



General syllabus for the third-cycle study programme in Sociology (240 credits)

This general syllabus was established by the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Gothenburg on 7 June 2013 (as authorised by the Faculty Board of Social Sciences on 18 December 2018) and revised by the Faculty Board of Social Sciences on 13 December 2018 and 22 June 2023.

Studies with a special focus on technology and science studies are also offered within the subject area.

1. Programme objectives

The goal of the third-cycle programme in sociology is for the doctoral student to graduate with a Degree of Doctor or Degree of Licentiate.

The programme objectives are to develop the requisite knowledge and skills in the doctoral student so that they are able to independently conduct research in sociology and contribute to the development of knowledge in the subject area through the production of a scholarly thesis.

Another goal of the third-cycle programme in sociology is to develop the doctoral student's ability to utilise their acquired scholarship skills and knowledge in future research projects or other qualified professional work. The goal of the programme is also to develop the doctoral student's communication and teaching skills with regard to effectively expressing themselves in speech and writing, both within and outside of academia. In the programme, it is mandatory for doctoral students to earn 5 credits in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and 2.5 credits in Research Ethics within the framework of the 240 credits required for the programme. The doctoral student must also possess a knowledge of the planning and implementation of research projects.

The programme is intended to provide the student with international contacts, for example, through participation in international research conferences and possibly attending a higher education institution (HEI) abroad.

The specific objectives of the study programme, which must be met in order to obtain a Degree of Doctor or Degree of Licentiate in Sociology, are set out below. In all other respects, the requirements set out in Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance Annex 2 System of Qualifications Ordinance concerning third-cycle qualifications apply.

1.1 Knowledge and understanding

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge within and a systematic understanding of the research domain sociology and in-depth and up-to-date specialist knowledge within a specific area of sociology.
- Demonstrate familiarity with scientific method in general and with the specific methods used in sociology in particular.

For the Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate knowledge in and a systematic understanding of sociology as well as up-to-date specialist knowledge within a specific area of sociology.
- Demonstrate familiarity with scientific method in general and with the specific methods used in the chosen research domain.

1.2 Competence and skills

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate the capacity for scientific analysis and synthesis as well as independently and critically evaluate and assess complex phenomena within the research domain.
- Demonstrate the ability to independently and with scholarly thoroughness identify and formulate research questions as well as to plan and conduct research and perform other qualified tasks using appropriate methods within specified time limits and to review and assess such work.
- By means of a thesis, demonstrate their ability through their own research to make a substantial contribution to the development of knowledge.
- Demonstrate the ability to present and discuss with authority research and research findings, orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts, in dialogue with the scholarly community and society at large.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify needs for additional knowledge.
- Demonstrate the qualities required to contribute to the development of society, in the contexts of both research and education as well as in other qualified professional contexts, and to support the learning of others.

For the Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate an ability to independently and with scholarly thoroughness identify and formulate research questions as well as to plan and conduct research and perform other qualified tasks using appropriate methods within specified time limits and to review and assess such work.
- By means of a licentiate thesis, demonstrate the ability to make a substantial contribution to the development of knowledge through their own research.
- Demonstrate the ability to present and discuss with authority research and research findings, orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts, in dialogue with the scholarly community and society at large.
- Demonstrate the kinds of skills required to participate independently in research and development projects and to work independently in other qualified activities.

1.3 Judgement and approach

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate intellectual independence and scholarly probity as well as the ability to make research ethics judgements.
- Demonstrate a deepened awareness of the possibilities and limitations of science and its role in society as well as human responsibility for how it is used.
- Be able to judge the strengths and weaknesses of one's own thesis.

For the Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate the ability to make research ethics judgements.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the possibilities and limitations of science and its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used.

2. Entry and admissions requirements

To be admitted to the study programme, the applicant must fulfil the general and specific entry requirements according to that which is stated in Chapter 7 of Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance.

2.1 General entry requirements

According to Chapter 7 Section 39 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a person meets the general entry requirements if they:

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

2.2 Specific entry requirements

The specific entry requirements for admission to the third-cycle study programme in sociology are as follows:

- A Master of Arts degree in Sociology or a second-cycle degree, with a degree project focusing on sociology
- Admission to the third-cycle study programme in sociology with a specialisation in Science and Technology Studies (STS) requires a Master of Arts degree in Sociology or Humanities as well as sociology-oriented degree project in the field of Science and Technology Studies
- Those meeting the specific entry requirements have also acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

3. Admission and selection

Applications for admission to the third-cycle study programme in sociology are generally received in response to notification of a vacancy. For further provisions on notifications of vacancies and admission, please refer to the general admission regulations for third-cycle studies at the University of Gothenburg.

According to Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance, applicants are to be selected on the basis of whether or not they are deemed capable of completing the programme. In addition, the institution's competence and mentoring resources are taken into account in the doctoral student's preliminary research focus. The applicant must attach the following as the basis for this selection:

- a. Academic papers and degree projects, which are assessed according to the following quality criteria:
 - a description of the selected problem area and aims;
 - the problem area's connection to prior research and selection of theoretical perspectives;
 - selection of methods and practical implementation;

- integration of theory into analysis, interpretation and conclusions; and
 - scientific precision and linguistic presentation.
- b. Certificates with respect to other relevant qualifications, such as participation in investigative work, research evaluation or development work;
- c. A concise project outline, in which the applicant indicates their research interest or planned thesis field. The outline is assessed according to the following quality criteria:
- scientific relevance
 - demonstrated familiarity with current and prior research;
 - feasibility in the framework for third-cycle studies; and
 - connection to the department's research profiles and supervision competences. Admission decisions are made by the Head of Department.

4. Content and structure of the programme

The third-cycle programme in sociology comprises 240 credits and ends with a Degree of Doctor. There is an option to graduate with a Degree of Licentiate after 120 credits, provided that the requirements in the Higher Education Ordinance Annex 2 Qualifications Ordinance concerning the Degree of Licentiate are met.

Third-cycle study programmes include coursework, with each course being examined as it is completed, along with the doctoral student's own research project, which leads to a scholarly thesis. The doctoral student is also expected to participate in seminar activities as part of their training and, unless there are specific reasons, to contribute to the department's joint activities.

The doctoral student may be able to transfer higher education credits from previous study. A decision on credit transfer and its associated advanced standing is made, subsequent to an individual application from the doctoral student, by the Head of Department in connection with the preparation of the student's individual study plan, but no later than 6 months after the plan is drawn up. A credit transfer must be linked to a decision on a deduction in the funding period that corresponds in time to the credit transfer. The deduction is to be documented in the individual study plan. At most, two years of credit transfer and associated advanced standing may be granted.

4.1 Courses

The third-cycle study programme in sociology comprises a coursework part of 60 credits. Of these, 37.5 credits are compulsory courses as described below.

Mandatory scientific method courses are:

- Qualitative methods (min. 7.5 credits)
- Quantitative methods (min. 7.5 credits)

Mandatory theoretical courses are:

- Contemporary sociological theory (7.5 credits)
- Classical sociological theory (7.5 credits)

In addition, it is mandatory to take courses equivalent to:

- 5 credits in teaching and learning in higher education
- 2.5 credits in research ethics

The third-cycle study programme in sociology with a specialisation in Science and Technology Studies (STS) comprises at least another 15 credits in Science and Technology Studies.

Other courses - 22.5 credits for third-cycle students in sociology and 7.5 credits for third-cycle students in sociology with a specialisation in Science and

Technology Studies - are determined in consultation with the supervisor.

The third-cycle study programme in sociology with the goal of Degree of Licentiate comprises a coursework part of a total of 30 credits, including one of the theory courses and one of the scientific method courses required for the Degree of Doctor. Other courses are determined in consultation with the supervisor. In addition to the above, 5 credits in teaching and learning in higher education and/or 2.5 credits in research ethics may be included in the Degree of Licentiate.

Any transfer of credits from prior studies shall be specifically indicated in the individual study plan. A credit transfer must be linked to a decision on a deduction in the funding period that corresponds in time to the credit transfer.

4.2 Thesis and defence of doctoral thesis

Central to the study programme is authoring a scholarly thesis where the doctoral student is to advance the knowledge in the research area. The doctoral student is expected to report on their thesis work regularly. This is done primarily through the authoring of a doctoral thesis, and text from this thesis must be presented in at least three seminars:

- Thesis Plan (PM) Seminar: At the latest three months after admission (thesis plan)
- Mid-way Seminar: after completion of half the study period (thesis manuscript)
- Final Seminar: 3-6 months before the estimated time of the public defence of the thesis (thesis manuscript in full)

External readers are to be engaged for the Mid-way Seminar and/or the Final Seminar.

The doctoral/licentiate thesis must be based on independent research and be of high international scholarly standard. The thesis can be constructed either as a coherent work (monograph thesis) or in the form of a summary of scholarly papers (compilation thesis). The doctoral/licentiate thesis shall be formulated in accordance with the rules set out in the Higher Education Ordinance.

For the third-cycle student who intends to only earn the Degree of Licentiate, the text shall be presented in at least one workshop in addition to the final licentiate seminar.

The doctoral and licentiate thesis respectively are to be defended at a public defence of doctoral thesis or a final licentiate seminar.

5. Supervision

For each doctoral student, two supervisors are to be appointed: a principal supervisor and an assistant supervisor. The principal supervisor must hold a position at the Department of Sociology and Work Science. They must also possess at least the qualifications required for appointment as a docent/reader and have completed a course in doctoral supervision.

The doctoral student has the right to supervision in accordance with that which is stated in *Tillämpningsbeslut för utbildning på forskarnivå vid samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten* (Decision applicable to third-cycle programmes at the Faculty of Social Sciences).

A doctoral student who so requests shall be permitted to change their supervisor.

6. Individual study plan

An individual study plan (ISP) is to be drawn up for each doctoral student in conjunction with admission to the programme. The ISP is to be established by the Head of Department in consultation with the doctoral student and their supervisors.

The ISP is to include a timetable with an associated funding plan for the entire study period up until the planned date for the defence of the thesis.

The ISP must be followed up at least once a year. This follow-up is to clearly state how the doctoral student is progressing within the programme. The doctoral student, supervisors and Head of Department are to certify in writing that they have read the ISP that they agree with the content, and the assistant supervisor that they have contributed to the contents of the individual study plan and any changes made to it.

7. Other matters

For all other matters, please refer to the current legislation, guidelines at the University of Gothenburg and at the Faculty of Social Sciences, and local regulations at the Department of Sociology and Work Science.