Admission regulations for third-cycle programmes/courses at KTH

Internal regulation no. 3/01
Valid from 07/06/2001
Amended from 03/12/2008

Established by the University Board on 03/12/2008

This internal regulation is based on:

- The Higher Education Ordinance (SFS) - Swedish Code of Statutes 1993:100)
- Ordinance (SFS 2002:139) on amendments to the Higher Education Ordinance
- Decision of the University Board of 07/06/2001, section 3.3
- KTH rules of procedure, section 5.5.4
- President’s decision no. 505/95, reg. no. 930-920-95 Dossier 60
- President’s decision no. 420/98, reg. no. 930-629-98 Dossier 60
- President’s decision no. 431/00, reg. no. 930-738-00, Dossier 60
- University Board decision of 27/08/2004
- President’s decision no. 1082/2004 “Deans of Faculty and Deputy Deans of Faculty of KTH’s nine Schools and their tasks relating to the organisation of the Schools”, reg. no. 930-2004-2896, dossier 13
- President’s decision no. 361/2005 “KTH rules of procedure”, reg. no. 930-2005-0480, Dossier 10 University Board decision of 08/06/2006
- University Board decision of 08/06/2006

Background

In accordance with the Chapter 6, paragraph 3 of the Higher Education Ordinance, KTH is obliged to draw up admission regulations. Admission regulations means rules on third-cycle courses to be applied by KTH with regard to applications, entry requirements and selection and also with regard to how decisions on admissions are made. The Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, paragraphs 34 - 41 contains overall provisions on access to third-cycle studies.

The University Board has decided

to adopt the admission regulations for third-cycle courses at KTH set out below.

Entry requirements
In order to be accepted for a third-cycle course, the applicant is required to meet the general entry requirements and any requirements that may have been prescribed by the Faculty Council for each individual third-cycle subject. The applicant must also possess such other abilities as may be required in order to benefit from the course.

General entry requirements

In accordance with the Chapter 7, paragraph 39 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the general entry requirements are met by those who have

1. passed second-cycle studies,
2. fulfilled course requirements corresponding to at least 240 credits, of which a minimum of 60 credits are for second-cycle studies, or
3. otherwise acquired largely equivalent knowledge either in or outside Sweden.

The Faculty Council may grant an individual applicant an exemption from the general entry requirements if there is a special reason to do so.

Special entry requirements

Special entry requirements imposed must be fully necessary to ensure that the student is able to benefit from the course. Requirements may relate to

1. knowledge from higher education or equivalent studies,
2. special professional or vocational experience, and
3. necessary language skills or other conditions determined by the course.

Special entry requirements at KTH means the requirement for preliminary knowledge of specific significance for the third-cycle subject in question. Special entry requirements may include the first-cycle and second-cycle studies necessary within a certain subject and at a certain level/scope in order to carry on third-cycle studies. In addition, a requirement may be imposed that students should have the necessary skills in English to enable them to cope with obligatory literature in the English language and draft and, if necessary, defend a dissertation in English. Requirements regarding skills in the Swedish language may also be imposed.

In subjects where such forms a natural part of the subject, the general study plan may set out the basic courses outside the technology sector that are to constitute both general and special entry requirements.

Foreign Higher Education studies

When assessing entry requirements for applicants with foreign higher education studies, in most cases the studies which meet the general entry requirements for third-cycle studies in the country where they are issued will also meet the general entry requirements for third-cycle studies at KTH. In cases where the nature of the teaching differs substantially from teaching in Sweden or in the event of uncertainty as to the quality of the teaching involved the studies, an opinion must be obtained from the Swedish Council for Higher Education (Universitets- och
högskolerådet, UHR). Knowledge of such details as the university or college where the applicant passed the first-cycle examination is extremely valuable for assessing equivalence.

**Assessing entry requirements**

All assessments of entry requirements and suitability are carried out within each School by the Director of Doctoral studies in consultation with the Dean. Equivalence or exemption is also assessed, as appropriate, by the Director of Doctoral studies. In all assessments, teachers who may act as supervisors within the intended specialist studies must be consulted. The proposed main supervisor must express an opinion on the applicant’s eligibility and suitability. The decision on entry requirements is made by the Director of Doctoral studies in all cases.

**Assessment of equivalence**

Assessment of equivalence means the assessment made to decide whether an applicant's knowledge – acquired in another system – is equivalent to the basic higher education studies that are normally required for the third-cycle subject in question. The assessment of equivalence is made by the Director of Doctoral studies in consultation with the Dean.

The assessment must include a judgement on whether the applicant achieved the necessary breadth and detail in his or her studies to allow the studies to form a basis for third-cycle studies. It should be possible to limit the assessment of equivalence to knowledge of substantial significance in relation to the specialisation of the intended third-cycle studies without disregarding the requirement for breadth and detail of the studies.

As stated above, the evaluation of foreign post-secondary courses may occasionally involve particular difficulties. In such cases, it is recommended that an opinion be obtained from the Swedish Council for Higher Education (Universitets- och högskolerådet, UHR).

**Exemption from the general entry requirements**

An exemption from the general entry requirements may be granted to an applicant who has not completed a full course of studies corresponding to over 240 credits but who has already completed second-level courses corresponding to a minimum of 60 credits as well as independent degree project linked to the intended course of study. Decisions on exemptions are made by the Director of Doctoral studies.

**Assessment of suitability**

requirements. Only applicants who are judged to be suitable to carry on third-cycle studies will be accepted for third-cycle studies. It is primarily the applicant's maturity, judgement and capacity for independent critical analysis that is to be assessed.

In the case of applicants with final grades from a Swedish university of technology, particular consideration should be attached to examination work and to the average grade (if the grade is graduated) in subjects that are of significance for the intended third-cycle subject.
Selection

In accordance with Chapter 7, paragraph 41 of the Higher Education Ordinance, students will be selected from among the applicants that fulfil the requirements for acceptance for third-cycle studies in relation to their ability to benefit from the studies.

The Faculty Council decides what grounds for assessment are to apply to the assessment of the ability to benefit from the studies.

Nevertheless, the mere circumstance that an applicant is considered able to have previous studies or professional activities credited towards the course of study may not mean that the applicant in question is given precedence over other applicants during the selection process.

Students must be selected from among the applicants that meet the general entry requirements. The applicant’s degree of maturity, capacity for independent judgement and critical analysis form important aspects of the assessment. The results of studies on second-cycle courses or in the form of independent work are of particular interest in this context.

Selection criteria, i.e. the specific requirements that a person must meet in order to carry out particular work as a doctoral student, are formulated when vacant study places on a third-cycle course are announced. Such an announcement must state the specific requirements to be fulfilled for acceptance as a doctoral student. The requirements must be formulated, for example, in terms of knowledge gained in first-cycle and second-cycle studies involving certain specific specialist subjects.

The selection is made by the Dean in consultation with the intended main supervisor during admission. In order to obtain comprehensive supporting data for a decision, the applicants should be interviewed and/or contact should be made with teachers on the applicants’ previous courses of study.

Admission

Applications for entry to third-cycle studies must be submitted within the time and in accordance with the procedure established by the higher education institution (Chapter 7, paragraphs 37 and 38 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

Admissions and selection are common to all applicants. Third-cycle studies can lead to two qualifications, a licentiate degree or a doctorate. Those accepted for studies for a doctorate may take a licentiate degree as a stage in their studies. Students accepted for third-cycle studies for a licentiate degree who subsequently wish to go on to studies for a doctorate must submit a new application.

Before a decision on acceptance is made, a well-founded discussion must be held with the prospective doctoral student to clearly establish his or her final objective (licentiate degree or doctorate) in his or her studies. The qualitative target will be completely decisive for
determining whether the doctoral student is accepted for a licentiate degree or a doctorate. It is extremely important to avoid creating a two-stage model in which doctoral students are regularly accepted for studies for a licentiate degree first and may then be permitted to go on to studies for a doctorate. Acceptance for a licentiate degree must therefore not be motivated by any limitation in the financial commitment for a School or a main supervisor.

At a School, only the number of doctoral students for which the school has supervision resources, acceptable study conditions in general and study finance for the entire study period may be accepted.

The requirement for study finance for the entire study period means that the School must assess whether it is possible to finance the doctoral student through a doctoral studentship or a doctoral grant. In addition, if resources for supervision and acceptable study conditions otherwise exist, the School may accept doctoral students who have other forms of study finance, e.g. stipends or professional activities that may be combined with third-cycle studies. When assessing "other study finance" the School is responsible for ensuring that the assessment is based on satisfactory supporting data. A student may be accepted if the School finds that study finance can be guaranteed throughout the study period and that the studies can be completed within four years in the case of a licentiate degree and eight years in the case of a doctorate.

If the financial basis for the study finance alters or ceases during the study period, the School is responsible for ensuring that systems for continued study finance are put in place. In cases in which doctoral students have so-called “other finance”, that responsibility is shared between the doctoral student and the School.

No requirement that the applicant must have obtained finance for the entire study period can be imposed, however an applicant’s "own" finance, e.g. a stipendium granted, may be included as part of the study finance.

In accordance with Chapter 7, paragraph 37 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a higher education institution which is considering accepting one or more doctoral students through an announcement or similar procedure must issue information on such matters. Nevertheless, no information need be provided

1. acceptance of a doctoral student who is to carry out a course of study within the framework of employment by an employer other than the university
2. in the case of acceptance of a doctoral student who has previously begun his or her third-cycle course of study at another university
3. if similar special reasons exist

Applications for admission to third-cycle studies must be submitted on a specific form to the School in question. Certified copies of certificates of academic courses taken and other documents that the applicant wishes to cite must be attached to the application. If the applicant has obtained his or her "own finance" for the whole period of study, the supporting data required for assessing the study finance must be attached.
**The Dean admits for third-cycle studies**

As a basis for his decision on admission, in addition to the applicant's documents, the Dean must be provided with supporting data that clearly indicates that the necessary resources exist and when a decision on eligibility by the Director of Doctoral studies is required. If the applicant is not considered eligible, a reasonably detailed reason must be given in the decision. The documents must clearly state such matters as the supervisory capacity in the intended third-cycle subject, access to a workplace, equipment and what is required in general for the performance of the studies and study finance throughout the period of study.

**Credit transfer**

Decisions on any credit transfers from previous courses of study are made by the main supervisor/examiner during admission. In accordance with Chapter 6, paragraph 32 of the Higher Education Ordinance, tests included in a third-cycle course of study should be assessed according to the grading system established by the higher education institution. The grade must be determined by a teacher appointed by the higher education institution (an examiner), see KTH Regulations, Examiners at KTH

[link](intra.kth.se/en/regelverk/utbildning-forskning/grundutbildning/prestationer/examinator-pa-kth-1.27199)

Courses for which transfers of credits may be granted must be relevant to the course of study in question and may not form general and special entry requirements.

The regulations contained in the KTH system of qualifications for third-cycle qualifications must be observed in the transfer of credits. In the case of a doctorate, a minimum of 60% of the total course component must be at third-cycle level and in the case of a licentiate degree; a minimum of 50% of the total course component must be at third-cycle level. Furthermore, in accordance with the system of qualifications, first-cycle courses in the area of technology may not be credited towards doctorates and licentiate degrees.

**The School informs the applicant of its decision**

The School sends the application form, endorsed with the decision-proof of admission, to university administration (UF), the department of Student records and information systems. The decision by the Director of Doctoral studies on eligibility is attached if the admitted applicant has undergone foreign higher education studies. The department of Student records and information systems sends a copy of the application form, endorsed with the admission decision, to the Student affairs’ office of the relevant School.

An individual study plan must be drawn up when a student is admitted. A finance plan relating to study finance for the entire period of study must be attached to the individual study plan.
For acceptance by a School

The Dean at the relevant KTH School accepts the doctoral student. Joint selections are carried out by an admissions committee in consultation with a subject representative and the Dean of the relevant KTH School.

Template and forms

Application for third cycle programme

For information on the entry into force of transitional provisions, SFS 2006:1053

Local regulations for third-cycle qualifications

Questions are answered by

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