

**DOCTORAL STUDY GUIDE
OF THE FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

2025–2027



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Editors

Doctoral Studies Development Group of the Faculty of Social Sciences

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TO THE READER

This study guide is for doctoral students who aim to complete a doctor's degree in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Lapland. It also contains instructions for those planning to engage in doctoral studies in the faculty and for supervisors. Doctoral students are also recommended to read the university's general Studies pages aimed at undergraduate students (www.ulapland.fi/EN). They contain generic instructions and regulations that also apply to doctoral students, including registration for attendance, user credentials, course registration, assessment of studies, general examinations, recognition of prior learning, teaching periods, study counselling, and social issues. The major and minor subjects and the research communities of the faculty are presented on the faculty's web pages (<https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Units/Faculty-of-Social-Sciences/Studies>). The administration of the faculty is also presented on these web pages.

To write a dissertation, you must have a right to engage in doctoral studies leading to a doctor's degree. Detailed instructions on applying for a study right for doctoral studies and other useful information are available on the web pages of the Doctoral School at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education>.

1. GENERAL

1.1 Doctoral education at the University of Lapland

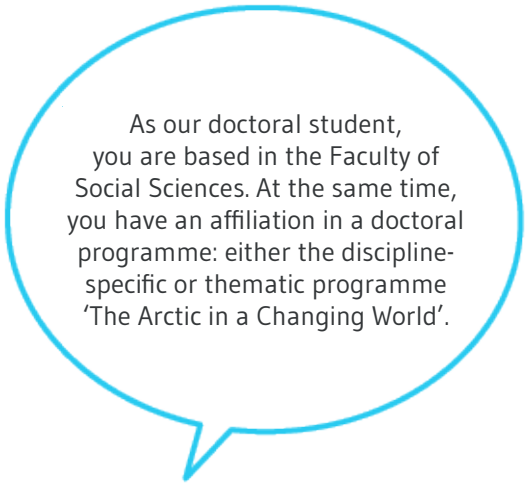
As a doctoral student at the University of Lapland you may belong to a discipline-specific doctoral programme or the university's joint multidisciplinary thematic doctoral programme The Arctic in a Changing World. When applying for a study right you are to choose your primary programme option between these two, but when you are granted the right it always concerns the faculty that later confers the doctor's degree.

A student following the education path of any given discipline belongs to the *discipline-specific doctoral programme*. Thus, academic subject-specific doctoral

studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences belong to the discipline-specific doctoral programme.

The thematic programme The Arctic in a Changing World is a multidisciplinary doctoral programme where students complete the thematic studies of the programme. The *thematic doctoral programme* is coordinated by the Doctoral School of the University of Lapland. Further information is available at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education>.

This doctoral study guide provides instructions primarily concerning discipline-specific doctoral studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Those studying according to the thematic programme should check the current study contents with the Doctoral School or on the programme's web pages at www.ulapland.fi/arcticdp.



As our doctoral student, you are based in the Faculty of Social Sciences. At the same time, you have an affiliation in a doctoral programme: either the discipline-specific or thematic programme 'The Arctic in a Changing World'.



1.2 Doctoral degrees in the Faculty of Social Sciences

The Faculty of Social Sciences is an educational unit operating in accordance with the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004).

As of 1 August 2017, the faculty has not admitted anyone to study for a licentiate. Those who have been given the right to pursue a licentiate prior to that date may continue with their studies.

In accordance with the above-mentioned Decree, the faculty awards the following doctoral degrees: Doctor of Social Sciences, Doctor of Administrative Sciences, and Doctor of Philosophy. The scope of a doctorate is 210 credits.

The major subject of a doctorate in **social sciences** (DSocSc) may be one of the following: management, international relations, tourism research, social politics, social work, sociology, or political science. The major subject of a doctorate in **administrative sciences** (DAdmin) is administrative science. A doctorate in **philosophy** (PhD) may be awarded when the dissertation represents a major subject that the faculty is not in charge of. This applies if the research is of highly multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary nature or if the field of the doctoral student's previous degree deviates from the faculty's majors so much that the doctorate cannot be awarded on the basis of any of them even after supplementary studies.

1.3 Study administration and guidance

In the Faculty of Social Studies, the administrative study affairs regarding doctoral studies are handled by the faculty office personnel (ytk.opinto@ulapland.fi).

The content-related responsibility for doctoral studies rests on the faculty's dean, the vice-dean responsible for research, and the faculty's professors. An updated list of personnel and their contact information is available on the faculty's web pages.

2. INSTRUCTIONS AND REGULATIONS ON APPLYING TO DOCTORAL EDUCATION AND COMPLETION OF DEGREES

2.1 Selection criteria and applying

The right to study for a doctor's degree can be granted to a person who has a master's degree or a corresponding Finnish or foreign degree and who, before the end of the application period, has completed advanced studies in the major subject of the doctoral degree that the person is applying for or matching studies. The matching studies may refer to studies in a related discipline or studies in a field that provides an exceptionally interesting, multidisciplinary combination. The decision on replacing the advanced studies with matching studies is made by the professor of the subject. If you have completed matching studies, you should check their validity already before applying by contacting the faculty teacher intended to be the supervisor. Those who have completed matching studies are usually assigned supplementary studies to strengthen their knowledge of the major subject of the doctor's degree (see Section 2.2). If a dissertation is of highly multidisciplinary nature, the degree awarded may be Doctor of Philosophy.

You can also apply for a right to pursue doctoral studies if you have completed a master-level degree at a university of applied sciences. In this case, your admittance is assessed by the Doctoral Studies Development Group. If you are admitted, the process supervisor makes a proposal for potential supplementary studies.

When preparing an application for the right to pursue doctoral studies, you are recommended, before submitting the application to the faculty, to contact the academic subject's staff and the person who will potentially be appointed as your dissertation supervisor. This is to initially ensure a basis for doctoral studies and the supervision of the dissertation in the faculty and to guarantee your commitment, the relevancy and feasibility of the topic with respect to the discipline, and the supervisors' suitability for supervising the process and contents of a work dealing with the topic in question (see also 2.3). Meanwhile, you may also discuss choosing between the discipline-specific and thematic doctoral programmes.

Use the Studyinfo.fi (Opintopolku.fi) system to apply for a right to pursue doctoral studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences. You can also apply for the study right outside the official application periods if you have a justifiable reason to do so. The justifiable reason may entail a situation in which funding to be received from a large research project (Business Finland, Academy of Finland) or the Doctoral School requires a valid doctoral study right and the funding application period will end before the next application period for doctoral studies.

Apply to doctoral studies using the Studyinfo.fi system. Make sure you also enter the required appendices into the system within the application period. There are typically two application periods per year, and you can find them on the web pages of the Doctoral School.

After the application period, a statement is requested from the supervisor specified in your application. If you do not name a supervisor engaged in the relevant academic subject, the Doctoral Studies Development Group will provide the statement. Either approval or rejection of a doctoral study right is proposed in the statement. If the study right is rejected, a justification as to why you cannot be admitted as a doctoral student will be given.

The Doctoral Studies Development Group of the faculty convenes after the application period to discuss each application and its statement. Based on the group's proposal, the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences makes the decisions on the doctoral students to be admitted.

Doctoral students are selected based on the quality and contents of the research plan. Quality relates to the clarity and feasibility of the plan as well as its potential to create new knowledge for the benefit of the discipline. Content relates to the importance and innovativeness of the topic or research subject and to the way in which the research plan corresponds to the research aims of the faculty. More information on the aims is available on the faculty's web pages at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Units/Faculty-of-Social-Sciences/Research>.

All applicants will be notified of the results of the selection via email and the Studyinfo.fi system approximately one month after the end of the application period.

Those admitted as doctoral students must confirm receipt of the study right by enrolling as students at the university during the enrolment period in the beginning of the term. By enrolling you will be granted the status of a doctoral student in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Many funders of doctoral research require that the recipient have a valid study right to pursue doctoral studies (see also sections 2.5 and 2.6). If you do not enroll, you will lose your study place. **You must always register as an attending student in the first term, unless you have special permission to register for non-attendance.** Apply to the faculty's dean for permission to register as a non-attending student in the first term.

2.2 Supplementary studies

If a newly selected doctoral student's previous studies relate to a field other than that of the major subject of the doctoral degree, or if the applicant is admitted based on a master-level degree from a university of applied sciences, or if a considerable long time has passed since studies in the major, the professor(s) of the subject may require the student to perform supplementary studies. A maximum of 30 credits can be

required as supplementary studies. These studies are compulsory and they are to be completed in addition to the other doctoral degree requirements.

A notice of required supplementary studies is sent by letter to those concerned before the beginning of studies. To serve their purpose, supplementary studies are to be completed primarily during the first study year.

2.3 Supervision

When a student selection is made, at least one supervisor (process/main supervisor) employed by the faculty is appointed to oversee the doctoral student's research. One or two more supervisors can also be appointed from the faculty or elsewhere. The supervisors are to have a doctor's degree, and the main supervisor is to have a professor's post or the title of docent. These supervisors may also be appointed at a later stage when the type of required supervisory expertise is known. The aim is that the supervisors' areas of expertise complement one another and thereby support the supervision process. Since the doctoral programme may also appoint supervisors to students who belong to the thematic doctoral programme, the official supervisors are appointed on the basis of the entire supervision concept. All doctoral students are recommended to have at least two supervisors.

A reciprocal agreement (supervising agreement) is made between the supervisor(s) and the doctoral student. It clearly defines the responsibilities pertaining to the commitments of the supervisor(s) and the student in the supervision relationship (<https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education/For-supervisors/Supervising-practices-and-the-academic-community/Supervising-agreement>). The supervising agreement is made through discourse between the supervisor(s) and the student, and it can be revisited in annual DSP discussions. The agreement is regarded as a tool that clarifies the supervision principles and practices. A copy of the agreement is delivered to the faculty office to be archived by the chief of administration in either paper or electronic format. The dean appoints all the above-mentioned supervisors and thereby makes the supervision relationships official.

However, the supervisor appointed from the faculty is always responsible for the administrative process (process supervisor). Usually, this person is also the main supervisor of the dissertation research. The main supervisor oversees and supports the researcher's work from the beginning of the process to the completion of the dissertation and conferral of the degree. If the main supervisor is from another unit or outside the university, the supervisor appointed from the faculty supports in planning the doctoral studies, registers potential study attainments (including substitution of studies performed elsewhere), and acts as a process supervisor discussed further down in this document. At the end of the studies, the process supervisor also proposes the pre-examiners and acts as the custos during the defence.

The Cotutelle agreement may enable you to conduct the dissertation research simultaneously at the University of Lapland and at a foreign university. For further information, see <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education/Interested-in-doctoral-studies/Cotutelle>.

As a doctoral student, you may request the dean to change a supervisor or the roles between them if you can justify the change clearly. Supervisors can also request such a change if they can justify it clearly. The grounds for the change may include the following: the supervisor moves to another university or retires, the supervision is nonfunctional in terms of the content of the dissertation or the progress of the work, or there are other substantial deviations from matters addressed in the supervision agreement. In these cases, the student has the opportunity to ask the faculty to appoint a new main or other supervisor if needed. The decision to be made depends on the faculty's supervisory resources in terms of content and time.

2.4 Doctoral study plan (DSP)



All those admitted to study for a doctoral degree must make a personal doctoral study plan (DSP) together with the process supervisor. The DSP is mandatory. The process starts at the beginning of studies and is implemented as follows:

- 1) Applicants make an initial DSP as part of their application for a right to study for a doctoral degree.
- 2) Having been selected, the student contacts the process supervisor and they draw up a more detailed DSP. The DSP specifies how the student will complete the doctoral studies required by the curriculum and potential supplementary studies, and how the student will carry his or her research forward. The plan must also contain a schedule for various study attainments and, when necessary, a funding

plan to enable the doctoral studies. The student's learning outcomes are also discussed in the plan.

Doctoral students report their progress at least once a year by updating the DSP with their process supervisor by the end of September. The updated DSP shall contain plans for the following academic year and the results of the previous years. The DSP also recounts the progress of the dissertation. The supervising agreement may also be updated in connection with the DSP update.

The DSP form is available at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education/Interested-in-doctoral-studies/Apply-for-doctoral-studies>.

2.5 Funding of studies

Situations vary a great deal between students when it comes to the funding of doctoral studies. Some are full-time researchers, others study on the side of their jobs. If you have unused student financial aid months left after your basic degree studies, it may be possible to use them for financing the beginning of your doctoral studies. By and large, you are to fund your own studies. To make it easier, you may want to do the following: network actively in the academic community, search for suitable research projects, apply for vacant researcher education positions, and seek information on available grants.

GRANTS

One way to finance your doctoral studies and dissertation research is to apply for a grant awarded by a foundation. Many foundations require grant applications with statements, usually given in electronic format. Most often the statements are given by dissertation supervisors, and you are recommended to request them well in advance. Many foundations stipulate that a single person can only provide a limited number of statements, which are to be placed in a priority order. Information on foundations that grant funding is available in the Aurora funding database at <https://www.aurora-tietokanta.fi/en/>. You can apply to the following foundations for a grant:

- Finnish Cultural Foundation
- Kone Foundation
- Emil Aaltonen Foundation
- Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation
- Foundation for Economic Education
- Foundation for Municipal Development, etc.

The University of Lapland offers researchers the possibility to enter into a 10-% employment contract with the university when an external source has awarded them a grant covering a minimum of 12 months. The chief of administration of the faculty provides further information on the 10-% employment contract.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Research in the Faculty of Social Sciences is conducted in numerous research projects. Doctoral students often take part in these projects, and they are encouraged to actively prepare and contribute to projects within their field. At times, research projects may have paid vacancies for doctoral students. For further information on projects, contact your faculty's researchers and teachers.

SALARIED RESEARCHER EDUCATION POSITIONS

The thematic doctoral programme of the University of Lapland and the faculty's research projects sometimes publicly invite people to apply for junior researcher posts where their main task is to conduct and complete their doctoral research. The posts are intended for full-time doctoral studying and there is a very limited number of them. Information on the application periods and recruiting is given by the doctoral programme, the university's Doctoral School, the faculty, and the academic subject. The vacancies are published at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/About-us/Vacancies>.

DOCTORAL STUDIES AND EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

If you are planning to start doctoral studies and have been unemployed, you should contact the local employment and economic development office before applying to the studies and sort out all issues related to your employment security.

2.6 Degree requirements: studies and dissertation

DOCTOR'S DEGREE

A doctor's degree has the following requirements:

- 1) Doctoral studies supporting the research. The studies encompass basics on research methodology, advanced studies in the major subject and one's own field of research, and other studies applicable to the study programme. The degree may also include researcher training courses approved by the faculty and, based on credit transfer decision of the Faculty Council, occupational specialisation studies in social work. More detailed instructions on the scope, contents, and completion of the studies are given in the curriculum for doctoral degrees (see Chapter 3).
- 2) A dissertation that is approved by the Faculty Council after a public examination.

In accordance with the principles defined further in the curriculum and the student's personal doctoral study plan (DSP), the studies referred to in paragraph 1 may include studies completed abroad and in national doctoral study programmes within the relevant field of research, articles and other publications, conference presentations, research-based teaching, and other scientific activity.

At the beginning of the doctoral studies, the doctoral student together with the supervisor are to define the topic and contents of the dissertation in such a way that it is possible to complete it in 3–4 years by studying full time or in 5–6 years by studying part time.

Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is a coherent scientific publication that generates new knowledge and is based on the student's own independent research. Its author must demonstrate an ability to utilize scientific research methods and proficiency in the theory and content of the relevant field of research. It must also provide a fresh scientific contribution. The dissertation may be published in print, electronically or both. The dissertation may be written in Finnish, English, or some other language if deemed justified by the faculty.

The dissertation can be a **uniform manuscript (monograph)** or an **article dissertation**.

Monograph

A monograph is written in one language by one author and it has not been published before. It is based on independent research and takes part in the research discussion of one or more disciplines. It addresses a selected research problem through academic criteria (see Chapter 4). The author may refer to his or her previous articles. The recommended length of a monograph is 120–200 pages without counting the references and appendices (for more details, see Appendix). The length depends on the dissertation type; for instance, it can be an ethnographic, conceptual, or quantitative work.

The monograph must contain a problem setting concerning the relevant research discussion, the research objectives and questions, an examination of the earlier research literature and the author's own theoretic viewpoint, commitments concerning philosophy of science, methodological solutions, research ethics considerations, empirical materials and analyses (if relevant), and the results and contributions of the research.

As for its structure, the monograph may be a traditional research report, a book, or some other construction complying with the discipline and research task. In addition to traditional academic writing convention, other forms of expression are allowed. A monograph may therefore contain pictures, sounds, etc. if it is justified in view of the research task and the relevant research discussion. The structure and

presentation mode must carry the argumentation forward. You are to discuss the form and structure with your supervisor. Finally, there must be an abstract at the beginning of the monograph (see below).

Article dissertation

An article dissertation consists of three constituent publications that address the same problem setting and an introductory chapter that sums up the publications. Each constituent publication must bring about new scientific results or perspectives. The publications and introduction must yield a new scientific contribution that corresponds to that of a monograph in terms of academic quality and other requirements.

The articles must have been published or accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals or research books. For a justified reason, one constituent publication may be on offer for publication so that it has been approved for the peer-reviewing process. In this case, the supervisor(s) must assess whether the article manuscript can be accepted for pre-examination.

The publication channels of the constituent articles must employ scientific peer-reviewing (the referee system). The articles may be published in top-level journals or research books that are well-established in the discipline and comply with the theme of the dissertation. It is recommended that at least one constituent publication be brought out in a scientific journal employing peer-reviewing. The constituent publications of the dissertation mainly correspond to type A1 (original peer-reviewed scientific article) or A3 (chapter in a research book). The author of the dissertation is not allowed to offer the constituent articles to any publication channel without the supervisor's consent.

The supervisors must make sure that the constituent articles are published through established scientific publication channels instead of those referred to as predatory journals. For example, *Julkaisufoorumi* (julkaisufoorumi.fi) and, in the case of domestic publications, the “peer-reviewed” label may help identify trustworthy channels. However, doctoral studies are evaluated based on their content as described in Chapter 4, and their publication forum classification does not serve as a basis for evaluation.

The publications may include co-authored articles if the student's independent contribution to them can be demonstrated. The doctoral student's contribution to each of the co-authored articles of the dissertation must be salient. The student must also be the main (first) author of at least two of the constituent publications of the dissertation. Regarding each publication, the doctoral student must announce his/her role as a writer in the manuscript and in the final dissertation (first author or co-author) and describe his/her scientific contribution to the publication, for instance, by defining the parts of the article for which he/she had the main responsibility and the parts that he/she co-authored. The doctoral student must deliver to the Faculty

Council a separate description of each writer's role in the co-authored publications. This description must also be signed and thereby approved by each author (see also https://tenk.fi/sites/tenk.fi/files/TENK_suositus_tekijyyys.pdf).

A co-authored constituent publication may also be included in another doctoral student's dissertation if it can be demonstrated that the authors have their own clear and independent parts in the publications; for instance, the same material has been addressed within different disciplinary frames. In this case, the doctoral student must justify very thoroughly the part of independent work in the co-authored publication and consider research ethics as well (e.g. right of use concerning materials). If the publication has been or will be used in another dissertation, it must be mentioned when leaving the manuscript for pre-examination.

The introductory chapter presents the objectives, methods, materials, results, and main argument of the entire doctoral research. Its purpose is to show the research-based and theoretical relationship between the constituent publications and to construct an argumentative whole based on the constituent publications. The standard length of the introductory chapter is 50–70 pages.

The author of the dissertation must make sure that the manuscript is linguistically correct.

Abstract

At the beginning of the monograph and the article dissertation there is a 1–2-page abstract that summarises the main argument of the research. It is to describe the scientific contribution of the research in relation to the disciplinary discussion in which the dissertation takes part. The abstract covers the study as to its problem setting, objectives, research questions, theoretical standpoints, conceptual frame, methods, materials, results, and conclusions based on them. The abstract is written in Finnish and English, and it concludes with the keywords.

Using AI in doctoral research

The doctoral student and the supervisors must follow the instructions of the University of Lapland, TENK, publication channels, and potential project financiers in the use of artificial intelligence in doctoral research.

Dissertation examination process in brief

The examination process in chronological order:

- 1) The supervisor(s) and the doctoral student discuss the pre-examination process and its date. It is recommended that at least two persons assess the eligibility of the manuscript for pre-examination with respect to the defined assessment criteria. Should they assess that the manuscript the criteria are not met, the process may be terminated or reverted to the supervision process.

- 2) The doctoral student runs the manuscript through the plagiarism detection system. The process supervisor checks the report.
- 3) The process supervisor asks the doctoral student whether he or she has anything to comment on the experts proposed to act as pre-examiners (disqualification). Thereafter, the process supervisor requests the consent of the experts.
- 4) The doctoral student emails the manuscript to the process supervisor.
- 5) The process supervisor announces the issue to the Faculty Council by emailing the manuscript and notice of an accomplished plagiarism check to the chief of administration and the secretary of administration of the faculty. Also emailed are the names, titles, organisations, and email addresses of the experts.
- 6) The Faculty Council appoints at least two pre-examiners for the manuscript.
- 7) The faculty administration sends the manuscript and instructions on assessment and compensation to the pre-examiners. The supervisor(s) or the doctoral student are not in contact with the pre-examiners in issues related to the assessment.
- 8) The pre-examiners have two months to issue their statements.
- 9) Based on the pre-examiner statements, the doctoral student has a chance to revise the manuscript and to finalise it so that it can be published as a dissertation. The doctoral student submits a written report of the revisions to the Faculty Council.
- 10) The Faculty Council authorises a public examination (defence) based on the favourable pre-examiner statements. The student is allowed to comment on the statements before the decision is made. Should one statement or both of them not favour defence, the work is reverted to the supervision process.
- 11) The Faculty Council appoints the custos and the opponent(s). Before making this decision, an opportunity is reserved for the student to comment on the opponent nominee(s). The custos acts as the opponent's contact person.
- 12) The Faculty Council rules the date of the defence.
- 13) The dissertation is to be published no later than ten days prior to its public examination. The e-publication is placed on public display on the official homepage of the University of Lapland. The printed version is placed on public display in the university lobby.
- 14) Public examination of the dissertation.
- 15) The opponent(s) give their statements and grade proposals.
- 16) The Faculty Council grades the dissertation. The student is allowed to comment on the opponent statement(s) before the grading decision is made.
- 17) The student may apply for rectification of the Faculty Council's grading decision.

See Chapter 4 for further instructions.

2.7 Degree certificates

You can apply for the doctor's degree certificate using the Peppi system, see more at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Studies/Thesis-and-graduation>.

Before applying for the degree certificate, make sure that all the studies included in the doctoral curriculum and the corresponding credits have been entered into the credit record. If something is missing, ask the process supervisor to update your credit record data. The degree certificate cannot be awarded before all the studies have been entered into the credit record. It is advisable to check the credit record annually during the DSP discussions with the process supervisor.

Doctors are given an electronic degree certificate has the following information: the title of the degree, the major, the date of graduation, the scope of the degree, the studies included in the degree, potential study modules with their grades, the title of the dissertation, and the grade of the dissertation.

The certificate is granted by the dean.

2.8 Entry into force

The instructions and regulations presented in this guide and the related curricula enter into force on 1 January 2025.

If you have started studying according to a previous doctoral study guide, you may continue pursuing your degree according to the requirements of this new doctoral study guide. Discuss any possible changes with your process supervisor.

3. CURRICULUM FOR DOCTORAL DEGREES

3.1 Structure of the curriculum for doctoral degrees

Having completed a master's degree, the doctoral student completes 30 credits' worth of studies complying with the curriculum for doctoral degrees and writes a dissertation (180 credits). The scope of doctoral studies is thus 210 credits (doctor's degree).

The Doctoral School organises an orientation day (TUKO1243) for all new doctoral students as part of the Philosophy of Science and General Researcher Skills module. During the orientation day you can learn more about starting the studies, meet other new doctoral students, and hear the speeches of doctoral alumni.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

The studies of the faculty's discipline-specific doctoral programme (in addition to the personal supervision process and writing the dissertation) are structured as follows.

Discipline- and faculty-specific studies, 20 cr.

POSTG01 Discipline-specific studies 5–10 cr.

POSTG02 Expertise in the topic of the research 5–10 cr.

POSTG06 Doctoral seminar 5–10 cr.

Philosophy of science and research skills, 10 cr.

POSTG300 Dissertation, 180 cr.

Please note that the POSTG codes are not course codes; they are headings under which individual courses are compiled in the credit record. The up-to-date course supply is available in the Peppi system under the studies of the faculty. In addition to courses, the POSTG codes may cover other study attainments, for instance conference presentations and seminar attendances (see section 3.2).

The studies under the heading *Philosophy of science and research skills* organised by the Doctoral School are open to all doctoral students at the University of Lapland (for more details, see the Peppi system and <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education/For-doctoral-researchers/Joint-studies>).

Discuss with your process supervisor how to allocate the attainments under the POSTG codes and the Philosophy of science and research skills module. Also, discuss with your process supervisor the inclusion of studies completed in other universities into your degree and the related credit transfers. The process supervisor submits your attainments to the credit record administrators after your annual DSP discussion.

Doctoral dissertation 180 ECTS	Discipline-specific and faculty-specific studies	20 ECTS
	Philosophy of science and research skills	10 ECTS

STRUCTURE OF THE THEMATIC DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

The Doctoral School provides thematic special studies. Further information on the study content is available on the Doctoral School's pages at www.ulapland.fi/arcticdp. In addition to thematic special studies, the doctoral studies must include participation in the doctoral seminar of the academic subject.

Thematic studies of the doctoral programme, 15 cr.

Philosophy of science and research skills, 10 cr.

Discipline- and faculty-specific studies, 5 cr.

POSTG06 Doctoral seminar, 5 cr.

POSTG300 Dissertation, 180 cr.

Doctoral dissertation 180 ECTS	Thematic studies of the doctoral programme	15 ECTS
	Philosophy of science and research skills	10 ECTS
	Discipline-specific and faculty-specific studies	5 ECTS

3.2 Contents of discipline-specific doctoral studies

POSTG01 Studies in the relevant field of science 5–10 cr.

The aim of these studies is to get you acquainted with the theoretical classic works and contemporary discussions of your field. Ask your process supervisor for more detailed instructions on completing the studies (e.g. taking a literature exam, writing an essay, or attending a seminar).

POSTG02 Expertise in the area of research 5–10 cr.

Objectives:

- Historical knowledge, present situation regarding the empirical area
- Cross-disciplinary knowledge of the area and related research
- Processing the topic of the upcoming dissertation into lectures and teaching packages already before the defence and/or
- Popularising the topic and disseminating it into public debate (newspaper/journal articles, interviews)

Articles, research reports, and other written productions can also be counted as doctoral study attainments, provided that they increase and demonstrate the doctoral student's expertise in the field. Credits for them are given as stated below. The number of credits depends on, for example, the length of the paper, the level of the seminar, and the intensity of work done in a working group.

- a presentation at an international seminar 3–5 cr.
- a presentation at a national seminar 3–5 cr.

In addition, lectures and popularisation concerning the topic or methodology studies and supervision of master's theses can also be counted as doctoral study attainments, provided that they increase and demonstrate the student's expertise in the field. Credits for them are given based on, for example, the scope and content of the tasks.

- popularisation of scientific results (articles, interviews), 1–2 cr.
- teaching and master's thesis supervision, 1–5 cr.

You may also agree to earn these credits on related courses organised by the Doctoral School, other disciplines, or other actors.

The doctoral students of the Faculty of Social Sciences must actively participate in the faculty's joint doctoral education seminar throughout their studies and present their dissertation research at the seminar at least once a year. In addition, doctoral students must present their research at least once a year in thematic seminars organized by academic subjects, national/international networks, etc. The number of credits is based on the activeness of your participation in seminars and conferences organised in academic networks.

4. FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS AND REGULATIONS ON ASSESSING A DISSERTATION AND ON DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ABOUT THE PUBLIC EXAMINATION

4.1 Examination procedure of the dissertation


PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The pre-examination is an external quality control method carried out by the academic community. Its purpose is to ensure that the dissertation research fulfills the criteria of scientific research and writing. **When submitting the dissertation manuscript to the faculty for pre-examination, you must be registered as an attending student at the University of Lapland.**

Before turning in the manuscript, you are to run it through a plagiarism detection programme (for instructions, see <https://www.ulapland.fi/FI/Opiskelu/Opintojen-aikana/Turnitin>).

The process supervisor reads the report and notifies the faculty about a performed check when proposing that the manuscript be sent for pre-examination. All dissertations at the University of Lapland are required to undergo a plagiarism check.

The pre-examination process starts when the process supervisor submits a written proposal to the faculty to send the manuscript for pre-examination. The process supervisor's proposal to appoint two independent pre-examiners must be delivered to the chief of administration and secretary of administration no later than two weeks before the Faculty Council meeting in which the pre-examiners are to be appointed. Along with the proposal, the process supervisor



Defence approaching?
Guidelines at:
[ulapland.fi/defenceapproaching](https://www.ulapland.fi/defenceapproaching)



delivers the manuscript as a PDF file and the experts' contact information. Before sending the proposal, the process supervisor requests the proposed expert pre-examiners' consent. Before requesting the consent, the process supervisor asks the doctoral student whether he/she has anything to comment on the proposed experts (disqualification).

A supervisor cannot act as a pre-examiner. Pre-examiners are invited from another university, another research institute, or a foreign university. The research institute cannot be a research institute or unit of the student's university. In selecting the pre-examiners, gender equality is pursued as far as possible. Disqualification issues are as provided in section 28 of the Administrative Procedure Act 434/2003. The pre-examiners must be professors or docents and their combined expertise must cover the discipline(s), the subject area, and the methodological and theoretical frames of the work to be examined. If the dissertation calls for special expertise, then a doctor who has conducted research on the special area may act as a pre-examiner or as the opponent. The pre-examiners can come from the same institute in exceptional cases only, that is, if another organisation does not have the required expertise and if the language of the manuscript makes it impossible to use international experts. In these cases, the process supervisor must justify the proposal on experts to the Faculty Council in writing.

The Faculty Council appoints two pre-examiners for the dissertation. Before appointing the pre-examiners, the author is allowed to comment on the selection. These comments typically concern disqualification issues. When the pre-examiners have been appointed, the faculty office sends the manuscript and the examination instructions and documents to the pre-examiners.

PRE-EXAMINATION STATEMENTS

Having received their assignment, the pre-examiners must give their well-founded, written statements within two months. The pre-examiners issue a statement on whether they consider the manuscript to be of such scientific merit that the Faculty Council can authorize a public examination.

The pre-examiners assess the following parts of the manuscript: (a) scientific merit and novelty value, (b) choice of topic and research problem, (c) theoretical handling, (d) material and methods, (e) own contribution, (f) results and credibility, (g) conclusions and discussion, (h) composition and presentation in the question of an article dissertation, (i) consistent thematic construction, (j) academic quality of the introduction chapter, and (k) the quality of constituent publications that have been published, approved for publication, or offered for publication and approved for the peer-reviewing process. A pre-examiner statement may contain correction and improvement suggestions that are preferably made using an appendix. In their statements the pre-examiners can propose either authorization or rejection of a public examination – the statement cannot be conditional.

The pre-examiners must bring forward any violations of research integrity (see [instructions](#) of TENK).

PRE-EXAMINERS' ROLE AND ETHICAL ISSUES

The faculty is in charge of communication between the doctoral candidate, supervisors, and pre-examiners.

During the pre-examination process, a pre-examiner may not discuss the content of the statement or other issues related to the dissertation with the doctoral student or supervisors. The pre-examiners must state in the pre-examination statement whether they have been in contact with the doctoral student or supervisors during the examination process.

Furthermore, the pre-examiner is not allowed to receive revised manuscript versions or other related documents or materials directly from the student or supervisor. They can only be received from the faculty.

The pre-examiner shall send the examination statement directly to the faculty.

A pre-examiner, opponent, or a member of the grading committee cannot be

- a person who is a co-writer in one of the constituent publications of the dissertation
- a person who is engaged or was engaged during the dissertation project in research collaboration with the doctoral candidate
- the doctoral candidate's close relative
- the doctoral candidate's or supervisor's immediate manager or subordinate.

In addition, special consideration is required if a person has engaged in close research collaboration with the doctoral student's supervisor during three years preceding the examination of the dissertation.

AUTHORISATION OF THE PUBLIC EXAMINATION

The pre-examiners deliver their statements to the faculty office, from where they are forwarded to the process supervisor and doctoral candidate as soon as they arrive. The candidate is allowed to reply to the pre-examiner statements. To be able to submit the reply, the student is entitled to request delaying the decision to authorise a public examination to the next Faculty Council meeting. The pre-examiners may present the comments specifying their statements directly to the doctoral student.

Based on the pre-examiner statements, the Faculty Council makes the final decision on authorizing or rejecting the public examination. If the statements or one of them does not favour the examination, the dissertation work returns to the supervisory process. In this case, the pre-examination process is restarted after the doctoral candidate has corrected the significant deficiencies pointed out in the statements. The candidate is to submit a written report to the Faculty Council on

the way the stated deficiencies and correction requirements have been considered in the new manuscript version.

Even when the public examination is authorised, finalising the manuscript is an important phase of the process. The candidate is to submit a written report to the Faculty Council on the way the feedback from the pre-examiners has been considered in the manuscript. The process supervisor is to make sure that the pre-examination statements have been observed in the finalisation of the dissertation. However, the candidate is ultimately in charge of the research and the final form of the dissertation.

CUSTOS, OPPONENT, AND THE TIME AND VENUE OF THE PUBLIC EXAMINATION

Having granted permission to proceed to a public examination, the Faculty Council appoints an opponent or opponents based on the process supervisor's proposal. The selection criteria for opponents are the same as those for pre-examiners. A pre-examiner may act as an opponent. Before appointing the opponent(s) the doctoral candidate is allowed to comment on the possible disqualification of the nominee(s).

The process supervisor or some other tenured professor of the academic subject or a related subject at the university typically acts as the custos. The faculty usually appoints the custos and the opponent(s) in the same meeting.

To determine the time and venue of the public examination, the process supervisor negotiates the issue with the doctoral candidate, custos, opponent(s), and chief of administration, after which the Faculty Council determines the time and venue. As a rule, public examinations are arranged in the premises of the University of Lapland; other venues are exceptions. Room reservations and streaming arrangements are made by the faculty office when the public examination is arranged in the university premises. If another venue is desired, the reservation is made by the doctoral candidate.

In unusual circumstances the examination may be arranged online. This is to be discussed with the process supervisor and the faculty's chief or secretary of administration.

PUBLICATION OF THE DISSERTATION

If put out by the University of Lapland, dissertations are primarily published on the open web as part of the Acta Electronica Universitatis Lapponiensis series. The publication platform is the Lauda repository of the University of Lapland. In preparation of the examination session, the university makes six paper copies of an electronically published dissertation for public display and one copy each for the candidate, opponent(s), and custos. Candidates need not pay for the electronic publication of a dissertation, but they may have more printed copies made on their own cost.

For special reasons (e.g. nonstandard design) and by decision of the faculty, a dissertation may be published in the university series only in print or also in print. In this case the faculty makes a separate decision regarding the printing costs.

Further instructions on publishing in the university series are available on the library's web pages at <https://lib.luc.fi/dissertations>.

If your dissertation is published elsewhere or as an author's edition, you must deliver 15 paper copies or an electronic copy and 6 paper copies to the chief of administration no later than 10 days before the public examination. Whether it is an article dissertation or a monograph, the same number of copies must be delivered to the university. Before delivery to the faculty, you are to have the dissertation's introductory part and constituent articles bound together or compiled into one electronic file.

In all events you must ensure that your dissertation is ready and publicly available no later than ten days before the public examination. The faculty distributes the dissertation to the pre-examiners, the opponent(s), the custos, and the main lobby.

When publishing an author's edition, make sure that the dissertation has an ISBN code. Further instructions on acquiring an ISBN code are available on the library's web pages at <https://lib.luc.fi/dissertations>.

PUBLIC EXAMINATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The role of the opponent(s) in the public examination of the dissertation (also referred to as a public defence) is to inspect and discuss the varied themes of the work. At the beginning of the actual event, the opponent usually focuses on methodological and general questions. This is followed by a more detailed analysis. If there is more than one opponent, they can agree on their order of appearance and work allocation. They can also take part in discussing a topic introduced by any of the opponents. The examination in its entirety may not last more than six hours.

The public examination is opened and closed by the custos. The custos functions as the chair and makes sure that the doctoral candidate is allowed an immediate reply to each remark. The custos also ensures that the discussion does not deviate too much from the topic. If the examination lasts more than two hours, the custos is to announce a break. The custos also leads the discussion with the audience. The custos may give the faculty a brief report on the proceedings of the public examination.

Further instructions on public examinations are available on the university's website at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education/For-supervisors/Supervising-practices-and-the-academic-community/Public-defence>.

OPPONENT STATEMENT AND GRADING OF A DISSERTATION

The opponent(s) must give a well-founded, written statement(s) on the dissertation no later than two weeks after the public examination. This is done either jointly or separately. In the statement(s) the opponent(s) also give a grading proposal.

When grading the dissertation, attention is also paid to the doctoral candidate's defence in the public examination. The custos is to be in contact with the opponent(s) and to keep up the assessment process. In fact, the custos and the opponent(s) usually discuss the success of the dissertation and public examination as well as the grading proposal.

The written opponent statements (or statement) on the dissertation are delivered to the author as soon as they arrive at the faculty. The candidate is allowed to reply to them before the relevant Faculty Council meeting. To submit the reply, the candidate is entitled to request that the grading be postponed to the next Faculty Council meeting.

Evaluation criteria of a dissertation and the public examination

A dissertation is a coherent presentation containing new scientific knowledge and building on independent research. The evaluation concerns the scientific contribution of the dissertation and the doctoral candidate's independent part in its production. More detailed evaluation criteria are presented below. The dissertation may be a monograph or an article dissertation comprising constituent publications and a separate introductory chapter. The research is to manifest scientific integrity and adhere to ethical research principles.

Dissertations and their defence in the public examination are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Topic, research subject, research problem, methodological delineation of the task, and research questions.** The topic of the research is important and the research subject is scientifically justified. The research presents a clear and appropriately delineated scientific problem. The research questions are conceptually precise and the study answers them. The research problem's complexity, ingenuity, and capacity to contribute to science are of particular merit.
- **Competence in the field of science and recognition of previous research.** The research demonstrates profound competence in the theories and concepts of the discipline and the special area of the research. It addresses the pertinent previous studies and their critique, and its results are proportioned to them. Further definition and development of the central scientific concepts or theories are of special merit.

- **Methods.** The chosen research methods are well justified and relevant in terms of the research problem. The methods are presented and used accurately and competently. Enhancement of research methods is of special merit.
- **Material.** The research questions can be answered on the basis of the chosen material(s). The quality and quantity of the material(s) meet the requirements of the research.
- **Analysis and observations.** The analysis is systematic and consistent. Its methods are compatible with the material and the analysis gives answers to the research questions. The reader can effortlessly follow the way in which the observations are made. The results are tested by addressing various application possibilities and potential counter-arguments. On the whole, the observations are logical and credible.
- **Presentation of the results and conclusions.** The results are presented intelligibly and they are based on the chosen theoretical frame, research material, and methods. The work weighs the meaning of the results and conclusions in light of the chosen research questions. The results are used to present ideas for further research. The research weighs the academic and social significance of the results.
- **Critical approach.** The researcher has a critical stance toward previous research, theories, methods, materials, sources, and the scientific contribution of his or her own work. The study as a whole is unique and independent.
- **Composition and form.** The structure of the dissertation is coherent, it progresses logically, and the text is clear and correct. In the case of foreign-language dissertations, it is general practice to use professional language editors, but typically not before the changes set forth in the pre-examiner statements have been made. You may apply for funding to this end (the faculty, Rector's grant, language editing costs specified in grant application, research projects).
- A statement on an **article dissertation** is to assess the introductory chapter, the constituent publications, and the whole dissertation composed of these. When a constituent publication has been approved for the publication process and has not yet been published or approved for actual publication, it is particularly important to assess it thoroughly. As for a jointly published article dissertation, the candidate's own contribution is to be specified and it must be sufficient for the dissertation in terms of quality and quantity.

The merits of the study in these areas are evaluated on a three-level scale as follows:

The grade **accepted** may be given if the study fulfils the requirements set for a dissertation. In this case, however, the merits of the study do not meet the criteria set for a higher grade. The work may also have shortcomings, but they do not lead to rejection.

The grade **good** may be given if the study is of good quality according to all or most of the evaluation criteria. Some aspects of the study may even be of exceptional quality. The work may have some shortcomings that are offset by its merits.

The grade **outstanding** is given only if the dissertation is of exceptional quality and manifests strong expertise according to all criteria. If the study contains highly important observations that also bear substantial international significance in the discipline and if the opponent deems the dissertation to rank among the best in its field, the opponent is to give it a special mention in the statement.

You may appeal against the grading of the dissertation to the Faculty Council within 14 days from being informed of the grading decision (see Regulations on Degrees at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Studies/During-your-degree/Student-rights-and-responsibilities>).

4.2 Communication on the public examination

The faculty informs the Communications unit about the time, opponent(s), and custos of the public examination as soon the matters have been decided. In addition, the faculty enters the defence into the Events section on the university's website.

The Communications unit informs the media about the public examination. For this purpose, the doctoral candidate must deliver a one-page draft press release to the Communications unit introducing the dissertation. This is to be done at least two weeks prior to the examination. In collaboration with the candidate, the Communications unit draws up a press release on the basis of the draft (see the instructions at <https://www.ulapland.fi/EN/Research/Doctoral-education/For-supervisors/Supervising-practices-and-the-academic-community/Press-release>).

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRESS RELEASE

The Communications unit is in charge of distributing your press release to the media. The basic distribution list covers the most important media in northern Finland and the rest of the country. The release is also sent to field-specific media. If you have personal preferences, you may also suggest other media to be included in the list. The extent of the distribution will be discussed with you. You are also recommended to be active in communication about your doctoral defence and to utilise your own media relations. However, it is important to ask reporters to abide by the publication date settled with the Communications unit; prearranged stories should not be published before other media have received the press release from the Communications unit.

The media decide independently on the publication of the release. Distribution of the English version to international media must always be settled separately. You are to personally take care of communication to international publication series.

The Communications unit assists and gives advice to candidates in matters related to press interviews and the media. You are advised to get ready for journalists contacting you both before and after the public examination – especially when the press release is sent to the media.

The Communications unit reports the defence on the website and social media of the University of Lapland.

PUBLIC DISPLAY AND PRESS COPIES OF THE DISSERTATION

The public display of an electronically published dissertation takes place on the frontpage of the university's website. Furthermore, the faculty places one paper copy on public display in the university's main lobby ten days before the defence. The dissertation published in paper format is placed on public display only in the university's main lobby.

The Communications unit has the necessary data on dissertations published in the university series. As for dissertations published elsewhere, the faculty delivers one press copy of them to the Communications unit. Press copies to reporters interested in the topic are usually delivered by the candidate (or the publisher of a dissertation put out elsewhere).

APPENDIX: The length of a dissertation and guidelines on research integrity

The length of a dissertation

B5-size text page with finished layout and without figures or tables (approximately)	English	Finnish
	500 words	326 words
	2,879 characters without spaces	2,808 characters without spaces
	3,378 characters with spaces	3,132 characters with spaces

Useful links to guidelines on research integrity and ethics

[The Finnish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and Procedures for Handling Alleged Violations of Research Integrity in Finland](#)

[Agreeing on authorship. Recommendation for research publications](#)

[The ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in the human sciences in Finland](#)

[Supervision of doctoral dissertations and their review process in Finland with a special emphasis on research integrity](#)

[Saamelaisia koskevan tutkimuksen eettiset ohjeet Suomessa = Sámiide guoski dutkama ehtalaš rávvagat Suomas = Sámmlíjd kyeskee tutkâmeettisiih ravvuuh Suomâst = Sámmlaid kuõskki tu'tkõkummuž eettla vuä'ppõõzz Lää'ddjânnmest](#)
[= Ethical guidelines for research involving the Sámi people in Finland - OuluREPO](#)