



FACULTY  
OF SOCIAL  
SCIENCES

GENERAL SYLLABUS FOR SOCIAL  
WORK

Reg. No.  
U 2020/963

2020-11-26

Faculty Board

## **General syllabus for third-cycle studies for the degree of Licentiate in Social Work at the National Graduate School in Applied Welfare Research, 120 credits**

The general syllabus for third-cycle studies for the degree of Licentiate in social work at the National Graduate School for Applied Welfare Research was approved by the Faculty Board of Social Sciences, 26 November 2020, Reg. no U 2020/963.

Studies in line with this general syllabus can lead to the following degree:

Licentiate of Philosophy in Social Work.

### **1 Subject description**

Research in social work is mainly concerned with the emergence, causes and solutions of social problems, the conditions and life situations of vulnerable groups and individuals, analyses of welfare policy, social policy measures, societal interventions, welfare organisations and professions.

Applied welfare research is intended to strengthen long-term knowledge formation and development within the social services domain and client- and practice-centric research about the social services. The topics of research may include person-centric social services, coherent intervention chains, outcomes of early/preventive interventions, innovations, client participation

and implementation research. Applied welfare research should be conducted so as to strengthen interaction between research and practice, and increase the involvement of clients and their relatives.

## **2 Objective and outcomes of third-cycle studies**

The aims of the third-cycle programme in social work at the School of Social Work, Lund University, is to provide students with specialised knowledge of social work and to train independent, critical researchers with extensive theoretical knowledge in the social sciences, advanced methodological skills and perception and the ability to carry out research projects.

The language of instruction is Swedish with a substantial component of English. The students on the programme are henceforth referred to as third-cycle students.

### **2.1 Degree of Licentiate**

On completion of the programme, the third-cycle student is to have acquired the following knowledge and skills (Higher Education Ordinance SFS 1993:100, Annex 2, Qualifications Ordinance):

#### ***Knowledge and understanding***

For a degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall demonstrate

- knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

#### ***Competence and skills***

For a degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake a limited piece of research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames in order to contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity

### ***Judgement and approach***

For a degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall

- the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research
- insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

## **3 Admission requirements**

The requirements for admission to third-cycle studies are that the applicant meets the general and specific admission requirements and is considered in other respects to have the ability required to benefit from the programme.

### **3.1 General admission requirements**

Pursuant to the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 39, a person meets the general requirements for admission to third-cycle studies if they:

1. have been awarded a second-cycle qualification,

2. have satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second cycle, or
3. have acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

The faculty board may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds.

### **3.2 Specific admission requirements**

The third-cycle student is to have satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 30 second-cycle credits in social work, or a corresponding qualification acquired in Sweden or abroad. The third-cycle student is also to have completed a second-cycle independent project worth 15 credits, or projects of an equivalent quality and scope.

### **3.3. Credit transfer**

If a student at a higher education institution has successfully completed a second-cycle course or study programme, he or she is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for the course or study programme to the third-cycle programme if the head of department, following a review, judges the course or programme to have a quality or specialisation that justifies credit transfer.

The credit transfer is to be assessed upon the third-cycle student's request in each individual case, and the decision is to be documented in the individual study plan, no later than a year after it was decided. Credit transfer of previous studies is to be linked to a decision on reduction in the period for funding that corresponds to the number of credits transferred.

## **4 Admission and selection**

Students are admitted to four years of part-time study leading to a degree of Licentiate.

Admission of third-cycle students to the graduate school is granted in accordance with the Admissions Regulations for doctoral programmes at Lund University and the Regulations for third-cycle education at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

#### **4.1 Admission**

Only students employed in accordance with the requirements of the National Graduate School in Applied Welfare Research can be admitted as third-cycle students. A funding plan must be available on admission. The plan must specify the third-cycle student's funding throughout the entire programme of study.

The third-cycle students are admitted to research projects developed by the graduate school and collaborating municipalities in consultation and approved by both parties. The agreement is to be attached to the third-cycle student's individual study plan.

Students who are admitted to a Licentiate programme must re-apply to be able to continue studies towards a degree of Doctor. Third-cycle students admitted to the National Graduate School in Applied Welfare Research may not be admitted as doctoral students in accordance with another general syllabus.

#### **4.2 Selection**

A selection among applicants must be made if there are a limited number of places. The criterion for selection is a weighted assessment of the relevance and feasibility of the planned project and the qualifications of the applicant at the time of application. The overriding criterion is the applicant's ability to benefit from the third-cycle programme. Special emphasis is placed on the applicant's capacity to pursue research in the social sciences. 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 give the applicant priority over other applicants.

In order to assess the ability to benefit from the third-cycle programme, the applicant's previous study results, papers, reports, research plans, any other research qualifications and documented professional experience will be considered. First- and second-cycle degree projects are accorded special weight.

An applicant who is judged to have a strong ability to assimilate third-cycle studies can be accepted on the condition of completion of a thesis at second-cycle level worth at least 15 credits, before the study period as a third-cycle student begins.

The department strives for diversity in the graduate school's activities. Gender equality must always be taken into account. Priority will be given to the under-represented gender in the graduate school, in cases of equally qualified applicants, unless there are valid reasons to the contrary.

## **5 Third-cycle courses and study programmes**

Third cycle studies that lead to a degree of Licentiate comprise four years of part-time study (120 credits).

### **5.1 Programme design**

The programme comprises 120 credits, made up of courses amounting to 37.5 credits and an academic thesis (Licentiate thesis) worth 82.5 credits. Teaching is in the form of courses, seminars, guest lectures and supervision of the thesis work.

For a degree of Licentiate the research student must have successfully completed all examinations in the programme and the Licentiate thesis.

### **5.2 Supervision**

At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each third-cycle student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. The principal supervisor is to have the qualifications of an associate professor and be employed at the School of Social Work, Lund University.

The individual study plan must specify the duties and responsibilities of each of the supervisors. Third-cycle students are entitled to supervision during the time deemed necessary for studies comprising 120 credits, i.e. four years of part-time study. Supervision includes both help with the orientation of studies and thesis work and support throughout the studies. A third-cycle student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor.

### **5.3 Individual study plan**

At the start of the programme, the third-cycle student shall draw up an individual study plan of the University's and their undertakings along with a timetable for the studies in consultation with the supervisors. The individual study plan must be followed up annually. The third-cycle student is to register at the start of each semester and, in consultation with the supervisors, specify the degree of activity for the current semester.

### **5.4 Courses and other components**

The courses that can be included in the programme may be offered within the context of the graduate school and by other departments and higher education institutions in or outside Sweden.

For courses at Lund University, there must be course syllabi that state the courses' learning outcomes, content and credits. For courses completed at other higher education institutions, the credits available for credit transfer are determined by the examiner. The courses to be taken by the individual student and to be included in the degree are to be specified in the individual study plan.

One of the grades Pass or Fail will be awarded for the thesis and other examinations within the programme. The examiner of

courses is a professor or lecturer with the qualifications of an associate professor.

#### **5.4.1 Courses**

The following courses are compulsory at the graduate school:

Introduction to applied welfare research (including theory of science), 7.5 credits

Quantitative methodology and statistical analysis, 7.5 credits

Qualitative methodology, 7.5 credits

Generic skills and abilities, 7.5 credits

The third-cycle student is also to obtain 7.5 credits from courses focusing on theory and subject specialisation.

A course in research ethics amounting to 3 credits is included among the compulsory courses. The learning outcomes of the course in research ethics are to give the third-cycle student skills in identifying ethical problems in different research contexts, ethically analysing their own and others' research, and provide knowledge about the principles of research ethics and scholarly norms and what can be deemed to be deviations from these, as well as knowledge of current regulations.

The compulsory course on Generic skills and abilities is tied to the learning outcomes of the programme and includes compilation of and information about existing knowledge, national and international research surveys, active participation in research seminars and application seminars, and communication of the student's own and others' research. The course component is assessed primarily on the basis of written reports of individual assignments, which are normally discussed at seminars.

A third-cycle student who has completed components deemed equivalent to the compulsory components of the programme's courses may, subject to a review by the examiner, structure the course component in a different way.

#### ***5.4.2 Research seminars and other components***

As part of the studies, the third-cycle student is to participate in seminars on the department's research activities and other doctoral students' thesis projects. The third-cycle students shall have the opportunity to present reports on the theoretical and/or methodological issues of the project, plans, papers and thesis chapters, and critically review the research of fellow students.

Third-cycle students shall present their thesis work at no fewer than three seminars:

- 1) a planning seminar when the plan for the thesis is drawn up
- 2) a midway review when about half of the thesis work has been completed
- 3) a concluding seminar to take place about six months prior to the planned date of the public defence

#### **5.5 Licentiate thesis**

The Licentiate thesis is the most important component of the third-cycle Licentiate programme. The thesis is to be based on an independently pursued research project.

The thesis may be designed as a number of research papers accompanied by an introductory summary in which the components are placed within a whole (compilation thesis). If there are special circumstances, the examiner may decide that a thesis can be designed as a unified study (monograph thesis).

A work by two or more authors may be approved as a Licentiate thesis or part thereof, if the contributions of the different authors are so clearly specified that they can be assessed individually.

The thesis is to be defended orally at a public defence. It is awarded one of the grades Pass or Fail. The grade is to reflect both the contents of the thesis and the public defence.

The grade is set by an examining committee composed of three members of whom at least one shall have the qualifications of an associate professor.

## **6 Further information**

Also see the Regulations for doctoral education at Lund University and the Regulations for third-cycle education at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

With respect to the question of withdrawal of resources for third-cycle students who to a considerable extent neglect their undertakings specified in the individual study plan (HEO, Chapter 6, Section 30), reference is made to the Regulations for doctoral education at Lund University.

Information on admission and application deadlines is available at the School of Social Work.