



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

PROCEDURE

ADMISSION TO DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES AT THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE

Type of document:	Procedure ¹
Date of approval:	28 June 2024
Reg no.:	FS 1.1-1299-24
Approved by:	Dean
Validity:	Until further notice
Field:	Third-cycle (doctoral)
Office in charge:	Faculty Office of Medicine
Replaces document:	New document

¹ This document has been translated from Swedish into English. If the English version differs from the original, the Swedish version takes precedence.



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1. Description

This procedure describes the Faculty of Medicine's admission process for doctoral (third-cycle) education in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance.

Chapter 7, Section 36 of the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100):

“A higher education institution may admit an applicant to third-cycle courses and study programmes who is appointed to a doctoral studentship. The higher education institution may also admit an applicant who has some other form of funding for their studies if it assesses that

- 1. funding can be guaranteed during the entire period of study, and*
- 2. the applicant can devote enough time to their studies to enable their completion within four years in the case of a licentiate degree or a licentiate degree in the fine, applied and performing arts or eight years in the case of a doctorate or a doctorate in the fine, applied and performing arts.*

For an applicant with funding via a grant/stipend, funding under item 1 of the first paragraph is regarded as guaranteed if the grant is equivalent to the pay level for doctoral students regulated by a Swedish collective agreement or standard practice in the profession, after deductions for preliminary tax at source according to the tax table equivalent to the average tax rate for municipalities and regions and which is published annually by Statistics Sweden. If the applicant will alternate time in Sweden and another country, the requirement for the level of the grant only applies to the time the applicant intends to be in Sweden.”

Higher Education Ordinance (2019:1014).

In this procedure, Section 3 below describes the admission of applicants hired as a doctoral student at Umeå University and Section 4 describes the admission of applicants who have another form of study funding.

As per the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 37, a higher education institution intending to admit a doctoral student is to give notice of this through advertising or an equivalent method. However, such a procedure is not required for the admission of a doctoral student who is to complete the programme in the context of being employed through an employer other than the high education institution.

This document uses the terms *doctoral education*, *doctoral programme and third-cycle courses and study programmes* synonymously.

2. Background

Umeå University has established an admission scheme for doctoral education (FS 1.1-861-21), which sets out the general framework for admission, eligibility, announcing of doctoral studentships and selection. This procedure describes the admission process at the Faculty of Medicine.

The admission process, regardless of whether the doctoral student is to be employed at Umeå University or not, is to have the same overall structure in all departments as follows:



3. Admission of doctoral students to be offered employment at Umeå University

3.1 Establishing a position with employment as a doctoral student

A prospective principal supervisor applies for the establishment of a doctoral student position at the department where the doctoral student is planned to be registered. The purpose of this step is to ensure at an early stage that the prospective doctoral student will be provided with the opportunities and resources necessary to complete a high-quality doctoral education programme.

The creation of a doctoral student position requires that:

- The scientific project is feasible and suitable/adapted as an educational project.
- The examiner is appointed.
- The principal supervisor fulfils the requirements to be a principal supervisor.
- The supervisor constellation is relevant to the project and fulfils the established requirements.
- The doctoral student can be offered a good environment for doctoral education.
- Ethical permits are in place or planned (if required).
- There is a financing plan for the entire duration of the education.

Assessment of the suitability of the research project as an educational project is to include peer review. When assessing the financial resources, the department's administrative manager/financial officer must be involved.

At the decision-making meeting, the head of department determines whether to establish a doctoral student position.

3.1.1 Support for assessing supervisors and the doctoral environment

Assessing supervisors

When establishing a doctoral student position, the prospective principal supervisor and assistant supervisor are also assessed. This assessment looks at their suitability as supervisors, focussing on time spent supervising and past qualifications.

- What previous supervision experience do the principal and assistant supervisors have?
- What supervisor training does the principal supervisor have?
- How many doctoral students are currently supervised by the principal supervisor?



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- As per Umeå University's admission procedure, an even gender distribution should be the goal when selecting supervisors and reference group members.

Assessment of the doctoral environment

Establishing a doctoral student position requires an environment that enables the highest possible quality of doctoral education.

Questions when assessing the doctoral environment:

- Are there opportunities to connect with other doctoral students and researchers, for example through networking activities, seminars etc?
- Is there support for the doctoral student's studies, for example in the form of necessary infrastructure?
- Are there opportunities for international/national exchanges and/or international/national contacts?
- Are there alternative ways of achieving the objectives if the chosen strategy is not successful?
- How is supervision of the proposed doctoral project planned to be organised (how will the different competences of the supervisors benefit the project)?
- Can an examiner with good knowledge of the research field be appointed?

3.2 Recruitment of doctoral students

The following procedure applies to the recruitment of doctoral students after establishing the doctoral student post:

1. Advertisement of a position as a doctoral student
2. Eligibility review of submitted applications
3. Selection of applicants (including interviews, reference checks, etc.)

3.2.1 Advertisement

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7. Section 37:

“When a higher education institution intends to admit one or several third-cycle students, information shall be provided by the higher education institution through advertising or some equivalent method.”

Doctoral studentships are to be advertised via Umeå University's recruitment system at the appropriate time, and, as a rule, the application period is recommended to be three weeks or longer. In addition to the general entry requirements, the advertisement is to include specific entry requirements, including, where appropriate, a clear specification of the necessary knowledge from higher education or equivalent education and/or professional experience assessed in relation to medical science as a doctoral subject area and the relevant research field.



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3.2.2 Eligibility review

For admission to doctoral education, the applicant is to meet both the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements as defined by the Faculty of Medicine and is deemed to have the ability necessary to benefit from the programme.

The general and specific entry requirements of the Faculty of Medicine are specified in the general study plan for doctoral education, and specific entry requirements, when applicable, are specified in more detail in the relevant announcement/advertisement for the doctoral position in the relevant research field (see previous section).

3.2.3 Selection of applicants, interviews and reference checks

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41:

“In selecting between applicants who meet the requirements laid down in Sections 35 & 36 their ability to benefit from the course of study programmes shall be taken into account.

The higher education institution determines which assessment criteria shall be used in determining the ability to benefit from the courses and study programmes.

However, 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.”

The following assessment criteria must be applied at the Faculty of Medicine to assess the ability to benefit from the education programme:

- subject knowledge relevant to the research field.
- assessment of how the applicant fulfils specific entry requirements as advertised.
- other knowledge/experience that may be relevant to the doctoral education.

The merits, abilities and suitability of the applicants are assessed on an overall level. The department has a responsibility to ensure this assessment is done, for example through interviews and reference checks. To ensure a high-quality selection process, it is recommended that potential candidates be invited to the research group/environment for an interview and/or to demonstrate their abilities.

The head of department appoints a recruitment panel with the competences and experience to assess candidates. A doctoral student appointed by the student union responsible for the subject has the right to participate in the consideration of admission matters. The department may also implement other mandatory steps and procedures for the recruitment process.

The form “*Application for admission to doctoral education for employment as a doctoral student at Umeå University*” is sent for administration and decision to:

foutb@adm.umu.se



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3.3 Admission decisions

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 34:

“The number of doctoral students admitted to third-cycle courses and study programmes may not exceed the number that can be offered supervision and otherwise acceptable conditions for study and whose studies are funded pursuant to Section 36.”

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 35:

“The requirements for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes are that the applicant

- 1. have the basic qualification and the specific qualification that the university may have prescribed, and*
- 2. are otherwise deemed to have the necessary ability to benefit from the programme.”*

* Note that “basic qualification” above refers to “general entry requirements” and “specific qualification” refers to “specific entry requirements”.

The applicant is assessed in relation to medical science as the doctoral subject and the relevant research field.

According to the Faculty of Medicine’s delegation regulations, the faculty-wide director of doctoral studies decides on admission to doctoral education, following a proposal from the head of the department where the doctoral student is to be registered.

Thereafter, the admitted student can be employed as a doctoral student at Umeå University by decision of the head of department.

The decision cannot be appealed.

3.4 Establish an individual study plan

No later than two months after the decision on admission to doctoral education, the doctoral student is to hold an introductory seminar to discuss the doctoral student’s Individual Study Plan (ISP) with the department’s director(s) of doctoral studies and other colleagues. The doctoral student and supervisor then submit a proposal for the ISP to the head of doctoral studies at the department. The ISP is approved by the head of department or an individual delegated to assess the ISP. No later than three months after admission, all doctoral students at the Faculty of Medicine are to have an established ISP and be registered in *LADOK*.

The purpose of the introductory seminar is to:

- Serve as an initial seminar for doctoral students and an opportunity to welcome new doctoral students.
- The doctoral student presents the research project from their perspective and has the opportunity to receive feedback from colleagues before finalising the ISP.
- Provide a learning opportunity for the doctoral student.
- Facilitate for the department in ensuring that all doctoral students have an ISP.

Completion of the introductory seminar is documented in the ISP.



4. Admission of doctoral students with other forms of study funding

4.1 Establishment of a doctoral student position with other form of study funding

A prospective principal supervisor applies for the establishment of a doctoral studentship at the department where the doctoral student is planned to be registered. The purpose of this step is to ensure at an early stage that the prospective doctoral student will be provided with the opportunities and resources necessary to complete a high-quality doctoral education programme.

Establishing a doctoral student post requires that:

- The scientific project is feasible and suitable/adapted as an educational project.
- An examiner is appointed.
- The principal supervisor fulfils the requirements to be a principal supervisor.
- The supervisor constellation is relevant to the project and fulfils the established requirements.
- The doctoral student can be offered a good environment for doctoral education.
- Ethical permits are in place or planned (if required).
- Study funding is confirmed. The head of department draws up an agreement with the party responsible for funding the doctoral studies (usually another employer). The agreement includes both a timetable and a study funding plan for the entire duration of the doctoral studies.

Assessment of the suitability of the research project as an educational project is to include peer review.

The head of department determines whether to establish a doctoral student position. The department is responsible for ensuring that those admitted as doctoral students have the opportunity to complete their entire education.

4.1.1 Support for assessing supervisors and the doctoral environment

Assessing supervisors

When establishing a doctoral student post, the prospective principal supervisor and assistant supervisor are also assessed. This assessment examines suitability as a supervisor, focusing on time spent supervising and previous qualifications.

- What previous supervision experience do the principal and assistant supervisors have?
- What supervisor training does the principal supervisor have?
- How many doctoral students are currently supervised by the principal supervisor?



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- As per Umeå University's admission procedure, an even gender distribution should be the goal when selecting supervisors and reference group members.

Assessment of the doctoral environment

Establishing a doctoral student position requires an environment that enables the highest possible quality of doctoral education.

Questions when assessing the doctoral environment:

- Are there opportunities to connect with other doctoral students and researchers, for example through networking activities, seminars etc?
- Is there support for the doctoral student's studies, for example in the form of necessary infrastructure?
- Are there opportunities for international/national exchanges and/or international/national contacts?
- Are there alternative ways of achieving the objectives if the chosen strategy is not successful?
- How is supervision of the proposed doctoral project planned to be organised (how will the different competences of the supervisors benefit the project)?
- Can an examiner with good knowledge of the research field be appointed?

4.2 Recruitment of doctoral students

The following procedure applies to the recruitment of doctoral students with other forms of study funding than employment as a doctoral student:

The head of department is responsible for ensuring that the applicant proposed by the principal supervisor as a candidate for the doctoral student post fulfils the general and specific entry requirements.

Eligibility review

For admission to doctoral education, the applicant is to meet both the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements as defined by the Faculty of Medicine and is deemed to have the ability necessary to benefit from the programme.

The general and specific entry requirements that apply at the Faculty of Medicine are specified in the general study plan for doctoral education, and where applicable, the specific entry requirements are elaborated on in the head of department's decision to establish the doctoral student position.

The form "*Application for admission to a doctoral education with an employer other than Umeå University*" is sent for administration and decision to: foutb@adm.umu.se



4.3 Admission decisions

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 34:

“The number of doctoral students admitted to third-cycle courses and study programmes may not exceed the number that can be offered supervision and otherwise acceptable conditions for study and whose studies are funded pursuant to Section 36.”

Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 35:

“The requirements for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes are that the applicant

- 1. have the basic qualification and the specific qualification that the university may have prescribed, and*
- 2. are otherwise deemed to have the necessary ability to benefit from the programme.”*

* Note that “basic qualification” above refers to “general entry requirements” and “specific qualification” refers to “specific entry requirements”.

The applicant is assessed in relation to medical science as the doctoral subject and the relevant research field. The requirements are specified in the decision on the establishment of a doctoral student post.

According to the Faculty of Medicine’s delegation regulations, the faculty-wide director of doctoral studies decides on admission to doctoral education, following a proposal from the head of the department where the doctoral student is to be registered.

The decision cannot be appealed.

4.4 Establish an individual study plan

No later than two months after the start of studies, the doctoral student is to hold an introductory seminar where the doctoral student’s Individual Study Plan (ISP) is discussed with the department’s director of doctoral studies and other colleagues. The doctoral student and supervisor then submit a proposal for the ISP to the head of doctoral studies at the department/equivalent. The ISP is approved by the head of department or an individual delegated to assess the ISP. No later than three months after admission, all doctoral students at the Faculty of Medicine are to have an established ISP and be registered in *LADOK*.

The purpose of the introductory seminar is to:

- Serve as an initial seminar for doctoral students and an opportunity to welcome new doctoral students.
- The doctoral student presents the research project from their perspective and has the opportunity to receive feedback from colleagues before finalising the ISP.
- Provide a learning opportunity for the doctoral student.
- Help the department to ensure that all doctoral students have an ISP.

Completion of the introductory seminar is documented in the ISP.