

# General syllabus for third-cycle study programmes in Theoretical Philosophy

Decision-maker	Faculty Board of Humanities
Executing officer	Ulrika Josefsson
Date of decision	2023-10-19
Period of validity	2023-11-01 - Until further notice
Summary	The syllabus describes the objectives, content and examination of the study programme as well as admission and selection.
Translation	This document is a translation of the Swedish original. In the event of problems of interpretation or differences between the Swedish and English text, the Swedish text which constitutes the basis of the information, shall always take precedence

## **Name of degree and subject area description**

The degrees obtained are the Degree of Doctor and the Degree of Licentiate in Theoretical Philosophy. Theoretical Philosophy examines the nature of external reality, our knowledge of that reality, as well as different ways of representing that knowledge in language and thought. Research within Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Gothenburg can be divided into three principal groups: (meta) metaphysics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mind. From a methodological perspective, all research within the subject can be described as research in analytical philosophy.

## **General national outcomes for Degree of Doctor**

According to the Qualifications Ordinance for the Degree of Doctor in the Higher Education Ordinance, Appendix 2, the outcomes for the Degree of Doctor are as follows:

- Demonstrate broad knowledge in and a systematic understanding of the field of research as well as in-depth and up-to-date specialist knowledge within a defined area of the field of research, and
- Demonstrate familiarity with scientific method in general and with the specific methods used in the field of research in particular.
- Demonstrate an ability to scientifically analyse and synthesise and to independently and critically evaluate and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations
- Demonstrate an ability to critically, independently, creatively 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
- Demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through their 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 an ability to identify needs for additional knowledge, and
- Demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity
- Demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- Demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

## **General national outcomes for Degree of Licentiate**

According to the Qualifications Ordinance for the Degree of Licentiate in the Higher Education Ordinance, Appendix 2, the outcomes for the Degree of Licentiate are as follows:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular
- 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
- Demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity
- Demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of their own research
- Demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- Demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for their ongoing learning.

## **Subject area specific and supplementary outcomes**

For the Degree of Doctor and Licentiate, the doctoral student shall:

- Demonstrate the ability to work as a researcher and teacher in Theoretical Philosophy at university level; as a lecturer in subjects outside academia of relevance to Theoretical Philosophy and with advanced information processing in the form of investigatory, preparatory and analytical work within both public and private sectors,
- Demonstrate the ability to plan, fund, implement and lead independent research projects,
- Demonstrate the ability to plan and conduct teaching in the field of Theoretical Philosophy.

## **Entry and admission requirements**

In order to be admitted to the study programme, the applicant must fulfil the general entry requirements and specific entry requirements in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

According to the Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 7 Section 39, a person meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes if they:

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

To be admitted to doctoral education in Theoretical Philosophy, in addition to general entry requirements, the following is required:

1. 30 higher education credits in Theoretical Philosophy as a second-cycle subject, at least 15 of which must be from a degree project or equivalent knowledge,
2. the type(s) of Swedish and English skills needed to be able to benefit from compulsory parts of the course and to be able to actively participate in seminars and similar activities.

## **Admission and selection**

Admission to doctoral education in Theoretical Philosophy normally occurs in connection with the Department's advertising of doctoral positions. For admission, funding for the applicant's doctoral studies must be secured.

According to Chapter 7 Section 41 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the selection shall take into account the ability of the applicants to benefit from the course or study programme. The applicant must attach the following as grounds for this selection:

- A Master's (60 and/or 120 credits) dissertation in Theoretical Philosophy worth a minimum of 15 higher education credits, or other project at the equivalent level and scope that documents the corresponding skills and abilities,
- A Bachelor's essay and/or advanced study project in Theoretical Philosophy written at advanced or second-cycle level; or other projects at the equivalent level and scope that document the corresponding skills and abilities,
- Official transcripts for studies in theoretical philosophy or the equivalent at first, advanced and second-cycle level,
- A project draft of maximum 3 000 words in which the applicant states the research area in which the applicant wishes to work; what the applicant's work in this area can be expected to contribute to the research front; why the planned research project is suitable for the intended department; which theories, methods and materials are likely to be used and how work with the project can be structured,
- References and/or letter of recommendation.

The written projects (including project draft) that are included with the application are evaluated based on the following quality criteria:

- Suitable subject demarcation, relevant research question(s),
- Suitable command of the subject and structuring of the thesis,
- Suitable use of language, formalities,
- Academic quality,
- Independence.
- In addition to the above, the project draft is also evaluated based on:
- Feasibility within the scope of a doctoral studentship,
- Possibility for the Department to offer supervisor with suitable knowledge within the research area of the application.

Recruitment and selection take into account the Department's supervision resources in the doctoral student's area of research focus. Admission may include interviews in addition to the examination of the qualifications submitted. The decision on admission is made by the Head of Department after preparation at the Department.

## **Content and structure of the programme**

Doctoral education in Theoretical Philosophy comprises 240 credits for the Degree of Doctor and 120 credits for the Degree of Licentiate.

Third-cycle study programmes include coursework, with each course being examined as it is completed, and the doctoral student's own research project, which leads to a scholarly thesis.

As part of their education, doctoral students are to participate in seminar activities. Doctoral students are also to participate in joint activities within their department unless there are special reasons for not doing so.

The study programme includes a coursework part which in the case of the Degree of Doctor comprises 60 credits, while for the Degree of Licentiate it comprises 45 credits.

The credits are divided as follows. The more in-depth content of each component (with the exception of the compulsory course in teaching and learning in higher education) is decided in consultation between the third-cycle student, their supervisor and examiner. The course components are generally examined in smaller parts.

**Research-oriented specialisation** (30 credits for Degree of Doctor and 20 credits for Degree of Licentiate): The component includes a specialisation in one or more of the classic areas of research in theoretical philosophy (alternatively, in one or several areas of research in one or more closely related subjects) and intends to provide broadened knowledge and deepened skills directly relevant to the doctoral student's thesis work. Potential areas of study are decided in consultation with the supervisor. Specialisation in the subjects closely related to theoretical philosophy may only take place if a qualified examiner is available.

**Advanced general orientation** (20 credits for Degree of Doctor and 15 credits for Degree of Licentiate): The component includes an advanced general orientation in one or more of the classic areas of research in theoretical philosophy (alternatively in one or more areas of research closely related to theoretical philosophy) and aims to provide the third-cycle student with advanced general knowledge of theoretical philosophy. Subjects studied under this heading may not be of direct relevance to the doctoral student's thesis work.

**Pedagogical and research-focused skills** (10 credits for Degree of Doctor and 10 credits for Degree of Licentiate): This course is compulsory and comprises four components:

(i) Compulsory university-wide basic course in teaching and learning in higher education (5 credits). This course should preferably be taken during the first year of the doctoral studies.

(ii) Compulsory course in research ethics at the Faculty of Humanities (2,5 credits).

(iii) Pedagogical practice: A component with specific focus on teaching theoretical philosophy. Includes practice in lesson planning, verbal and visual presentation techniques, examination and student supervision (1,5 credits).

(iv) Research practice: A component that practices the communication of individual academic results or the results of others in written and/or oral form for presentations in seminars, conferences or workshops; alternatively for publications in international journals. As a part of this component, the third-cycle student also practices writing project applications and what is known as the "third task" – presenting and interested audience with either individual research or the research of others in a pedagogical and accessible way (1 credit).

The examination of components or aspects of the course held outside of the Department shall assess whether the accompanying course requirements have been met. Suitable examination methods for additional components are determined by the supervisor or other examiner. Where courses or course

components are examined through seminar participation or other forms of practical exercise, the examiner shall ensure that the third-cycle student's performance is clearly documented in the individual study plan.

If a doctoral student would like to transfer credits from previous courses and study programmes, this must be specified in their individual study plan.

The thesis prepared for the Degree of Doctor comprises 180 credits. It may take the form of a monograph or a compilation thesis. A licentiate thesis may form part of a doctoral thesis, in either revised or unrevised form.

The licentiate thesis comprises 75 credits.

The doctoral student is expected to report on their thesis work regularly. In the first instance, this should take place via one of the department's seminars.

Further details about this are set out in the Rules for Third-Cycle Education at the Faculty of Humanities.

The doctoral thesis is defended at a public defence. When assessing the thesis, both its content and defence will be taken into consideration. The thesis is assessed using the grades of Pass or Fail.

Licentiate theses are defended at a public seminar. When assessing the Licentiate thesis, both its content and defence will be taken into consideration. The thesis is assessed using the grades of Pass or Fail.

## **Supervision**

For each doctoral student, at least two supervisors are to be appointed, one of which shall be the main supervisor and the other shall be the co-supervisor. At least one of the supervisors is to be employed at the University of Gothenburg, ordinarily in the department in which the doctoral student is placed. At least one of the supervisors must have the qualifications required for appointment as a docent/reader and at least one of the supervisors must have completed a course in doctoral supervision.

The doctoral student is entitled to a level of supervision that is at a minimum in accordance with the standard determined by the Faculty Board (see Rules for Third-Cycle Education at the Faculty of Humanities).

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

## **Individual study plan**

Upon admission, the doctoral student and their supervisors are to draw up an electronic individual study plan in consultation with the doctoral examiner, which is to be established no later than two months after the commencement of studies.

The individual study plan is to be reviewed at least once each year. This follow-up is to clearly state how the doctoral student is progressing within the programme.

In conjunction with drawing up the individual study plan, the doctoral student is entitled to request the transfer of credits from previously passed second- or third-cycle courses and study programmes. Credits that are counted towards the general or specific entry requirements may not also be counted as credits at third-cycle level and must be replaced by another course. Otherwise, the following options apply.

- A doctoral student who has completed and passed a course at second-cycle level which is included among the compulsory or optional courses at third-cycle level is entitled to request that the course

be replaced with another course of the same scope in their individual study plan. This does not impact the programme length for the Degree of Doctor.

- A doctoral student who has completed parts of their doctoral studies while admitted to doctoral education at another higher education institution or in another subject may request that these credits be transferred without being replaced by other courses. This does have an impact on the programme length for the Degree of Doctor, which is reduced to the corresponding extent.

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.

## **Transitional provisions**

Doctoral students admitted prior to 1 November 2023 may, in consultation with their supervisors and doctoral examiner, petition the Head of Department to transfer to this general syllabus.