



## Supervising PhD students

Qualifying course for PhD supervisors, 3 weeks (120 hours)  
(*Forskarhandledarutbildningen*)

### 1 GENERAL

The course targets supervisors, and those intending to take on the role as supervisor, on the PhD programmes at Örebro University and Region Örebro County. Applicants from other higher education institutions may also be considered.

The course is offered in both Swedish and English.

#### 1.1 Approval

The course was approved by the director of the Centre for Academic Development on 30 September 2019.

#### 1.2 Course aims

The course aims to

- foster the development of collegially shared knowledge about research supervision; and
- contribute to the development of a good supervisory and postgraduate culture at Örebro University.

An important basis for this exchange of knowledge is the experience that participants bring to the course. Such experiences are deepened and developed through lectures, seminars and discussions about the course tasks and set texts.

## 2 THE COURSE

### 2.1 Course content

The course comprises two parts or perspectives. One is the public mission of PhD study in Sweden; that is, the role the development of research plays in society and the public domain and how it is regulated both nationally by the Higher Education Act and Ordinance and locally at Örebro University. The other is the educational mission of the PhD supervisor, and more precisely the challenges, opportunities and problems that he or she faces in the supervision context.

The course is planned to cover 120 hours of work (roughly the equivalent of 5 hp). This includes six full-day teaching sessions and another nine days of independent work on the course tasks.

#### The public mission

- The history and public significance of research and PhD study, with a focus on the Swedish context.
- Current policy and public goals for postgraduate research and study.
- The regulatory framework for postgraduate study nationally and locally, and working conditions for research students.
- Regulations for individual study plans for research students.

#### The educational mission – a social contract

- The practical organisation of PhD study.
- Research ethics in theory and practice.
- Communication between supervisor and research student.
- The relationship between main supervisor, co-supervisor and research student.
- The role of the supervisory community, research environments and research culture more generally.
- What happens after the PhD?
- The significance of gender and cultural diversity in the supervisory context.
- Leadership and collegiality, power relations and conflict resolution.
- The plurality of PhD study: different research traditions and cultures; funding sources and opportunities; and access to research schools and environments.

### 2.2 Learning outcomes

*Knowledge and understanding*  
Participants will develop

- knowledge and understanding of PhD supervision as a process; and
- knowledge and understanding of various aspects of the relationship between supervisor and PhD student.

### *Competence and skills*

Participants will develop

- the competence and skills to practise good PhD supervision; and
- the competence and skills to contribute to a good supervisory culture at their university.

### *Judgement and approach*

Participants will develop

- a reflective approach to their supervisory role and to the relationship between supervisor and PhD student.

## **2.3 Teaching formats**

Teaching is mainly in the form of seminars, however, there may also be some lectures. Attendance is compulsory. Should a participant miss out on a session, they may attend it the next time the course is offered, however, they must do so within two years. This does not apply to attendance at the first two course sessions. For these, attendance is compulsory during the same semester as when the participant started the course. If the attendance requirement has not been met within two years of the participant starting the course, they are required to take the entire course again.

## **2.4 Examination**

To get a course certificate you are required to attend all sessions of the course and to complete the three course tasks. Attendance at the first two days is obligatory to be able to take the course in that semester. Any missed session(s) after that point can be made up for by attendance at the equivalent session(s) in a subsequent semester.

Verbal presentations need to be in English, but written work can be submitted in either English or Swedish.

## **2.5 Literature**

A suggested reading list of current literature on PhD supervision will be provided shortly before the start of the course. Participants will choose a book-length study from this list to read during the course.

### **3 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants who have been awarded a PhD degree.

### **4 APPLICANT PRIORITY**

No priority is given. Applicants are offered a place in the course as long as there are places left and a complete application reaches the university together with a confirmation from the applicants' head or director.