

This is a translation of the original Swedish document.

General study plan for third-cycle education in Geography with a focus on human geography at Stockholm University.

General Syllabus for Third-Cycle Studies in Geography with a Specialization in Human Geography at Stockholm University.

1. Decision

This general study plan for third-cycle education in Geography with a focus on human geography has been determined by the Faculty Board of Social Sciences at Stockholm University on 31 May 2007, and last revised on 12 June 2023.

The general study plan applies from 12 June 2023.

2. Subject description

Human geography studies human activities from a spatial perspective. Human geographers are interested in social processes, including social planning, and their spatial aspects, such as spatial distribution, context, interaction between different places, space as a physical place or as a social construction, created by social relations.

3. The aim of the education

Admission to third-cycle education in Geography with a focus on human geography only takes place for studies that conclude with a doctoral degree. If there are special reasons, however, the social science faculty board can decide on admission for studies that end with a licentiate degree. Third-cycle education in Geography with a focus on human geography can be completed with a licentiate or doctoral degree.

A PhD student in Geography with a focus on human geography can complete the licentiate degree as a stage in their education at third-cycle level. The licentiate stage is not mandatory for the human geography doctoral degree.

3.1 Doctoral degree

The doctoral degree is obtained after the doctoral student has completed an education of 240 higher education credits in a subject for education at third-cycle level.

Knowledge and understanding

For a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must

demonstrate broad knowledge within and a systematic understanding of the research area as well as deep and up-to-date specialist knowledge within a defined part of the research area, and

demonstrate familiarity with scientific methodology in general and with the specific research area's methods in particular.

Skills and Abilities

For a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must

demonstrate the ability to carry out scientific analysis and synthesis as well as independent critical examination and assessment of new and complex phenomena, issues and situations,

demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate questions critically, independently, creatively and with scientific accuracy, as well as to plan and use adequate methods to conduct research and other qualified tasks within given time frames and to review and evaluate such work,

demonstrate with a thesis their ability to significantly contribute to the development of knowledge through their own research,

demonstrate the ability to present and discuss research and research results with authority in both national and international contexts orally and in writing in dialogue with the scientific community and society in general,

demonstrate the ability to identify the need for additional knowledge, and



demonstrate the ability to contribute to the development of society and support the learning of others, both within research and education as well as in other qualified professional contexts.

Scientific skills and approach

For the doctoral degree, the doctoral student must

demonstrate intellectual independence and scientific honesty as well as the ability to make ethical judgments, and

demonstrate in-depth insight into the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used.

Scientific thesis (doctoral thesis)

For the doctoral degree, the doctoral student must have a scientific thesis (doctoral thesis) of 165 higher education credits approved.

Miscellaneous

For doctoral degrees with a certain focus, the specified requirements shall also apply, which each university itself determines within the framework of the requirements in this degree description.

3.2 Licentiate degree

The licentiate degree is awarded either after the student has completed an education of at least 120 higher education credits in a subject for third-cycle education, or after the student has completed a part of at least 120 higher education credits of an education that is to be concluded with a doctoral degree, if the university decides that such a licentiate degree can be awarded at the university.

Knowledge and understanding

For the licentiate degree, the doctoral student must

demonstrate knowledge and understanding within the research area, including current specialist knowledge within a defined part of it as well as in-depth knowledge of scientific methodology in general and the specific research area's methods in particular.

Skills and Abilities



For the licentiate degree, the doctoral student must

demonstrate the ability to critically, independently and creatively and with scientific accuracy identify and formulate questions, to plan and with adequate methods carry out limited research work and other qualified tasks within given time frames and thereby contribute to the development of knowledge and to evaluate this work,

demonstrate the ability to clearly present and discuss research and research results in both national and international contexts orally and in writing in dialogue with the scientific community and society in general, and

demonstrate such skills as are required to participate independently in research and development work and to work independently in other qualified activities.

Scientific ability and approach

For the licentiate degree, the doctoral student must

demonstrate the ability to make ethical judgments in their own research,

demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used, and

demonstrate the ability to identify their need for additional knowledge and to take responsibility for their knowledge development.

Scientific paper

For the licentiate degree, the research student must have a scientific essay of 90 higher education credits approved.

4. Eligibility and prerequisites

4.1 Basic eligibility

Basic entry requirements for the third-cycle programme are met by those who have

1. completed an advanced level degree,
2. completed course requirements of at least 240 higher education credits, of which at least 60 higher education credits at advanced level, or



3. in some other way within or outside the country acquired essentially equivalent knowledge.

The University may, for an individual applicant, grant exemptions from the requirement for basic eligibility, if there are special reasons. The department board decides on exemptions from requirements for basic eligibility.

4.2 Special requirements

Instruction language and seminar language are either Swedish or English. Therefore, very good knowledge of Swedish or English is required. It is also required that you have passed at least 90 higher education credits in human geography or have other relevant background for the education.

Any corresponding assessment of eligibility is made by the Director of Studies, and decisions are made by the Departmental Board.

5. Call and admission procedure

Decisions on the admission of applicants to third-cycle education in Geography with a focus on human geography are made by the department board at the department of human geography. The institutional board may not further delegate decisions on admission. The institution's board may only accept applicants who are employed as doctoral students for third-cycle education. Education at third-cycle level is provided to the extent that available resources allow. Information about admission to third-cycle education is routinely advertised on the department's website. The call or announcement should also take place via SU's website. The announcement should be made at least one month before the application deadline.

Decisions on admission to third-cycle education with funding other than doctoral employment are made by the faculty committee.

For further information on how the exemptions according to Chapter 7 Section 37 of the Higher Education Ordinance is applied, reference is made to the Faculty of Social Sciences' guidelines for education at third-cycle level.

A doctoral student who has previously been admitted to education at doctoral level with a licentiate degree as the final goal, and after completing the licentiate degree wishes to continue his studies for a doctoral degree in the same subject must apply to be admitted at the



regular announcement. Admission is, where applicable, only for studies during the time remaining until the doctoral degree.

Admission to third-cycle education can take place twice a year. Decisions on admission are made by the institution's board. Deadlines for applications are 1 April and 15 November each year, provided that places in the program at PhD level are announced. At the time of admission in the spring, admission takes place to the places in the doctoral program financed by the department. Admission of externally funded doctoral students can also take place at this time. At the time of admission in the autumn, only externally funded doctoral students are admitted. Decisions on the admission of doctoral students with funding other than doctoral positions are made by the faculty committee. At the time of admission in the spring, a decision on admission is announced no later than in the first half of May of the same year, and studies at PhD level begin in the autumn semester. At the time of admission in the autumn, a decision on admission is announced by mid-December at the latest, and studies at PhD level begin in the spring semester.

The application is made via the university's recruitment system and can be accessed at www.su.se. The application must be designed according to the instructions in the recruitment system and contain information about the highest degree, other degrees, current employment, language skills, references, and other information that is requested. Those who apply for education at third-cycle level in Geography with a focus on human geography must attach the following to the application (in Swedish or English):

1. Certified copies of grades and all cited credit documents, including essays, articles, reports and other scholarly works.
2. An outline that describes the planned research/research focus. It must state the main orientation, conceivable thesis topic, and preferably also a specification of possible research problem, theory, method and material. This outline is not binding and can be revised during the research process.
3. Names of two academic references.

5.1 Basis of assessment and selection criteria

An admissions committee appointed by the department board at the Department of Human Geography usually prepares the applications and makes selections. Ranking of applicants who meet the requirements for basic and special eligibility is done with regard to their ability to absorb the education. The assessment criteria applied to the selection are as follows:

1. The scientific ability demonstrated by the applicant in thesis work from advanced and basic level, as well as in the preliminary research plan.
 - a. independence in analysis and layout in previous works
 - b. problem formulation and rigor in previous work and research plan
 - c. previously demonstrated ability to meet given time frames
 - d. methodological and scientific maturity
 - e. communication and collaboration skills
2. The applicant's prior academic knowledge in relevant areas of knowledge.
3. The applicant's ability to contribute to and benefit from the research environment at the human geography department.

The departmental board at the Department of Human Geography decides on admission to third-cycle education.

Neither the decision to admit someone to third-cycle education nor to hire someone as a doctoral student can be appealed.

More detailed information about the admission process is given on the institution's website.

6. Content and organization of the education

Education at third-cycle level in Geography with a focus on human geography consists partly of courses of 75 ECTS credits, and partly of a thesis of 165 ECTS credits. 30 higher education credits correspond to one semester of full-time studies.

The programme is planned so that the studies require four academic years for doctoral students who devote themselves full-time to their own education at research level. This assumes that the doctoral student is fully committed to the studies and makes effective use of the teaching and supervision. If a doctoral student request it, the employment may be part-time work, but no less than 50 percent of full-time, i.e., eight years.

The duration of studies to obtain a doctoral degree is four years of full-time studies or 240 higher education credits. The education consists of a course component of 75 higher education credits and a thesis part comprising 165 higher education credits. It is possible to take a licentiate degree after 120 credits, of which 45 credits must consist of courses and 75 credits from a scientific work.

All doctoral students who are admitted to third-cycle education in Geography with a human geography focus must follow the present general study plan. Any collaborations in the form of cotutelle, individual doctoral student participation in a research school or externally funded



projects can only affect the individual differences in the education that are documented in the individual study plan.

Details of the arrangement of the studies are determined under point 6.3 and in the Individual Study Plan.

6.1 Individual Study Plan

Individual study plans must be drawn up for all active PhD students in Geography with a focus on human geography. The individual study plan contains the commitments of the university and the doctoral student, a financing plan and a timetable for the doctoral student's education. The plan is determined by the department board after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisor.

The individual study plan is reviewed at least once a year after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisor and is amended by the university as necessary.

For details regarding the establishment, management and follow-up of the individual study plans, refer to chapter 6 §§ 29 and 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance, Regulations for third-cycle education at Stockholm University as well as the instructions of the Humanities Area and the guidelines of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

6.2 Supervision and other resources

At least two supervisors must be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them must be appointed as the main supervisor. At least one supervisor must have undergone research supervisor training or have been assessed by the faculty committee as having equivalent competence. All supervisors must hold a doctorate or equivalent, and at least one supervisor must have docent qualifications. The person appointed as main supervisor must be employed at the department or, if the department decides so, at another department or institute within the faculty. However, at least one supervisor must be employed at the institution. A doctoral student who requests it may change supervisors. Decisions about supervisors can also be changed at the request of supervisors or for other reasons. The request for a change of supervisor must be sent to the director of studies and the supervisor is appointed by the head of department.

The supervision group/supervisor must give the student advice and instruction on how courses should be selected and how the thesis work should be oriented, planned and carried out.



Research students must, through regular contacts, keep the supervisor informed about the progress of the work and obtain advice on continuing forward.

In addition to supervision, the institution must provide a workplace and the working conditions required for the education. The doctoral student also has the right to study and career guidance during the education period. The main responsibility for the latter lies with the supervisors.

The doctoral student has the right to supervision during the education as long as the Rector does not, with the support of Chapter 6. Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance, decide otherwise. If a doctoral student significantly disregards his commitments according to the individual study plan, the Rector shall decide that the doctoral student shall no longer have the right to supervision and other resources for the education. Before such a decision is made, the doctoral student and his or her supervisor must be given the opportunity to express themselves. The examination shall be made on the basis of their accounts and other investigation available. In the assessment, consideration must be given to whether the university has fulfilled its own commitments according to the individual study plan. The decision must be in writing and justified. A decision on withdrawal of resources according to Chapter 6 Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance can be appealed to the Appeal Board for the higher education institution.

For further information regarding supervision and other resources, reference is made to regulations for third-cycle education at Stockholm University as well as instructions for individual study plans in the Humanities Area.

6.3 Courses and examination

For a doctoral degree, courses of 75 higher education credits are required at third-cycle level or advanced level. Of the course credits, at least 15 higher education credits should be made up of courses from the National Programme for Third-cycle Courses in Human Geography, and at least 15 higher education credits of method-oriented courses. For a doctoral degree in Geography with a focus on human geography, courses in human geography, or equivalent, of at least 37.5 higher education credits at graduate or advanced level are required. Individually designed literature courses can comprise a maximum of 15 higher education credits. A course in higher education pedagogy can comprise a maximum of 7.5 higher education credits. Courses organized by another institution or outside the university can also be credited, after the supervisor's or subject representative's approval. The doctoral student's choice of courses should be approved by the director of studies for third-cycle education, who also assesses the credit value of external courses in the human geography education.

For the licentiate degree, courses of 45 higher education credits are required at third-cycle level or advanced level.

In connection with each course, individual tests are organized and the form of examination is shown in the individual study plans. These are usually written, but in exceptional cases can also be oral. Courses are assessed with the grade Pass or Fail.

6.3.1 Recognition of previous education

Course credits from advanced level or equivalent can be credited to the education, provided that the credits have not been used to fulfil the general eligibility requirements. Credit transfer affects the duration of study, for example the funded time of the education is shortened by one week per 1.5 credits credited. The application for credit transfer must be in writing and include relevant course plans, course information and course certificates. The application is sent to the director of studies for third-cycle education.

6.3.2 Other compulsory elements

The doctoral program includes additional compulsory elements that do not generate higher education credits:

1. A dissertation plan seminar: At the end of the first academic year, a dissertation plan is presented by the doctoral student.
2. A half-term seminar: When approximately half of the thesis work is completed, a text containing drafts of parts of the thesis is presented.
3. A final seminar: At the final seminar, in principle, the entire manuscript for the thesis is presented.

6.4 Doctoral thesis and defence

For a doctoral degree in Geography with a focus on human geography, an approved thesis consisting of an independent work in human geography that corresponds to 165 higher education credits is required. The work is planned in consultation with supervisors.

A doctoral thesis in Geography with a focus on human geographic can consist of either a monograph or a number of compiled articles (combination thesis). Requirements for the

quality and scope of the research effort do not differ between the two forms. A summary thesis must contain an introductory cover as well as a number of articles, each of which must have a quality and a scope that corresponds to an article that could be accepted in a referee assessment for an international scientific journal. In cases where others than the doctoral student contributed to one or more articles, the doctoral student's contribution must be clearly stated. Depending on the number of co-authored articles, a summary thesis usually consists of three to five articles.

If it is not clearly stated in one or more of the other parts of the thesis, the title of a summary thesis or the introductory chapter of a monograph must:

- Systematically place the thesis in a broader cultural-geographical context, as well as the research field the thesis contributes to.
- Identify the thesis' contribution to the development of knowledge in the research field, as well as what needs for additional knowledge exist within this.
- Relate the dissertation's method(s) to scientific methodology in general and commonly used methods in the research field.
- Make research ethics assessments relevant to the thesis.

The doctoral thesis can be written in English or Swedish; theses written in Swedish must have a summary in English and vice versa.

The doctoral thesis must be defended orally at a public defence under the auspices of the university, which can be held in Swedish or English. It is assessed with one of the grades pass or fail. When grading, consideration must be given to the content of the thesis and to the defence of it.

The opponent and assessment committee are appointed by the faculty committee on the basis of a proposal from the professor most closely concerned in consultation with the head of department and the supervisors. The opponent should have docent competence. If there are special reasons, however, a person without docent qualifications can be appointed. The opponent must be independent of the doctoral student and the thesis. The composition of the examination committee and other aspects of the defence follow established guidelines regarding defences at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Stockholm University.

All course credits must be completed before the defence takes place.

6.5 Licentiate thesis and licentiate seminar

For the Licentiate degree, an approved licentiate thesis is required that corresponds to 75 higher education credits, which can consist of one or more articles with the same quality requirements as above.

The licentiate thesis must, at a seminar that takes place during term time, be reviewed by an opponent with at least doctoral competence and who has good knowledge of the subject areas and methods essential to the thesis. The thesis must have been available at the department and the university library at least three weeks before the seminar takes place.

Opponent and examiner or possible grading committee are appointed by the departmental board/prefect on the proposal of the subject representative most closely involved. Supervisors may not participate in the grading of the essay. Licentiate theses are assessed with one of the grades fail or pass. When grading, consideration must be given to the content of the essay and to the defence of it.

Provisions regarding assessment board etc. can be found in guidelines issued by the Social Sciences Faculty Board at Stockholm University.

All course credits must be completed before the defence takes place.

7. Transitional rules

Doctoral students who have been admitted before the general study plan came into effect, may, after consultation with the main supervisor and director of studies, request to be transferred to this study plan. The request must be made to the director of studies for the doctoral program. The individual study plan must then be updated.

8. Other

In issues not covered here guidance can be found in current legislation, guidelines at Stockholm University and at the Faculty of Social Sciences, as well as local regulations.