Guidelines for Revision and Review of Individual Study Plans at NMT

Observera att detta dokument även finns tillgängligt på svenska.

Purpose

These guidelines aim to support doctoral students, supervisors and heads of department in revising, reviewing and approving individual study plans (ISPs).

The guidelines focus on revising the content of study plans and supplement the manuals available 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 include 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 their studies. The plan must be established following consultation with the doctoral student and their supervisors and must be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary. At Mid Sweden University, individual study plans are managed digitally in Ladok.

At the Faculty of Science, Technology and Media (NMT), ISPs must be revised at least once a year in consultation between the doctoral student and their supervisor and approved by the head of department before being formally adopted by the Faculty Council for Third-Cycle Education (FUR). The department is responsible for ensuring that the university's commitments in the ISP are fulfilled. FUR is responsible for formally approving the individual study plan and monitoring activities.

Instructions for Revising the Study Plan

Time plan

The annual ISP review process at the Faculty of Science, Technology and Media involves all doctoral student, principal supervisor and heads of

department. Doctoral students are expected to approve their ISP by January 31 each year, after revising the study plan together with their principal supervisor.

Focus

When revising the study plan, the doctoral student and supervisor should focus on ensuring that all completed activities are fully documented and that a complete plan is in place for the remainder of the doctoral studies.

Attention should be paid to:

- documenting milestones in the doctoral studies under "Basic information";
- documenting all aspects of the thesis work through activities under "Thesis work";
- assigning sufficient progression points (pr) to each activity to complete the programme; and
- ensuring that courses and conferences are displayed and categorised correctly.

The guide below addresses these areas as well as other functions of the ISP system in Ladok. Please note that the particularly important areas listed above will be marked with the following symbol: 

Logging in

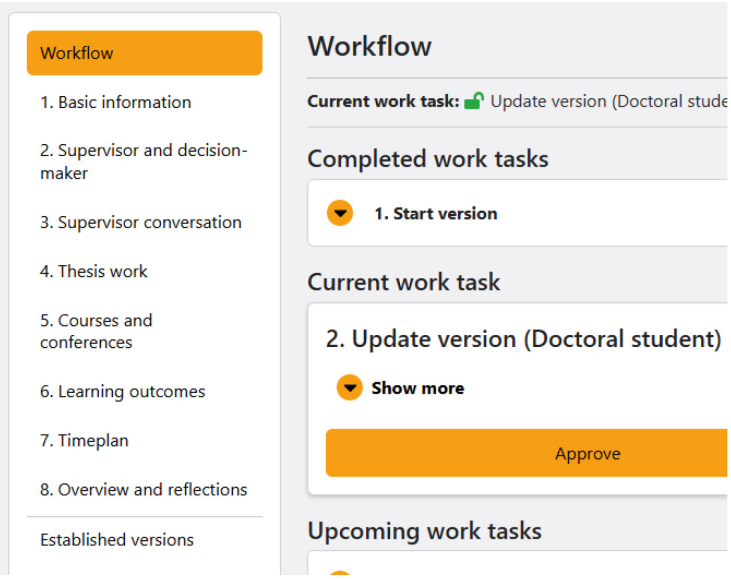
Doctoral students log in to Ladok for students (blue colour scheme – not Ladok for staff which has a green colour theme) to access their individual study plan. If you cannot find your individual study plan in Ladok for students, contact the faculty administrator.

Supervisors log in to Ladok for staff. The doctoral students they supervise are listed under the tab “My doctoral students (ISP)” on the start page. If a doctoral student is missing, contact the faculty administrator.

Workflow

After logging in, the option “Individual study plan” is available in the menu on the right. Clicking this option opens the ISP. The menu on the left contains a list of the different sections of the study plan.

The ISP opens in the "Workflow" section. The "Show more" button provides a description of the process from the creation of the study plan to its approval, as well as more detailed information about the current task. Further information is available under the "Instructions" button in each section.



Once the revision process has been completed, the doctoral student must return to the Workflow section to approve the ISP and forward it to the supervisor for review. Please note that the supervisor can also revise information in the ISP while its status is "Update version (Doctoral student)".

Basic information

Admitted to

The basic information concerning the doctoral studies should first be checked. Is the admission to a licentiate degree, the latter part of doctoral studies or a doctoral degree correct? Is the doctoral subject correct? If any information is incorrect, contact the faculty administrator.

General syllabus

The study plan must comply with the general syllabus applicable to the doctoral subject at the time of admission, regarding the number of course credits and compulsory courses. The general syllabus is uploaded by the faculty administrator.

Milestones in third-cycle studies

Planned milestones in the doctoral studies must be documented here: the licentiate/half-time seminar and public defence of the doctoral thesis, together with the (approximate/confirmed) date of

each milestone. Please note that activities leading up to these milestones must be entered under "Planning and follow-up" in the "Thesis work" section.



Study activity and funding (SCB)

The "Planned study activity and funding" function should not be used. However, doctoral students should check that their study activity rate for previous semesters and the current semester has been reported and is displayed in the study plan. If the study activity rate is missing for any semester or the information is incorrect, contact the faculty administrator at the department.

Other documentation

PDF files can be uploaded here. During the implementation phase of Ladok ISP, previous ISPs were uploaded here.

Supervisor and decision-maker

The doctoral student and supervisor should check that all supervisors are documented in the study plan. However, only supervisors employed at Mid Sweden University are listed as holding the supervisor role.

The "Supervision input" function may be used if necessary, but the faculty has not identified any need to regulate its use.

Supervisor conversation

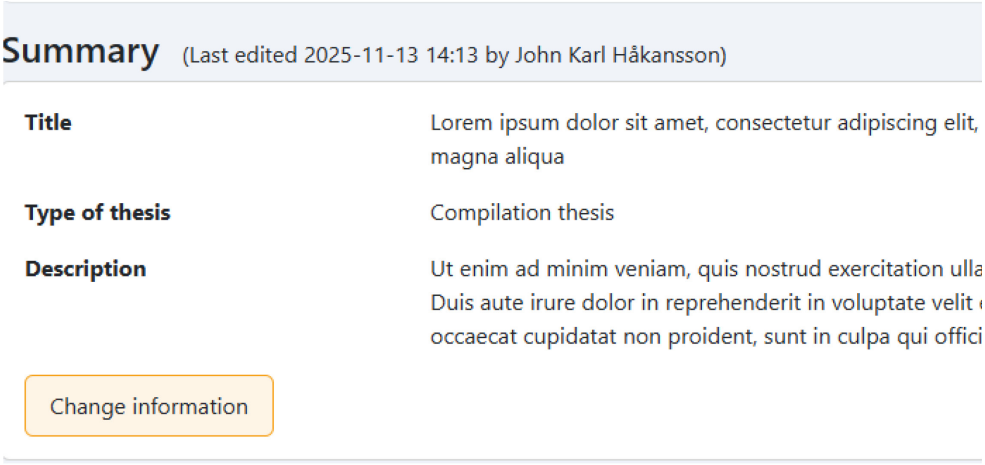
The principal supervisor and doctoral student can document supervision meetings here, including their content and the type of meeting, such as supervision, follow-up meetings and career discussions.

Use of this function is not mandatory. Individual study plans are subject to the principle of public access to official documents, and sensitive information should therefore not be included.

Thesis work

Summary

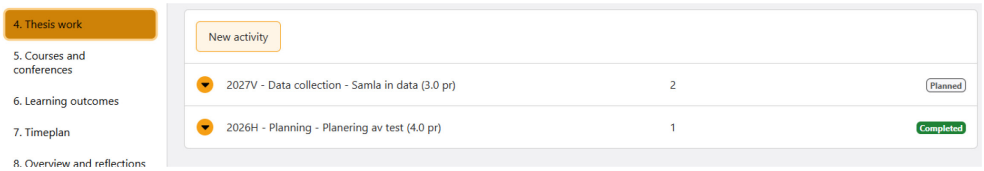
The working title of the thesis, the type of thesis and a brief description of the subject/focus and status of the thesis work must be entered here. This is particularly important when revising the final study plan before a licentiate seminar or public defence of the doctoral thesis.



Planning and follow-up

The doctoral student and supervisor jointly plan and structure the thesis activities. In the first version of the individual study plan, the supervisor has particular responsibility for guiding the doctoral student in dividing the thesis work into appropriate activities that can be followed up.

In subsequent versions, the doctoral student and supervisor follow up on completed activities and revise the plan based on the progress of the thesis work and any changes in circumstances.



Completed and planned thesis activities must be named, assigned progression points (pr) and described in a way that makes it possible to follow up on the activity, even for someone unfamiliar with the traditions or terminology of the subject.

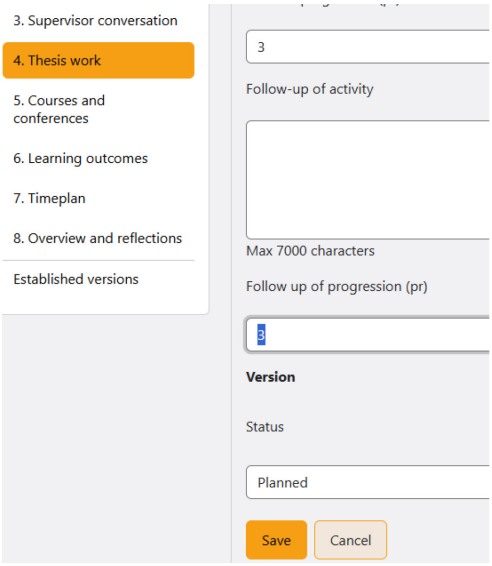
Several activities may run in parallel or overlap during the study period. Each activity must be placed in the calendar half-year in which it is planned

to be completed or was completed. The doctoral student changes the status of completed activities to "Completed" and, if necessary, adjusts the calendar half-year for completed and planned activities. Only the status options "Planned" or "Completed" should be used.

Progression Points

Progression points (pr) are used to indicate how the total scope of the thesis work is distributed among activities and to monitor progress in the thesis work. Progression points indicate the relative scope of activities within the thesis work and should not be interpreted as an exact measure of actual working time.

The sum of progression points (pr) for completed and planned thesis activities, together with the total number of course credits under "Courses and conferences", must correspond to the total scope of the programme: 120 credits for a licentiate degree and 240 credits for a doctoral degree.



When an activity has been completed, its progression points must also be entered under "Follow-up of progression (pr)".

Structure and Scope of Activities

The doctoral student and supervisor should design the activities based on the individual doctoral student's research project, research subject and type of thesis work. Activities should be clearly defined and possible to follow up, while the ISP should provide a clear overview of the planned progression of the thesis work.

Avoid dividing the thesis work into excessively small individual tasks. Tasks such as literature searches, data collection, analysis, manuscript writing, conference participation or seminars can advantageously be grouped into larger, coherent activities when they relate to the same part of the thesis work.

As a guideline, an activity may often comprise approximately 5–15 progression points (pr), but its scope should be adapted to the structure of the thesis work and the content of the activity. Both smaller and larger activities may therefore be justified.

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 programme: 120 credits for a licentiate degree and 240 credits for a doctoral degree.

The doctoral student is responsible for ensuring that completed, credited and planned compulsory and elective courses, as well as their credit values, are accurately recorded.

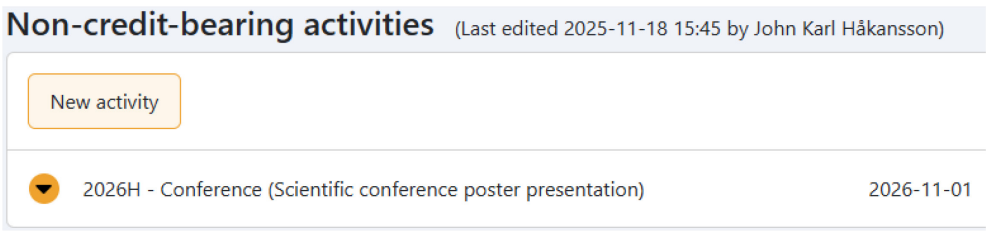
Courses cannot be changed from "Planned" to "Completed" in the ISP. Completed courses are displayed as completed only once the result has been reported and certified in Ladok, or credits have been transferred if the course was completed at another higher education institution.

Planned courses are not automatically removed when a course result is reported. To avoid duplicates, the corresponding planned course must therefore be removed manually. If a completed course is missing from the study plan, contact the faculty administrator.

Conferences and seminars

Participation in conferences and seminars must be documented in the ISP. Since such participation at NMT is normally not reported as a course result in Ladok, it must be registered under "Non-credit activities".

If conference or seminar participation is to be assigned progression points under "Thesis work", it should be entered as an activity or included in a larger, coherent activity.



Learning outcomes

Under learning objectives, the doctoral student and supervisor may, if they wish, follow up on progress in relation to the qualification requirements for a licentiate or doctoral degree. However, the faculty does not require this field to be used.

Timeplan

The "Timeplan" section summarises all information entered in the ISP. Information cannot be edited in the timeline, and the use of the "Notes" and "Comments" fields is discouraged.

If any information in the timeplan is incorrect, this is because the information is incorrect in its original source. Return to the field from which the information was retrieved to make the correction (usually "Thesis work" or "Courses and conferences").

Overview and reflections

The overview table provides an overview of the doctoral studies for each calendar half-year in which an activity has been listed. Milestones, study activity, courses and conferences, and progression are displayed and summarised.

If activities have been entered and assigned the correct progression points (pr), they will be listed here as shown in the example below. Please note that in the example, the sum of course credits and progression points equals 240, which is the desired result.

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)

Reflections

Under "Reflections", the doctoral student and principal supervisor can briefly reflect on the past year, focusing on progression, any obstacles and the need to revise the study plan. Any deviation report should also be included here.

The reflection may, for example, address whether progress in the doctoral studies has been in line with the plan, whether obstacles or changed circumstances have affected the work, and whether planned activities or courses have needed to be revised.

Avoid including sensitive or personal information, as the individual study plan is an official document and may be subject to public access.

Supervisor's review

Once the doctoral student has approved the study plan, it is forwarded to the principal supervisor for review and approval.

The principal supervisor checks that the study plan provides an accurate and up-to-date picture of the planning and progression of the doctoral studies, including milestones, study activity and funding, supervision, thesis activities, and courses and conferences.

The supervisor should pay particular attention to ensuring that thesis activities have the correct status and progression points and are assigned to the correct calendar half-year, that courses and credit transfers are correct, and that activities and courses are correctly totalled in the overview.

Planned activities whose end dates have passed must be followed up and adjusted if necessary. Any deviations from planned progression must be documented under "Overview and reflections".

If the study plan needs to be supplemented, it is returned to the doctoral student. Otherwise, the principal supervisor approves the plan and forwards it to the head of department for review.

Head of department's review

Once the study plan has been approved by the supervisor, corrections should only be necessary in exceptional cases.

If necessary, the study plan can be returned to the doctoral student and supervisor. Please consult the faculty administrator if anything is unclear.

Faculty review

As the final step in the annual review, the ISP administrator checks that the study plan is complete and correct before it is considered by the Faculty Council for Third-Cycle Education (FUR).

If the study plan needs to be supplemented or revised, it is returned to the doctoral student with comments.

Following FUR's decision, the ISP administrator formally approves the current version in Ladok, after which the version is locked.

Further reading

SFS (Sveriges förenade Studentkårer) report on ISP (2024)
https://sfs.se/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/SFS-The-Individual-Study-Plan.pdf