

Guidelines for doctoral supervision in artistic research

Disclaimer: In case of a discrepancy between the Swedish and the English version of the decision, the Swedish version will prevail.

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1. Introduction

This steering document contains guidelines for supervision in doctoral education at Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH). The guidelines describe roles, responsibilities and obligations when supervising doctoral students, as well as processes for appointing and changing supervisors.

Regarding doctoral supervision, the Higher Education Ordinance (HF) stipulates the following in chapter 6 § 28:

At least two supervisors must be appointed for each doctoral student.

One of them must be appointed principal supervisor. The doctoral student is entitled to supervision during their studies unless the Vice-Chancellor has decided otherwise with the support of Section 30.

Upon request, a doctoral student must be allowed to change supervisor.

2. Appointing supervisors

The principal supervisor and supervisor are appointed in connection with the admission of the doctoral student. The overall competence of the supervisors in relation to the doctoral project is decisive for the selection of the supervisory team. The principal supervisor must be an active researcher with experience in artistic research and have artistic, methodological and/or theoretical knowledge relevant to the doctoral student's research field. The supervisor's expertise may be more project or subject specific and should complement the principal supervisor's knowledge so that the two together can provide the doctoral student with sufficient support.

The Vice-Rector for Research proposes principal supervisors and supervisors in consultation with the Head of the Third-Cycle Subject Area. Proposals for supervisors are also made in dialogue with the doctoral student and the principal supervisor.

Decisions are made by the Vice-Chancellor after consideration by the Board for Education and Research's (Nämnden för utbildning och forskning, NUF) Research Education Committee (forskarutbildningutskottet, FoU).

The following requirements apply when appointing supervisors:

- To be a principal supervisor, an artistic doctoral degree or equivalent documented artistic research and/or artistic experience is required, as well as completed supervisor training at SKH or another higher education institution (no later than during the doctoral student's first year of employment).
- Supervisors should be employed at SKH. The main supervisor is responsible for results reporting and other administration linked to the doctoral programme. External supervision occurs only when internal expertise in relation to the specific needs of the doctoral project is lacking.

- Supervisors must develop their supervisory skills by participating in SKH's supervisory seminars, which are held once a term. Participation should correspond to at least one full day per calendar year.
- Family or other close relationships between doctoral students and supervisors and among supervisors are not allowed.

When appointing supervisors, gender balance should be promoted.

When engaging an external supervisor, the Research Office draws up an agreement/contract specifying the terms and conditions of the assignment, after consultation with the Vice-Rector for Research and the HR department.

3. Responsibilities and obligations

3.1 SKH's obligations

The higher education institution may only admit as many doctoral students as can be offered supervision and acceptable conditions for studies (Chapter 7, Section 34 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

A doctoral student is entitled to regular supervision. The form and frequency of supervision is documented by the supervisor and the doctoral student in the individual study plan and is based on the doctoral student's needs.

Each doctoral student is entitled to at least 544 hours of supervision during 4 years of full-time studies. The supervision time includes the time during which the supervisor and doctoral student meet and work on the doctoral student's education and also time for work that takes place outside meeting time, see the supervisors' obligation below. Supervision time always follows the doctoral student's study activity. If the doctoral student has a study activity of 100 per cent., the time within the supervisory group is usually distributed as at least 84 hours per year for the principal supervisor (equivalent to five per cent of full-time) and at least 51 hours per year for the supervisor (equivalent to three per cent of full-time). The time allocation is based on the expected workload and is specified in the doctoral student's individual study plan.

Supervision after the end of the employment as doctoral student shall be offered until the public defence as long as the doctoral student is actively studying and fulfilling their obligations according to the individual study plan.

In addition to the meeting to update the individual study plan, each doctoral student must have an annual performance appraisal (utvecklingssamtal) with the Head of Subject. If the manager and supervisor roles coincide, the performance appraisal must be conducted with another suitable person.

3.2 The supervisors' obligations

Doctoral supervision refers to the professional encounter between doctoral student and supervisor.

Supervisors represent SKH and have a major responsibility for the doctoral student's education and that the doctoral student achieves the nationally and locally set programme and learning outcomes. The individual study plan is a central tool for planning and implementing the doctoral studies. The supervisor and the doctoral student shall be in regular contact regarding the progress of the studies and the doctoral student's progress in relation to the individual study plan.

When the doctoral student's first individual study plan is established, the role of each supervisor shall be clearly stated, and agreement shall be reached on how supervision is to be organised and carried out by the appointed supervisors, including the allocation of supervision time. This shall be continuously followed up in the doctoral student's individual study plan.

3.2.1 The overall responsibility of supervisors

- to familiarise themselves with and follow the rules for doctoral education at SKH,
- to be responsible for the supervision of the doctoral student in accordance with the general study plan for the doctoral programme in performative and media-based practices and the doctoral student's individual study plan,
- to define the division of responsibilities between the principal supervisor and the other supervisors and discuss and clarify the specific supervisory function with the doctoral student. It is particularly important that the expectations of the doctoral student and the supervisors on each other are made clear at an early stage.
- to be responsible for ensuring that the individual study plan, including the timetable and financing plan, is established and monitored at least once a year and revised if necessary.
- to be responsible for the quality of the artistic research project in relation to learning outcomes and qualitative targets as stipulated in the Higher Education Ordinance¹.
- keep the Third-Cycle Education Coordinator and the Head of the Third-Cycle Subject Area informed about the progress of the studies and any problems or deviations from the individual study plan.

3.2.2 Supervision and follow-up of the doctoral student's study progress

- to establish a plan together with the doctoral student for how the supervision will be carried out. Together with the doctoral student, the principal supervisor and supervisor meet at least once a year in connection with the follow-up of the doctoral student's individual study plan to discuss the supervisors' division of responsibilities and follow up the supervision.

¹ Högskoleförförordning, Unofficial English Translation

- to be responsible for and support the doctoral student's study progression as specified in the general syllabus and individual study plan.
- to support the doctoral student in the definition and development of the doctoral project.
- to provide support in the selection and application of methods, choice of activities and budget allocation within the framework of the doctoral project.
- to participate in the planning of the doctoral student's reflection, documentation and exposition within the doctoral project.
- to support the doctoral student's communication of the doctoral project internally at SKH, nationally and internationally.

3.2.3 Percentage seminars, final seminar and public defence

- to plan the percentage seminars, the final seminars and the public defence, in consultation with the doctoral student, the technical coordinator and the Third-Cycle Education Coordinator.
- to propose opponents for percentage seminars and be responsible for contacting and communicating with opponents for percentage seminars, in consultation with the doctoral student.
- to approve that the doctoral student has achieved 30, 50 and 80 per cent of the doctoral programme in connection with completed percentage seminars. Reporting to the HR department is done via the Research Office in order for the doctoral student to move up the salary ladder.
- to support the doctoral student in planning the presentation of the doctoral project for the final seminar and public defence.
- to assess and recommend that the doctoral project can be submitted for examination.
- to propose, in dialogue with the Head of the Third-Cycle Subject Area, the opponent and the examination committee for the final seminar and the public defence, contact them, collect CVs, compile a short biography for the communication department and write a motivation for the choice of opponent and examination committee in consultation with the Head of the Third-Cycle Subject Area.

3.2.4 Research ethics

- to be responsible, in collaboration with the doctoral student, for ensuring that good research practice is followed, i.e. to ensure that the doctoral student's research complies with the principles of good research practice accepted by the research community, including obtaining the necessary permissions.

3.2.5 Collaboration agreement

- to ensure that collaboration agreements are made when the doctoral student carries out project components in collaboration with other institutions or actors in the field.

3.2.6 Career guidance

- to show interest for and support the doctoral student's career development.

3.2.7 Quality assurance and reflection

- to ensure the quality of supervision by regularly evaluating it together with the doctoral student. For example, the following should be discussed: What forms of supervision are used? Are they useful? Are the discussions focused enough? Is the flow of information from both parties good enough, are both parties prepared for meetings, and if not, what concrete steps can be taken to improve this?

3.3 The doctoral student's obligations

The doctoral student's obligations are outlined in the general syllabus, the individual study plan and the course syllabuses. The doctoral student shall fulfil their obligations according to the individual study plan and, in dialogue with the supervisors, regularly discuss, follow up and, if necessary, revise the individual study plan and at least once every year, participate in the discussion about the doctoral students' and the supervisors' expectations on supervision.

4. Changing supervisors

A doctoral student who so requests must be allowed to change supervisor in accordance with Chapter 6, Section 28 of the Higher Education Ordinance without disclosing reasons by contacting the Third-Cycle Education Coordinator. A change of supervisor can take place at any time during the doctoral programme.

If a supervisor is unable to provide supervision due to long-term sick leave/leave of absence or new assignments, the university must appoint a new supervisor as soon as possible.

Proposals for new supervisors are discussed in dialogue between the supervisor, the vice-rector for research, the head of the third-cycle subject area and the third-cycle education coordinator. The proposal must always be based on the doctoral student's right to as qualified supervision as possible. The doctoral student cannot decide who will be the supervisor, but can be invited to the dialogue.

Decisions on changing supervisors are taken by the Vice-Chancellor after preparation by the research education committee. In the event of a decision to change, the supervisory assignment for the previous supervisor is also ended.

In connection with a change of supervisor, the doctoral student's individual study plan is revised immediately.

4.1 Disagreements

Any disagreement that arises between the supervisor and the doctoral student should be handled promptly and professionally. Whatever the nature, it is important to discuss problems at an early stage. Both the supervisor and the doctoral student are obliged to contribute to finding a solution to the situation that has arisen. It is important that the discussions are constructive and matter-of-fact.

The responsible Head of Subject - in their role as employer for and being responsible for the work environment of the doctoral student - and the Head of the Third Cycle subject area should be informed and involved at an early stage to help resolve the disagreement. In cases where the Head of Subject works closely with one of the parties, the Head of Department will enter into the conversation.

In cases where a new supervisor is appointed, it is important to follow up the situation of the former supervisor both from the perspective of work environment and employer responsibility via the Head of subject for the supervisor and from the perspective of the educational environment via the Head of the Third-Cycle Subject Area.

5. Withdrawal of supervision and other study resources

The supervisor is responsible for keeping the Third-Cycle Education Coordinator and the Head of the Third-Cycle Subject Area informed about the doctoral student's study progress and any problems and deviations from the doctoral student's individual study plan.

If a doctoral student substantially neglects their obligations under the individual study plan, the Vice-Chancellor must decide that the doctoral student is no longer entitled to supervision and other study resources (Chapter 6, Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance). This is regulated in the guidelines for withdrawal of the doctoral student's right to supervision and other study resources.

6. Transitional provisions

Principal supervisors appointed before these guidelines enter into effect who do not have formal supervisor training must have undergone formal supervisor training within two years of the decision date.