



The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Curriculum for doctoral studies in Political Science (Forskarutbildning i Statsvetenskap)

Curriculum approval

Revised by the Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences on 28 October 2021.

The curriculum replaces the previous version from 12 September 2019, HS2019/1359.

General stipulations for PhD programmes are provided in the Higher Education Act and in the Higher Education Ordinance. Doctoral programmes at Karlstad University are offered to the extent allowed by available resources.

1. General Information

The doctoral programme in Political Science can lead to a licentiate or doctor's degree.

The doctoral programme is offered in Political Science or in Political Science with specialisation in Region Building (as part of the Graduate School on Sustainable Societal Transformation).

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 General Objectives

The general outcomes of licentiate or doctoral studies in terms of knowledge and understanding, competence and skills, and judgement and approach are specified as follows in the System of Qualifications (Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 2, SFS 2006:1053):

Knowledge and understanding

For a 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.*

For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student 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 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 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 autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity.*

For the **Degree of Doctor** the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously 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 student 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 the **Degree of Doctor** the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate intellectual autonomy 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 /doctoral thesis

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

For a degree of Doctor the third-cycle students shall have been awarded a pass grade for a doctoral thesis of at least 120 ECTS credits.

2.2 Subject-specific objectives

The doctoral programme in Political Science prepares students for further national/international academic careers and also for qualified professional work requiring Political Science expertise. The objectives below apply both to the licentiate and doctor's degree. The objectives are related to the general objectives for licentiate and doctor's degree, in order to clarify the level of each degree.

For a Degree of Licentiate and Doctor in Political Science at Karlstad University, students must:

- demonstrate broad and deep knowledge of Political Science as an international discipline and research tradition,
- demonstrate specialist knowledge in a research area of Political Science or in an

- application area,
- demonstrate ability to conduct research in Political Science and/or qualified investigatory work in Political Science application areas independently,
 - demonstrate ability to analyse current social issues and political problems academically,
 - demonstrate ability to discuss social and political issues in writing in public debate and present research results in a written, accessible form,
 - demonstrate insight into multidisciplinary approaches and experience from interactions across traditional disciplinary borders.

As part of the Graduate School on Sustainable Societal Transformation, students must demonstrate ability to treat and develop knowledge of region building in a multidisciplinary context.

For a degree of Licentiate students must have received a pass grade on a scholarly thesis of at least 60 ECTS credits. For a degree of Doctor students must have received a pass grade on a scholarly thesis of at least 150 ECTS credits.

3. Qualification 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, Sec. 35).

3.1 General Eligibility

To meet the general entry requirements, the applicant must have been awarded a master level qualification; satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were at master level; or acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad. The faculty board may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds. (Higher Education Ordinance, Chap. 7 Sect. 39)

3.2 Special Eligibility

To meet the specific entry requirements for doctoral studies in Political Science, the applicant must have been awarded a master-level degree with a major in Political Science and completed courses in Political Science totalling at least 120 ECTS credits, of which 30 ECTS credits are earned at master's level and include a degree project of at least 15 ECTS credits, has special eligibility for admission to doctoral studies in Political Science. Courses in Political Science taken as part of degree programmes such as Public Administration or teacher training also give eligibility.

An applicant can also meet the specific entry requirements by in some other way having the prerequisite knowledge described above, in the country or abroad.

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 based on 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 the proposed research area and its relevance for the subject's research programme, supervision capacity and the candidates' intention to be present and participate in the research environment. Eligible candidates in Political Science will be selected on the basis of their assessed capacity to successfully complete a doctoral programme in Political Science by attaining its objectives (see section 2 above).

6. Content and Outline

The doctoral programme can lead to a doctoral or licentiate degree. The doctor's 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 an independent project (licentiate or doctoral thesis). To earn a doctoral degree, the candidate must complete 75 ECTS credits of course work and a thesis comprising 165 ECTS credits. To earn a licentiate degree, the candidate is required to complete 52.5 ECTS credits of course work and a thesis comprising 67.5 ECTS credits.

The research school programme consists of courses (see section 6.1) and a joint research seminar. At the seminar, students present their texts for response and comments in discussion with students and supervisors from all the participating disciplines as well as their own.

Mandatory seminar presentations for the licentiate degree in Political Science

Students present their work on at least three occasions:

- Thesis idea (within three months)
- One-year seminar (within a year after admission)
- Final seminar

Mandatory seminar presentations for the doctor's degree in Political Science

Students present their work on at least four occasions:

- Thesis idea (within three months)
- One-year seminar (within a year after admission)
- Midway seminar
- Final seminar

6.1 Courses

University-wide mandatory courses

For Degree of Doctor

- Communicating Science 4.5 credits

Joint mandatory courses for the graduate school

(For both licentiate and doctor's degrees and the doctoral and licentiate students admitted to the Graduate School on Sustainable Societal Transformation)

- Thematic course on Region Building, 7.5 credits

Subject-specific courses for Degree of Licentiate

Subject-specific courses for the licentiate degree must total 30 ECTS credits of which 15 credits are for theory and analysis courses that demonstrate the range of the discipline. Recommended courses are Introduction to Political Science (7.5 credits) and Analytical Approaches in Political Science (7.5 credits). Courses in both qualitative and quantitative method are normally included. Credits can be awarded for similar courses at other universities, in Sweden or abroad.

Specialisation courses for Degree of Licentiate

Specialisation courses for Degree of Licentiate must total 7.5 credits. The student will, in consultation with supervisor and/or examiner, choose relevant specialisation courses in relation to the licentiate thesis. Specialisation can be achieved within the discipline, at other disciplines or through multidisciplinary courses. Courses offered by other departments are also valid. If the licentiate student is admitted as a part of the Graduate School on Sustainable Societal Transformation, the mandatory course in Region Building will act as the specialisation course.

Subject-specific courses for Degree of Doctor

Subject-specific courses for the doctor's degree must total 45 ECTS credits, of which 15 credits are for methodology courses, 30 credits for theory and analysis courses that demonstrate the range of the discipline. Recommended courses are Introduction to Political Science (7.5 credits) and Analytical Approaches in Political Science (7.5 credits). Courses in both qualitative and quantitative method should be included. Credits can be awarded for similar courses at other universities, in Sweden or abroad.

Specialisation courses for Degree of Doctor

Specialisation courses for Degree of Doctor must total 30 credits. The doctoral student will, in consultation with supervisor and/or examiner, choose relevant specialisation courses in relation to the doctoral thesis. Specialisation can be achieved within the discipline, at other disciplines or through multidisciplinary courses. Courses offered by other departments are also valid. If the licentiate student is admitted as a part of the Graduate School on Sustainable Societal Transformation, the mandatory course in Region Building is included here.

6.2 Licentiate and Doctoral Thesis

Doctoral students are required to write a thesis for a doctoral or licentiate degree, either as a monograph or as a unified collection of previously published papers. 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 Licentiate Thesis Requirements, Regulations on Doctoral Thesis and Public Defence Procedures and Guidelines for a Compilation Thesis in Political Science.

The topic of the licentiate or doctoral thesis is chosen in consultation with the supervisor and the examiner.

6.3 Supervision

Students admitted to the doctoral programme are entitled to supervision in accordance with the principles stated in the current policy document at Karlstad University (Higher Education Ordinance Ch. 6, Sec. 28).

6.4 Individual Study Plan

Within six months of admission to the doctoral programme, each doctoral student must draw up an individual study plan in consultation with their supervisor. The plan should include a realistic time plan for coursework, thesis work and supervision. It should also include 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 revision (at least once a year), with any written comments and corrections in writing.

6.5 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 Sec. 33–35). Furthermore, doctoral and licentiate theses are also regulated by Karlstad University's policy documents.