demonstrate the skills required to independently participate in research and development work and to work independently in other professional contexts.

For a degree of **Doctor** research 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;
- 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 skilled tasks within given time frames and to review and evaluate such work;
- demonstrate their ability to make a significant contribution to the development of knowledge through their own thesis and research;

- *demonstrate the ability to present and discuss research and research results with authority, in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts;*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify their need of further knowledge; and*
- *demonstrate the capacity to contribute to the development of society and support the learning of others through research and education, and in other professional contexts.*

### **Judgement and approach**

For a degree of **Licentiate** research students shall

- *demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of their own research;*
- *demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and responsibility of the individual for how it is used; and*
- *demonstrate the ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing their knowledge.*

For a degree of **Doctor** research students shall

- *demonstrate intellectual independence and scholarly rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics relating to research; and*
- *demonstrate specialised insight into the potential and limitations of scholarship, 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 research students shall have received a pass grade for a licentiate thesis of at least 60 ECTS credits.

For a degree of Doctor the research students shall have received a pass grade for a doctoral thesis of at least 120 ECTS credits.

### **Subject Specific Objectives**

Upon completed studies, the research student shall have

- *acquired specialised knowledge of jurisprudence theory and philosophy,*
- *acquired enhanced methodological knowledge of different jurisprudence methods,*
- *the ability to plan and complete extensive jurisprudence investigations independently,*
- *the ability to analyse legal and any other source material critically.*

Doctoral studies also prepare students for an academic career and for professional positions 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 is considered 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. Specific eligibility**

A person who has earned a Degree of Master of Laws, a Degree of Bachelor of Laws or a Degree of Master (60 credits) of Jurisprudence of at least 240 ECTS cr. has special eligibility for admission to doctoral studies in law. A person who, in some other way in the country or abroad has acquired

equivalent general and specific knowledge for the proposed disciplinary specialisation, 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 with an emphasis on the quality of previously written academic theses or development work, especially at Master's level. Special consideration will also be given to work experience of relevance to the doctoral programme, the candidates' possibility to be present at the Business School, and to existing supervision capacity in relation to the proposed research area.

## 6. Content and Outline

### 6.1 Degree requirements

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.

### 6.2 Courses

#### *Subject-specific courses*

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

- Theory of Science for Legal Scholars, 7.5 ECTS cr.
- Research Theory and Methodology, 15 ECTS cr.
- The Moral Philosophy and Ethics of Jurisprudence, 7.5 ECTS cr.

For a licentiate degree, the first two courses of 22.5 cr. shall be included. The remaining courses for the doctor's degree (30 cr.) and for the licentiate degree (7.5 cr.) are courses through which the students can acquire the knowledge of methods and theory required to pursue research in jurisprudence as well as the specialised subject knowledge required to complete the thesis. The student's background, research interests or thesis topic can justify other course work combinations. Students are encouraged to take courses at other institutions of higher education in Sweden and abroad. The doctoral programme requires active and regular participation in research seminars.

### 6.3 Doctoral and Licentiate Thesis

Candidates are required to write a thesis for a doctoral or a licentiate degree, either as a monograph or as a compilation of previously published papers with an introductory chapter. Candidates are required to defend their licentiate thesis at a seminar and their doctoral thesis at a public examination. Further information is provided by the policy documents "Doctoral Thesis Requirements" and "Licentiate Thesis Requirements".

If the dissertation is produced in collaboration with others, the individual candidate's contribution must be clearly indicated (for the benefit of the supervisor and the examining committee). The thesis,

normally written in English or Swedish, shall reflect the candidate's capacity to address a problem in the field of study independently and with a satisfactorily scholarly/scientific approach.

#### **6.4 Supervision**

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

A main supervisor and a co-supervisor are appointed in conjunction with the doctoral students on admission. The supervisors give advice and comment on the thesis topic and the thesis process. The doctoral student is expected to keep the supervisor updated on the progress regularly and seek advice on the continuation.

The supervisors are expected to continuously discuss, read and critically review the work in progress before it is submitted for examination.

#### **6.5 Individual Study Plan**

Each doctoral student must draw up an individual study plan in conjunction with the supervisors 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).

#### **6.6 Quality Assurance**

In addition to the faculty's regular system of following up doctoral students through the ISP, for example, the quality of the student's thesis work is assured by means of four mandatory seminar procedures for the *doctor's* degree:

1. Proposal seminar: In the first year the student presents the main ideas for the thesis project.
2. Halfway seminar: Before the end of the second year the student submits a text on one or some sections of the thesis (50-150 pages), gives an account of the research pursued so far and presents a plan for the remaining research period.
3. Text seminar: Around a year before the final submission, the student presents a substantial part of the thesis manuscript for discussion. The theory, method, structure, disposition and the presentation of the work in progress are discussed.
4. Final seminar: Before the public thesis defence, the whole thesis is submitted for a final seminar review.

For a *licentiate* degree, two mandatory seminars are required:

1. Proposal seminar: In the first year the student presents the main ideas for the thesis project.
2. Final seminar: Before the public thesis defence, the whole thesis is submitted for a final seminar review.

A special reviewer shall be appointed for each seminar, and for at least one of the seminars 2, 3, or 4, a special external reviewer shall be appointed.

#### **6.7 Examination**

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