General Syllabus for Research Studies in

DISABILITY SCIENCE

Handikappvetenskap

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty Board of Medicine and Health on 16 March 2010 (reg. no. CF 62-642/2008). The syllabus was last amended on 15 June 2011.

1 Subject description

Central to the studies is to offer the students insight into disability and handicap from different research perspectives and in the form of different research problems. These are studied with primarily two basic dimensions as the point of departure. One is the dimension individual – society which involves having the individual's conditions, perspectives and problems in view or making social analyses of the conditions of the disabled. The other dimension looks at natural science – cultural aspects and emphasises the importance of being able to pursue disability research on a wide range of issues; from distinct problems using the natural science, technical and medical fields as the starting point, to the understanding of disability and handicap where different cultural-analytical and social-science approaches are emphasised. The student is expected to bring together and integrate knowledge from several different research perspectives.

2 Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the programme, the qualitative targets, are evident from appendix 1 to this syllabus.

3 Admission to the programme – entry requirements and selection etc.

Entry requirements and the basis of assessment for the selection of students are evident from appendix 2 to this syllabus. For other admission information, see Admission Regulations for Örebro University.

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1 The syllabus is approved by virtue of the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 26-27 (SFS 1993:100)
2 The English translation of the general syllabus was last amended on 10 May 2012.
4 General information on the programme organisation

There are two types of research study programmes – one concluding with the doctoral degree (240 credits) and one concluding with a licentiate degree (120 credits). The programmes mainly consist of courses, followed by a course examination, and the writing of a doctoral or licentiate thesis respectively. The research student is expected to take an active part in research seminars and other assigned activities during the period of study. The student is further recommended to take advantage of the opportunities to attend guest lectures etc. at the university, and to attend and contribute to national and international conferences. For each research student, a minimum of two supervisors will be appointed, one of which is nominated as the principal supervisor. The detailed organisation of the programme is determined in the individual study plan.

Credit overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview of programme organisation and qualification requirements</th>
<th>Courses/ examinations, credits</th>
<th>Thesis, credits</th>
<th>Total no. of credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compulsory</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licentiate degree</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Qualification requirements for the doctoral degree

The programme for the doctoral degree comprises 240 credits, corresponding to four years of full-time study.

For the doctoral degree, the research student must
- have received a passing grade in the examinations of the 60 credits included in the courses listed below, in accordance with the respective course syllabus, and
- have received a passing grade on a scholarly dissertation (doctoral thesis) corresponding to 180 credits. The thesis is to be defended orally in public.

The compulsory courses for the doctoral degree comprise 37.5 credits in total, distributed as follows:


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3 Under the new higher education system, and in accordance with the English translation of the Higher Education Ordinance, study programmes at the research level are referred to as third-cycle courses and study programmes. In this document, these programmes and their students are referred to by using compounds of the terms research, research studies and third-cycle. These should thus be considered to be synonymous [translator’s comment].

4 The Higher Education Ordinance stipulation that at least two supervisors be appointed for each research student does not apply to research students who commenced their studies before 1 July 2007. Instead, the older provision of at least one supervisor applies (point 18, transitional provisions of SFS 2006:1053).

5 Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 4, 5, 28 and 29

6 One credit point according to the previous credit system corresponds to one and a half credits under the new system.

7 Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 5

8 “Courses” also refers to other programme modules that in addition to the thesis generate credits.

9 Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 5 and 33
- Foundation Course in Disability Research I, 11.5 credits
- Foundation Course in Disability Research II, 11 credits
- Research Methods and Theory of Science, 15 credits

Foundation Course I provides a basic review of different perspectives on disability and handicap with regard to rights, ethics and interdisciplinarity. Foundation Course II facilitates in-depth studies of theories relevant to disability science.

The elective courses comprise 22.5 credits in total.

6 Qualification requirements for the licentiate degree

The programme for the licentiate degree comprises 120 credits, corresponding to two years of full-time study\(^\text{10}\).

For a licentiate degree, research students must
- have received a passing grade in the examinations of the 45 credits included in the courses listed below, in accordance with the respective course syllabus, and
- have received a passing grade on a scholarly thesis corresponding to 75 credits\(^\text{11}\).

The compulsory courses for the licentiate degree comprise 26.5 credits in total, distributed as follows:
- Foundation Course in Disability Research I, 11.5 credits
- Research Methods and Theory of Science, 15 credits

The elective courses comprise 18.5 credits in total.

7 Other provisions

7.1 Required reading
The required reading in the subject area is listed in the course syllabuses for the compulsory courses.

7.2 Course selection
The research student plans, in consultation with the supervisor, which courses should be part of the programme. The selection is subsequently laid down in the individual study plan.

7.3 Half-way licentiate degree
Students admitted to the programme concluding with the doctoral degree may conclude part of their studies with a licentiate degree, if their studies comprise at least 120 credits\(^\text{12}\). To obtain such a half-way degree, the same criteria apply as to programmes that are to be concluded with a licentiate degree. See above.

8 Further information
Further information about provisions for the programme can be found on the university homepage, in the section on research studies. Documents there include the

\(^{10}\) Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 2, 4, and 5
\(^{11}\) Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 5
\(^{12}\) Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 4, and the university’s regulations on research study programme qualifications
Admission Regulations for Örebro University and other information about national and local regulations.

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**Entry into force and transitional provisions**

The general syllabus in the new subject area of disability science shall be in effect from 1 April 2010.

Research students who have been admitted for studies in any of the former research subject areas, disability science and disability science with a focus on medicine, shall as a principal rule conclude their studies in accordance with the qualification requirements applicable on 31 March 2010 under the former subject area’s general syllabus, including its transitional provisions. The head of school may however in the individual study plan decide that the research student may continue his/her studies under the new general syllabus for disability science.

Research students who have begun their studies on the programme before 1 July 2007 are hereby reminded of their right to complete, as an alternative, their studies and obtain their qualification pursuant to the earlier provisions for studies on a research study programme that were in force before the so-called Bologna reform. This right exists until, but no later than, the end of June 2015 (point 5, transitional provisions of SFS 2006:1053). See further the transitional provisions of previous general syllabuses for the subject areas in question.

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Amendments decided on by the vice-chancellor on 19 October 2010 shall take effect on 1 January 2011. These amendments are brought about by changes in the Higher Education Ordinance, but do not lead to any substantive changes in the general syllabus.

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Amendments decided on by the faculty board on 15 June 2011 shall take effect on 1 September 2011. These amendments refer to the compulsory courses.

The old qualification requirements referring to the previous foundation course of 30 credits applies:
- to research students that have passed the said foundation course of 30 credits before 1 September 2011.
- to research students that have completed the said foundation course of 30 credits but have not obtained a passing grade before 1 September 2011. These research students have the right to at least three more examination opportunities for each part of the course equally distributed during the period until 1 January 2013.

Research students that have only completed one or more modules of the previous foundation course of 30 credits shall continue their programme under the new qualification requirements. Modules that have been completed but that have been eliminated from the programme shall either be examined to generate credits or be compensated accordingly with the time spent on such modules. Decision on these matters shall be taken by the head of school.
Extract from the Qualifications ordinance, annex 2, Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)

**Outcomes for the licentiate degree**

**Knowledge and understanding**
For a 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 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 Licentiate the third-cycle student shall
– demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research,
– demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the
responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
– demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for
his or her ongoing learning.

**Outcomes for the doctoral degree**

**Knowledge and understanding**
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the third-cycle student shall
– demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced
and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and
– demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of
research in particular.

**Competence and skills**
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the third-cycle student shall
– demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well to review and assess new and
complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically,
– demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically,
autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other
qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work,
– demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of
knowledge through his or her own research,
– demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and
research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and
society in general,
– demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge, and
– demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both
through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.

**Judgement and approach**
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the third-cycle student shall
– demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments
of research ethics, and
– demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and
the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.
Admission to research studies – entry requirements and selection

1 Admission requirements – Higher Education Ordinance

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that the number of research students that may be admitted by the university may not exceed the number that can be offered supervision and otherwise acceptable conditions for study and whose studies are funded pursuant to the provisions in the Higher Education Ordinance13.

The requirements for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes are that the applicant
1. meets the general and specific entry requirements that the faculty board may have laid down, and
2. is considered in other respects to have the ability required to benefit from the course or study programme14.

2 Entry requirements

2.1 General entry requirements

A person meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes if he or she
1. has been awarded a second-cycle qualification,
2. has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second-cycle, or
3. has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

The higher education institution may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds 15.

Transitional provisions

a) A person with credits or qualifications from undergraduate programmes corresponding to the entry requirements above will also be eligible16. Exemptions from the entry requirements may be made also in these cases, if there are special grounds.

b) A person who meets the general entry requirements for research study programmes (120 credits from undergraduate programmes or corresponding knowledge17) before 1 July 2007, will also be considered to meet the general entry requirements for third-

13 Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 34
14 Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 35
15 Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 39
16 Point 10, transitional provisions for SFS 2006:1053
17 A person who has completed an undergraduate programme of at least 120 credits, or in some other way, in Sweden or abroad, has acquired substantially corresponding knowledge.
cycle courses and study programmes after that, however, until no later than the end of June 2015\textsuperscript{18}. Exemptions from this provision are not permitted.

2.2 Specific entry requirements

A person meets the specific entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes in the subject if he or she has passed courses of at least 90 credits, including an independent project on the advanced course level\textsuperscript{19}, in a main field of study of relevance to the disability science field. A person who has acquired substantially corresponding knowledge, in Sweden or abroad, also meets the specific entry requirements.

Transitional provisions

A person with credits or qualifications from undergraduate programmes corresponding to the entry requirements in the previous paragraph will also be eligible\textsuperscript{20}.

This primarily refers to passed courses of at least 60 credits, including an independent project on the advanced course level/60 credit level, in a subject of relevance to the disability science field.

2.3 Ability in other respects to benefit from the education

The assessment whether the applicant has such ability in other respects to benefit from the programme shall be made based on his/her education and other previous activities, as well as on the essays and other independent projects of a scholarly nature that have been submitted by the applicant (compare section 3 below on the assessment criteria for the selection of research students, especially concerning capability).

3 Selection from among the applicants

In selecting between applicants, their ability to benefit from the programme shall be taken into account. The higher education institution determines which assessment criteria shall be used in determining the ability to benefit from the programme.

However, the fact that an applicant is considered able to transfer credits from prior courses and study programmes or for professional or vocational experience may not alone give the applicant priority over other applicants\textsuperscript{21}.

Assessment criteria for selection\textsuperscript{22}

The criteria A - B aim at facilitating the determination of the applicant’s ability to benefit from the programme. They should therefore be relevant to the applicant’s

\textsuperscript{18} Point 11, transitional provisions for SFS 2006:1053
\textsuperscript{19} The “advanced course level” refers to the same level of in-depth studies as under the previous higher education system. With the new credit system, the advanced course level thus refers to 61-90 credits within the main field of study.
\textsuperscript{20} Point 10, transitional provisions for SFS 2006:1053
\textsuperscript{21} Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41
\textsuperscript{22} Local regulations on the selection of research students to third-cycle courses and study programmes etc.
ability to later achieve the learning outcomes of the programme. The outcomes are described in appendix 1 to this general syllabus.

A Education and other previous activities – formal qualifications

The assessment is based on submitted certificates and transcripts as well as degree certificates and/or course certificates.

Training and experience contributing to the applicant’s ability to successfully benefit from the programme applied for are considered an additional qualification.

- Education
  Special emphasis is given to the scope, depth and grades of the applicant’s training within the subject area applied for, particularly the grades on written independent projects.
  Emphasis is also given to the scope, depth and grades of training within other fields of great relevance to the field applied for.

- Other previous activities
  Special emphasis is given to long and independent professional and/or vocational experience of great relevance to the subject area applied for.

B Capability – demonstrated knowledge, competence and skills

The assessment is based on a consideration of the applicant’s submitted essays and other written independent projects of a scholarly nature, as well as a research plan. For those applicants who at this stage are considered to be most qualified, and if it is deemed necessary, references will be taken and interviews will be carried out.

It is considered an additional qualification if the applicant demonstrates such knowledge, competence and skills that contribute to his/her being successfully able to benefit from the programme applied for. These are for example
- sound theoretical, analytic and methodological knowledge;
- sound ability to discuss, in writing and in speech, issues and conclusions;
- intellectual independence; and
- sound ability to carry out advanced tasks within given time frames.

Special emphasis is given to the applicant’s ability to
- identify and formulate realistic and productive research problems;
- integrate knowledge and experience and apply these in ways and in contexts where they have not previously been used; and
- conduct a dialogue characterised by independence as well as by an ability to cooperate.

C Weighing up qualifications

The fact that an applicant is considered able to transfer credits from prior courses and study programmes or for professional or vocational experience may not alone give the applicant priority over other applicants (Chapter 7, Section 41, Higher Education Ordinance).

When weighing up the assessment criteria A and B, the greatest emphasis is placed on criteria B, Capability.
D Gender equality

If, followed from the above, applicants are found to have equal qualifications, preference will be given to applicants of the underrepresented sex among the research students within the subject area\textsuperscript{23}. Here, the underrepresented sex shall be understood to be the share of either female or male students enrolled on the subject area’s research study programme that amount to less than 40 per cent.

\textsuperscript{23} Higher Education Act (SFS 1992:1434), Chapter 1, Section 5, second paragraph; and other provisions