

General Syllabus for Degree of Doctor in Sport Science

Decision-maker	Board of Faculty of Education
Responsible unit	Faculty of Education Office
Decision date	8 April 2026
Period of validity	To be reviewed by 2029 at the latest
Summary	The general syllabus for the Degree of Doctor in Sport Science regulates doctoral studies in the subject in question. The study plan is supplemented by the general provisions for third-cycle courses and study programmes contained in the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) and Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 12 of the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), Admission Regulations for Doctoral Education, Rules for Doctoral Education – Doktorandreglerna, Faculty-specific Rules and Regulations for Doctoral Education and Policy for Reviewing Thesis at Seminars
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.

1. Qualification, teaching and research duties

This degree refers to the Degree of Doctor in Sport Science. After consideration, credit may be given for the Degree of Licentiate in the event of further study upon admission for the Degree of Doctor.

Sport Science is a doctoral subject focussing on sport, exercise and physical activity applying a multidisciplinary perspective. Sport Science involves studies of the body and of those participating in sport and physically active individuals, the development of sports culture in society and sport as a collective term for top-level (elite) sport, exercise and experience sports as well as outdoor life and recreation. The starting point adopted is that physical and sports activities can promote health and well-being, performance and aesthetic experience.

2. Aims of the study programme

According to the Qualifications Ordinance (Appendix 2) of the Higher Education Ordinance, for the Degree of Doctor the doctoral student shall

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and
- demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, questions at issue 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 pre-determined timeframes and to review and evaluate this work,
- demonstrate through a thesis their 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 at large,
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further 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 contexts.

Judgement and approach

- 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 science, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

3. Entry requirements

The requirements for admission to doctoral studies are that the applicant, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 7, Section 35 of the Higher Education Ordinance, meets the general and specific entry requirements and is otherwise assessed as having the requisite ability to benefit from the doctoral studies.

3.1 General entry requirements

According to Chapter 7, Section 39 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a person meets the general entry requirements if he or she has been awarded a second-cycle qualification, or has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second-cycle.

Eligible applicants include those who have acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

3.2 Specific entry requirements

The applicant is required to have fulfilled the course requirements comprising at least 90 credits passed in the field of sport science or another adjoining field of relevance to sport science activities in order to meet the conditions for specific entry requirements. To meet the entry requirements, the applicant is required to have an independent project (degree project) within these 90 credits, comprising at least 15 credits awarded in the second-cycle.

Eligible applicants include those who have acquired substantively equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

4. Admission, selection and assessment criteria

Admission to doctoral studies in Sport Science normally takes place in connection with the department's advertisement of doctoral student positions. Decisions on admission to doctoral studies are made by the Head of Department. This is to take account of the department's capacity to offer supervision and acceptable conditions of study. For further provisions, see the Higher Education Ordinance, the Admission Regulations for Doctoral Education at the University of Gothenburg, and the Rules for Doctoral Education – Doktorandreglerna.

According to Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance, in selecting between applicants who meet the entry requirements, their ability to benefit from the doctoral studies shall be taken into account.

Selection between applicants is based on the following assessment criteria:

- the quality of the degree project affording eligibility (or equivalent document)
- the quality of the research plan/outline submitted, where applicable related to research environments at the Faculty of Education

The fact that an applicant is considered able to transfer credits from prior courses and study programmes or for professional or vocational experience may not alone give the applicant priority over other applicants (Chapter 7, Section 41 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

5. Programme disposition and content

The course or study programme comprises 240 credits (equivalent to 48 months of full-time studies) and is to include a course component of 60 credits and a thesis component of 180 credits.

5.1 Courses

The course component comprises both compulsory and optional courses.

The compulsory course component includes an introductory course of 5 credits, an advance course within the subject of the field of research of 5 credits, and optional methods courses comprising 15 credits of which 2,5 credits have to be in Research Ethics. These courses are normally held during the first three terms in the case of full-time studies.

The remaining 35 credits can be chosen in consultation with the supervisor; for example, doctoral-level courses at the Faculty or at another Swedish/foreign higher education institution, individual literature courses and/or credit transfer for participation at international conferences, including paper presentation.

Examinations for courses cover both the course literature and the teaching provided and may be formulated as oral or written tests and/or work tasks conducted individually or in a group. Tests of knowledge and tasks are assessed by a designated examiner and are given one of the grades Pass or Fail.

For doctoral students, admitted to a Doctoral School, compulsory course requirements within the framework of the Doctoral School may also be included.

5.2 Thesis

For the *Degree of Doctor*, the student is to write a thesis based on independent scholarly work. The subject of the thesis is specified in consultation with the supervisor in conjunction with admission or as soon as possible thereafter.

The thesis is to be formulated as connected scholarly work, in the form of a monograph, or as consolidated scholarly works with an annotated and summarising chapter ('compilation thesis').

The thesis will be reviewed at a general seminar on three occasions – planning seminar, halfway seminar and final review – in accordance with the Faculty of Education's Policy for Reviewing Thesis at Seminars.

The thesis will be defended at a public defence and assessed by a grading committee, where it will be given one of the grades Pass or Fail. Consideration is to be taken of both the content and defence of the thesis when setting the grade.

6. Supervision

At least two supervisors are to be appointed for each doctoral student, of whom one is a principal supervisor and one an assistant supervisor. The principal supervisor shall be an employee and qualified at least to the level of docent (reader) within a relevant subject at the Faculty. Exceptions are dealt with in each individual case in accordance with the Delegation of Authority Policy. At least one of the supervisors is to have

completed supervisor training. The wishes of the doctoral student shall be considered when appointing a supervisor. A doctoral examiner shall also be appointed for each doctoral student.

The doctoral student is entitled to supervision for a period corresponding to no more than four years of full-time studies in accordance with the provisions set out in the individual study plan. Doctoral students are entitled to change supervisor if they so request. The Rules for Doctoral Education - Doktorandreglerna and the Faculty of Education's clarification relating to supervision otherwise apply (see Faculty-specific Rules and Regulations for Doctoral Education).

7. Individual study plan

An individual study plan is to be drawn up for each doctoral student in conjunction with admission. The individual study plan shall include the commitments of the University and the doctoral student, a time schedule and a plan of the doctoral student's studies in terms of content and funding. The individual study plan is to be approved by the head of department, following consultation with the doctoral student, supervisor and doctoral examiner, no later than two months after the start of the studies. The plan is to be followed up at least once a year and the follow-up will clearly identify how the studies are progressing.

8. Other

Doctoral students are expected to actively participate in conferences and seminar activities during their period of study, both within and outside the Faculty, and also participate in the research environment. The expected scope of attendance and contribution to the research environment shall be included in the individual study plan.

9. Transitional provisions

This general syllabus applies to doctoral students admitted from and including 1 July 2026

Doctoral students admitted prior to 1 July 2026 can ask the head of department for permission to change to this general syllabus following consultation with their supervisor and doctoral examiner. The individual study plan should then be updated.