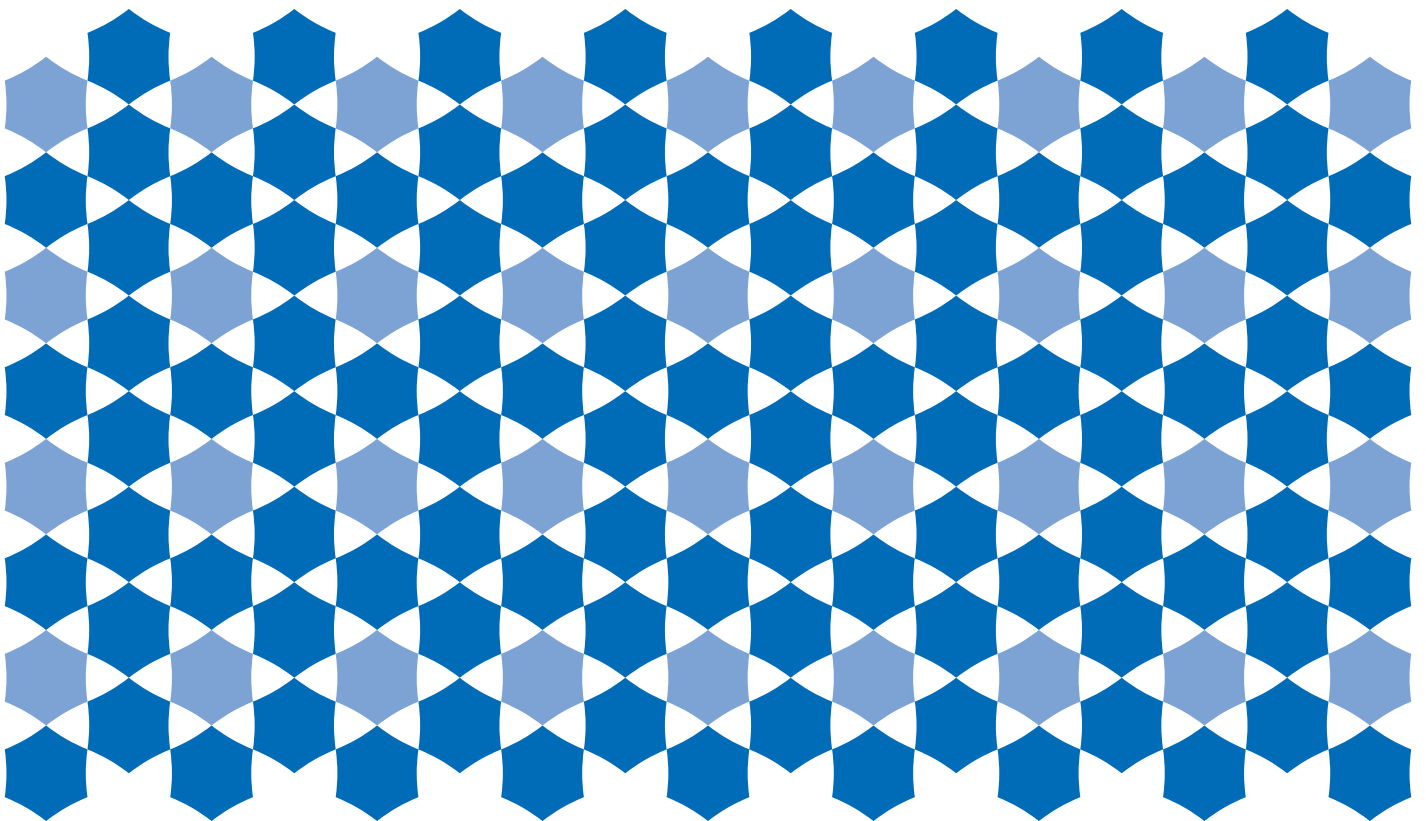




# Guidelines for the evaluation of third-cycle programmes



Guidelines for the evaluation of third-cycle programmes

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# Introduction

This guidance document concerns evaluation of third-cycle programmes. These guidelines are based on the national system for quality assurance in higher education that the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) has been assigned by the government to develop and implement. UKÄ has reported on this assignment in the report *National system for quality assurance in higher education – presentation of a Government assignment* (Report 2016:15). Evaluation of third-cycle education is included in the review component ‘programme evaluation’, which is one of the four review components within the national system of quality assurance in higher education. Between 2014 and 2016, UKÄ carried out a pilot study for the evaluation of third-cycle programmes.

# National system for quality assurance in higher education

Quality assurance in higher education presupposes that quality assurance is conducted by higher education institutions (HEIs) as well as by UKÄ. This means that the HEIs and UKÄ have a shared responsibility for quality assurance in higher education. Valuing this shared responsibility has been a core principle of UKÄ in its work with the Government assignment to develop a new system for quality assurance in higher education. It has been important to create a clear link between UKÄ's reviews and the quality assurance processes at the HEIs, while also considering how UKÄ's reviews can contribute to further improving this work. It is also in line with international principles for quality assurance in higher education, *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), which deals with HEIs' internal quality work, the external quality assurance of HEIs' activities as well as the requirements that the quality assurance bodies must meet. To adhere to the requirements in ESG, both the HEIs and UKÄ must ensure that these standards are met.

## UKÄ's reviews

The objectives of UKÄ's review are partly to assess the performance of the study programmes and partly to contribute to the HEIs' work with quality improvements in higher education. The national system for quality assurance in higher education consists of the following four components:

- appraisal of applications for degree-awarding powers
- institutional reviews of the HEIs' quality assurance processes
- programme evaluations
- thematic evaluations.

UKÄ has strived to develop a model that is useful for all four components but that can also support the internal quality assurance processes of the HEIs. The model, which is described in Fig. 1, consists of four aspect areas and three perspectives that together are based on both applicable Swedish law and ordinances and the ESG.

The aspect areas are

- governance and organisation
- environment, resources and area
- design, teaching/learning and outcomes
- actions follow-up, actions and feedback.

The three perspectives are:

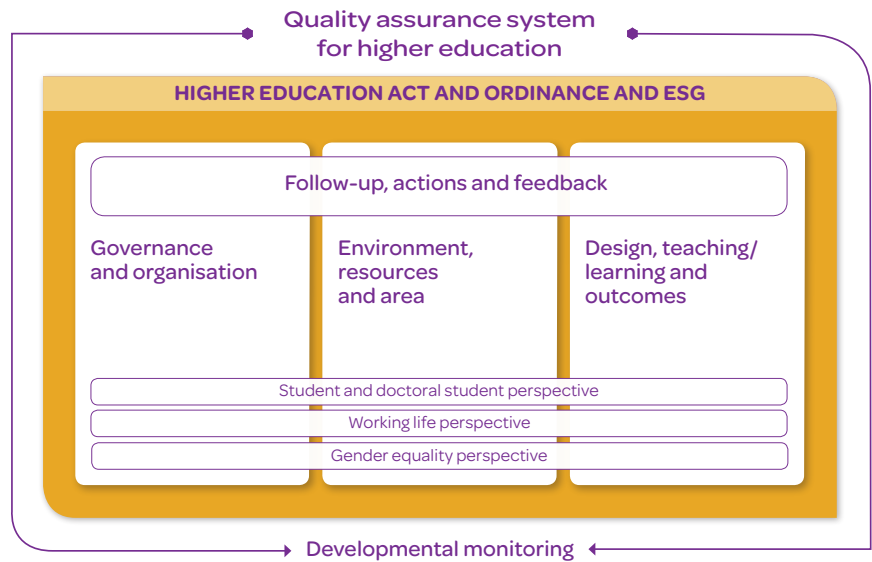
- student and doctoral student perspective
- working life perspective
- gender equality perspective.

Student influence and participation are regulated in the Higher Education Act, particularly in relation to the HEI's quality assurance processes (Chapter 1, section 4). Furthermore, the student perspective is more clearly described in the revised ESG (2015). The working life perspective is also regulated in the Higher Education Act. For example, first-cycle programmes shall prepare 'students to deal with changes in working life' (Chapter 1, section 8). Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are key quality factors to be considered in the reviews and, like many other authorities, including the HEIs, it is an area that UKÄ has been assigned by the Government to develop. This area is also regulated in the Higher Education Act (Chapter 1, Section 5).

UKÄ formulates the requirements to be met when assessing aspects and perspectives, i.e. assessment criteria. The assessment criteria are to remain open-ended and not overly controlling in how HEIs choose to organise and conduct their operations. Aspects, perspectives and assessment criteria for the evaluation of third-cycle education are set out in detail in annex 1 to this document.

All reviews will be carried out by independent assessment panels put together by UKÄ based on a nomination procedure in which HEIs, student unions and employee/employer organisations make suggestions for assessors. The assessment panels consist of student representatives, representatives of employers and the labour market and experts from the higher education sector, participating in the evaluation process on equal terms. UKÄ decision is based on the assessment panels' reviews.

**Figure 1.** Overview of the model's aspect areas and perspectives. The model is based on the Swedish Higher Education Act, the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance and ESG. Aspects and perspectives are assessed using the assessment criteria. The aspect area 'follow-up, actions and feedback' is influenced by and has repercussions on the other aspects and is thus included in the assessment criteria for other aspects. The HEIs are asked to describe, analyse and evaluate, using specific examples, how they ensure and follow up that they fulfil the assessment criteria for the different aspects and perspectives in a systematic way.



For complete information on the national system for quality assurance in higher education, see the report *National system for quality assurance in higher education - presentation of a Government assignment* (Report 2016:15).

# Evaluation of third-cycle programmes

Programme evaluations monitor actual conditions and outcomes, e.g., that the programme meets the requirements in applicable laws and ordinances.

The reviews focus on how well the follow-up, actions and feedback processes contribute to ensuring and improving quality in the reviewed programmes in a systematic way.

The reviews also contribute to improving the HEIs' quality since the assessors provide feedback in their reports on both identified good examples and areas in need of improvement.

## Purpose

The aim of these programme evaluations is to monitor the programmes' outcomes and to contribute to the HEI's own quality improvements for the reviewed programmes.

## Main principles for evaluation of third-cycle programmes

Evaluation of postgraduate education is based on third-cycle programmes in their entirety, which comprises thesis work, courses and other parts.

The method is based on the assumption that the two levels of education, licentiate degrees and doctorates, are evaluated as a single unit. The main reasons for this is that both are subject to the same requirements for quality of research and that the existing system of degree awarding at third-cycle level does not distinguish between the two levels. This reasoning is valid for both the general and the fine arts programmes that lead to qualifications at third-cycle level. Doctorates and fine arts doctorates have separate qualification descriptors and will be assessed using the same procedure but in relation to the respective qualification descriptor.

The evaluations will be based on the third-cycle subject areas and specialisation indicated in the general study plans that the HEI has established, and in which the HEIs offer third-cycle education. A selection of the third-cycle subject areas that the HEI offers and which lead to licentiate and doctoral degrees will be included in the evaluations. Courses for which there have been no registered doctoral students for two years, or for which closure has been decided before the start of the evaluation, will not be evaluated.

The path to obtaining a doctorate may look very different, depending on such things as the field's traditions and the size of both the subject area and the HEI. Moreover, third-cycle programmes are based on the individual student and the specific thesis project. Both consideration and reflection are required when describing and assessing third-cycle programmes as a coherent whole. This makes it necessary for both the self-evaluation reports



and their assessment to consider the variation inherent in an individual programme. Even if the thesis or the documented fine arts research project themselves are not included as a basis for the evaluation, examination of the processes that lead to the finished thesis or the documented fine arts research project are relevant. It may, for example, include the HEI's various peer review processes associated with the thesis work by including supervision, seminars, workshops and conferences.

All programme evaluations are based on the requirements of the Higher Education Act, the Higher Education Ordinance and the Degree Ordinances, the ESG, and Government communication *Assuring the quality of higher education* (2015/16:76, report 2015/16:UbU9, Riksdag communication 2015/16:155) and the government bill *Forskarutbildning med profilering och kvalitet* [Third-cycle programmes with profiles and quality] (2008/09:134). The evaluation method is based on the experiences and lessons learned from the 2011–2014 evaluation cycle, as well as on the comments and suggestions gathered from the conferences, interviews, surveys and seminars with HEI, student, and employer and labour market representatives collected during the method development work that began in 2013. UKÄ has also conducted several analyses of the effects of the previous evaluation system. The method is based on a general structure which applies to all degree levels.

In addition to checking the programmes' outcomes, the reviews are also to help the HEIs improve quality. As such, it is important that the assessors provide feedback on both good examples and the identified areas in need of improvement.

The evaluations emphasise the actual conditions and outcomes, that is, how the programme meets the requirements of applicable laws and ordinances. Consideration should also be given to ESG. Furthermore, the programme evaluations will focus on how the programmes ensure that doctoral students are given good opportunities to achieve the objectives of the System of Qualifications, and how the HEI ensures that the doctoral students have achieved the qualitative targets upon graduation. The HEIs are also to describe and evaluate how well the follow-up, actions, and feedback processes contribute to ensuring and developing the reviewed programmes in a systematic way.

## Selection principles for evaluation of third-cycle programmes

Planning for evaluating third-cycle programmes in the 2017–2022 six-year cycle is based on the fields of application and fields of research (in accordance with Swedish standard classification of research subjects (*Standard för svensk indelning av forskningsämnen 2011*)). The six fields of research are the natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences and humanities, including artistic research. For the evaluation of third-cycle programmes, artistic research is separated from the humanities and forms its own seventh field of research. The following selection criteria have been used whenever possible:

- All HEIs offering third-cycle programmes have at least one programme evaluated.

- At least one programme from each of the seven research fields (see above) that an HEI offers third-cycle studies in is evaluated.
- All programmes within selected fields of application and fields of research are evaluated to provide a picture of the situation at the national level.

## Aspects, perspectives and assessment criteria

The focus for the evaluation of third-cycle education is on the three aspect areas

- environment, resources and area
- design, teaching/learning and outcomes
- follow-up, actions and feedback.

And on the three perspectives

- student and doctoral student perspective
- working life perspective
- gender equality perspective.

Every aspect area is divided into several aspects, which as with the three perspectives, are examined based on the associated assessment criteria (Annex 1). The aspect area follow-up, actions and feedback has been integrated into all aspects (except the aspect third-cycle subject area). To a certain extent, the three perspectives are also integrated in the different aspects. To facilitate assessment of how the perspectives are incorporated, the HEIs are also asked to summarise each of the perspectives as seen in their respective assessment criteria.

An overall appraisal will be given for each aspect area and perspective. For reviews to be legally correct, predictable and transparent, aspects, perspectives and assessment criteria should be made known to all stakeholders in advance and be common to all programmes within the same evaluation. Some clarifications are necessary to achieve this.

### Third - cycle programme environments

The aspect area 'environment, resources and area' includes the aspects third-cycle subject areas, personnel (which here refers to supervisor resources) and the third-cycle programme environment. It should especially be noted in this context that, in the case of the education environment's scope and quality, the starting point is that the quality, breadth and long-term sustainability of the environment should be assessed from a doctoral student perspective.<sup>1</sup>

The assessment must be based on the scope and quality of the research and education that the doctoral student has access to, i.e. the third-cycle programme environment. A high-quality third-cycle programme environment also requires that the research environment is of good quality and sufficient size. The environment should also have sufficient breadth and scope in terms of both the number of individuals and the breadth of subjects represented. It is also important to consider the doctoral students' opportu-

1. *Forskarutbildning med profilering och kvalitet (2008/09:134)*

nity for collaboration with researchers both nationally and internationally, as well as with the surrounding society. Stability is also important, including a stable supervisor/teacher resource.

### Qualitative targets

Those parts of the qualitative targets that have been selected for the evaluation are found in the aspect area 'design, teaching/learning and outcomes'. To limit the scope of the evaluation, certain qualitative targets have been omitted, fully or partially.<sup>2</sup>

The main selection principle has been to exclude the targets, or parts of targets, that are usually assessed through the thesis or in the documented fine arts research project and the public defence. However, it is reasonable to assume that there are differences in the way the qualitative targets are taught and assessed, depending on both how the individual thesis project is designed and separate traditions of the field.

UKÄ's evaluations of third-cycle programmes are based on the third-cycle subject area. At the same time, the Higher Education Ordinance mentions 'research field' instead of 'third-cycle subject area' when discussing targets for knowledge and understanding, including in the wording 'broad knowledge and understanding in the research field'. As 'research field' is not clearly defined, UKÄ has chosen to interpret breadth in the research field to mean breadth in third-cycle subject area.

## Assessment material

Assessment material consists of the HEI's self-evaluation, including annexes, general and individual study plans, interviews with doctoral students and representatives of the reviewed programme, and other material that UKÄ produces. All assessment material for the review is to be weighed together. Theses or documented artistic research projects will not be used as assessment material for the evaluation of third-cycle programmes. UKÄ has concluded that existing external reviews of these are already sufficient, since they have a public defence and external examination committee members, as stated in the Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 6, sections 33–34.

### UKÄ Direkt

All written documents are uploaded and registered by the HEI on UKÄ Direkt, which is the HEIs portal for UKÄ's online case management system. UKÄ will also upload information to UKÄ Direkt that the HEIs need prior to and during the review, for example the user manual for UKÄ Direkt, guidelines and self-evaluation templates. There is an HEI administrator for UKÄ Direkt at each HEI, who issues login information to the HEI's other users and who can answer questions about UKÄ Direkt.

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2. See Annex 2 *Degree ordinance* for all qualitative targets.

### **The HEI's self - evaluation**

The self-evaluation is entered into UKÄ template and should not exceed 25 pages. To facilitate the evaluation, the HEIs are asked to follow the template structure for their reports. The self-evaluation template can be downloaded from UKÄ Direkt, and the completed self-evaluation can be uploaded and registered to the site.

The self-evaluation aims to give the HEI the opportunity to show that the evaluated programme meets the assessment criteria for the aspect areas and perspectives. The HEI is asked to describe, analyse and evaluate, using specific examples, how it ensures and follows up the evaluated programme's quality, and how it has ensured in a systematic way that doctoral students have met the qualitative targets upon receipt of the degree. The HEI should provide examples in the self-evaluation that describe both strengths and identified areas in need of improvement, including planned and implemented actions to further develop the programme. This is intended to give the assessors an understanding of the programme as a whole and how the internal processes work to drive quality improvements.

To facilitate a fair evaluation, it is important that the HEI's presentation in the self-evaluation be complete. References to source material (e.g. course study plans and other policy documents) that the self-evaluation is based on should, therefore, only be used as supplementary information to which the assessment panel may refer should it need to verify or delve deeper into something. All sources with page references should be easily available for the assessment panel, such as through web links to documents. Annexes for the self-evaluation consist of tables with information about the number of doctoral students, supervisor resources, research conducted by supervisors in the programme, publication lists and so on.

### **General study plans**

Pursuant to Section 25 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a HEI authorised to issue degrees at third-cycle level must decide on the third-cycle subject area that the third-cycle programme is organised in (SFS 2010:1064). According to Section 26 of the Higher Education Ordinance, there shall be a general study plan for each third-cycle subject area. The general study plan must specify the main content of the programme, requirements for specific entry requirements and other necessary regulations (pursuant to Section 27).

### **Individual study plans**

A random selection of individual study plans will be reviewed for each programme. Individual study plans are drawn up for all doctoral students and are to be archived. Under the Higher Education Ordinance, these are to be

‘reviewed regularly’ and ‘amended by the HEI to the extent required’ (chapter 6, Section 29).

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the study plan is to include the HEI’s and doctoral student’s commitments:

1. An individual study plan shall be drawn up for each doctoral student.
2. The plan shall contain the undertakings made by the doctoral student.
3. The plan shall contain the undertakings made by the higher education institution.
4. The plan shall contain the doctoral student’s undertakings regarding the HEI.
5. The plan shall contain a timetable for the doctoral student’s study programme.
6. The plan shall be adopted after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors. The individual study plan shall be reviewed regularly and amended by the higher education institution to the extent required after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors.

Individual study plans, and procedures for their review, should therefore be able to provide information about quality assurance and how programmes ensure progress and the doctoral students’ achievement of qualitative targets. Individual study plans may also be used for in-depth reviews of the how programmes ensure that the doctoral student achieves the targets, as well as ensuring access to the breadth and depth of the third-cycle programme environment. If study plans are managed in a structured and systematic way, they can provide a picture of how the programme ensures that individual doctoral students achieve different targets, for example, through descriptions of courses taken, conferences that the doctoral student has been involved in and other activities. They can also supplement information about the degree of access the doctoral student has to his or her research environment’s breadth and depth, for example by describing participation in seminar activities, supervision and so on.

Individual study plans included in an evaluation are randomly selected using a model where a maximum of 16 individual study plans per programme are included. Each HEI uploads to UKÄ Direkt a list of doctoral students whose individual study plans are included in the evaluation. If there are more than 16 individual study plans, 16 individual study plans are randomly chosen. If no individual study plans are available, the review is based on other documentation.

### Interviews

Interviews with doctoral students and representatives of the reviewed programme will be held to supplement the panel’s assessment of the self-evaluation, individual study plans and other documentation. The HEI receives the material produced by UKÄ well in advance of the interviews.

Interviews with both representatives of the HEI and doctoral students are carried out in the form of web meetings. The meetings may vary in extent, depending on the number of questions that the assessment panel wishes to ask. Both the HEI and the doctoral students will be given information about

the question areas that the assessors want to ask during the interview and instructions about the interview about two weeks before the interview takes place. The project manager at UKÄ will be informed about the persons chosen for participation in web interviews approximately one week prior to the date of the interview.

Doctoral students to be interviewed should preferably be appointed by a student organisation that either belongs to a student union or has union status at the HEI. If the student or doctoral student union are unable to recruit the doctoral students, UKÄ, in consultation with the HEI's quality officer or other designated person, will ensure that doctoral students are recruited for the interviews.

#### Other assessment material

Prior to the reviews, UKÄ will compile data on the HEI and the programme that is relevant to the aspect areas being examined. This could include national statistics showing the student completion rate and establishment level, previous inspections, appraisals of degree-awarding powers and previous programme evaluations. The material then serves as a basis for discussions and questions during the interview. The HEI will receive this material well in advance of the interviews.

## Assessment panels

The assessors are recruited according to the usual nomination procedure in collaboration with HEIs, student unions (via the Swedish National Union of Students, SFS) and employer and labour market organisations. UKÄ, however, appoints the assessment panels. Collectively, the panel is to have sufficiently broad and extensive expertise to assess all aspect areas and perspectives included in the review. The assessment panels usually consist of

- expert assessors
- doctoral student representatives
- employer and labour market representatives.

The collective knowledge and experience of the experts and employer, labour market and doctoral student representatives allow the assessment panels to make joint assessments of the aspects and perspectives included in the review.

As a quality assurance measure, the HEIs can comment on the assessment panel's composition, for example, to point out conflicts of interest, before the panel is officially appointed by UKÄ.

All assessors will undergo training in UKÄ's evaluation and working methods. Their assignment involves:

- discussing aspect areas, aspects, perspectives and assessment criteria
- participating in meetings during the entire evaluation process
- as a group, be represented at the initial meeting with the HEIs to be included in the evaluation
- review the various assessment criteria, justify the reviews in writing and specify what data the reviews are based on

- jointly prepare questions for interviews with doctoral students, supervisors and the HEI's leadership
- summarise the assessments in a joint statement including the assessment panel's proposed joint judgement and proposed decision.

## Assessments and report

All material will be considered in the assessment panel's assessment of how well the programme fulfils the assessment criteria for the reviewed aspect areas and perspectives. All included aspect areas and perspectives must be judged as satisfactory for the programme to be assessed as maintaining high quality.

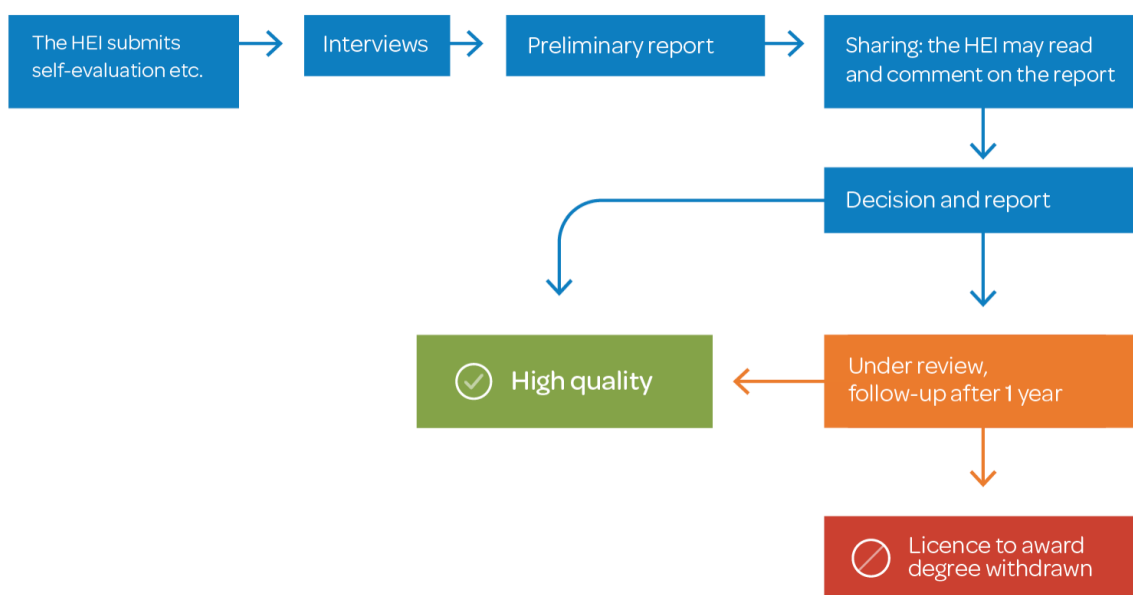
The assessment panel's determinations and reasoning are to be clearly presented in a report. This report will serve as feedback to the HEI on development possibilities and good examples identified by the assessors. Furthermore, anything judged to have insufficient quality should be clearly stated. The assessment panel's draft report will be sent to the HEI for comment before UKÄ makes its final decision. This will give the HEIs the opportunity to correct any factual errors. The sharing period is three weeks. The final report will then be the basis for UKÄ's decision.

## Decision

The overall rating is given on a two-point scale. Supported by the assessor panel's report, UKÄ will decide if the programme maintains high quality or if the programme is under review. If a programme is under review, this means that UKÄ is also questioning the degree-awarding powers in the relevant third-cycle subject area.

Information on decisions is published at [www.uka.se](http://www.uka.se).

**Figure 2.** Diagram showing the programme evaluation process.



## Follow-up

As with previous evaluation systems, HEIs with programmes under review will have one year to address the deficiencies and submit an action report to UKÄ. To review the HEI's report of actions taken, UKÄ will appoint a panel of assessors which, if necessary, can request additional documentation and require an interview if they consider that the material is not sufficient to make an assessment. When the panel considers that it has an adequate basis, the taken actions are evaluated and a report is then submitted to UKÄ. Supported by the panel's report, UKÄ will decide if the programme maintains high quality or if the degree-awarding powers are to be revoked. UKÄ makes decisions for state HEIs, except for the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the Swedish Defence University<sup>3</sup>. For independent higher education providers, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the Swedish Defence University, the assessment panel and UKÄ's position are submitted to the Government for decision.

In cases where a state HEI has its degree-awarding powers revoked, enrolled students who have already begun their studies have a right to complete the education (Chapter 1, section 14 of the Higher Education Act).

The HEIs may also terminate the programme under review. In such cases, the HEI is to notify UKÄ of its decision to terminate the programme under review no later than the last day for submitting the report of taken actions. The case will then be closed. If the decision to terminate the programme comes in after the last day to submit an action report, the case will then not be closed. In these cases, UKÄ will conduct a follow-up and examine the question of degree-awarding powers for the relevant programme.

UKÄ believes that it is also important to follow-up those programmes that have been judged high quality. Forms for this type of follow-up are being drafted and could include surveys, conferences and other forms of follow-up.

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3. Entitled to award first- and second-cycle qualifications.



# Annexes

## Annex 1. Aspect areas, aspects, perspectives and assessment criteria

### Aspect area: Environment, resources and area

#### Aspect: Third-cycle subject area

<b>Assessment criteria</b>	The demarcation of the third-cycle subject area and its connection to scholarship or artistic practice and proven experience are adequate and appropriate. The third-cycle subject area's relationship to the area for third-cycle education is adequate (for the HEIs that have degree-awarding powers for an area in third-cycle education).
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<b>Guidelines for HEIs</b>	<b>Describe and justify</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how the third-cycle subject area is demarcated in both width and depth</li><li>• the third-cycle subject area's connection to scholarship or artistic practice and proven experience</li><li>• (for HEIs authorised to award doctoral degrees) how the third-cycle subject area relates to the area of third-cycle programme..</li></ul>
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<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<b>Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the third-cycle subject area's demarcation in both width and depth</li><li>• the third-cycle subject area's connection to scholarship or artistic practice and proven experience</li><li>• where appropriate, the third-cycle subject area's relation to the area of the third-cycle programme.</li></ul>
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**Aspect: Staff**

**Assessment criteria**

- A.** The number of supervisors and teachers and their combined expertise are sufficient and proportional to the content of the programme and its teaching/ learning activities.
- B.** The combined expertise of supervisors and teachers and skill development are followed up systematically to promote high quality in the programme. The outcomes of the follow - up are translated, when necessary, into actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

**Guidelines for the HEI**

**Describe, analyse and evaluate using examples**

- the combined expertise of the supervisors and teachers in relation to the programme
- what is being done to ensure that there are sufficient supervisor resources in the long term
- what is being done to allow changing supervisors as needed
- how scientific / fine arts and educational professional development for supervisors and teachers is accomplished
- the ability of supervisors and teachers to follow societal developments in general that are relevant to their supervision and teaching
- how supervision and teaching quality is kept high and of sufficient scale, what actions are taken with follow - up of the supervising group's composition and expertise, and how feedback from quality improvement actions is given to relevant stakeholders.

**Guidelines for assessors**

**Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify**

- the combined expertise of the supervisors and teachers in relation to the programme
- that supervisors' and teachers' expertise is systematically followed up and adapted to ensure it is appropriate for the programme's scope and content
- what the HEI is doing to allow changing supervisors as needed
- the opportunities for supervisors and teachers to carry out research and to monitor developments within their own subject area, and their actual opportunities to maintain and continuously develop their scientific / fine arts and educational expertise
- the ability of supervisors and teachers to follow societal developments in general that are relevant to their supervision and teaching
- that follow - up, quality improvement actions and feedback occur to safeguard and develop the teachers' and supervisors' combined expertise and that feedback on quality improvement actions is given to relevant stakeholders.

**Aspect: Third-cycle programme environment**

**Assessment criteria**

- A.** Research and artistic research at the HEI has sufficient quality and scale for third-cycle education to be carried out at a high scientific / artistic level and within a good educational framework. Relevant collaboration occurs with the surrounding society, both nationally and internationally.
- B.** The third-cycle education environment is systematically followed up to ensure high quality. The result of the follow-up is translated, when necessary, into quality improvement actions and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

**Guidelines for the HEI**

**Describe, analyse and evaluate the following using examples.**

- What is being done to broaden the programme environment through local, national and international networks? How are doctoral students included in these networks, and how do the networks complement the third-cycle programme environment, in terms of size and quality? How is collaboration with the surrounding society conducted? How does the HEI ensure the quality of the dissertations that are publicly defended?
- What is the composition of the doctoral student group (sex, age, specialisation and language skills relevant to the programme)? Do any doctoral students work from another location or in another environment? What opportunities and challenges have been identified in this regard and how have these been handled?
- What is the composition of the supervisor group (sex, age, specialisation and language skills relevant to the programme)? Do many of the supervising group works from another location or in another environment? What opportunities and challenges have been identified in this regard and how have these been handled?
- How are systematic reviews carried out to ensure that the third-cycle programme environment maintains a high-quality level? What actions are taken in connection with follow-up? How is feedback of these actions given to ensure that the third-cycle education environment maintains its high quality and that there is relevant collaboration with the surrounding society?

**Cont. Aspect: Third-cycle programme environment**

<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p><b>Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• what is being done to broaden the programme environment through the local, national and international networks that the doctoral students and supervisors are a part of and that are important for the programme. That the doctoral students are included in these networks, and the ways in which the networks complement the third-cycle programme environment, in terms of size and quality. How collaboration with the surrounding society is conducted, how the HEI ensures the quality of the dissertations that are publicly defended.</li><li>• the composition of the doctoral student group (sex, age, specialisation and language skills relevant to the programme) and if any doctoral students work from another location or in another environment. What opportunities and challenges have been identified in this regard and how these have been handled.</li><li>• the composition of the supervisor group (sex, age, specialisation and language skills relevant to the programme) and how many of the supervising group works from another location or in another environment. What opportunities and challenges have been identified in this regard and how these have been handled.</li><li>• that systematic reviews are done to ensure that the third-cycle programme environment maintains high quality, that there are established follow-up routines that ensure review results are implemented as quality-raising actions, and that these actions are implemented to ensure that the third-cycle programme environment maintains high quality, and that there is relevant collaboration with the surrounding society.</li></ul>
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**Overall assessment of the aspect area 'environment, resources and area'**

<b>Guidelines to assessors</b>	<p>Make a comprehensive assessment of the aspect area 'environment, resources and area', based on the collected material and assessment of the evaluated aspects, based on all the assessment criteria.</p> <p>Emphasise, when possible, good examples that show that the programme's quality assurance efforts lead to improvement actions. Assess how the identified areas for improvement are handled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the aspect area is not deemed to be satisfactory, then clearly state what aspects or criteria are not satisfactory and how these should be addressed.</li></ul>
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## Aspect area: Design, teaching/learning and outcomes

### Aspect: Achievement of qualitative targets for 'knowledge and understanding'

#### Assessment criteria

- A.** The programme ensures, through its design, teaching/learning activities and examination, that doctoral students who have been awarded their degrees show broad knowledge and understanding both within their third-cycle subject area and for scientific methodology/fine arts research methods in the third-cycle subject area.
- B.** The programme's design and teaching/learning activities are systematically followed up to ensure achievement of qualitative targets. The results of the follow-up are translated, when necessary, in actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

#### Guidelines for the HEI

##### Describe, analyse and evaluate using examples

- how forms and content of programmes ensure that doctoral students show broad knowledge and understanding both within the third-cycle subject area and for scientific methodology/fine arts research methods in the third-cycle subject area
- how progression is achieved during the programme and what the link is between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations
- what is done to enable doctoral students to complete their programmes within the scheduled time
- any quality improvement actions that have been taken in connection with the follow-up and how feedback has been given on these quality improvement actions to ensure the achievement of the qualitative targets.

#### Guidelines for assessors

##### Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify

- How forms and content of programmes ensure that doctoral students show broad knowledge and understanding both within the third-cycle subject area and for scientific methodology/fine arts research methods in the third-cycle subject area
- how progression is achieved during the programme and what the link is between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations
- how HEI is working towards offering doctoral students a high-quality selection of courses that is relevant to the general and individual study plans
- how it is ensured that doctoral students can complete their programmes within the scheduled time.
- how the achievement of qualitative targets by the doctoral students is systematically followed-up, and which, if any, quality improvement actions have been taken in connection with the follow-up and how feedback on these quality improvement actions is provided

**Aspect: achievement of qualitative targets for 'competence and skills'**

**Assessment criteria**

**A.** Through its design, teaching/learning activities and examination, the programme ensures that doctoral students whose degrees have been awarded can plan and use appropriate methods to conduct research and other qualified (artistic) tasks within predetermined time frames, and in both the national and the international context, in speech and in writing authoritatively, can present and discuss research and research findings in dialogue with the academic community and society in general. Doctoral students are to also show they can contribute to development of society and supporting the learning of others within both research and education and in other qualified professional contexts.

**B.** Programmes are followed up systematically to ensure that their design and teaching/learning activities are high quality and that the doctoral students achieve the qualitative targets. The results of the follow-up are translated, when necessary, into actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

**Guidelines for the HEI**

**Describe, analyse and evaluate using examples**

- how the design and content of the programme ensures that doctoral students can plan and use appropriate methods to carry out research and other qualified (artistic) tasks within predetermined time frames, and in both the national and the international context, in speech and in writing authoritatively, can present and discuss research and research findings in dialogue with the academic community and society in general. How the doctoral students demonstrate the potential for contributing to the development of society and supporting the learning of others both within research and education and within other qualified professional contexts.
- how progression is achieved during the programme and what the link is between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations
- what is done to ensure that doctoral students can complete their programmes within the scheduled time
- what quality improvement actions have been taken in connection with the follow-up and how feedback has been given on these actions to ensure goal attainment.

**Guidelines for assessors**

**Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify**

- how the design and content of the programme ensures that doctoral students can plan and use appropriate methods to carry out research and other qualified (artistic) tasks within predetermined time frames, and in both the national and the international context, in speech and in writing authoritatively, can present and discuss research and research findings in dialogue with the academic community and society in general. How the doctoral students demonstrate the potential for contributing to the development of society and supporting the learning of others both within research and education and within other qualified professional contexts.
- that progression is achieved during the programme and what the link is between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations.
- that the HEI is working towards offering doctoral students a high-quality selection of courses that are relevant to the general and individual study plans.
- that it is ensured that doctoral students are enabled to complete their programmes within the scheduled time.
- how the achievement of qualitative targets by the doctoral students is systematically followed-up, and which, if any, quality improvement actions have been taken in connection with the follow-up and how feedback on these quality improvement actions is provided.

**Aspect: Achievement of qualitative targets for 'judgement and approach'**

<b>Assessment criteria</b>	<p><b>A.</b> Through its design, teaching/learning activities and examination, the programme ensures that doctoral students how have been awarded degrees show intellectual independence, (artistic integrity) and scientific probity/disciplinary rectitude and the ability to make research ethics assessments. The doctoral student is to also have a broader understanding of the science's/ Fine Art's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used.</p> <p><b>B.</b> Programmes are followed up systematically to ensure that their design and teaching/learning activities are high quality and that the doctoral students achieve the qualitative targets. The results of the follow-up are translated, when necessary, into actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.</p>
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<b>Guidelines for the HEI</b>	<p><b>Describe, analyse and evaluate using examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how the programme's forms and content ensure that the doctoral students attain intellectual independence, (artistic integrity) the ability to demonstrate scientific probity/disciplinary rectitude and the ability to make research ethics assessments, and how it is ensured that the doctoral student achieves a broader understanding of the science's/ Fine Art's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used</li><li>• how progression is achieved during the programme and what the link is between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations</li><li>• what is done to ensure that doctoral students can complete their programmes within the scheduled time</li><li>• what quality improvement actions have been taken in connection with the follow-up and what feedback has been given on these actions to ensure goal attainment.</li></ul>
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<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p><b>Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how the programme's forms and content ensure that the doctoral students attain intellectual independence, (artistic integrity) the ability to demonstrate scientific probity/disciplinary rectitude and the ability to make research ethics assessments, and how it is ensured that the doctoral student achieves a broader understanding of the science's/ Fine Art's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used</li><li>• that progression is achieved during the programme and what the link is between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations</li><li>• that the HEI is working towards offering doctoral students a high-quality selection of courses that are relevant to the general and individual study plans</li><li>• that it is ensured that doctoral students can complete their programmes within the scheduled time</li><li>• how the achievement of qualitative targets by the doctoral students is systematically followed-up, and which, if any, quality improvement actions have been taken in connection with the follow-up and how feedback on these quality improvement actions is provided</li></ul>
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**Overall assessment of the aspect area  
'design, teaching/learning and outcomes'**

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**Guidelines  
for assessors**

- Make a comprehensive assessment of the aspect area 'environment, resources and area', based on the collected data and assessment of the evaluated aspects and on all the assessment criteria.
  - Emphasise, when possible, good examples that show that the programme's quality assurance efforts lead to improvement actions. Assess how the identified areas for improvement are handled.
  - If the aspect area is not deemed to be satisfactory, then clearly state what aspects or criteria are not satisfactory and how these should be addressed.
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## Working life perspective

### Assessment criteria

- A.** The programme is useful and prepares students for an ever - changing working life.
- B.** The programme's design and teaching / learning activities are systematically followed up to ensure that it is useful and prepares for working life. The results of the follow - up are translated, when necessary, into actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

### Guidelines for the HEI

#### Describe, analyse and evaluate from a working life perspective using examples

- how the programme's utility and preparation for working life are ensured by its content and design
- the way in which those responsible for the programme collect information that is relevant for quality assurance and development of the programme's usefulness and preparation for working life and various career paths, both in Sweden and abroad
- how those responsible for the programme work with alumni experiences
- the extent to which doctoral students are given the opportunity for work at the institution, or similar, in the form of teaching, administration or other work
- which, if any, actions are taken in connection with follow - up and how feedback from these is given to ensure that the programme is useful and prepares the doctoral students for a changing working life, as well as how feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

### Guidelines for assessors

#### Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify

- that the HEI ensures that the programme's content and design are useful and that it prepares doctoral students for a changing working life, both in Sweden and abroad
- that those responsible for the programme collect information that is relevant for quality assurance and development of the programme's usefulness and preparation for working life and its various career paths
- how those responsible for the programme work with alumni's experience in quality assurance and the development of the programme
- how doctoral students are given the opportunity to work for the institution, or similar, in the form of teaching, administration or other work and if there is any difference between the doctoral students who are located at the HEI and those who are at other sites
- how the working life perspective is systematically followed up and whether the follow - ups lead to relevant actions that ensure that the programme's design and teaching / learning activities are relevant and prepare for working life, as well as how feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

## Overall assessment of the working life perspective

### Guidelines for assessors

Make a comprehensive assessment of the working life perspective based on the collective documentation and assessment of the included assessment criteria. If the HEI included the working life perspective in its discussion of the different aspect areas, consider this in this overall assessment.

If the working life perspective is not deemed to be satisfactory, then clearly state what criteria are not satisfactory and how these should be addressed.

## Doctoral student perspective

<b>Assessment criteria</b>	<p><b>A.</b> The programme allows the doctoral students to play an active part in the work of improving the programme and learning processes.</p> <p><b>B.</b> The programme is systematically followed up to ensure that doctoral student input is used in quality assurance and improvement of the programme. The results of the follow - up are translated, when necessary, into actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.</p>
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<b>Guidelines for the HEI</b>	<p><b>Describe, analyse and evaluate from a doctoral student perspective using examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how doctoral students can play an active part in improving the programme and learning processes</li><li>• how doctoral students participate in decision - making processes, including preparation, for matters relating to third - cycle education</li><li>• how a good physical and psycho - social working environment for doctoral students is ensured</li><li>• how comments from doctoral students and alumni about the programme are collected, compiled and reported to the doctoral students and how they are used in quality assurance and improvement of the programme. Any actions taken to strengthen the influence of doctoral students in connection with follow - up of the programme. How feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.</li></ul>
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<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p><b>Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how doctoral students can play an active part in improving the programme and learning processes</li><li>• that doctoral students participate in decision - making processes, including preparation, for matters relating to third - cycle education</li><li>• how a good physical and psycho - social working environment for doctoral students is ensured</li><li>• how comments from doctoral students and alumni about the programme are collected, compiled and reported to the doctoral students and how they are used in quality assurance and enhancement of the programme. Any actions taken to strengthen the influence of doctoral students in connection with follow - up of the programme</li><li>• how feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.</li></ul>
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## Overall assessment of the doctoral student perspective

<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p>Make a comprehensive assessment of the doctoral student perspective based on the collective documentation and assessment of the included assessment criteria. If the HEI included the doctoral student perspective in its discussion of the different aspect areas, this shall be considered in this overall assessment. If the doctoral student perspective is not deemed to be satisfactory, then clearly state what criteria are not satisfactory and how these should be addressed.</p>
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## Gender equality perspective

<b>Assessment criteria</b>	<p><b>A.</b> A gender equality perspective is integrated in the programme's design and teaching / learning activities.</p> <p><b>B.</b> Systematic follow - up is performed to ensure that the programme's design and teaching / learning activities promote gender equality. The results of the follow - up are translated, when necessary, into actions for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.</p>
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<b>Guidelines for the HEI</b>	<p><b>Describe, analyse and evaluate from a gender equality perspective using examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how a gender equality perspective is integrated in the programme's design and teaching / learning activities</li><li>• what the identified opportunities and challenges regarding the composition of the doctoral student group are and how these have been handled</li><li>• how follow - up ensures that a gender equality perspective is integrated in the programme design and teaching / learning activities, and how the results of the follow - up are translated into relevant actions for improving quality and how this is subsequently communicated to the relevant stakeholders.</li></ul>
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<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p><b>Base your assessment on assessment criteria and documentation. Assess and justify</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how is a gender equality perspective integrated in the programme's design and teaching / learning activities</li><li>• any identified opportunities and challenges regarding the composition of the doctoral student group and how these have been handled</li><li>• how follow - up ensures that a gender equality perspective is integrated in the programme design and teaching / learning activities, and how the results of the follow - up are translated into relevant actions for improving quality and how this is subsequently communicated to the relevant stakeholders.</li></ul>
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## Overall assessment of the gender equality perspective

<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p>Conduct an overall assessment of the institution's gender equality perspective based on the collective documentation and judgement of the included assessment criteria. If the HEI included this perspective in its discussion on the different aspect areas, this shall be considered in this overall assessment. If the gender equality perspective is not deemed to be satisfactory, then clearly state what criteria are not satisfactory and how these should be addressed.</p>
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## Aspect area: follow-up, actions and feedback

### Overall assessment of aspect area 'follow-up, actions and feedback'

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<b>Guidelines for assessors</b>	<p>Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the aspect area follow-up, actions and feedback based on the collective documentation and assessment of the other aspect areas and perspectives.</p> <p>Emphasise, when possible, good examples that show that the programme's quality assurance efforts lead to improvement actions. Assess how the identified areas for improvement are handled.</p> <p>If the aspect area is not deemed to be satisfactory, then clearly state what aspects or criteria are not satisfactory and how these should be addressed.</p>
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## Annex 2. Qualification Ordinance, General Qualifications

### Degree of Licentiate

#### SCOPE

The Degree of Licentiate is awarded either after a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of at least 120 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered, or after a third-cycle student has completed one part comprising at least 120 credits of a study programme intended to conclude with the award of a PhD, if a higher education institution decides that a Degree of Licentiate of this kind may be awarded at the institution.

#### OUTCOME

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

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall

- exhibit knowledge and understanding in the research area, including relevant specialist knowledge within a defined part of this and in-depth knowledge of scientific methodology in general and the specific research area's methods 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.

##### **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 their need for further knowledge and to take responsibility for acquiring additional knowledge.

##### **Thesis**

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

##### **Miscellaneous**

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Licentiate with a defined specialisation.

## Degree of Doctor

### SCOPE

A Degree of Doctor is awarded after the third-cycle student has completed a study programme of 240 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered.

### OUTCOME

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

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 his or her artistic field, and
- exhibit familiarity with scientific methodology in general and with the specific research area's methods in particular.

#### **Competence and skills**

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 in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and
- demonstrate the basis for contributing to the development of society and supporting the learning of others within both research and education and in other qualified professional contexts.

#### **Judgement and approach**

For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate intellectual independence and scientific probity and the ability to make research ethics assessments and
- demonstrate a broader understanding of the science'/art's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used.

#### **Research thesis (doctoral thesis)**

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

#### **Miscellaneous**

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Doctor with a defined specialisation.

SFS 2009:1101

## Degree of Licentiate (Fine, Applied and Performing Arts)

### SCOPE

The Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts is awarded either after a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of at least 120 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered, or after a third-cycle student has completed one part comprising at least 120 credits of a study programme intended to conclude with the award of a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts, if a higher education institution decides that a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts of this kind may be awarded at the institution.

### OUTCOME

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

For Fine Arts licentiate degrees, the doctoral student must exhibit knowledge and understanding in the research area, including specialist knowledge of their fine art area, and exhibit knowledge of arts research methods in general and the specific research area's methods in particular.

#### **Competence and skills**

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- Demonstrate creative ability within his or her fine arts area,
- demonstrate the ability to critically, independently and creatively and with research accuracy, identify and formulate issues, to plan and use adequate methods in executing a fine arts research project and other qualified fine arts tasks within specified time limits, thereby contributing to the development of knowledge and to evaluate this work,
- 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, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity.

#### **Judgement and approach**

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research,
- demonstrate understanding of the art's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her artistic development.

**Documented artistic research project**

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for an artistic research project of at least 60 credits.

**Miscellaneous**

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts with a defined specialisation.



## Degree of Doctor (Fine, Applied and Performing Arts)

### SCOPE

A Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts is awarded after a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of 240 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered.

### OUTCOME

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts 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 his or her artistic field, and
- exhibit familiarity with Fine Arts research methods in general and with the specific research area's methods in particular.

#### **Competence and skills**

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate creative ability within his or her fine arts area,
- demonstrate the capacity for artistic analysis and synthesis as well to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate artistic issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified artistic tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work
- demonstrate through a documented artistic research project 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 basis for contributing to the development of society and supporting the learning of others within both research and education and in other qualified professional contexts.

#### **Judgement and approach**

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate intellectual autonomy, artistic integrity and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- demonstrate a broader understanding of Fine Art's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used.

**Documented artistic research project (doctoral thesis)**

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a documented artistic research project (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.

**Miscellaneous**

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts with a defined specialisation. (SFS 2014:125)



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