



HUMANISTISKA FAKULTETEN

Åtgärdsplan efter extern utvärdering av utbildning på forskarnivå

Datum: 2025-05-08

Institution: Institutionen för Filosofi, Lingvistik och Vetenskapsteori

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Bedömgargruppens sammanfattande bedömning och rekommendationer

General Assessment

In the introduction/ summary of the report, the evaluation group writes:

The Department of Philosophy, Linguistics, and Theory of Science includes the subjects: Theoretical Philosophy, Practical Philosophy, Linguistics, Computational Linguistics, Theory of Science, and Logic. Each of these subjects has its own research focus, its own PhD students, and its own subject collegium (*ämnesråd*). This department structure affects the PhD program in many different ways. The department manages to both preserve the integrity of the different research subjects and promote connections across subjects. The members of the different subjects in the department seem to agree about the importance of preserving the disciplinary integrity of the subjects so that the students learn the research and publication requirements and expectations of their respective subjects. There is also a strong consensus about the general structure of the department's graduate program and the principles determining whether a subject can accept a new graduate student in a given year. The research collegia seem to be working well, ensuring that the graduate students get appropriate training in their respective disciplines. At the same time, the department facilitates informal connections and interactions across subjects, for example through a joint tea/ lunch room, and joint activities for all graduate students at the department. Further, faculty members at the department stress the importance of the graduate program, care about their students, and are in most cases actively looking for ways in which they can improve the students' learning environment even more.

Recommendations

- Strengthen Department-wide collaboration on PhD training and make the integrated Department a valid part of the learning environment for graduate training.
- Develop pro-active, coordinated activities to expand the volume of PhD training to facilitate critical mass and maintain quality, both in the PhD training at large and in the discipline-based learning environments.
- Maintain but possibly modify, the rotation system to avoid anemic episodes of student shortage in individual disciplines.

- Develop and keep up-to-date (when relevant) the 'guide' for PhD students ('lathund'). It should be quite comprehensive to maximize transparency and fairness and to avoid misunderstandings. Include in particular information and advice for international students.
- Monitor closely the relationship between faculty competencies/fields of concentration and supervision demand.
- Discuss how to achieve both knowledge depth and a broad competence in the subjects, in the context of the different subjects' respective conditions.
- Ensure that each student gets information about courses and conferences relevant to them. Preferably this should not only be the responsibility of the supervisors.
- Provide information about relevant stipends as well as practical guidance about applications. This is especially important for students whose dissertations require fieldwork.
- Develop career guidance as an element of the PhD program.
- In light of the difficulties faced by international PhD students, we encourage the department to take all the measures available to them. This includes, but is not limited to, offering 2-year contracts and writing guidelines addressing these problems.
- Discuss the issue of teaching hour allocation and consider department-wide principles, at least for PhD students. Make sure that information about the system is clearly communicated to the PhD students.
- Offer the opportunity and encourage all supervisors who have not yet done so to take a pedagogical course on supervision in doctoral programs.

Comments from the department

General Assessment of the Department's Ability to Address the Recommendations

The work with this action plan has been led by the Associate Head of Doctoral Studies at the department, but documents have been circulated for comments from the different subjects and the PhD student group throughout the process, from the first draft of the evaluation committee's report to the final action plan submitted to the faculty. In this way, the entire department has been involved in the work of prioritizing between the recommendations presented in the report, and determining how to best address them.

The department recognizes itself in the general picture as well as in many of the more detailed descriptions of how the department's doctoral education functions, and we had many instructive and illuminating discussions with the external

evaluation group, both during their site visit and at the feedback meeting. Several of the recommendations in the report are of a nature that does not require extensive reallocation of available resources.

Many recommendations focus on improving the flow of information on issues important to doctoral students, facilitating meetings and exchanges of experience, and initiating discussions on key issues related to doctoral education. We assess that all recommendations of this nature can be addressed within a year of the publication of this report (even though several of these recommendations pertain to recurring discussions and information sharing).

There is only one recommendation that may require a more extensive review of financial priorities: the suggestion to increase the number of active doctoral students to improve the educational climate. Currently, there are limited financial opportunities to expand the number of internally funded doctoral positions. However, the department management will explore ways to strengthen the ability of smaller disciplines to apply for external funding for doctoral positions and consider certain adjustments to how the department's model for distributing doctoral positions between subjects is applied.

Recommendations Not Included in the Action Plan

A point that the review panel repeatedly emphasized, both in their report and in conversations, was their view that the composition of the department has the potential to build strong and relevant interdisciplinary research environments. They note that such collaborations could help address some of the challenges arising from the division of subjects, as for example the difficulty to reach a critical mass of doctoral students in each subject. In some formulations (see p. 4 and p. 17, appendix), this could be interpreted as a call for the department to announce joint doctoral positions and develop more department-wide doctoral courses. While there is consensus among both the department management and the department's researchers and supervisors that interdisciplinary collaborations are beneficial when they arise from shared educational or research interests, we take this as an advice for a long-term strategy goal for the department, but we assess that it is not something we will be able to resolve within the scope of this action plan.

However, we will explore the interest in cross-disciplinary exchanges to ensure that doctoral students and supervisors across the department have opportunities to meet, exchange experiences, and gain insight into the ongoing research within the entire department. We will also create opportunities for supervisors from different subjects to share insights in, for example, working techniques and career advice, as well as to share their networks with the entire group of doctoral students at the department, to mitigate the risk that doctoral students in small research environments are solely reliant on their supervisors.

The report also highlighted shortcomings in how the department relates to the expectation that doctoral education should be relevant to societal needs. It raised the question of whether the content of the doctoral program is driven by the department's need for researchers and teachers rather than by society's need for well-educated individuals who can work both within and outside academia. In relation to this, it was mentioned that it might be problematic that a



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significant proportion of the department's doctoral graduates continue working within the department after defending their theses, partly because it is a risk of re-producing the PhD education.

In general, neither the department's supervisors nor the management team recognize the characterization that doctoral students are being trained "in the department's own interest." FLoV has a high proportion of staff members from countries other than Sweden, and the department is characterized by a distinctly international research environment. However, while the department actively pursues an international recruitment strategy, it is also true that several former doctoral students choose to base their research projects within the department. At present, we do not view this as a problem but rather as a positive indication that the department has succeeded in creating a work environment where staff actively choose to stay when opportunities arise. Since the department has many researchers from other universities and countries, we believe that the development of our PhD programmes is influenced by views and traditions from various institutions, not only by researchers who obtained their PhD at our department.

Regarding the question of training doctoral students for a career outside academia, the different subjects face very different challenges in this respect. Some subjects have more "natural" connections to non-academic fields - for example Computational Linguistics which has ties to computer science and related areas. In such subjects the doctoral students are more aware about the opportunities outside academia. Other subjects, perhaps most notably Logic and Theoretical Philosophy, do not have those connections. Consequently, supervisors in these subjects face greater challenges in advising doctoral students who seek careers outside academia after completing their studies. We do not think that we can educate our supervisors in these subjects to have better knowledge of how to build a career outside academia, mainly due to limited resources in terms of time and finances (supervisors have between 1-4 percent of fulltime for supervising doctoral students, which in many cases is much less than they actually work with supervision). However, the department believe that we can improve somewhat by maintaining contact with our former doctoral students and inviting alumni who have succeeded in the endeavor of getting a career outside academia to share their advice with the PhD student group.

In accordance with a recommendation from FUB, we have chosen not to indicate a prioritization order among the various measures, as we intend to implement all of them and do not believe there is a clear order of priority between them.

Abbreviations

FLoV: Inst. för Filosofi, Lingvistik och Vetenskapsteori // Department of Philosophy, Linguistics and Theory of Science

VPFU: Viceprefekt för forskarutbildning // Associate Head of Doctoral Studies

VPF: Viceprefekt för forskning // Associate Head of Research

FUG: Forskarutbildningsgruppen // Doctoral Education Group

LG: Ledningsgrupp/ Department management

AC: Avdelningschef/ Unit head

HR: Personalhandläggare/ Human Resources officer

Åtgärdsplan

Bedömgrensens rekommendation	Planerad åtgärd	Prioritering	När	Ansvarig	Aktiviteter och uppföljning
(1) Develop pro-active, coordinated activities to expand the volume of PhD training to facilitate critical mass and maintain quality, both in the PhD training at large and in the discipline-based learning environments.	*Arrange activities such as departmentwide workshops concerned with where, and how, to apply for external project funding that includes doctoral students. **Evaluate the result after one year		HT25- VT26,	*VPF **VPFU/ LG	
(2) Strengthen Department-wide collaboration on PhD training and make the integrated Department a valid part of the learning environment for graduate training.	* In consultation with the subject councils/supervisory committees, explore opportunities for supervisors and doctoral students from different disciplines to meet and share their research interests.		Fall -25 and onwards	*FUG, in consultation with the supervisory committees at the dept. **VPFU	

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	**Regularly invite supervisors from different disciplines to doctoral meetings to discuss, for example, different ways of working/networking/finding opportunities within or outside academia.				
(3) Maintain, but possibly modify, the rotation system to avoid anemic episodes of student shortage in individual disciplines.	Evaluate the rotation system and consider possible modifications to reduce the risk of prolonged student shortages in individual disciplines. Review the funding model for doctoral students to assess whether the goal of having at least two active doctoral students per subject is a viable path forward.		HT25	VPFU + LG	
(4) Guidelines for co-authorship for supervisors-PhD students	Develop guidelines/advice for co-authoring between supervisors and doctoral students.		VT26	FUG	

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<p>(5)</p> <p>Non-EU students: offer 2-years contract</p>	<p>The department will replace the current routine of extending doctoral students' employment contracts one year at a time with a new routine where, after the first year, doctoral students' employment contracts are extended for a two-year period (provided that the principal supervisor and the VPFU assess that the student is following their ISP and has performed as expected during the first year).</p>		<p>HT25</p>	<p>VPFU + HR</p>	<p>This routine is implemented from April-25</p>
<p>(6)</p> <p>Allocate teaching opportunities: all PhD students who want to teach should have the opportunity to do a minimum amount of teaching.</p>	<p>Investigate the possibility of having a department-wide policy for "a minimum amount of teaching" and what that would entail (e.g., in terms of cost, practical feasibility), or whether it would be more appropriate to have recommendations and</p>		<p>HT25</p>	<p>LG, VPFU, AC</p>	

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	clarify for all doctoral students how they can go about teaching if they wish to.				
(7) Develop and keep up-to-date (when relevant) the 'guide' for PhD students ('lathund'). It should be quite comprehensive to maximize transparency and fairness and to avoid misunderstandings. Include in particular information and advice for international students.	Update the document <i>Third-Cycle Studies at FLoV</i> ("Lathund")		VT25	VPFU + the Director of Studies for doctoral education + the doctoral studies administrator	The document <i>Third-Cycle Studies at FLoV</i> ("Lathund") is up-to-date since March 2025, the revised version has been sent for review to the doctoral group and FUG and approved in the revised version. Information for non-EU students has been added to the department's PhD education website.
(8) Monitor closely the relationship between faculty competencies/fields of concentration and supervision demand.	Regularly monitor that doctoral students receive adequate supervision and have an overview of the resources that could be made available if needed. This is already done at least once a year during the employee performance review ("medarbetarsamtal") *VPFU asks doctoral students if they need a		*VT25 and onwards	VPFU	

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	more structured evaluation of the supervision situation in the performance review.				
(9) Discuss how to achieve both knowledge depth and a broad competence in the subjects, in the context of the different subjects' respective conditions.	Initiate discussions in the supervisory committees on how this can be ensured, and under what circumstances there is a risk that a doctoral student may become either too narrow or too broad in their subject knowledge.		VT26	FUG (initiates and follows up)	
(10) Ensure that each student gets information about courses and conferences relevant to them. Preferably this should not only be the responsibility of the supervisors.	*Encourage supervisors to always email information and tips about courses and conferences to all doctoral students in the subject area, or alternatively to the VP/PhD administration for further distribution. Also, promote joint supervisor-doctoral student meetings, e.g., once per semester, to exchange experiences		HT25	*FUG (initiates and reminds) **VPFU	

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	<p>and tips.</p> <p>**Inform doctoral students about how to find elective courses in other subjects or at other universities (on workplace meetings, on the Sharepoint-site <i>FLoV PhD students</i>)</p>				
<p>(11)</p> <p>Provide information about relevant stipends as well as practical guidance about applications. This is especially important for students whose dissertations require fieldwork.</p>	<p>*Encourage supervisory committees to discuss how they can collectively take responsibility for this issue (where relevant).</p> <p>**Update the Sharepoint-site <i>FLoV PhD Students</i> with structured information about where to find funding</p>		<p>**VT25- *HT25</p>	<p>*FUG (initiates and follows up) ** VPFU</p>	
<p>(12)</p> <p>Develop career guidance as an element of the PhD program.</p>	<p>Organize workshops/ seminars each semester focused on career guidance based on doctoral students' needs and interests. Keep an</p>		<p>VT25 and onwards</p>	<p>VPFU (in consultation with the PhD group, and with FUG and the supervisory committees)</p>	<p>VT25: 25-04-30: Post-doc application workshop with Mikael Strömberg from Research and Innovation Services (FIK)</p> <p>25-05-27: Workshop on how to go abroad during your PhD studies with Jorun</p>

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	eye on faculty and student union activities.				Holmberg, international administration officer at the Faculty of Humanities + colleague from IC
(13) Discuss the issue of teaching hour allocation and consider department-wide principles, at least for PhD students. Make sure that information about the system is clearly communicated to the PhD students.	Invite the education coordinators to a workplace meeting for doctoral students to explain how teaching hours are allocated. Explore whether there is an alternative system that the doctoral students would prefer in terms of transparency and predictability (while maintaining the same financial outcome).		HT25	VPFU	
(14) Offer the opportunity and encourage all supervisors who have not yet done so to take a pedagogical course on supervision in doctoral programs.	Reminder to supervisors who have not completed the supervision course.		HT25	AC	