

General syllabus for third-cycle courses and study programmes in

STUDIES IN THE HUMANITIES

Humanistiska studier

This syllabus was approved on 5 December 2017 (ORU 5.1-05718/2017)¹. It was last amended on 21 April 2022 (reg. no. ORU 20220/02250)².

By virtue of the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 26 (1993:100), Örebro University prescribes the following.

1 Subject description

As a subject, studies in the humanities thematises cultural awareness and language practices in a humanistic, cultural and historical perspective. With an openness to different theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches, the subject specialisations are united in their common focus on questions dealing with our understanding and interpretation of the world, both as individuals and as belonging to different groups, and the values being inherent in these interpretations. Another common ground is the focus on interaction and communication within and across cultural boundaries. Within all specialisations on the programme, past, present and future-oriented perspectives are applied.

The subject has five subject specialisations:

Comparative literature

English

History

Rhetoric

Swedish language

Within history, society's temporal dimensions are problematised, highlighting change and continuity in the past. Research areas with special research competence at Örebro University include gender history, cultural history and migration history. History research at Örebro University has, together with comparative literature research, a focus on narration and narratives and their significance for human meaning-making.

¹ Faculty Board of Humanities and Social Sciences

² The English translation of this general syllabus was last amended on 11 July 2022.

Literary history, literary theory and literature didactics are all studied within the subject specialisations of comparative literature and English. At Örebro University, there is special competence within areas such as classic and contemporary fiction, cross-genre texts, as well as within theoretical perspectives such as narratology and cultural studies.

Rhetoric is based on classical theories and methods for critical analysis of persuasive action and objects such as speech, text, images and other symbolic expressions. Rhetoric research at Örebro University is conducted within areas as diverse as crisis communication, intercultural rhetoric, body language, visual rhetoric, rhetoric and gender, and rhetoric and education.

The subject specialisations of Swedish language and English thematise several aspects of various speech communities, from both a historical and contemporary perspective. At Örebro University, there is special competence within areas such as multimodality, linguistic variation in speech and writing, and literacy – the latter particularly from a subject-didactic perspective.

The emphasis on subject didactics is shared by English, history, comparative literature and Swedish language. Swedish as a school subject traditionally, and at Örebro University, encompasses the subjects of Swedish language and comparative literature.

The doctoral programme is linked to relevant research environments at the university such as Narration, Life and Meaning; Language and Rhetoric in Society; Centre for Crisis Communication; and didactic research environments.

The programme consists of components offered within the subject as a whole, as well as in-depth courses within each subject specialisation.

2 Outcomes

The intended learning outcomes for the award of the degree, the qualitative targets, are evident from [annex 1](#) to this syllabus. The different components of the third-cycle study programme shall together equip the doctoral student to meet all intended learning outcomes³. The intended learning outcomes are referred to in more detail in the degree requirements in sections 5 and 6.

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

Provisions on entry requirements and selection can be found in [annex 2](#) to this syllabus. For information on admission in other respects, see the admission regulations for Örebro University.

4 Programme organisation – general information⁴

There are two types of third-cycle, or doctoral, study programmes – one concluding with the doctoral degree (240 credits, corresponding to four years of full-time study) and one concluding with the licentiate degree (120 credits, corresponding to two years of full-time study).

³ In the Swedish higher education system, and in accordance with the terminology recommended by the Swedish Council for Higher Education, courses and study programmes at the doctoral level are referred to as *third-cycle courses and study programmes*. In this document, the terms *doctoral* and *third-cycle* are used interchangeably as prefixes to terms related to studies on the doctoral level and they should therefore be considered synonymous [translator's comment].

⁴ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 4, 5, 28 and 29 and local guidelines on the organisation of third-cycle courses and study programmes

The programmes mainly consist of courses and the writing of a doctoral or licentiate thesis. The programme components are assessed by means of course examination and the public defence of the thesis respectively. The doctoral student is expected to take an active part in seminars and other auxiliary components during their period of study. The student is further recommended to take advantage of the opportunities offered to attend guest lectures etc. at the university, and to attend and contribute to national and international conferences.

For each doctoral student, a minimum of two supervisors will be appointed, supporting the student during their studies⁵. One of them will be nominated principal supervisor. The detailed organisation of the programme shall be determined in an individual study plan.

In addition to the requirements laid down in this general syllabus, there may be special requirements for the doctoral student's programme, such as courses that are compulsory within the framework of a research school, which must be specified in the individual study plan. The credit distribution between courses/examinations and thesis should nevertheless be in accordance with the programme organisation as laid down in this general syllabus.

Credit overview

Overview of programme organisation and degree requirements	Courses/examinations, credits		Thesis, no. of credits	Total no. of credits
	Compulsory	Elective		
Doctoral degree	20	40	180	240
Licentiate degree	12.5	27.5	80	120

5 Degree requirements for the Degree of Doctor in the subject in general, 240 credits

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student must

- have received a passing grade in the examinations⁶ of the 60 credits generated by the courses listed below,
- have received a passing grade on a scholarly dissertation (doctoral thesis) corresponding to 180 credits. The thesis is to be defended orally at a public defence event⁷.

Compulsory courses, total of 20 credits

Theories and Methods in Language Studies, Rhetoric, History, and Comparative Literature, 7.5 credits

The course and examination shall refer to parts of outcomes D1, D2, D3, D4, D6, D8 and D10, annex 1.

⁵ The Higher Education Ordinance stipulation that at least two supervisors be appointed for each doctoral student does not apply to doctoral 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).

⁶ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 32

⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 5 and 33

Philosophy of Science, 7.5 credits

The course and examination shall refer to parts of outcomes D2, D3, D4 and D10, annex 1.

Research Ethics and Good Research Practice, 5 credits

The course and examination shall refer to parts of outcomes D2, D3, D4, D9 and D10, annex 1.

Elective courses, total of 40 credits

Which course/courses a doctoral student shall take is determined based on an assessment of what courses will enable them to meet the intended learning outcomes. The doctoral student plans, in consultation with the supervisor, which courses should be part of their programme. The selection is then laid down in the individual study plan.

Block I: Specialised courses within one of the subject specialisations, total of 30 credits

The courses and examinations shall refer to parts of outcomes D1, D2, D7 and D10, annex 1.

Block II: In-depth theoretical and methodological knowledge within a field relevant to the research project, 0–10 credits

The courses and examinations shall refer to parts of outcomes D2, D3, D9 and D10, annex 1.

Block III: Conducting research and education, 0–10 credits

The courses and examinations shall refer to one or several of the following outcomes D7, D8, D9 and D10, annex 1.

Block IV: Science and its conditions, 0–10 credits

The course and examination shall refer to one or several of the following outcomes D2, D3, D4, D7, D9 and D10, annex 1.

Doctoral thesis and public defence, 180 credits

At the public defence event, the assessment of the doctoral thesis and the public defence thereof shall refer to all intended learning outcomes specified for the award of the doctoral degree, see annex 1.

6 Degree requirements for the Degree of Licentiate in the subject in general, 120 credits

The licentiate degree is the degree awarded to those who have been admitted to and successfully completed a licentiate programme. Students who have been admitted to the programme concluding with the doctoral degree have the right to apply for the award of a licentiate degree, as a half-way degree⁸. The degree requirements in this section apply to the licentiate degree both as a final and as a half-way degree.

⁸ Örebro University's local regulations on qualifications

For the licentiate degree, the doctoral student must

- have received a passing grade in the examinations⁹ of the 40 credits generated by the courses listed below,
- have received a passing grade on a scholarly paper (licentiate thesis) corresponding to 80 credits¹⁰.

For courses and course blocks that are identical for the licentiate and doctoral degrees, please see outcomes and descriptions in section 5. For any other courses and course blocks, see below¹¹.

Compulsory courses, total of 12.5 credits

Theories and Methods in Language Studies, Rhetoric, History, and Comparative Literature, 7.5 credits

The course and examination shall refer to outcomes L1, L2, L3, L4, L6, L8 and L10, annex 1.

Research Ethics and Good Research Practice, 5 credits

The course and examination shall refer to parts of outcomes L2, L3, L4, L9 and L10, annex 1.

Elective courses, total of 27.5 credits

Which course/courses a doctoral student shall take is determined based on an assessment of what courses will enable them to meet the intended learning outcomes. The doctoral student plans, in consultation with the supervisor, which courses should be part of their programme. The selection is then laid down in the individual study plan.

Block I: Specialised courses within one of the subject specialisations, 20–27.5 credits

The courses and examinations shall refer to parts of outcomes L1, L2, L7 and L10, annex 1.

Block II: In-depth theoretical and methodological knowledge within a field relevant to the research project, 0–12.5 credits

The courses and examinations shall refer to outcomes L1, L2, L9 and L10, annex 1.

Block III: Science and its conditions, 0-12.5 credits

The courses and examinations shall refer to one or several of the following outcomes L2, L3, L4, L7, L9 and L10, annex 1.

Licentiate thesis

On the examination of the licentiate thesis, the assessment shall refer to all intended learning outcomes specified for the award of the licentiate degree, annex 1.

⁹ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 32

¹⁰ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 5

¹¹ Since the licentiate degree may constitute a half-way degree on the road to a doctoral degree, the courses intended for a licentiate degree should, in conformity with the courses intended for a doctoral degree, be linked to the outcomes for the doctoral degree, see further in the guidelines for general syllabuses for third-cycle courses and study programmes.

7 Further information

Further information about provisions for doctoral study programmes can be found on the university website. Documents there include the admissions regulations for Örebro University and other information on national and local regulations.

Entry-into-force and transitional provisions

This general syllabus for studies in the humanities shall come into force on 1 January 2018. As a principal rule, doctoral students admitted to any of the previous doctoral study programmes in the subjects of history, comparative literature, rhetoric, language studies and the Swedish language shall, under the previous doctoral study programmes' general syllabuses and transitional provisions, as a main rule conclude their studies in accordance with the degree requirements that applied for the student in question on 31 December 2017. The head of school may, however, make provisions in the individual study plan for the student to complete their studies in accordance with the new general syllabus for studies in the humanities.

The amendment to the general syllabus approved on 22 August 2019 shall take effect on 22 August 2019. The amendment refers to a change of wording in the subject description (section 1) as a result of an organisational change and does not constitute any changes to the degree requirements for the doctoral or the licentiate degrees.

The amendments decided by the Faculty Boards on 3, 4 and 12 September 2019, shall take effect on 1 October 2019. The decision does not entail any changes in substance.

The amendment to the general syllabus approved on 4 March 2020 shall take effect on 1 April 2020. The amendment refers to the discontinuation of the specialisation for doctoral students within the research school UVD (Educational Sciences with Emphasis on Didactics) (sections 1, 4, 6 and 8). Doctoral students already admitted to the programme shall complete their studies in accordance with the previous degree requirements. If requested by a doctoral student and if appropriate, the head of school may make provisions in the individual study plan for the student to complete their studies in accordance with the new degree requirements.

The amendment to the general syllabus approved on 21 April 2022 shall take effect on 1 May 2022. The amendment refers to an increase of the number of compulsory course credits for both the doctoral and licentiate degree, and a corresponding reduction of elective course credits. Doctoral students already admitted to the programme shall complete their studies in accordance with the previous degree requirements. If requested by a doctoral student and if appropriate, the head of school may make provisions in the individual study plan for the student to complete their studies in accordance with the new degree requirements.

Outcomes¹²

Outcomes for the DEGREE OF DOCTOR	Outcomes for the DEGREE OF LICENTIATE
For the Degree of Doctor, the third-cycle student shall	For a Degree of Licentiate, the third-cycle student shall
<i>Knowledge and understanding</i>	<i>Knowledge and understanding</i>
D1 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	L1 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.
D2 demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.	L2 (for the equivalent to D2, see L1, second part)
<i>Competence and skills</i>	<i>Competence and skills</i>
D3 demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically,	L3 (no direct equivalent to D3)
D4 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,	L4 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,
D5 demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research,	L5 (no direct equivalent to D5, refer however to L4, second part)
D6 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,	L6 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
D7 demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge, and	L7 (comp. L11)
D8 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.	L8 demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity.
<i>Judgement and approach</i>	<i>Judgement and approach</i>
D9 demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and	L9 demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research,
D10 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.	L10 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
	L11 demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning (comp. D7).

¹² Extract from the Qualifications ordinance, annex 2, Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)

Admission to doctoral studies – entry requirements

1 Admission requirements – Higher Education Ordinance

The Higher Education Ordinance stipulates that the number of doctoral 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 university 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 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 higher education institution may permit an exemption from the general entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds¹⁵.

Transitional provisions

A person with *credits or qualifications from undergraduate programmes under the previous higher education system* 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 grounds¹⁷.

2.2 Specific entry requirements

A person meets the specific entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes in the subject if they have received a passing grade on courses of at least 90 credits, including an independent project of at least 15 credits in comparative literature, English, history, rhetoric or the Swedish language, depending on the specialisation applied for. A person also meets the specific entry requirements if they have a teaching qualification with passing grades on courses of at least 90 credits in either of the school subjects English, history or Swedish, including an independent project of at least 15 credits in English, history, the Swedish language or comparative literature, depending on the specialisation applied for. A person who has acquired

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 Previous transitional provisions regarding p 11 in SFS 2006:1053 expired at the end of June 2015.

substantially corresponding knowledge, in Sweden or abroad, also meets the specific entry requirements.

Transitional provisions

A person with credits or qualifications from undergraduate programmes under the previous higher education system corresponding to the entry requirements in the previous paragraph will also be eligible¹⁸.

2.3 Ability in other respects to benefit from the course or study programme

The assessment whether the applicant has such ability in other respects to benefit from the programme shall be made based on prior courses and programmes taken by the applicant, on 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 assessment criteria in accordance with the university's regulations on the selection of doctoral students below).

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 applicants¹⁹.

Assessment criteria for selection²⁰

The criteria A - B aim at facilitating an examination of the applicant's ability to benefit from the programme. They should therefore be relevant to the applicant's ability to later achieve the learning outcomes of the programme. The outcomes are described in annex 1 to this general syllabus.

A Courses, study programmes and other previous activities – formal qualifications

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

Completed courses and study programmes and experience contributing to the applicant's ability to successfully benefit from the programme applied for are considered an additional qualification.

- Courses and study programmes

Special emphasis is given to the scope, depth and grades of the applicant's prior courses and study programmes within the subject area applied for, particularly the grades on written independent projects.

¹⁸ Point 10, transitional provisions for SFS 2006:1053

¹⁹ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41

²⁰ Local regulations on the selection of doctoral students to third-cycle courses and study programmes etc.

Emphasis is also given to the scope, depth and grades of prior courses and study programmes within other fields of great relevance to the subject area 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 on 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 their 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 (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41).

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 sex that is underrepresented among the doctoral students within the subject area²¹. The underrepresented sex here refers to if and when the share of either female or male students enrolled on the subject area's third-cycle study programme amounts to less than 40 per cent.

²¹ Higher Education Act (SFS 1992:1434), Chapter 1, Section 5, second paragraph and other provisions