

Standing orders for postgraduate studies

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The degree of Doctor of Laws

Doctoral students must complete the postgraduate studies as laid down by the Faculty, compile a doctoral dissertation and defend it in a public examination. According to the general guidelines on third-cycle degrees at the University of Helsinki, a doctoral degree must include a doctoral dissertation and related research as well as 60 credits of postgraduate studies. The studies included in the doctoral degree support the completion of the dissertation and related research, familiarise the doctoral student with the principles and methods of scientific and legal research as well as relevant problems, expand and enhance the knowledge and skills provided at the Master's level, and provide the necessary skills for a career in research and other demanding expert positions.

Besides research-related studies, the doctoral degree can include studies in methodology, ethics and the philosophy of science, as well as activities in the international scientific community. The doctoral degree also includes courses preparing students for various expert positions, such as leadership, university pedagogy, scientific communication and project work courses. Therefore, the degree may include activities that support the completion of the dissertation and prepare the student for both research positions and other demanding expert positions.

Learning outcomes and set objectives for study progress for the Doctor of Laws degree approved by the Faculty Council.

The degree of Licentiate of Laws (research)

Students working towards the degree of Doctor of Laws may complete the Licentiate degree either as an intermediate degree towards the doctoral degree or as an independent third-cycle research degree. The general guidelines on third-cycle degrees at the University of Helsinki state that apart from the dissertation, the study requirements for the Licentiate degree and doctoral degree are identical.

Studies leading to third-cycle research degrees at the Faculty of Law - the structure

The Faculty Council has approved the learning outcomes and set objectives for study progress for doctoral degrees and the doctoral programme as well as the degree structure of the doctoral programme on 27 January 2015, and the new degree programme has taken effect on 1 August 2015. All doctoral students at the Faculty will complete their degrees in accordance with the new degree programme.

The new degree structure (pdf-file) and contents of the doctoral programme (pdf-file), valid from 1.8.2015 onwards:

General studies (16 cr)

- Orientation
- Jurisprudence I & II (à 4 cr, total 8 cr)
- Seminars in Legal Theory I & II (à 4 cr, total 8 cr)

Major subject studies (24 cr)

- Field-specific studies I (6 cr)
- Field-specific studies II (14 cr)
- Research seminar (4 cr)

Academic and professional skills studies (20 cr)

- Research skills (4 cr)
- I) Introduction to research skills
- II) Research methods
- Academic and professional skills courses (16 cr)

Licentiate thesis (LL.Lic. degree) or
Doctoral dissertation (LL.D. degree)

Contents of the programme

General studies (16 cr)

Teacher in charge for General studies is Professor of Legal Theory Panu Minkkinen, except for Orientation the responsible organisation is the Steering group of the doctoral programme.

- Orientation

Learning outcomes:

You will familiarise yourself with the Doctoral Programme in Law, the Faculty of Law as a scientific community, and other first-year doctoral students.

Method of completion:

Participation in an orientation session at the beginning of studies.

- Jurisprudence I & II, 2 x 4 cr

Learning outcomes:

You will familiarise yourself with key problems in legal thought, theories of law and the history of legal concepts and thought. You will understand law in the context of culture and society, familiarise yourself with the key prerequisites for social justice, broaden your understanding of legal thinking, as well as acknowledge the opportunities provided by legal studies and cross-disciplinary research. In addition, you will be able to evaluate law and legal research knowledge critically and analytically, as well as to write an essay on general, societal and scientific questions in the field.

Method of completion:

The module is divided into two components of four credits each. It can be completed by participating in two courses, during which students will write their essays of 3,000 words each. Alternatively, students may write two essays without participating in teaching. In this case, the recommended length for one essay is 5,000 words. Different completion methods can also be combined. The essays should contain independent research and be of dissertation-level quality.

- Seminar in legal theory I & II, 2 x 4 cr

Learning outcomes:

You will understand the basics of legal-theoretical argumentation, know how to give a theory-oriented presentation, as well as evaluate law and jurisprudence critically and analytically from a theoretical standpoint.

Method of completion:

The module is completed by participating in two doctoral seminars of four credits each. Students are expected to participate actively in the seminar, to give a presentation and to complete the required assignments.

Major subject studies (24 cr)

Responsible organisation: Dissertation supervisor or discipline coordinator

- Field-specific studies I, 6 cr

Learning outcomes:

You will familiarise yourself with the key literature in your major subject and the development of your field, as well as know how to write an essay on research in the field of your major subject.

Method of completion:

The module is completed by writing an essay based on key scientific literature in the student's major subject. Alternatively, the course may be completed by successfully submitting an article to a scientific journal. The recommended length for the essay or article is 7,000 words.

- Field-specific studies II, 14 cr

Learning outcomes:

You will familiarise yourself in depth with research in your field and will be able to participate in scientific discussion accordingly. You will know how to combine prior knowledge with new information gained from your research and to familiarise yourself with related fields of study. You will be able to give a presentation at a scientific conference, understand conference procedures, as well as acknowledge the scientific and

societal impact of your research. Your experience in writing a monograph will enable you to publish an article in a scientific journal. In addition, you will be able to provide teaching based on your research, as well as work, communicate and interact in an international academic community.

Method of completion:

The module is completed by either attending courses organised by the major subject, other courses relevant to the field of research, or postgraduate study seminars or courses; by giving a presentation based on the research in a scientific conference, publishing an article based on the research in a scientific journal, providing teaching based on the research and/or other methods that support the dissertation project and related research in terms of their content (different methods may be combined as agreed). The workload of an individual course or assignment is calculated in hours so that 26.7 hours equal one credit.

- *Research seminar, 4 cr*

Learning outcomes:

You will know how to give an oral presentation about your research as well as evaluate other students' research critically and analytically in a seminar setting. You will familiarise yourself with scientific discussion and be able to discuss new theories and research results in your field, as well as participate in academic discourse as an expert.

Method of completion:

The module is completed by participating in a research seminar. In the seminars, doctoral students engage in scientific discussion on both their own research and visiting experts' presentations. Students are expected to present their research, act as opponent for a fellow student and participate at least for twenty hours of research seminar sessions. Research seminars are organised by disciplines or discipline groups and they are open to all students accepted to the doctoral programme. Students may therefore also complete the module by participating in research seminars organised by disciplines other than their major subject. Participation in seminars may be restricted by the discipline if the nature of the event so requires.

Academic and Professional Skills Studies (20 cr)

Responsible organisation for Research skills -study unit is the Discipline coordinator of legal theory and for Academic and professional skills courses the Steering group of the doctoral programme.

- *Research skills, 4 cr*

Learning outcomes:

You will know how to search for research information, master the principles of academic writing, familiarise yourself with research ethics and the criteria for scientific information, master relevant research methods and know how to apply them to your research.

Method of completion:

The module includes two components, an introduction and a seminar:

I) Introduction to research skills, 1 cr

The first part is completed by attending an introductory lecture on information seeking, scientific writing, research ethics and legal research methods.

II) Research methods, 3 cr

The second part is completed by attending a seminar on research methods and methodology. Students are expected to participate actively in the seminar, to complete any assignments and to write a methodological essay of approximately 3,000 words on a topic related to their dissertations.

- Academic and professional skills courses, 16 cr

Learning outcomes:

You develop your research skills and are able to evaluate information sources and research knowledge independently. You familiarise yourself with university pedagogy and are able to develop your legal expertise independently. You also master the necessary ICT skills and are able to communicate legal issues and topics pertaining to your field of research to the scientific community and the general public. In addition, you possess the necessary skills and capabilities for scientific research and demanding expert and management positions which require scientific know-how.

Method of completion:

The module is completed by attending courses that focus on academic and professional skills, such as academic writing, research ethics, university pedagogy, research methods, argumentation and interaction skills, the acquisition of research funding, research management, career skills, scientific communication as well as other academic and professional skills that support the dissertation process and foster expertise. The courses are organised by the Doctoral Programme in Law, other doctoral programmes, the Doctoral School in Humanities and the Social Sciences, the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, and the University of Helsinki. The workload of an individual course or assignment is calculated in hours so that 26.7 hours equal one credit.

Licentiate thesis (The degree of Licentiate of Laws)

The basic format for a research-based Licentiate thesis continues to be the monograph. Its recommended length is approximately 100–150 pages (A4, 12 pt Times New Roman or equivalent, line spacing at 1.5, bind margin at 3 cm and other margins at 2.5 cm).

Article-based Licentiate theses should be a collection of several separate scientific publications or manuscripts that have been accepted for publication and that focus on the same topic. In addition, the thesis must include a summarising section presenting the background, objectives, methods, materials and results of the research as well as a discussion and conclusion section. This section should be a balanced whole, drafted on the basis of both relevant literature and the publications included in the Licentiate thesis. The recommended length for the summarising section is 30–50 pages. It is recommended that the articles be published in refereed publications if possible. Co-authored publications may be included if the author's independent contribution to them can be clearly demonstrated. When submitting the thesis for the preliminary examination, the author must provide a written report stating his or her contribution to the co-authored publications. A Licentiate thesis consisting of several studies of a smaller scope must be comparable to a monograph in terms of quality and other criteria.

Before a Licentiate thesis can be graded, the author must defend it at the research seminar of his or her major subject.

Doctoral dissertation (The degree of Doctor of Laws)

A doctoral dissertation consists of peer-reviewed scientific publications or manuscripts accepted for publication and a summarising section (an article-based dissertation), or it should be a single, previously unpublished research-based scientific text attributed solely to the doctoral student (a monograph).

Before the dissertation can be graded, the author must defend it in a public examination.

The dissertation should begin with a short abstract of one to two pages containing an outline of the dissertation and its key results. The abstract should contain the objectives or research questions, key methods and results of the dissertation as well as any conclusions thus made.

Previously published works cannot be accepted as monographs. However, students working on monographs may publish articles on the topic of their dissertation before the completion of the monograph and refer to these publications in the dissertation proper. As a rule, the maximum length of a monograph is 250 pages. The supervisors of monographs and other dissertations containing non-peer-reviewed results must verify the quality of the manuscript with particular care before the preliminary examination.

Article-based dissertations consist of scientific publications on the same topic and a summarising section written by the doctoral student. The summarising section should present the background, objectives, methods, materials and results of the research as well as a discussion and concluding section. This section should be a balanced whole, drafted on the basis of both relevant literature and the publications included in the dissertation. The recommended length for the summarising section is 70–100 pages. Article-based dissertations generally include three to five peer-reviewed scientific articles. Articles not yet accepted for publication may also be included in the dissertation. The number of articles required depends on their 1) scope, 2) scientific significance and quality, 3) publication forum, and 4) the author's independent contribution. An article-based doctoral dissertation must be comparable to a scientific monograph in terms of quality and other criteria.

In an article-based dissertation, the term "scientific article" refers to an original article in a scientific publication. Article-based dissertations must include a sufficient number of peer-reviewed original articles. As a rule, manuscripts not yet accepted for publication should not constitute a significant part of the content of the dissertation.

An article-based dissertation can also include co-authored publications. The doctoral candidate's input into these must be clearly demonstrable. The same publication may be included in several students' dissertations. To determine the doctoral student's contribution to co-authored publications, the student and supervisor must draft a report on the student's contribution to each co-authored publication. If a co-authored publication has also been used in another dissertation, this must be mentioned in the report. It is recommended that the doctoral candidate submit the report draft to the other authors of the publication as well. The doctoral candidate must submit the report to the Faculty when submitting the dissertation for preliminary examination, as well as later to the preliminary examiners, opponent and custos. The report may also be included in the summarising section of the dissertation or of an article.

Studies leading to the degree of Doctor of Laws following the completion of a Licentiate degree (research) according to the degree requirements in force prior to 1 August 2008

Most of the required studies leading to the degree of Doctor of Laws will already be completed in the Licentiate degree (research). Apart from the studies included in the Licentiate of Laws degree the following studies need to be completed in the Doctor of Laws degree (total 20 credits):

General studies 8 cr:

- Seminars in Legal Theory I & II (à 4 cr, total 8 cr)

Major subject studies 4 cr:

- Research seminar (4 cr)

Academic and professional skills studies 8 cr:

- Academic and professional skills courses (8 cr)

Doctoral dissertation

Content of the studies, see above Degree structure and contents of the doctoral programme.

Before the dissertation can be graded, the author must defend it in a public examination.

Doctoral programme reform 2015: provisions for the transition period and the equivalencies of study modules

The reformed degree structure for doctoral degrees at the Faculty of Law has entered into force on 1 August 2015. All students pursuing third-cycle research degrees at the Faculty will complete their degrees in accordance with the new degree structure.

As a rule, any credits completed in accordance with the previous degree requirements are included in the degree in full. The equivalencies and substitution options for previous credits in the new degree structure are to be implemented in a way that most benefits the student.

If necessary, students may agree with their supervisors on the optimal procedure for completing or substituting study units in Major subject studies module.

General studies (16 cr):

Orientation

Compulsory for new doctoral students; not required of postgraduate students who began their studies before 2015.

Jurisprudence I & II (2 x 4 cr)

Previously completed courses in the theory of science may be substituted for this course. Two study modules of four credits are required to substitute for the courses Jurisprudence I & II in the new degree structure.

If you have completed more than eight credits in the theory of science module (total scope 12 cr, i.e., 3 x 4 cr) in accordance with the old degree structure, the "extra" credits are included in the Academic and professional skills studies module.

NB! If you have completed parts of the theory of science module that are not visible in the Student Register, please contact doctoral student in jurisprudence Paul Tiensuu by email to request that these studies be entered in the Student Register. Old, partially completed studies are not registered automatically!

If you wish, you can also substitute this module with a previously completed course in Legal research methods (4 cr).

Seminar in legal theory I & II (2 x 4 cr)

The course requirements and scope remain the same.

Field-specific studies (24 cr):

Field-specific studies I (6 cr)

This study module can be substituted by a previously completed cum laude approbatur module (10 cr) in the major subject.

You can agree with your supervisor to use the "extra" 4 cr of the cum laude approbatur module in the new degree structure to partially substitute for the Field-specific studies II course or the Research seminar, if you have not yet completed the equivalent courses as per the new degree structure (a laudatur module in the major subject and studies included in the module "Other activities in accordance with the Personal Study Plan"). The extra 4 cr of cum laude approbatur studies can be included in the Academic and professional skills courses module, if necessary.

Field-specific studies II (14 cr)

This study module can be substituted by a previously completed laudatur module (14 cr) in the major subject.

Research seminar (4 cr)

This study module can be substituted by a previously completed "Other activities in accordance with the Personal Study Plan" module (4 cr) in the specialised part of the degree.

To have the appropriate scope, incomplete modules must be supplemented by participating in research seminar sessions, taking into consideration the required number of presentations.

Academic and professional skills studies (20 cr):

Research skills (4 cr)

This study module can be substituted by a previously completed Legal research methods course (4 cr).

Academic and professional skills courses (16 cr)

This study module can be partially substituted by a previously completed "Other activities in accordance with the Personal Study Plan" module in the general part of the degree.

Monitoring postgraduate study progress and registering for active doctoral study

The University of Helsinki monitors the progress of postgraduate students. In the monitoring procedure, enrolled postgraduate students who have not yet completed their degree after six years of having been granted the right to study will be screened from the Student Register. The screened students cannot register as attending students for the following academic year without presenting a study and research plan approved by the Faculty. For more specific instructions, see the Faculty website.

As of academic year 2015–2016, every doctoral student registered as an attending student must report how actively they plan to pursue their degree during the coming academic year, as well as how active they were the year before, when they register for the academic year. This practice applies to both new doctoral students and doctoral students whose right to study was granted before 2015. The reporting of the full-time or part-time status of doctoral students is based on vice-rector's decision 1/2015.

The activity of doctoral studies, i.e., either full-time or part-time status, is determined jointly by the doctoral student and the supervisor. As this determination should be based on the joint assessment of the supervisor and supervisee, the doctoral student must contact his or her supervisor well in advance of registering for the academic year. The doctoral student must sign a statement that he or she has discussed the assessment with his or her supervisor when completing the registration. More information, see UH's website.

As of spring 2016, the Doctoral programme in law will monitor the study progress of its doctoral students. The plan is to combine the monitoring with the annual reporting of the activity of doctoral study required by the University. Doctoral students are required to discuss their study progress and status with their supervisors in connection with the reporting. The monitoring and subsequent supervision aim to support and enhance the dissertation process, related research and postgraduate studies in accordance with the student's personal study plan and the yearly objectives of the doctoral programme. Thus, the monitoring also supports supervision.

Annual Review 2016 -report (e-form) should be made by June 15 2016 at the latest. Reporting is obligatory.

The supervisor will monitor the supervisee's progress regularly throughout the research project, providing support and guidance. In addition to monitoring by the supervisor, the steering committee of the doctoral programme will function as a general monitoring group for doctoral students. In cases of supervision-related problems, the supervisor and supervisee should strive to reach a solution together. The head of the Doctoral programme may be consulted when necessary.

The doctoral student's monitoring group convenes when necessary and consists of the head of the Doctoral programme in law or another steering committee member with a doctoral degree, the supervisor and the discipline coordinator of the major subject or a neighbouring subject or another person invited to participate when necessary. The monitoring group will convene at the invitation of the steering committee of the Doctoral programme if deemed necessary on the basis of the monitoring of the doctoral student's progress. The monitoring group may also convene when necessary at the request of the supervisor or the doctoral student.

Studying abroad and international connections

It is recommended that every postgraduate student spend at least a few months abroad. The studies abroad can include independent research and non-degree studies, courses, a diploma or a degree. When conducting independent research the student should also strive to participate in the activities of the local research community. Research seminar activities, such as presentations required of postgraduate students, can be completed abroad as well.

Gaining and maintaining international connections is important also when studying in Finland. Supervisors and disciplines should help and encourage young researchers to participate in international seminars and conferences in their respective fields and publish their work in international journals or other media.

The Faculty of Law launched a mobility programme for doctoral students in 2015 in collaboration with the League of European Research Universities (LERU). The programme enables the Faculty to appoint its doctoral students as candidates for a mobility period of up to four weeks at LERU partner universities.

The chancellor's travel grant aims to support doctoral students' international research visits. All doctoral students enrolled in doctoral programmes at the University of Helsinki are eligible to apply for the grants. Funding is available for a scientific visit abroad that supports the doctoral student's dissertation process and doctoral studies at the University of Helsinki.

In addition, doctoral students in the Doctoral programme in law may apply for travel grants for conferences, seminars, courses or research visits in Finland through a special application procedure. These grants cover reasonable travel expenses.

Scales and grades for the assessment of completed studies

At the University of Helsinki, completed studies are graded on the following scale of 0–5: 5 (excellent), 4 (very good), 3 (good), 2 (satisfactory), 1 (passable) and 0 (fail). In addition, courses may be graded on a scale of pass–fail. As a rule, postgraduate studies at the Faculty are graded on a scale of pass–fail.

The new Regulations on Degrees and the Protection of Students' Rights at the University of Helsinki were approved 21 April 2015. As of 1 January 2016, doctoral dissertations and Licentiate theses are graded on a scale of Pass with Distinction, Pass, and Fail, as provided in section 38 of the amended Regulations.

Both the title and grade of the doctoral dissertation/Licentiate thesis will be specified in the diploma.

Recognition of completed studies

Studies completed abroad will be incorporated into the degree as fully as possible. Students leaving to pursue studies abroad should discuss the recognition of the planned studies with their supervisor(s) or discipline coordinator before commencing the studies.

In the case of study units included in the field-specific part of a postgraduate degree, the discipline coordinator or the supervisor, if he or she is the professor of the discipline, decides whether these courses can be substituted by studies completed elsewhere.

The decision on the substitution of the courses “Jurisprudence I & II” and “Seminar(s) in Legal Theory” will be made by the professor of jurisprudence.

The substitution or inclusion of studies in the Academic and professional skills studies module will be decided by the steering committee of the Doctoral programme based on a statement prepared by the student. The statement must be submitted to the postgraduate studies coordinator.

Studies completed elsewhere cannot be incorporated into the postgraduate degree if they are already included in another degree. For this reason, the entry regarding the recognition of a course must provide information on the compensating studies or work.