Mittuniversitetet
MID SWEDEN UNIVERSITY

Management and Follow-up of Individual Study Plans, Faculty of Human Sciences

Decision-making body: Council for Third-Cycle Education (RUF)

Responsible function: Faculty of Human Sciences (HUV)

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Translated from Swedish. In case of any discrepancy between the Swedish and English versions, the Swedish version shall prevail.

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Individual Study Plan

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, an Individual Study Plan (ISP) shall be established for each doctoral student. The plan must specify the obligations of the university, such as access to supervision and other resources, as well as the obligations of the doctoral student and a timetable for the study programme. The plan is approved by the university following consultation with the doctoral student and their principal supervisor. The ISP must be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary.

At Mid Sweden University, Individual Study Plans are managed digitally in Ladok. On admission to third-cycle education, an ISP is created when the admission is registered in Ladok. At present, this means that a new ISP is created for each admission. A doctoral student who, for example, is initially admitted to a licentiate degree and subsequently admitted to a later stage towards a doctoral degree will therefore receive a new ISP. At the Faculty of Human Sciences (HUV), each ISP is revised in consultation between the doctoral student and the principal supervisor, and then reviewed by the subject area (approved by the subject representative) before being confirmed annually by the Council for Third-Cycle Education (RUF). The third-cycle subject area is responsible for ensuring the quality of the doctoral programme, including monitoring the student's progression and ensuring that the obligations of both the university and the student are fulfilled. The ISP must be followed up at least once per year.

1. Purpose

This document is intended to support doctoral students, supervisors, and subject representatives in revising, reviewing, and approving Individual Study Plans (ISP). The document focuses on the content-related revision of study plans and complements the technical manuals provided by the STUA/Ladok unit. Individual study plans for doctoral students | miun.se

2. Overview of the process

An Individual Study Plan must be followed up at least once per year, and the ISP process consists of the following steps:

1. The doctoral student, in consultation with the principal supervisor, completes the ISP.
2. The principal supervisor reviews and approves the plan.
3. The subject representative (research collegium) reviews and approves the plan.
4. The Council for Third-Cycle Education (RUF) confirms the plan.

3. Instructions (step by step)

3.1 Logging into Ladok

Doctoral students log in to Ladok for students (blue interface) to access the ISP. Studentwebb

If the Individual Study Plan is not visible, contact the Faculty Office administrator.

Supervisors (principal and assistant supervisors) and subject representatives log in to Ladok for staff (green interface). Ladok - start

If the list of doctoral students is incomplete, contact the Faculty Office administrator.

3.2 Workflow

The Workflow view displays the entire process — from creation to final approval of the ISP. The current task and the person responsible (Doctoral Student, Principal Supervisor, Subject Representative, or the Council for Third-Cycle Education) are shown here.

Previously approved versions of the ISP are also available in this view and can be opened as PDF files.

3.3 Basic information

The basic information constitutes the foundation of the ISP and must always be up to date and accurate. The doctoral student is responsible for checking the information and, where necessary, requesting corrections.
If any information is incorrect, contact the Faculty Office administrator.

Content of the Basic Information Section

- **Admitted to:** information about admission (licentiate degree, doctoral degree, or admission to a later stage) and the third-cycle subject.
- **General syllabus:** the ISP must follow the general syllabus that applied at the time of admission, particularly regarding the required scope of courses and mandatory elements. The doctoral student must upload their general syllabus.
- **Milestones in third-cycle studies:** key milestones such as the planning seminar, half-time seminar, final seminar, licentiate seminar, and defence of doctoral thesis must be documented with preliminary date. (If a milestone generates thesis credits, it must also be entered as a thesis activity under Thesis work.)
- **Study activity and funding:** planned study activity and funding are entered by the doctoral student and the principal supervisor for the entire doctoral period. Reported study activity and funding are retrieved from other parts of Ladok. The doctoral student must check that the reported study activity and funding are correct.
  If any information is incorrect, contact the Faculty Office administrator.
- **Other documentation:** the doctoral student may upload relevant PDF files, such as research plans, certificates of seminar participation, or previous versions of the ISP.

3.4 Supervisor and decision-maker

The doctoral student and the principal supervisor must ensure that all supervisors are correctly documented in the ISP.

3.5 Supervisor conversation

The doctoral student and the principal supervisor can document supervisor conversations and their content here, and select the type of conversation, for example: Supervision, Follow-up, or Career conversations. *Avoid including sensitive information, as the Individual Study Plan is subject to the principle of public access to official documents.*

3.6 Thesis work

The doctoral student and the principal supervisor plan and follow up the thesis work documented in the ISP by adding activities.

Each activity must include:

- Name/title
- Short description (understandable also outside the subject)
- Thesis credits (progression, pr)
- Calendar half-year in which the activity is planned to be completed or has been completed

When an activity is planned:

- Set the status to Planned.
- Enter the scope of the activity under Planned progression (pr).

When the activity is completed:

- Change the status to Completed.
- Enter the scope of the activity under Follow-up of progression (pr).

Activities may run in parallel or overlap during the education. The principal supervisor supports the doctoral student in setting up activities in the ISP. Each third-cycle subject area within the Faculty must have clear guidelines for planning thesis activities. These guidelines must be known to doctoral students and all supervisors. *Examples of activities:* research plan, data collection, analysis, articles/chapters. The sum of the thesis credits (pr) must correspond to the scope of the doctoral thesis and the licentiate thesis.

A summary of the thesis credits (referred to as pr in Ladok) is displayed under the tab **Overview and reflections**.

Ethical approvals

Any required ethical approvals are uploaded in this section by the doctoral student.

3.7 Courses and Conferences

Planned courses, conferences, seminars, and other activities must be registered in consultation with the principal supervisor.

Unsorted certified results

Reported results in Ladok (courses, credit transfers and any course credits for participation in seminars and conferences) are automatically transferred into the ISP

from Ladok. The doctoral student is responsible for sorting completed courses/results into the correct category, Mandatory courses or Elective courses. If you are admitted to a later stage towards a doctoral degree, completed courses from your admission to a licentiate degree programme are shown in your ISP for the licentiate degree.

Mandatory courses and Elective courses

The doctoral student and the principal supervisor can add planned courses here. Once a course has been passed and sorted into the correct category, the planned course must be removed manually.

Credit transfer

Courses awarded through credit transfer are automatically placed under the category Credit transfer, regardless of whether they are mandatory or not. If you are admitted to a later stage towards a doctoral degree, credit transfer courses are currently shown in both the ISP for admission to the licentiate degree programme and the ISP for admission to the doctoral degree programme.

Conferences, seminars and other activities

The fields Conferences and Seminars and other activities should not be used in the ISP, as activities in these fields cannot be marked as completed. When an activity is removed after the course result has been reported, information about the completed activity is not retained either.

Non-credit-bearing activities

For seminars and conferences, it is recommended that these are registered under Non-credit-bearing activities, regardless of whether the activity will give course credits or not. There the activity can be marked as completed, the scope described in text and the documentation saved. *Please note that activities in the field Non-credit-bearing activities are not shown in the summary under Overview and reflections.*

If participation in seminars or conferences is to generate thesis credits, it must be entered as an activity under Thesis work.

3.8 Learning outcomes

Under Learning Outcomes, the doctoral student and the principal supervisor may link activities and courses to the degree objectives. *Note that the Faculty does not require this section to be completed.*

3.9 Timeplan

The Timeplan provides an overview of the information registered in the ISP for each calendar half-year. It is not possible to edit directly in the Timeplan; it functions only as an overview. Comments will disappear when the plan is confirmed.

3.10 Overview and reflections

Under Overview, a summary is provided of the calendar half-year, milestones, study activity, courses and conferences, and progression. Values presented before brackets refer to *completed credits*, and values in brackets refer to *planned credits*. Under Reflections, the doctoral student and the principal supervisor may also reflect on the year's progression. In the event of a deviation from expected progression, this field is used for an explanation and any action by the subject area. *Avoid sensitive information, as the ISP is subject to the principle of public access to official documents.*

4. Principal supervisor, Subject representative, and the Council for Third-Cycle Education

4.1 Principal supervisor

The principal supervisor has a central role in revising and reviewing the ISP.

When the doctoral student has submitted the ISP for review, the principal supervisor receives a notification in the system. After reviewing the plan and making any necessary adjustments, the principal supervisor approves the ISP under the Workflow tab.
The principal supervisor may also return the ISP to the doctoral student for revision or completion.

The principal supervisor shall:

- follow up planned and completed activities under **Milestones** and **Thesis work**, including their status and time specification, and adjust the planning together with the doctoral student if needed,
- check that **Courses and conferences** are correctly documented,
- ensure that agreed changes have been incorporated into the plan,
- review the ISP to ensure that it reflects the obligations of both the doctoral student and the university,
- document measures taken to support the doctoral student's progression,
- write a deviation report under Overview and reflections where necessary.

4.2 Subject representative (Research collegium)

When the ISP has been approved by the principal supervisor, it is forwarded to the subject representative. At this stage, the research collegium (FK) must review the ISP and ensure that the doctoral student's progression aligns with the planned structure and the objectives of the programme. The research collegium within each subject has overall responsibility for monitoring the doctoral students' ISPs. The subject representative acts as the collegium's representative in Ladok. The ISP is therefore approved in the system only after the collegium has reviewed and endorsed it.

The subject representative shall:

- after receiving the Faculty Office's progression summary, ensure that the research collegium has access to information regarding the doctoral student's progression in accordance with the subject area's procedures,
- ensure that the collegium's comments are considered before approval,
- return the ISP to the principal supervisor for revision if the collegium deems that adjustments are necessary,
- ensure that a deviation report is provided under Overview and reflections where necessary,
- notify the Faculty Office if support with managing the ISP is needed, for example during the doctoral student's leave of absence or parental leave, such as assistance with forwarding the ISP to the principal supervisor,
- approve the ISP in the system once the collegium considers the study plan ready for approval.
- notify the Faculty Office and RUF if there are inactive doctoral students who should be registered as inactive. See section 4.3.1, Inactive doctoral students, for more information.

Deviation Report

If a doctoral student deviates by more than 30 credits from the expected progression — based on a comparison between time spent and completed courses and thesis work — an explanation must be provided under **Reflections (in Overview and Reflections).** *Avoid sensitive information, as the ISP is subject to the principle of public access to official documents*.

The Faculty Office is responsible for sending out a progression summary for the subject area's doctoral students in connection with the annual follow-up.

4.3 Council for Third-Cycle Education (RUF)

Once the subject representative has approved the ISP, it is forwarded to RUF for follow-up and confirmation.

During the annual follow-up, RUF shall:

- follow up and confirm the ISPs,
- request additional information, such as deviation reports, where necessary,
- decide, at the subject area's request, whether an ISP should be set as inactive,
- make a note in the ISP for the relevant year if the doctoral student and the supervisor have not approved the ISP within the specified time.

4.3.1 Inactive doctoral students

For doctoral students who are not actively pursuing their studies but have not yet completed them, the subject area may register the student as inactive.
When RUF has confirmed the current ISP, no new ISP is created for the following year.

If, and when the doctoral student resumes their studies, a new ISP can be created.
At the request of the subject, the Faculty Office may contact inactive doctoral students to determine whether they wish to withdraw from their studies.

4.3.2 Handling ISPs not approved within the specified time

If an ISP has not been approved by the doctoral student and the supervisor within the specified time, RUF may make a note of this in the ISP and then open a new study plan for the relevant year. The note shall read as follows: *The Individual Study Plan for the year xxxx was never submitted to the Faculty for approval. An ISP for the year XXXX is created and can then be reviewed and updated by the doctoral student, the supervisor, the research collegium, and the Faculty.*

5. ISP prior to admission to a later stage

When a doctoral student is admitted to a later stage of the programme, the ISP for admission to the licentiate degree programme must be updated and approved by the doctoral student, the principal supervisor, and the subject representative. A new ISP for the doctoral degree is created for the remaining part of the programme. The previous content of the licentiate ISP is not transferred but remains accessible for reading.
Earlier approved ISPs can be accessed under **Established versions**.

6. Procedures related to obtaining a degree

When the degree is issued, the ISP is set as completed, and all links to supervisors, subject representatives, and administrators are deactivated. The Individual Study Plan remains in Ladok and is regarded as archived information.

7. Annual cycle for follow-up

The work with the ISP is illustrated in the form of an annual cycle, showing when different elements must be reported at the latest.
As soon as an ISP has been approved at the subject level, it can be forwarded to the Council for confirmation.

- **By 31 December:** The doctoral student and the principal supervisor are responsible for ensuring that the study plan is accurate and up to date and each approve the plan separately.
- **By 31 January:** The Faculty Office sends a summary of each doctoral student's progression to the subject area (subject representative). The research collegium (FK) is responsible for following up the study plans in accordance with the subject area's procedures.
- **By 31 March:** Study plans are approved by the subject area (subject representative).
  In cases of major deviations from expected progression, the principal supervisor provides a deviation report in the study plan.
- **By 30 April:** RUF follows up the study plans and reviews any deviation reports. Thereafter, the previous year's study plans are confirmed, and a new study plan is created.