

Guidelines for revision and review of individual study plans at NMT

Observera att detta dokument även finns tillgängligt på svenska.

Purpose

This guide aims to support doctoral students, supervisors and heads of departments in the work of revising, reviewing and establishing doctoral students' individual study plans (ISP).

The focus of the guide is on revising the content of study plans and is intended to complement the manuals that can be found on the [STUA/Ladok unit's websites](#).

The individual study plan

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, an individual study plan must be drawn up for each doctoral student. The plan must contain the university's commitments, for example regarding the doctoral student's access to supervision and other resources, as well as the doctoral student's commitments and a timetable for the doctoral student's education. The plan must be decided by the university after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisor.

The ISP must be regularly followed up and, after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisor, changed by the university to the extent necessary. At Mid Sweden University, individual study plans are managed digitally in Ladok.

At the Faculty of Science, Technology and Media (NMT), the ISP must be revised in consultation between the doctoral student and supervisor and approved by the head of department before the Council for third-cycle education (FUR) approves the plan. The department is responsible for ensuring that the university's commitments in the ISP are fulfilled. FUR is responsible for approving the individual study plan and for following up on the commitments made in the plan. The individual study plan must be followed up at least once a year.

Instructions for revising the study plan

Time plan

The yearly ISP review process at the Faculty of Science, Technology and Media encompasses every doctoral student, main supervisor and head of department. The doctoral student is expected to approve their ISP by January 31 of each year, after having revised the study plan together with their main supervisor.

Focus

The PhD student and supervisor's focus when revising the study plan is to make sure that completed activities are documented in full and that there is a complete plan for the remainder of the third-cycle education.

Special attention should be paid to:

- making sure milestones are documented under "Basic information",
- that the entirety of the thesis work is documented with activities under "Thesis work"
- sufficient progression points (pr) given to each activity to complete the study programme, and finally
- that courses and conferences are shown and categorized correctly.

In the guide below, these areas will be covered as well as other functions of the ISP system in Ladok. Please note that the more important areas listed above will be highlighted in the following guide with this symbol:

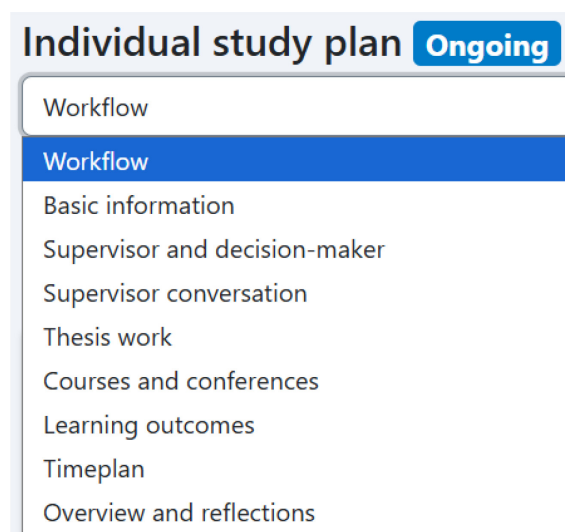


Signing in

The doctoral student logs into Ladok for students (blue colour theme – not Ladok for staff with green colour theme) to find their individual study plan. If you cannot find your individual study plan in Ladok for students, contact the faculty administrator.

Supervisors log into Ladok for staff. The doctoral students they supervise can be found in the tab on the home page called "My doctoral students (ISP)". If no doctoral student is shown, contact the faculty administrator.

Workflow



After logging in, the option “Individual study plan” is available in the right-hand menu. Clicking there will bring up the ISP. At the top of the study plan is a drop-down list with the different content tabs in the study plan.

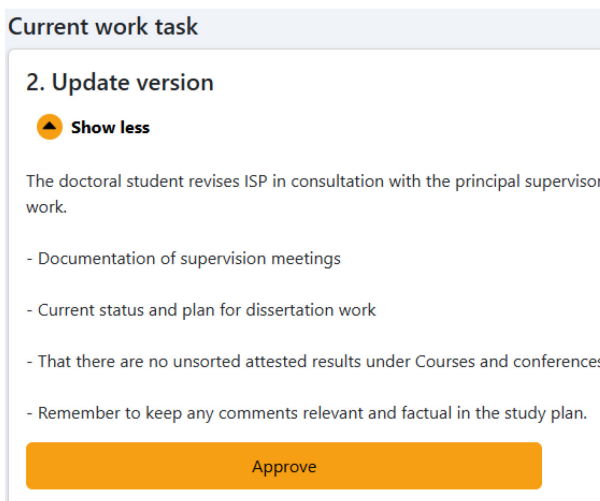
The start menu in the ISP is “Workflow”. Under this heading, the process from the study plan being drawn up to its approval is described, with the current work task being described in more detail.

Once the PhD student has completed their revision process all the way to “Overview and reflections”, they must go back to the workflow tab to approve the ISP and send it on to the supervisor’s review. Please note that the supervisor can also revise information in the ISP while in the “Update version” status, but only the PhD student can approve the plan.

Basic information

Admitted to

Initially, the basic information about the third-cycle education should be checked. If the information is not correct, contact the faculty administrators (John Håkansson or Fanny Burman).



General syllabus

The study plan must be in accordance with the general syllabus of the third-cycle subject at the time of admission, regarding course content and mandatory courses. Please see [the general syllabus](#) for each subject.

Milestones in third-cycle studies

Any adjustments to planned milestones in the doctoral education should be documented here. With “milestones”, we mean the important events in any PhD or licentiate project, such as the planning seminar, thesis defense or half time/licentiate seminar.



Milestones in third-cycle studies (Last edited 2025-11-13 14:07 by John Karl Håkansson)		
New milestone		
2027H - Half-time seminar	2027-09-30	Planned
2026V - Planning seminar	2026-04-15	Planned

Please note that activities in the thesis work for these milestones should also be listed under the tab "Thesis work" as an activity under "Planning and follow-up" – we'll get to that tab shortly.

Study activity and funding (SCB)

The function "Planned study activity and financing" should not be used. However, the doctoral student should check that the activity level for previous semesters and the current semester has been reported and displayed in the study plan. If any semester lacks an activity report or contains incorrect information, the faculty administrator at the department should be contacted.

Other documentation

Files in pdf format can be uploaded here. During the implementation phase of Ladok ISP, ISPs from our previous system have been uploaded here.

Supervisor and decision-maker

The doctoral student and supervisor check that the entire group of supervisors is documented in the study plan. The "Supervisor input" function can be used if necessary, but the faculty has not seen any need to regulate its use.

Supervisor conversation

Selected supervision meetings of importance (suggested 1-4 per year) can be documented here, for example supervision meetings aimed at following up on ISP. However, this function is not mandatory to use. The individual study plan is covered by the principle of public access, so sensitive personal information should not be provided.

Thesis work

Summary

The working title of the thesis should be stated here, as well as the type of thesis (monograph/compilation) and a brief description of the topic/focus of the thesis. This is particularly important when revising the final study plan prior to the licentiate seminar or PhD defense.

Summary

(Last edited 2025-11-13 14:13 by John Karl Håkansson)

Title	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, magna aliqua
Type of thesis	Compilation thesis
Description	Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia

Change information

Planning and follow-up

New activity		
2026H - Write manuscript - Article 1, Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet (5.0 pr)	1	Planned
2026V - Data collection - Literature review, field of Lorem ipsum scholarship (5.0 pr)	1	Planned
2026V - Planning seminar 2026-04-15	1	Planned
2025H - Planning - Project proposal for planning seminar (4.5 pr)	1	Completed

In (at least) the first version of the study plan, the supervisor is expected to take responsibility for guiding the work of structuring activities.

Completed and planned dissertation activities should be named, listed, given a “pr” point weight and described in a way that enables review by someone unfamiliar with the research subject’s vernacular. It is possible that several activities run in parallel or overlap during the study period. Each activity should then be placed under the calendar half-year in which it was completed/planned to be completed. Furthermore, the doctoral student marks completed activities as completed and adjusts the half year for completed and planned activities if necessary. Please keep from using any other status options than “planned” or “completed”.

The sum of points for completed and planned activities must, together with the total scope of courses under “Courses and conferences”, correspond to the scope of the education; 120 credits for a licentiate degree and 240 credits for a doctoral degree.

In the table below doctoral students and supervisors can find suggestions on designing the structure and scope of thesis work activities. Please note that the proposal contains generic headings that should be reformulated to describe each doctoral student's individual study plan based on the conditions, research topic and type of thesis work pertaining to each individual student.

Suggested/possible activities	Scope (pr)
Literature search	5–7.5
Reading/Experiment planning	5–7.5
Pilot study/Method development	5–7.5
Experiment/Data collection	5–7.5
Data analysis	5–7.5
Reporting of experiments (manuscript writing)	5–7.5
Review of manuscript	3–5
Abstract writing for conference, submission	1–3
Conference participation	1–2
Conference participation with presentation	2–3
Planning meeting with collaborators	1
Study visit	1–3
Research seminar	1–3
Applying for funding	1–5

Suggested/possible activities	Scope (pr)
Writing popular science article	1–7.5
Participating in scientific program (radio, TV)	1–5
Preparing patent application	1–3
Writing licentiate thesis summary/Mid-seminar	7.5–15
Licentiate seminar (including preparations)	5–7.5
Writing doctoral thesis	15–30
Dissertation (including preparations)	5–7.5

Courses and conferences

The sum of completed and planned courses, together with the total scope of activities under “Thesis work”, must correspond to the scope of the education; 120 credits for a licentiate degree and 240 credits for a doctoral degree.



The doctoral student ensures that the number of completed, credited and planned compulsory and elective courses and the scope of these is correctly documented.

The doctoral student ensures that conference participation is documented and displayed in the system.

Courses cannot be converted from “planned” to “completed” in the system but must instead be reported in the system as completed (or credited if the course has been taken at another university). A common source of error for courses is that planned courses remain in the system if they are not manually deleted, which can cause duplicates when course results are reported in Ladok. The manually entered planned courses need to be deleted manually. If any course is missing from the study plan, please contact the faculty administrator.



One counter-intuitive feature of the system is how conferences and seminars are displayed. Since the NMT faculty doesn’t report conference or seminar participation into Ladok similarly to how course results are reported, conference participation cannot be displayed under those headings, but must rather be registered as “Non-credit-bearing activities”

Non-credit-bearing activities (Last edited 2025-11-18 15:45 by John Karl Håkansson)

New activity



2026H - Conference (Scientific conference poster presentation)

2026-11-01

Learning outcomes

Under learning objectives, if the doctoral student and supervisor so wish, progression in relation to the degree objectives for the licentiate or doctoral degree can be followed up. However, there is no requirement from the faculty to use this tab.

Timeplan

The timetable tab summarizes all information entered into the ISP. It is not possible to edit information in the timetable, and the fields for “note” and “comments” are not recommended to be used. If any information in the timetable is incorrect, it is because the information is incorrect at the source – go back to the tab/field from which the information was retrieved to correct it there (usually “thesis work” or “courses and conferences”)

Overview and reflections

In the “overview” table, you get a view of the entirety of the studies with every half year in which some activity has been listed. Milestones, study activity, courses and conferences and progression is shown and summarized. If activities have been input and given progression points (pr) correctly, they will be listed here as in the example below – note that in the example the sum of course credits and pr equals 240, which is the desired outcome.

Calendar half year	Milestones	Study activity	Courses and conferences	Progression
2026V	Defence of doctoral thesis			
2025H				(33.5 pr)
2025V		100%	4.0 hp	(30.0 pr)
2024H		99%	10.5 hp	(12.0 pr)
2024V		98%	10.5 hp	(3.0 pr)
2023H		100%	3.0 hp	(17.5 pr)
2023V		98%	15.0 hp	(10.0 pr)
2022H		100%	4.5 hp	(6.0 pr)
2022V		100%	12.5 hp	(20.0 pr)
2021H		100%		(28.0 pr)
2021V		98%		(20.0 pr)
Summary		893%	60.0 hp	(180.0 pr)

In the “reflections” section a brief account of the past year should be written by the PhD student (and possibly by the supervisor), containing a reflection on the progress of the dissertation work. Examples of questions to answer when summarizing the past year: Has the doctoral student experienced that the progression in the research work has been satisfactory, or have obstacles emerged during the year? Have activities or courses needed to be revised during the year? Has any manuscript been submitted for review? The reflection on the past year should be kept to around 50-100 words. Feel free to keep the previous year's description with each revision to facilitate review over time.

Supervisor's review

When the doctoral student approves the study plan, it is forwarded to the supervisor for approval. The supervisor reviews the plan and ensures that previously agreed changes have been implemented and that the plan otherwise reflects the commitments agreed upon by the university and the doctoral student. The supervisor checks that milestones/activities marked as completed are indeed completed and approves these. Any activities with the status "Planned" where the end date has passed are discussed with the doctoral student for adjustment. The supervisor checks the status of courses and conferences and addresses any inconsistencies in consultation with the doctoral student.

Head of department's review

Once the study plan has been approved by the supervisor, it should not normally require correction. If necessary, the study plan can be returned to the doctoral student and supervisor. Faculty administrators can also be consulted.

Faculty review

As the last step in the yearly review, the council for third-cycle education (FUR) reviews the study plan. This usually results in final approval of the plan, but may also result in the plan being sent back to the doctoral student for further revision, with comments. The goal for this process is to have completed the review of all study plans by the last meeting of the Spring Semester each year.

Further reading

SFS (Sveriges förenade Studentkårer) report on ISP (2024)

<https://sfs.se/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/SFS-The-Individual-Study-Plan.pdf>