



Regulations for Third-Cycle Studies at Karlstad University

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Karlstad University –

we explore the unknown and challenge the established

Karlstad University is a young and dynamic university with excellent relationships with both industry and the public sector. Karlstad University takes pride in combining academic excellence with external cooperation. Throughout the University, international perspectives and collaborations are encouraged.

Karlstad University has around 16,000 students, 250 doctoral students, and a staff of over 1,200. The University's positive working environment, interesting research and education, solid development opportunities, and beneficial terms of employment attract qualified employees and students from all over the world. International recruits are offered help to make the transition to Sweden and Karlstad smoother.

Democratic principles, equality, and diversity are the cornerstones of the University, and that is evident in our working environment. We value the enriching presence of diverse backgrounds and competencies among students and staff.

More information about being a doctoral student at Karlstad University is available [here](#).

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1 Introduction

Regulations for Third-Cycle Studies includes national and local regulations pertaining to third-cycle courses at Karlstad University. The regulations are based on the Swedish Higher Education Act¹ and the Higher Education Ordinance² and constitute an interpretation and application of the general provisions. The rules are also based on the University's Admissions Regulations for the Doctoral Level and the University's Rules of Procedure and Delegation of Authority.

This document is intended to serve as a source for any and all regulations related to third-cycle studies at Karlstad University while serving as an easily accessible handbook in licentiate or doctoral studies for students, supervisors, examiners, or anyone else involved with third-cycle studies at Karlstad University.

There are two third-cycle programmes – one concluded with a Degree of Doctor (240 ECTS credits, equivalent to four years of full-time studies) and one concluded with a Degree of Licentiate (120 ECTS credits, equivalent to two years of full-time studies). The programmes mainly comprise courses and work on a doctoral or licentiate thesis, which are both examined through tests and a doctoral defence or licentiate seminar respectively.

Henceforth, “doctoral student” will refer to any student admitted to and participating in third-cycle studies, regardless of whether the objective is a Degree of Licentiate or Degree of Doctor. It will include all third-cycle students, regardless of funding or employment contract type.

2 Third-cycle studies

2.1 Purpose and outcomes

The overarching purpose of third-cycle studies is described as follows in the Swedish Higher Education Act:

Third-cycle courses and study programmes shall be based fundamentally on the knowledge acquired by students in first and second-cycle courses and study programmes, or its equivalent.

*In addition to the requirements for first and second-cycle courses and study programmes, third-cycle courses and study programmes shall develop the knowledge and skills required to be able to undertake autonomous research.*³

The Higher Education Ordinance specifies the intended learning outcomes formulated as qualification requirements for the Degree of Doctor and the Degree of Licentiate.⁴ The intended outcomes are listed in the study syllabus of every third-cycle subject area and are included via a link in the digital individual study plan.

¹ The Swedish Higher Education Act, SFS 1992:1434

² The Higher Education Ordinance, SFS 1993:100

³ Chap. 1 Sect. 9a Higher Education Act

⁴ Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 2

2.2 Studies concluded with a Degree of Licentiate

Studies concluded with a Degree of Licentiate comprise 120 ECTS credits, equivalent to two years of full-time studies. Part-time studies may be approved but never at less than a 50% rate and always with a corresponding extension of the study duration.

For a Degree of Licentiate, the student shall

- have received a passing grade on all tests included in the studies,
- have received a passing grade on a scientific thesis for at least 60 ECTS credits

The general study syllabus for the third-cycle subject area specifies the ratio of independent study (scientific thesis) versus coursework.

A person admitted to studies concludes with a Degree of Licentiate who then wants to continue towards a Degree of Doctor has to reapply for admission and be formally readmitted to continue their studies. ⁵

2.3 Studies concluded with a Degree of Doctor

Studies concluded with a Degree of Doctor comprise 240 ECTS credits, equivalent to four years of full-time studies. Part-time studies may be approved but never at less than a 50% rate and always with a corresponding extension of the study duration.

For a Degree of Doctor, the student shall

- have received a passing grade on all tests included in the studies,
- have received a passing grade on a scientific thesis for at least 120 ECTS credits. The doctoral thesis shall be presented and defended orally in public.⁶

The general study syllabus for the third-cycle subject area specifies the ratio of independent study (scientific thesis) versus coursework.

A person admitted to studies concluded with a Degree of Doctor has the right to finish part of their studies with a Degree of Licentiate, provided that studies comprise at least 120 ECTS credits.⁷

3 Third-cycle subject areas (disciplines)

A student is admitted to studies in a particular discipline. The faculty board determines which subjects to offer third-cycle studies in. Requirements and criteria for disciplines can be found in this document specifying [the grounds for assessment in terms of the establishment or discontinuation of a third-cycle discipline at Karlstad University](#).

⁵ Admission Regulations for the Doctoral Level C2019/916

⁶ Chap. 6 Sect. 33 Higher Education Ordinance

⁷ Admission Regulations for the Doctoral Level C2019/916

The third-cycle disciplines at Karlstad University are listed [here](#).

3.1 General study syllabus

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that for each subject in which third-cycle studies are offered, a general study syllabus⁸ is required and is determined by the faculty board. These can be found at the University's [pages for third-cycle studies](#).

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that a general study syllabus shall indicate the following:

- *the main content of the study programme,*
- *specific entry requirements and*
- *any other regulations required.*⁹

The general study syllabus at Karlstad University shall include the following headings:

1. General description of the discipline
2. The learning outcomes, both general and subject-specific where applicable
3. Entry requirements, general entry requirements and subject-specific entry requirements Please note that to be listed as a specific entry requirement, it must be essential to the doctoral student's ability to achieve the intended outcome of the studies.
4. Admission
5. Selection, the assessment criteria in the admissions process that will be applied to determine the applicants' ability to successfully complete the studies,
6. Programme curriculum and structure
 - 6.1. Courses
 - 6.2. Licentiate and doctoral thesis
 - 6.3. Supervision
 - 6.4. Individual study plan
 - 6.5. Examination

3.2 Individual study plan

An individual study plan (ISP) should be drafted for each doctoral student. The doctoral student creates the ISP in consultation with the supervisor and examiner. It is entered into the electronic ISP system for approval by the student and principal supervisor, confirmation by the head of department, review by the faculty office, and final decision by the dean (in that order). The Karlstad University intranet has [instructions](#) for how to fill out an ISP. The plan should include:

- the commitments of the higher education institution and student,¹⁰
- a timetable for the doctoral student's study programme, ¹¹
- information about how supervision of the doctoral student is organised,
- information about the doctoral student's examiner,
- information about the thesis project, its issues, and its intermediate targets,
- information about courses planned and other activities that do and do not entitle the doctoral student to credits,

⁸ Chap 6. Sect. 26-27, Higher Education Ordinance

⁹ Chap. 6, Sect. 27, Higher Education Ordinance

¹⁰ Chap. 6 Sect. 29 Higher Education Ordinance

¹¹ Chap. 6 Sect. 29 Higher Education Ordinance

- other requirements for the studies to fulfil the outcomes.

The dean signs off on the individual study plan after consultation with the doctoral student and supervisor¹². The ISP has to be reviewed regularly, no less than once per year. The University amends the ISP as needed after consultation with the doctoral student and supervisor. Each faculty has documents for quality assurance ^{13, 14}.

4 Period and rate of study

4.1 Period of study

For studies concluded with a Degree of Doctor, the period of study equals four years of full-time studies. For studies concluded with a Degree of Licentiate, the period of study equals two years of full-time studies.

The period of study is counted from the day when the doctoral student begins their studies after the university's formal decision to admit the doctoral student, the so-called start date.

A doctoral student may have already completed part of their studies, for instance through courses or research deemed an acceptable part of the third-cycle studies in question. To avoid counting that time twice for the doctoral student, the University is advised to deduct an equal amount of time from the studies. A corresponding deduction will also be made from the employment period.

4.2 Rate of study — full-time and part-time studies

Doctoral studies are normally full-time. Part-time studies may be approved by the University but never at less than a 50% rate. There will be a corresponding extension of the study duration, to a maximum of eight years for doctoral studies and four years for licentiate studies.

Grounds to approve part-time studies:

- **Departmental duties within the framework of a doctoral studentship**

A doctoral student often performs duties such as teaching, other research, and administration. This is referred to as departmental duties. Departmental duties may not constitute more than 20% of a full-time post.¹⁵ Departmental duties are subject to an agreement between the doctoral student and the department.

- **Part-time doctoral studentship**

A doctoral studentship can only be made part-time at the request of the

¹² Chap. 6 Sect. 29 Higher Education Ordinance

¹³ Quality assurance in first-cycle, second-cycle, and third-cycle studies at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Karlstad University, HS 2017/468

¹⁴ Quality assurance in third-cycle studies at the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology, HNT 2017/400

¹⁵ Chap. 5 Sect. 2 Higher Education Ordinance

doctoral student. A part-time appointment is subject to the dean's review and approval. The appointment may not constitute less than 50% of a full-time post.¹⁶

- **Part-time studies with other forms of funding**

If the student is not funded by the doctoral studentship itself, the terms for part-time studies are established in agreements and the individual study plan. The rate of study should be at least 50% of full-time during the period of study.

4.3 Reporting activity and funding

Karlstad University is obligated to submit information about doctoral students to Statistics Sweden. The information is also used in the University's annual report. For that reason, every doctoral student has to update their information about activity and funding in Ladok once every six months.

Activity means active study, which is to say the time that the doctoral student has spent pursuing third-cycle studies. The activity refers to the work performed in the third-cycle studies. Time spent on teaching, administration, and other tasks is deducted from the full-time activity. Deductions are also made for sick leave, parental leave, or other forms of leave. 100% activity is equivalent to full-time studies (40 hours per week). In calculations for part-time activity, the percentage should signify the average number for the entire period. If the doctoral student has been inactive, the number to enter is 0%.

Funding refers to how studies have been funded during the semester. The doctoral student can have several forms of funding during the course of a semester. Funding must be reported for every doctoral student with more than 0% activity. The types of funding used at Karlstad University are:

AUH	Employment outside the University, but not with a company
DKE	Doctoral studentship – external funds
DKF	Doctoral studentship – internal funds
HKE	Other employment with Kau – external funds
HKF	Other employment with Kau – faculty funds
FTG	Industrial doctoral student who is employed by a company and pursues third-cycle studies as part of the employment
ÖVR	Funding has not been secured

A form for reporting activity and funding is available via:
Inslaget/Stödsystem/Ladok/Forskarutbildning.

5 Admission and appointment

It is important to distinguish between the admission of a doctoral student and the appointment to a doctoral studentship. While all doctoral students at Karlstad University are admitted to third-cycle studies, not all doctoral students are employed

¹⁶ Chap. 5 Sect. 3a Higher Education Ordinance

through doctoral studentship appointments. A student admitted to third-cycle studies at Karlstad University could be employed by another higher education institution, or by a company or government agency.

For more information about the application, entry requirements, and admissions process, read [the Karlstad University Admissions Regulations](#).¹⁷

The admissions process contains the following steps:

1. Approval of a doctoral studentship
2. Recruitment
3. Formal admission

For more information about each step, see the respective sections below. More information is also available with regard to applicants with special needs, and to transfers from other universities. There are several forms of appointment for third-cycle students, and these are also detailed below.

5.1 The approval of a doctoral studentship

Doctoral studentships are subject to approval by the faculty board. Before the approval of a doctoral studentship, the department concerned shall give an account of the following issues:

- How funding of the studentship can be guaranteed for the whole period. *“Admission to doctoral studies requires that supervision, funding and acceptable conditions are guaranteed for the whole period of study.”*¹⁸
- How adequate supervision can be arranged. Each doctoral student is entitled to 160 hrs of supervision per year when their degree of activity is 100%. A lower degree of activity comes with a proportional reduction in supervision.
- How other conditions of study can be arranged satisfactorily. This refers to a work station, equipment, and other resources required to complete the studies. The head of department and the dean are responsible for ensuring acceptable study conditions.
- The proposal of a principal supervisor and at least one co-supervisor. The principal supervisor must be a professor or a reader. In exceptional cases, a university teacher with a doctorate can be the proposed principal supervisor, but only if the co-supervisor is a professor or reader. Such allowances must only be made when a supervisor for instance has particular expertise of great relevance to a student’s research area.
- The proposal of a professor or reader as examiner.
- The proposed advertisement, including assessment criteria at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences or a brief project description at the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology respectively.

¹⁷ Admissions Regulations for Education at Doctoral Level at Karlstad University C2019/916

¹⁸ Admissions Regulations for Education at Doctoral Level at Karlstad University C2019/916

5.2 Recruitment

All recruitment of doctoral students shall be based on selection procedures. Third-cycle studentships should always be announced. Exceptions from the announcement requirement can be made pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance.¹⁹ Karlstad University allows for the following exceptions:

- If the studies are to be pursued within the framework of employment elsewhere.
- If the doctoral student transfers from another higher education institution.
- If there are similar special grounds.

The position should be announced via the University's recruitment tool for a recommended minimum of three weeks before the application deadline. The advertisement should be posted in Swedish and English and include the requirements and qualifications necessary to be considered. The University welcomes domestic and international applicants.

Qualification requirements for third-cycle studies

To be eligible for third-cycle studies, the applicant must meet the general and specific entry requirements.

A person meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle studies if he or she:

1. *has been awarded a second-cycle qualification*
2. *has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second-cycle, or*
3. *has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.*²⁰

The higher education institution may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds.²¹

The specific entry requirements are stated in the general study syllabus for each discipline. The requirements laid down shall be essential for students to be able to benefit from the course or study programme.²²

General and specific entry requirements are listed in an employment profile/advertisement along with any other requirements. The University recommends the use of the advertising templates provided.

Selection

¹⁹ Chap. 7 Sect. 37 Higher Education Ordinance

²⁰ Chap. 7 Sect. 39 Higher Education Ordinance

²¹ Chap. 7 Sect. 39 Higher Education Ordinance

²² Chap. 7 Sect. 40 Higher Education Ordinance

It is the department's responsibility to ascertain the ability and suitability of the third-cycle student. To assure the quality of the selection process, the recommendation is to set up a recruitment team with the right competence and experience to assess candidates. The team should be selected to ensure a wide range in terms of subject area, background, and gender. The team should include a professor or reader and a person with international experience. The department will assess the applicants' eligibility and rank them. The top candidates are called for an interview, whereupon references should be contacted for the most qualified applicants. Eligible applicants are ranked and offered the position in turn, should anybody withdraw their interest. The selection process has to be documented and justified based on the predetermined selection criteria.

A formal admission serves as the basis for the appointment.

5.3 Formal admission

The department's suggested appointment is reviewed and discussed by the relevant faculty board or the body/function to which the faculty board has delegated doctoral student admissions. Formal admission to third-cycle studies is delegated to the Committee for Third-Cycle Studies by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and to the dean by the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology respectively. A doctoral student representative shall be given opportunity to participate in the preparatory stage. Formal admission to third-cycle studies at Karlstad University requires the dean's signature. The decision is sent to the applicant. The University HR Office is informed if the admission constitutes University employment. Admission is registered in Ladok.

5.4 Applicants with special needs

Information for applicants and students with special needs can be found on the web page [Students with special needs](#).

Applicants with special needs due to a disability are recommended to reach out to the University's student support contact staff well ahead of time. Doing so helps the University draft a plan as soon as possible for how best to accommodate the applicant in their studies.

5.5 Transfer between institutions

At Karlstad University, there are a number of active doctoral students who are admitted to another university or equivalent. Provided that the majority of their duties has been undertaken at Karlstad University, the faculty board concerned may at the doctoral student's request decide that the student be transferred to Karlstad University to complete their doctoral studies and qualifications.

Such a transfer may be made on the conditions that:

1. *the doctoral student requests a transfer a request in writing is submitted to the appropriate faculty office*
2. *the doctoral student can verify admission at the faculty and university in question*
3. *the receiving department has a funding and supervision plan and can show that the transfer is made in consultation with the university where the student is admitted any change in the supervision arrangement in conjunction with the transfer must be specified*
4. *the faculty dean approves the transfer.* ²³

These documents are sent to the appropriate faculty office for approval by the relevant faculty board or body/function to which the faculty board has delegated doctoral student admissions.

5.6 Forms of employment

Third-cycle studies are not subject to a tuition fee. The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates requirements for funding, meaning that a doctoral student must be able to secure funding for the duration of the studies.²⁴ This rule is often referred to as the funding requirement.

In other words, the University may not admit an applicant to third-cycle studies unless the applicant has adequate funding. Funding takes many forms, and thus there are several different forms of employment, such as employment as a doctoral student, permanent employment at Karlstad University with funding for doctoral studies at no less than 50 per cent, and employment elsewhere with funding for third-cycle studies.

Employment as a doctoral student

A doctoral studentship at Karlstad University is a government appointment especially designed for third-cycle studies. Provisions for the employment of doctoral students are stipulated in the Higher Education Ordinance. ²⁵ Only those who are or have been admitted to third-cycle studies may be appointed to doctoral studentships.

A doctoral studentship shall be a full-time post. If a doctoral student so requests, the appointment may be a part-time post but for no less than 50 per cent of a full-time post, provided that the supervisor approves of this structure and the dean grants the request. The total employment period for a doctoral student may, however, not exceed the time corresponding to four years of full-time third-cycle studies. Licentiate studies correspond to two years of full-time studies. The position may include departmental duties, normally in the form of teaching, at no more than 20%. In such cases, the employment period can be extended to a maximum of five years in total. Study time while the doctoral student was not appointed to a doctoral studentship shall be deducted from these periods. The period can be extended for leave of absence on special grounds, such as illness, parental leave, service in the defence forces, holding an elected position in a student organisation or union, or for assignments on

²³ Admissions Regulations for Education at Doctoral Level at Karlstad University C2019/916

²⁴ Chap. 7 Sect. 36 Higher Education Ordinance

²⁵ Chap. 5 Sect. 1-7 Higher Education Ordinance

a panel assessing the Swedish Higher Education Authority reviews. An extension of the employment period in other special circumstances is subject to a case-by-case assessment and the reasons must be specified in the doctoral student's ISP.

At Karlstad University, elected positions at the University, national and international doctoral student organisations, and assignments relating to the Swedish Higher Education Authority reviews are included in the time allotted for departmental duties. The doctoral student is entitled to spend the time required on the assignment.²⁶ If the assignment comprises more than 20% of full-time, the doctoral student shall request a leave of absence to complete it. A leave of absence is appropriate given that the doctoral student will receive a fee/salary from the other party.

The first employment period can be no more than one year, and the employment cannot be renewed by more than two years at a time. Employment can be funded internally, externally, or by a combination of the two.²⁷

Decisions regarding the employment of doctoral students cannot be appealed.

Doctoral students' wage rates progress according to a local collective agreement (the four-step ladder).²⁸ A special form²⁹ is used to notify the HR Office when a doctoral student is moved up the ladder. The principal supervisor is obliged to fill out the form and submit it to the HR specialist.

Permanent employee at Karlstad University with funding for doctoral studies at no less than 50 per cent

A part-time employee has to work at least 50%. Third-cycle studies have to account for at least 50% of a full-time position. This means that a full-time lecturer can spend half of their working time pursuing doctoral studies, and a part-time lecturer working 50% can dedicate all of their working time to doctoral studies. Employment can be funded internally, externally, or by a combination of the two.

Non-employee of Karlstad University (industrial doctoral student)

Subject to an agreement between Karlstad University and the other employer, a doctoral student employed elsewhere can conduct third-cycle studies. Agreement templates and financial templates are provided by the respective faculty office. Other employers may refer to industry, the education system, other universities, or government agencies. A part-time employee has to work at least 50%. Third-cycle studies have to account for at least 50% of a full-time position. Such employments are

²⁶ Please refer to SUHF recommendations for extensions of doctoral students' periods of employment and study for certain elected positions.

²⁷ Admissions Regulations for Education at Doctoral Level at Karlstad University C2019/916

²⁸ The collective agreement is available on the University intranet under Anställning/Kollektivavtal / Collective Agreements.

²⁹ The form is available on the University intranet under Anställning/Blanketter / Forms.

always completely funded by external means. In special circumstances, the Vice-Chancellor can make exceptions.

Collaboration with other higher education institutions (joint degree/double degree)

Subject to an agreement between Karlstad University and another higher education institution, a doctoral student can be admitted and receive either a double or a joint degree. Double degree means that a doctoral student is admitted and is then supervised and examined at two higher education institutions. After completed studies, two degree certificates is awarded. Joint degree means that at least two higher education institutions provide a joint doctoral programme, which then concludes with a joint degree and degree certificate. Agreement templates and a description of the process are provided by the respective faculty office.

Other forms of employment

Karlstad University applies strong restrictions on admitting doctoral students who are not included in the forms of funding described above. The Vice-Chancellor approves or rejects such applications after the dean has presented the matter in question. If such students may be admitted following the approval of the Vice-Chancellor, their funding must be equal to that of a doctoral student employment, irrespective of form and origin.

Karlstad University does not permit the establishment of scholarships or doctoral grants to fund third-cycle studies.

5.7 Working environment, health, and illness

All University employees including doctoral students are covered by the same safety net in terms of working environment, health, and illness. [The health and safety guide](#) provides brief descriptions and a great number of links to more comprehensive information. Doctoral students employed and/or working outside Karlstad University are covered by corresponding provisions at their place of work.

A doctoral student who is struggling emotionally, feels disrespected or discriminated against, is involved in a conflict, or has opinions about the working environment should primarily turn to the head of department, or, if that is not appropriate, to the dean or HR office. Another option is to contact a safety representative, labour union representative, doctoral student representative, or the occupational health service.

6 Supervisor, supervision, and examiner

The Higher Education Ordinance states: *The number of doctoral students admitted to third-cycle courses and study programmes may not exceed the number that can be offered supervision and otherwise acceptable conditions for study and whose studies are funded.*³⁰

At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. The doctoral student is entitled to supervision during his or her studies unless the vice-chancellor has decided otherwise by virtue of Section 30.

*A doctoral student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor.*³¹

A principal supervisor and at least one co-supervisor shall be proposed for each doctoral student. The principal supervisor must be a professor or a reader. At least one of the supervisors must have supervisor training. In exceptional cases, a university teacher with a doctorate can be the proposed principal supervisor, but only if the co-supervisor is a professor or reader. Such allowances must only be made when a supervisor for instance has particular expertise of great relevance to a student's research area.³²

Supervisors are appointed by the Committee for Third-Cycle Studies for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and by the dean for the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology.

The organisation and distribution of duties between supervisors is specified in the doctoral student's individual study plan.

Each doctoral student is entitled to 160 hrs of supervision per year when their degree of activity is 100%. A lower degree of activity comes with a proportional reduction in supervision.

A doctoral student who wants to be appointed a new supervisor should notify the faculty office pursuant to faculty procedure. The doctoral student is not obligated to give a reason for wanting a new supervisor, nor to be part of any consultations on the matter.

6.1 Supervision in practice

Supervision is essentially a form of instruction where the goal is for the doctoral student to meet the stipulated learning outcomes for the degree. The individual study plan is a key tool in the planning and execution of third-cycle studies. To support supervisors in their roles, Karlstad University offers courses and other activities related to third-cycle supervision.

The supervisor is obligated to stay abreast of regulations concerning third-cycle studies.

³⁰ Chap. 7 Sect. 34 Higher Education Ordinance

³¹ Chap. 6 Sect. 28 Higher Education Ordinance

³² Admissions Regulations for Education at Doctoral Level at Karlstad University C2019/916

6.2 Third-cycle examiner

For each doctoral student, a specially appointed examiner is selected as part of the admissions procedure. At the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the Committee for Third-Cycle Studies appoints the third-cycle examiner. At the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology, the dean appoints the third-cycle examiner.

The doctoral student's examiner cannot be the same person as their principal supervisor. Exceptions to this rule require justification and are to be made sparingly.

The examiner should be a professor or reader and normally have a permanent position as a teacher at Karlstad University. The minimum requirement is that the examiner is a permanent employee working at least 50% or a fixed-term employee contracted for at least two years working at least 50%.³³

The doctoral student's examiner has the overall responsibility to assure the quality of the third-cycle study process.

Furthermore, the examiner is ultimately responsible for the assessment of whether a specific course can be included in the doctoral student's degree, for preparing and making decisions about credit transfers, and for notifications about the public defence of the doctoral thesis/licentiate seminar. At the licentiate seminar, the examiner and an external co-assessor decide whether to approve the thesis and defence.

7 Courses and seminars

7.1 Courses, tests, and course syllabus

The studies comprise work on the doctoral thesis or academic paper and coursework including examinations.

The discipline's general study syllabus specifies what is required to be awarded qualifications. Some courses may be mandatory while others are electives. Individual literature courses and seminar series may be included in the coursework at the discretion of the discipline.

In this framework, doctoral students can take courses in their own discipline, within a graduate school, or any other relevant courses offered at Karlstad University. If appropriate, courses can be taken at another higher education institution. The doctoral student decides which courses to include in the studies after consultation with the supervisor and examiner, and this is specified in the individual study plan.

Mandatory courses in third-cycle studies must have course syllabi.

Course in higher education pedagogy

³³ Rules of Procedure for Faculty Boards, the Board of Teacher Education and the Organisation of the Faculties C2019/887

Doctoral students who teach at a first- or second-cycle level are expected to have completed adequate training in higher education pedagogy or acquired the equivalent skills in some other way.³⁴ A doctoral student who is set to teach will take a course in higher education pedagogy within the scope of their employment at Karlstad University during time not allotted for third-cycle studies (meaning as part of departmental duties). Alternatively, the course can be completed during time allotted for studies if the discipline's general study syllabus specifies that the course can be included in the third-cycle studies, or if the examiner approves it.³⁵

The option that applies to each doctoral student should be included in the individual study plan.

Courses with examinations

Examinations that form part of third-cycle courses and study programmes shall be assessed in accordance with the grading system prescribed by the higher education institution. The grade shall be determined by a teacher specially nominated by the higher education institution (the examiner).³⁶

Examinations are awarded a grade of Pass or Fail.

Third-cycle examiner

Examinations included in third-cycle studies will be graded by a specially appointed teacher; examiner.³⁷ The examiner should normally be a permanently employed teacher at the University. The minimum requirement is that the examiner is a permanent employee working at least 50% or a fixed-term employee contracted for at least two years working at least 50%. An examiner for third-cycle studies should be a reader or professor.³⁸

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has decided that an examiner should be appointed for each third-cycle course for the duration of one semester, one academic year, or one year. The dean is responsible for the appointment of third-cycle examiners.

7.2 Credit transfer

A student who has completed part of their third-cycle studies at another higher education institution is entitled to transfer the credits under certain conditions. If credit can be transferred, the doctoral student does not have to re-take examinations

³⁴ Guidelines for departmental duties of Kau doctoral students - Riktlinjer för doktoranders institutionstjänstgöring vid Kau, reg.no. C2005/164

³⁵ SUHF REK 2011:3 Reg.no. 10/106

³⁶ Chap. 6 Sect. 32 Higher Education Ordinance

³⁷ Chap. 6 Sect. 32 Higher Education Ordinance

³⁸ Rules of Procedure for Faculty Boards, the Board of Teacher Education and the Organisation of the Faculties C2019/887

for that part of the studies. Credit transfer is subject to approval. The doctoral student decides whether to apply for a credit transfer.

Credit transfer is regulated by the Higher Education Ordinance:

If a student at a higher education institution in Sweden has successfully completed a higher education course or study programme, she or he is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for a course or study programme at another higher education institution. This does not apply, however, if there is a substantial difference between these courses or study programmes.

The same applies for students who have successfully completed a course or study programme

1. at a university or higher education institution in Denmark, Finland, Iceland or Norway or a signatory to the Council of Europe's Convention of 11 April 1997 on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Swedish Treaty Series 2001:46), or

2. at Nordiska högskolan för folkhälsovetenskap (NHV – The Nordic School of Public Health).

A student is entitled to transfer credits from a course or study programme other than that laid down in Section 6 if the nature and extent of the knowledge and skills cited by the student are such that they correspond on the whole to the course or study programme for which the credits are to be recognised. A student may also be given credit for corresponding knowledge and skills acquired in a vocational or professional capacity.

The higher education institution shall assess whether credits can be awarded for the prior course or study programme or professional or vocational experience.³⁹

The University may not set local rules for credit transfer. Each individual matter of credit transfer is subject to review pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance regulations cited above.

It is the responsibility of the doctoral student to draft and submit an application for credit transfer. The application must be made on the form provided⁴⁰. On the form, the doctoral student enters the course (or equivalent) for which the credit is to be transferred, where applicable the Swedish or English translation of the course name, the number ECTS credits awarded for the course, and the higher education institution and country where the course was completed. The doctoral student should attach a copy of the course certificate and course syllabus or equivalent, as well as any other documents that the student would like to be considered in the matter. The application is submitted to the faculty office.

An application for credit transfer should be assessed pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance stipulations above. The assessment is informed by the Higher Education Ordinance learning outcomes for third-cycle studies as expressed in the general study syllabus followed by the doctoral student and in the course syllabi relevant to the transfer.

The decision to approve or reject credit transfer is made by the doctoral student's examiner.

³⁹ Chap. 6 Sect. 6–8 Higher Education Ordinance

⁴⁰ The forms are available on each faculty's website

The decision is always to be documented in writing, whether credit transfer is approved or rejected. If credit transfer is approved, the faculty administrator registers the decision in Ladok. If the application is rejected, the examiner is obligated to justify the decision. If the application is partially rejected, the examiner must specify which credits are approved and which are rejected. The rejections must be justified. If the application is completely or partially rejected, the University is required to immediately notify the doctoral student in writing and include instructions for an appeal.

A decision about credit transfer can be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board.⁴¹

7.3 Research seminars and other activities

The doctoral student is encouraged to actively participate in research seminars and other constructive activities for the duration of the period of study. Doctoral students are also recommended to avail themselves of the opportunity to attend guest lectures et cetera at Karlstad University and to participate in national and international conferences, summer graduate schools, and other constructive activities outside Karlstad University. Doctoral students with graduate school connections should participate in seminars organised by the discipline and by the graduate school, as well as other constructive activities.

8 Examination and degree

8.1 The research thesis required for the Degree of Licentiate

These regulations refer to the research thesis required for the Degree of Licentiate, as stipulated in the System of Qualification⁴²

The licentiate thesis shall be based on independent research and be of good academic standard. The thesis shall include an abstract of approximately 250 words. The licentiate thesis shall be presented at a public seminar at the discipline's department before a grade is awarded.

The licentiate thesis shall be written in English, Swedish, another Nordic language, or another language within the discipline's scholarly community. The essay shall have a title and abstract in Swedish and one other language.

- The seminar shall be chaired by the appointed examiner of the licentiate degree. A special provision applies at the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology. If the same person was appointed as both supervisor and examiner when the student was admitted, a specific examiner shall be appointed for the licentiate thesis.

⁴¹ Chap. 12 Sect. 2 Higher Education Ordinance

⁴² Higher Education Ordinance, Annex 2

- A specific external reviewer (opponent) and co-assessor – a professor or a docent – shall be appointed for the licentiate thesis.
- The seminar shall be held after the thesis had been publicly available for three weeks (see below).

The examiner shall ensure that the thesis is made available at the department/discipline and Karlstad University Library for at least three weeks before a grade is awarded. The public seminar date shall be set in analogy with the time periods that apply to the public defence of the doctoral thesis.

The examiner shall further ensure that the faculty office is notified that the thesis will be presented, including the name of the student, the names of the external reviewer and co-assessor, the title of the thesis, and information on the preliminary reviewer. The main rule is that the licentiate seminar shall be held as a physical meeting at Karlstad University. Exceptions to this rule where one, several or all participants will attend remotely, are decided by the dean. The reason for remote attendance must be justified. The faculty office shall be notified at the latest on the first day of the three-week period during which the thesis is made public. A copy of the thesis shall be sent to the faculty office at the latest on the first day of the three-week period during which the thesis is made public. If an external reviewer and co-assessor is prevented from attending the licentiate seminar, the dean of the faculty can appoint another external reviewer and co-assessor who will replace him/her.

At the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology, a specific examiner may be appointed for a licentiate thesis. In such cases, the notification tasks must be performed by the principal supervisor and the name of the proposed specific examiner shall be included when the faculty office is notified.

At the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, information detailing the quality assurance process is attached to the notification of the licentiate thesis.

The Faculty of Health, Science and Technology requires that before the licentiate thesis is made public, it shall be reviewed, in its preliminary form, by a qualified academic assessor who has not been directly involved in supervising the student or the research in question.⁴³

The Faculty Office sends the assessment form for the licentiate seminar and a form confirming fulfilment of all requirements for the licentiate degree to the department's faculty administrator.

At the latest three weeks before the public seminar, the respondent shall ensure that 1 physical copy of the licentiate thesis is delivered to the faculty office, and 5 physical copies are delivered to the University Library. The University Library issues a receipt on delivery of the library copy and submits the receipt to the relevant faculty office. Electronic publication of the licentiate thesis requires the respondent to fill out and sign a publication agreement as mandated by the University Library. The discipline concerned shall distribute copies of the licentiate thesis to other relevant departments in the country at its own expense. The Faculty Board recommends electronic publication instead of distributing hard copies to other departments.

The licentiate thesis is assessed by the examiner and a co-assessor (at least a docent (associate professor/reader) and preferably external) and one of the grades Pass or

⁴³ See SUHF recommendations for third-cycle studies, REK2011:3

Fail is awarded. After the seminar, the external reviewer/co-assessor and examiner discuss the grade. The principal supervisor can be present at the discussion, but cannot partake in the decision. The co-supervisor may also be present, if deemed appropriate. The completed assessment form for the licentiate thesis is given to the administrator who records the grade in the Ladok registry. It is then submitted to the faculty office.

A thesis awarded a passing grade shall be stored and catalogued at Karlstad University Library.

8.2 Doctoral thesis and public defence procedures

Thesis format

The doctoral thesis can either be a single-topic scholarly study (monograph) or a collection of previously published academic papers with an introductory chapter (compilation thesis).

If a doctoral thesis is authored by more than one person, the individual contributions must be clearly indicated in order to be recognised as a person's doctoral thesis. To this end, the supervisor and each doctoral candidate sign an account of contributions to be included in the thesis and to serve as a guide for the external reviewer, examining committee, and the public.

Upon assessment of a compilation thesis, the doctoral candidate's contributions shall be clearly distinguishable from other persons' contributions to the academic papers. An account of contributions must be included in the thesis.

A doctoral thesis shall be written in English, Swedish, another Nordic language, or another language within the discipline's scholarly community. A doctoral thesis shall have a title and abstract in Swedish and one other language.

A doctoral thesis shall include a notification cover sheet (spikblad) with an abstract in English not exceeding 2,000 characters, including spaces.

Time, place, notification

No later than six weeks before the public defence, the examiner must notify the faculty office of the public defence and propose the names of the chair of the proceedings, the external reviewer, and members of the examination committee, as well as the requested time for spikning (notification of the date of the public defence). The chair should not have been the doctoral candidate's supervisor. The main rule is that the public defence shall be held as a physical meeting at Karlstad University. Exceptions to this rule where one, several or all participants will attend remotely, are decided by the dean. The reason for remote attendance must be justified. If an external reviewer or a member of the examining committee is prevented from attending the public defence, the dean of the faculty can appoint another external reviewer or committee member who will replace him/her.

The notification shall include information detailing the quality assurance process, including a review of the thesis in its preliminary form by qualified academic

assessors who have not been involved in supervision or the research in question, at the halfway seminar, or in any other manner.

Forms for registration of public defence can be found on the respective faculty's websites.

The public defence shall take place during the academic semester with the exceptions of the period from the Saturday before Midsummer to the start of the autumn semester, and the period between 22 December to 10 January. The dean decides on the time and place and appoints the external reviewer, the examination committee, and the chair of proceedings.

No later than three weeks before the public defence, the time and place of the public defence shall be announced on the University noticeboard and the thesis made publicly available (nailed to the board, spikning). The periods from the Friday immediately before Midsummer to 15 August and from 24 December to 6 January cannot be included in the three-week notification period.

The dean may allow a shorter notification period in case of acute and verified illness or other special circumstances. Examples of time limits: public notification must be made no later than 25 May for a public defence scheduled for 15-18 June, 10 June for a public defence scheduled on 1 September, 16 August for a public defence scheduled on 6 September, 6 December for a public defence scheduled on 10 January.

The faculty office sends the assessment form for the doctoral thesis and a form confirming fulfilment of all requirements for the doctoral degree to the department's faculty administrator.

Duplication and accessibility of the thesis

At the latest three weeks before the public seminar, the respondent shall ensure that 1 physical copy of the doctoral thesis is delivered to the faculty office, and 5 physical copies are delivered to the University Library. The University Library issues a receipt on delivery of the library copy and submits the receipt to the relevant faculty office. Electronic publication of the doctoral thesis requires the respondent to fill out and sign a publication agreement as mandated by the University Library. The discipline concerned shall distribute copies of the doctoral thesis to other relevant departments in the country at its own expense. The discipline decides how many copies of the doctoral thesis to print. The Faculty Board recommends electronic publication instead of distributing hard copies to other departments.

At the time of notification, the thesis must be duplicated and be available at the University in the number of copies necessary to enable the academic community and the public to read the thesis before the public defence.

At the same time, the thesis must be distributed to every higher education department in Sweden in the field of the thesis, and to the libraries at such higher education institutions.

Public defence

The public defence is an open event and is chaired by a person appointed by the dean. There shall be an external reviewer appointed by the dean at the public defence along with an examination committee.

At the end of the proceedings, members of the audience have the right to ask the respondent questions in the order indicated by the chair.

External reviewer

The external reviewer shall at least be a docent (associate professor/reader) unless there are special circumstances, be a specialist in the field, and shall not be employed at Karlstad University. If there are special circumstances, these must be justified.

Assessment and examination committee

One of the grades Fail or Pass shall be awarded in the examination of the doctoral thesis, assessed based on the quality of the thesis and its defence.

The examination committee, specially appointed for each thesis, decides on the grade to be awarded.

Composition of examination committee

The examination committee shall have three or five members. The dean decides on the number of members and their appointment. At least one substitute member shall be appointed.

The members of the committee shall at least be docents (associate professors/readers). In special circumstances, one member who does not meet this requirement may be appointed. If there are special circumstances, these must be justified.

Unless there are special circumstances, a majority of the members shall be recruited among teachers within the discipline elsewhere than Karlstad University. Members who are employed at Karlstad University should be recruited outside of the circle of colleagues in the subject to which the candidate belongs. If there are special circumstances, these must be justified.

The supervisor cannot be a member of the committee and the chair of the proceedings should not be a member of the committee.

The University's gender equality guidelines shall be observed in the appointment of the examination committee.

Examination committee's meeting and decision

After the public defence, the examination committee decides on the grade. The chair of proceedings, external reviewer, and principal supervisor can be present at the meeting, but cannot partake in the decision. The co-supervisor may also be present, if deemed appropriate.

The committee elects one member to chair the meeting. The committee can make a decision if all members are present. The decision applies that a majority of members agree on. If the thesis is awarded a Pass grade by majority decision, a member is entitled to have a dissenting opinion noted in the minutes without specifying the reason for this. The committee's minutes do not contain any motivation for the committee's or individual member's positions regarding the approval of the thesis.

Should the thesis fail, the committee shall justify their decision, and a member has the right to have a dissenting opinion noted in the minutes along with the reasons for this opinion.

Recording of the grade and completion of third-cycle studies

The completed assessment form for the doctoral thesis and public defence along with a certificate of completed third-cycle studies is given to the administrator who records the grade in the Ladok registry. It is then submitted to the faculty office.

8.3 Qualification

The studies are concluded with a Degree of Doctor or Degree of Licentiate. A doctoral student can claim a Degree of Licentiate as an intermediate qualification when the doctoral student has completed a section totalling at least 120 ECTS credits of studies concluded with a Degree of Doctor. Qualification requirements are specified in the discipline's general study syllabus.

A doctoral student that fulfils the qualification requirements for a Degree of Doctor or Degree of Licentiate shall upon request receive a degree certificate from the University. Karlstad University issues digital degree certificates. The Diploma Supplement is an attachment containing a description in English of the studies' content, nature, level, and context in the Swedish educational system. An application form for a degree certificate is available on the University's pages for third-cycle studies, [Application form degree certificate](#).

A specialised department within Central Services administers certificates and advises students on certificate-related issues.

A rejected application for a degree certificate can be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board.

Titles of qualifications

The following licentiate degrees are awarded at Karlstad University:
Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy in..... (Filosofie licentiatexamen)
Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy in..... (Ekonomie licentiatexamen)
Degree of Licentiate of Laws in..... (Juris licentiatexamen)
Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy in..... (Teknologie licentiatexamen)

The following doctoral degrees are awarded at Karlstad University:
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in..... (Filosofie doktorsexamen)
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in..... (Ekonomie doktorsexamen)
Degree of Doctor of Laws in..... (Juris doktorsexamen)

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in..... (Teknologie doktorsexamen).⁴⁴

Subject and specialisation in the degree certificate

The discipline to which the doctoral student has been admitted is added as a suffix in the degree certificate.

*Example: Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Discipline: Biology*

An exception applies to the Degree of Doctor/Licentiate of Laws, which is phrased as follows: *Degree of Doctor of Laws in x (specialisation). Degree of Licentiate of Laws in x (specialisation).*⁴⁵

9 Graduate schools

Karlstad University's ambition to facilitate interdisciplinary interaction in our research includes third-cycle studies. There is collaboration across subjects and disciplines, for instance in the form of interdisciplinary work in the framework of graduate schools. There is collaboration between graduate schools at the University as well as nationally and internationally. More information about [graduate schools](#).

A graduate school should contribute to a robust, creative third-cycle study environment in a wider context and provide a stimulating research environment to bolster the doctoral student's learning and development. Graduate school activities should enhance the quality and contents of supervision and studies and be viewed as a resource for doctoral students in addition to being an avenue for social activities.

Karlstad University has established several graduate schools in the arts and social sciences, as well as health, science and technology, and didactics. Graduate schools are established by order of the faculty boards. They constitute a collaborative structure for various disciplines at the University and are centred around a particular theme or problem. Other universities, government agencies, municipalities, or private businesses may be part of the collaboration.

While doctoral students are admitted to a discipline and primarily belong to that discipline, they conduct part of their research within the framework of the graduate school.

The same general provisions apply for graduate school studies as for third-cycle studies. Doctoral students follow their discipline's general study syllabus, but special provisions may apply to doctoral students tied to a specific graduate school.

Karlstad University collaborates with other higher education institutions through national graduate schools. The intention is for institutions to work together and thus

⁴⁴ Karlstad University System of Qualifications, C2018/240

⁴⁵ Title of qualification Degree of Doctor of Laws/Degree of Licentiate of Laws, HS 2020/767

ultimately offer doctoral students the best possible education. There is also international collaboration through international graduate schools.

10 Career support and continuing professional development

Several sections at Karlstad University join forces to provide continuing professional development and career support for researchers. Career support is also available to third-cycle students. Initiatives include:

- Individual and career-related skills development through Karlstad University's in-house transferable skills development package for researchers, CTRIVE® 3.0. For more information: Grants and Innovation Office (GIO)
- Courses in Data Management (2 credits) and Applications of Research (4.5 credits) specifically designed to improve the doctoral student's competitive edge in these areas. For more information: [Grants and Innovation Office \(GIO\)](#)
- External Relations' Alumni Service can help connect doctoral students with previous students working in many different sectors in countries all around the world, either for academic or career purposes. For more information: [External Relations](#)
- A series of podcast interviews where doctoral students present their essays/theses. The target audience is non-specialists, and participating gives doctoral students an opportunity to practise research communication in terms of popular science. For more information: [University Library](#)
- A doctoral course in Information Retrieval (3 credits) covering subjects including information seeking, evaluating information resources and search results, reference management, bibliometrics, strategic scholarly publication, and copyright and Open Access. For more information: [University Library](#)
- Higher education pedagogy For more information: [Centre for Teaching and Learning \(UPE\)](#)
- A number of seminars and initiatives for doctoral students are organised regularly. For more information: [HR Office](#)

A discussion with the supervisor and examiner about the doctoral student's post-defence future can take place in conjunction with supervision and ISP discussions.

More information about career support for researchers [is available here](#).

11 Withdrawal of resources for third-cycle students

If a doctoral student substantially neglects the undertakings specified in the individual study plan, the Vice-Chancellor can decide to withdraw supervision and other resources from the doctoral student, pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance.

If a doctoral student substantially neglects his or her undertakings in the individual study plan, the vice-chancellor shall decide that the doctoral student is no longer entitled to supervision and other study resources. Before such a decision is made, the doctoral student and the supervisors shall be given an opportunity to make representations. The case shall be considered on the basis of their reports and any other records available. The assessment shall take into account whether the higher education institution has fulfilled its own undertakings in the individual study plan. A written record of the decision shall be made, which is to include reasons for the decision. Resources may not be withdrawn for any period in which the third-cycle student has been appointed to a doctoral studentship or is receiving a doctoral grant.⁴⁶

If study resources have been withdrawn pursuant to Section 30, the doctoral student may, on application to the vice-chancellor, recover his or her entitlement to supervision and other resources. The doctoral student must then demonstrate convincingly, by presenting prospective study results of considerable quality and scope or in some other way, that he or she can fulfil his or her remaining undertakings in the individual study plan.⁴⁷

A withdrawal of resources means that the doctoral student no longer has the right to supervision or to attend courses and seminars. The doctoral student also does not have the right to continued funding through the University. Doctoral studentships are normally fixed-term, initially one or two years extended to a total of four or five years. A doctoral student whose resources have been withdrawn has the right to remain in the University's employ until the contract has expired. There will not be an extension of the contract, however.

The student retains their studentship and may take an examination for completed coursework or submit a research paper for a Degree of Licentiate or a doctoral thesis. Doctoral students who fulfil the requirements for a Degree of Licentiate or Degree of Doctor is still entitled to a degree certificate.

Appeal

A decision to withdraw study resources from a doctoral student and a decision that a student is not to recover these resources can be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board.⁴⁸ The appeal must be submitted to the University within three weeks and clearly specify which decision is the subject for the appeal, and what action the appellant would like to see. More information is available on the University's intranet.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Chap. 6 Sect. 30 Higher Education Ordinance

⁴⁷ Chap. 6 Sect. 31 Higher Education Ordinance

⁴⁸ Chap. 12 Higher Education Ordinance

⁴⁹ Central Services/Legal Affairs Office

12 Disciplinary measures and expulsion

Disciplinary measures for cheating, disruption, and harassment are stipulated in the Higher Education Ordinance.⁵⁰ The disciplinary measures comprise warnings and suspension.

Violations are reported to the Vice-Chancellor and processed by the person on the disciplinary board who prepared the case. The decision is made by the Vice-Chancellor or the University's disciplinary board. More information about disciplinary matters is available on the University's intranet.⁵¹

The Swedish Higher Education Act⁵² and Ordinance on the expulsion of students from higher education allow the expulsion of a student if the student suffers from a mental disorder, abuses alcohol or drugs, or is found guilty of a serious crime.⁵³ A central board, the Higher Education Expulsions Board, decides on the matter following a report from the Vice-Chancellor of the University. Expulsions are processed by the University Legal Affairs Office.

13 Decision-making mandate for third-cycle studies at Karlstad University

The Swedish Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance specify the University's decision-making mandates. Many duties and decisions have been delegated to the faculty board, Vice-Chancellor, or other officials and bodies. Always refer to the University's Rules of Procedure and Delegation of Authority for each specific case. Below is a brief summary of the decision-making mandates of various bodies.

- *The University Board* supervises all of the University operations and assumes responsibility for the fulfilment of its mandate. The Board's mandate includes decisions about the appointments procedure, key directives, and the University's budget.
- *The Vice-Chancellor* is directly accountable to the board. The Vice-Chancellor has a mandate in certain overarching third-cycle study matters, such as the grading system or degree regulations. The Vice-Chancellor also has the mandate to withdraw the right to supervision and other resources from doctoral students. The Vice-Chancellor has delegated the decision-making mandate in some matters to the faculty board.

⁵⁰ Chap. 10 Higher Education Ordinance.

⁵¹ Central boards and councils/Disciplinary board

⁵² Chap. 4 Sect. 6 Higher Education Act

⁵³ Ordinance on the expulsion of students from higher education, SFS 2007:989.

- *The faculty board* is responsible for third-cycle studies. An overarching task is the planning, support, and follow-up of research and teaching. The faculty board is responsible for educational quality, internationalisation, and gender equality. The faculty board determines general rules for third-cycle studies, such as general study syllabi and guidelines for the execution of the studies. The faculty board in turn has delegated certain tasks to the dean or committee for third-cycle studies.
- *The committee for third-cycle studies* approves the course syllabus for the third-cycle studies. At the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the committee approves the admission of doctoral students and appoints supervisors and examiners.
- *The dean* makes decisions regarding the admission of doctoral students, individual study plans, and appoints the examining committee and external reviewer. At the Faculty of Health, Science and Technology, the dean also appoints supervisors and examiners.

Student influence

Students, in this instance doctoral students, shall be entitled to exert influence over the studies. The University shall endeavour to enable students to play an active role in the continued development of courses and study programmes, and have representation in decisions-making or deliberations that affect the studies and situation of the students. For that reason, there are student representatives on the faculty boards, the Board of Teacher Education, and on other drafting and decision-making bodies whose issues include third-cycle student matters. Such elected positions are not included in the third-cycle studies, but are planned within the framework of departmental duties. More substantial assignments may require a leave of absence.⁵⁴

Doctoral students have the opportunity to influence their own third-cycle studies by participating in discipline meetings and meetings for doctoral students and supervisors in the respective disciplines.

14 Disqualification

Disqualification means that there are special circumstances that may affect the trust in a person's ability to partake in a decision process without bias. The person has a vested interest in the matter that could affect their position.

Possible disqualification on the grounds of bias is frequently considered in third-cycle studies, for instance in the admissions process, funding allocation, approval and changes of an individual study plan, appointment of examiners and examination committees, credit transfer and assessment of professional equivalency, and assessment of examinations and the licentiate and doctoral thesis.

⁵⁴ Please refer to SUHF recommendations for extensions of doctoral students' periods of employment and study for certain elected positions.

Disqualification protocol is stipulated in the Administrative Procedure Act:

A person charged with handling a matter on behalf of a government agency is considered to have a conflict of interest

- 1. if the matter concerns themselves or someone close to them, or if they or someone close to them can expect extraordinary advantage or detriment from the outcome,*
- 2. if they or anyone close to them is or has been the legal representative of someone that the matter concerns or of anyone that can expect extraordinary advantage or detriment from the outcome of the matter,*
- 3. if they have taken part under the auspices of a subordinate authority in the final handling of a matter concerning the same material issue and thus have already formed an opinion on issues now to be decided on by a superior agency, or*
- 4. if there is some other special circumstance that is likely to undermine confidence in their impartiality in the matter.*

Disqualification shall be disregarded where the question of impartiality is obviously of no importance.

A person who is disqualified may not handle the matter or be present when the matter is decided on. They may, however, take those steps that cannot be made by someone else without an inconvenient delay.

Anyone who knows of any circumstance that could constitute their disqualification is obliged to disclose it on their own motion.⁵⁵

A disqualified person may not participate in preparation, deliberation, assessment, or presentations, or in any way handle the matter in question. Some personnel are normally not subject to these provisions, for instance the registrar or administrator processing the decisions.

Anyone who knows of any circumstance that could constitute their disqualification is obliged to disclose it on their own motion. An issue of disqualification can also be raised by someone else, such as the doctoral student or a colleague. Issues of disqualification should be reported to the immediate superior at the University. If a doctoral student wishes to discuss possible disqualification, they can turn to the University's legal office.

As a consequence, a replacement has to fill the disqualified person's position. If a person with a conflict of interest is found to have handled a matter without disqualifying themselves, the decision made may in some cases be overturned.

15 Processing of personal data

Karlstad University acts as data controller and processes personal data in compliance with the applicable data protection legislation.

The General Data Protection Regulation stipulates that you have the right to request information about the personal data relating to you and have any incorrect

⁵⁵ Sect. 16–18 Administrative Procedure Act

information rectified. You also have the right to request that your data be deleted or limited, and to object to the processing of personal data. You can also file a complaint with the Swedish Authority for Privacy Protection. Contact Karlstad University's data protection officer on dpo@kau.se. For more information about the processing of personal data at Karlstad University, go to [Processing personal data at Karlstad University](#).

Personal data is retained as long as is necessary based on the purpose of the processing and in accordance with applicable legislation and the Karlstad University information management plan. Some data is processed in cloud services outside the University. The university may transfer personal data to a third country, i.e. a country outside of the EU/EEA when cloud services are used or in matters regarding international research projects.

Personal data in official documents is handled in compliance with the Freedom of the Press Act⁵⁶ the Archives Act⁵⁷ and provisions as stipulated by the National Archives of Sweden.⁵⁸ If there is no official decision to clear the records, compliance with Archives Act dictates that the information be retained.

This applies to data not processed according to the Ordinance on the Reporting of Studies in Higher Education (1993:1153, see below).

Doctoral studentship

The personal data of people employed as doctoral students is processed in various HR system to the degree that is necessary to fulfil the terms in the employment contract and requirements stipulated in laws and collective agreements, and in any other systems required for Karlstad University to fulfil its mandate. Categories of personal data processed include identity information (name, personal identity number, address, phone number, and email), employment type and scope, period of employment, additional assignments and supervisory roles, service planning, side jobs, salary, taxes and social security contributions, absences, medical certificates, labour union memberships, et cetera. Data may be made available to third parties, for example to fulfil legal requirements regarding the reporting of taxes and social security contributions. Data is made available to, for instance, the Swedish Tax Agency, Statistics Sweden, the Swedish Agency for Government Employers, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Higher Education Authority, the National Government Employee Pensions Board, and labour unions. A confidentiality assessment is done before data is made available.

Karlstad University is responsible for the filing and processing of personal data. Data is filed to ensure the preservation of information about applicants, completed studies, grades, and degrees awarded. GDPR allows for some instances where data can be made available, such as to Statistics Sweden and funders of research.

Ladok

⁵⁶ The Freedom of the Press Act, (1949:105)

⁵⁷ The Archives Act (1990:782)

⁵⁸ <https://riksarkivet.se/foreskrifter-och-regler>

The doctoral student's data from the application and certain diplomas as well as information about study results will be automatically processed in a student administration system called Ladok. Provisions applicable to the system are specified in the ordinance.⁵⁹

The personal data of each student is stored in the administrative database Ladok (name, personal identity number, address, telephone number and email address) along with information including participation in courses and programmes and examinations, results, grades, transferred credits or recognition of prior experience, and degrees obtained. Ladok also needs to store the information Karlstad University needs to supply to Statistics Sweden. The ordinance allows for data from these databases to be made available to third parties, e.g. other higher education institutions and the Swedish Board of Student Finance.

Individual study plans

The individual study plan also contains the doctoral student's data. The same rules apply for ISPs as for Ladok (see above).

The doctoral student always receives a copy of the finalised and revised study plans, and of any other decisions in connection to it. Additional information about the student is generally not entered until the next revision.

Karlstad University is responsible for the processing of personal data. Data is processed to fulfil the requirement in the Higher Education Ordinance stipulating that the University shall set individual study plans for each doctoral student.⁶⁰

16 Who to contact

For questions that are not directly related to the supervisor, course coordinator, or examiner, the doctoral student's primary point of contact is the discipline's faculty administrator. The administrator can refer you to the right person. Questions concerning the formal part of the third-cycle studies, admissions, ISPs, rules, et cetera can be directed to faculty office staff. Questions concerning employment should be directed at the HR Office.

⁵⁹ The Ordinance on the Reporting of Studies in Higher Education (1993:1153)

⁶⁰ Chap. 6 Sect. 29 Higher Education Ordinance