Supervisors and supervision of doctoral students

Internal regulation no. 10/95
Valid from 21/08/1995
Amended from 09/12/2008

This internal regulation is based on:

- The Higher Education Ordinance (SFS; Swedish Code of Statutes 1993:100)
- President’s decision 930-38-95, dossier 60
- President’s decision 930-743-97, dossier 60
- President's decision no. 431/00, reg. no. 930-738-00, dossier 60
- President's decision no. 8/01, reg. no. 930-1398-00, dossier 60
- President’s decision no. 361/2005, “KTH rules of procedure” reg. no. 930-2005-0480, dossier 10
- President’s decision no. 396/2005, reg. no. 930-2005-0553, dossier 60
- President’s decision no. UF-0449-07, reg. no. V-2007-0625, dossier 60
- President’s decision no. UF 314-08, dossier 60
- President's decision no. UF-2013/0382, V-2012-0908

The Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 6, section 28 states:
For each doctoral student must be appointed a minimum of two supervisors. One of them must be the main supervisor. A doctoral student has a right to supervision during the course of study, unless the President with the support of section 30 decides otherwise. A doctoral student who so requests may change supervisor." (SFS 2010:1064)

The President has resolved that

the following should apply at KTH for supervisors and supervision of doctoral students in addition to the provisions of the Higher Education Ordinance.

Competence requirements for supervisors

Professors, guest professors or adjunct professors employed at KTH may be appointed as main supervisors. Adjunct professors should also be docent at KTH. Other persons who are docent and who are permanently employed at KTH may also be appointed as main supervisors. The employment at KTH must be at least 20% of full time.

The main supervisor and other supervisors are appointed by the director of doctoral studies.

Another person may also be appointed as a main supervisor if particular reasons for such exist. Decisions on these matters are made by the director of doctoral studies in consultation with the Dean of School. The decision applies until further notice.
A person who holds at least a doctorate or has equivalent competence may be appointed as the other (assistant) supervisor.

At least one of the doctoral student’s supervisors must have undergone KTH’s supervisor training or have equivalent competence.

If the main supervisor ceases to be employed at KTH, he or she must leave his or her post as main supervisor but may instead be appointed as an assistant supervisor. Only if there are particular reasons for such may a supervisor who has ceased to be employed at KTH remain as a main supervisor. Such particular reasons may exist, for example, if the main supervisor has extensive contact with KTH and the doctoral student has a short time remaining to his or her examination. Decisions on these matters are made by the director of doctoral studies in consultation with the doctoral student and the Dean of School.

Acceptable supervisor competence and study finance must be guaranteed during the doctoral student’s full period of study. Any transfer of supervisor must be established in the individual study plan.

**Supervisors’ functions and duties**

The supervisor is responsible for supervision of the doctoral student and for ensuring that course studies and dissertation work on the student’s thesis proceeds at an appropriate rate. The supervisor must, together with the doctoral student, draw up an individual study plan and update it at least once a year. That study plan is approved by the director of doctoral studies. Furthermore, the main supervisor must propose to the director of doctoral studies a reviewer at the licentiate seminar, an examiner and a Grading Board at the public hearing of the dissertation. Other supervisors may be appointed to assist the main supervisor throughout the period of study.

As a guideline, a full-time doctoral student has a right to supervision for four years. Part-time students have a right to supervision to a proportional extent.

If supervision cannot be offered to a normal extent, that should entitle the student to an extension of the study period.

**Tests and credit transfer in third-cycle courses**

In accordance with Chapter 6, paragraph 32 of the Higher Education Ordinance, tests included in a third-cycle course of study is to be assessed according to the grading system decided by the higher education institution. The grade must be determined by a teacher appointed by the higher education institution (an examiner).

Existing categories of teacher are defined in the employment regulations at KTH (länk till anställningsordningen =...
An examiner must decide on credits of approved parts from first-cycle or second-cycle studies, third-cycle studies at another higher education department or from a foreign seat of learning. If a person other than the main supervisor is the examiner, the main supervisor must be consulted.

The grade – pass or fail – of a licentiate thesis is given by the examiner. If a person other than the main supervisor is the examiner, the main supervisor must be consulted.

For further information on examiners at KTH, see

Examiners at KTH

Change of supervisor

Requests for a change of supervisor must be submitted in writing to the director of doctoral studies. If the director of doctoral studies is the supervisor, the request must be submitted to the Dean of School. The reason for requesting the change must be stated in the request.