



Scientific Postgraduate Education
HANDBOOK
Faculty of Social Sciences (SOC)

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1. Introduction

This handbook is for those who are studying for a scientific postgraduate degree at the Faculty of Social Sciences (SOC) of Tampere University (TAU). The handbook contains the faculty-specific regulations for postgraduate studies that specify the degree regulations, admission criteria defined for each curriculum period, and links to curriculum structures and content in the electronic study information system SISU. All this information is also available in the [Student's Guide](#).

The Faculty of Social Sciences offers doctoral studies in the humanities, medicine, psychology, health sciences and social sciences in eight Doctoral Programmes.

The degrees awarded by the Faculty's Doctoral Programmes and their fields of study are described in the table below. The link of each programme takes you to its curriculum in the SISU student information system. [The curricula of Licentiate's degrees](#) are also available in SISU.

DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES AND DEGREES	FIELD OF STUDY
Doctoral Programme in Philosophy (PhD, Licentiate of Philosophy) Humanities field of education (MINEDU's area of steering)	Philosophy
Doctoral Programme in History (PhD, Licentiate of Philosophy) Humanities (MINEDU's area of steering)	History
International Doctoral Programme in Epidemiology and Public Health (PhD, HScD, HScL, DM) Health sciences field of education/ Health and welfare fields (MINEDU's area of steering) Medicine (MINEDU'S area of steering) Doctoral Programme in Medicine (DM, PhD) Lääketieteen koulutusala/ Lääketieteet (OKM ohjausala) (LT) Doctoral Programme in Health Sciences (HScD, HScL, PhD) Health sciences field of education/ Health and welfare (MINEDU's area of steering)	Biostatistics Epidemiology Gerontology Global Health and Development Health Care Management Health Economics Health Services Research Health Sociology Nursing Science (no DM degree) Occupational Health Public Health Social and Health Policy Social Psychiatry
Doctoral Programme in Literary Studies (PhD, Phil.Lic.)	Comparative Literature Finnish Literature

Humanities (MINEDU's area of steering)	
<u>Doctoral Programme in Psychology and Logopedics</u> Psychology: Field of education: psychology/social sciences (MINEDU's area of steering) Logopedics: Field of education humanities / humanities (MINEDU's area of steering) Vocology: Field of education humanities / humanities (MINEDU's area of steering)	Psychology (DPsych, LPsych, PhD) Logopedics (PhD, Lic.Phil.) Vocology (PhD, Lic.Phil.)
<u>Doctoral Programme in Social Sciences</u> (DSocSci, LSocSci, PhD) Social sciences field of education/Social sciences (MINEDU's area of steering)	Youth Research Social Anthropology Social Policy Social Psychology Social Work Sociology Gender Studies (formerly Women's Studies) Peace and Conflict Research

At Tampere University, all scientific postgraduate degrees (Licentiate and doctoral degrees) are called doctoral studies. In this handbook, those studying for a scientific postgraduate degree are mainly referred to as doctoral students because the perspective is on studies and curricula. Doctoral students are called doctoral researchers when they are employed by the University.

Licentiate and doctoral degrees consist of the studies in the curriculum as well as the licentiate thesis or doctoral dissertation and its public defence.

The main coordinator of doctoral studies at Tampere University is the Doctoral School, which consists of all Doctoral Programmes of all Faculties. All doctoral students are students at the University's Doctoral School by virtue of being enrolled in a Doctoral Programme. The Doctoral School coordinates, evaluates and develops doctoral education at Tampere University and oversees the joint studies offered to doctoral students.

1.1. Objectives of Postgraduate Education

The Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004) regulates undergraduate and graduate level academic degrees as well as scientific and artistic postgraduate degrees.

According to Section 21 of the Decree, the objective of scientific postgraduate education is that the student:

- 1) becomes well-versed in his/her own field of research and its social significance and gains knowledge and skills needed to apply scientific research methods independently and critically and to produce new scientific knowledge within his/her field of research
- 2) becomes conversant with the development, basic problems, and research methods of his/her own field of research
- 3) gains such knowledge of the general theory of science and of other disciplines related to his/her own field of research that enables him/her to follow developments in them.

Moreover, the aim of postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences is to give the doctoral student the ability to act successfully both in academic research and teaching duties as well as in other specialist roles in society.

Postgraduate students must gain profound knowledge of their own research topic, but also achieve a broad perspective of the field in general. The goal of the studies is to help the student to adopt a scientific way of thinking, understand good research practices, and acquire mastery of diverse research skills.

2. Applying for Postgraduate Studies

2.1. Conditions of Eligibility and Admission Criteria in Postgraduate Studies

Conditions of eligibility

According to Section 37 of the Finnish Universities Act (558/2009), eligible applicants for studies leading to an academic licentiate or doctoral degree have completed:

- 1) a relevant Master's degree awarded by a university
- 2) a relevant Master's degree awarded by a university of applied sciences; or
- 3) a relevant applicable study programme abroad which in the awarding country gives eligibility for the corresponding level of higher education.

The Universities Act (Section 37, 558/2009) stipulates that a university may require a postgraduate student to complete supplementary courses to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to complete a postgraduate degree in the arts or sciences. A maximum of 60 ECTS of supplementary studies may be required of an applicant.

For applicants who have completed a Master's degree in an appropriate field in a university of applied sciences (UAS) in Finland or abroad, the Faculty's doctoral programmes will consider the applicant's ability to successfully complete the doctoral degree on a case-by-case basis.

The Faculty of Social Sciences requires that applicants who have completed an UAS Master's degree in Finland or a Master's degree of less than 120 ECTS abroad demonstrate the following: mastery of the key theoretical concepts of the field, knowledge of scientific theory and research ethics as well as research methods in the field that are required for successfully completing a dissertation. This proficiency must be demonstrated by providing an account of completed studies related to the above-mentioned areas. The account must indicate the content and extent of the studies and include a summary and the final grade of the applicant's thesis for the UAS Master's degree.

Section 22 of the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004) states that to complete a doctoral degree, a student must:

- 1) complete the required postgraduate studies,
- 2) demonstrate independent and critical thinking in the field of research, and
- 3) write a doctoral dissertation and defend it in public.

Section 23 of the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004) defines the licentiate degree as follows: A student admitted to postgraduate studies may complete a licentiate degree when he/she has completed those postgraduate courses that the University deems necessary as well as any specialisation studies included in the degree. The licentiate degree includes a licentiate thesis, in which the student demonstrates good conversance with the field of research and the knowledge and skills for independently and critically applying scientific research methods.

Demonstration of eligibility

Applicants must submit their degree certificates and supporting documents in officially certified form when submitting their application and, where applicable, the documents must accord with the [country-specific requirements](#). For degrees earned at a Finnish university after 1 January 1995, a copy is sufficient because the validity of the degree will be checked in a national database.

Eligibility criteria

According to Section 36 of the Universities Act (558/2009), the university decides on admission criteria. According to Section 20 of Tampere University Degree Regulations, the Faculty Council decides on the conditions and criteria for admission to artistic and scientific postgraduate studies. In addition to an applicant's general eligibility for postgraduate studies, the admission of doctoral students considers the applicant's study plan and research plan, as well as the Faculty's resources for organising courses and supervision in postgraduate education. Tampere University's Academic Board has set out the general principles for the

admission of doctoral students, as well as the policies related the applicant's previous qualifications and the demonstration of language proficiency.

The Faculty decides on the conditions and criteria for admission to postgraduate studies at least as often as in every curriculum period. [The admission criteria of degree programmes](#) are available on the Study with us -> Our programmes -> Doctoral programmes page. Doctoral programmes are responsible for the admission procedure and selection of doctoral students. SOC Faculty's Steering Group for Doctoral Education assesses the ability and commitment of the applicants according to the following criteria:

- scientific quality of the research plan, the suitability of the methods and materials to the research question and the realistic feasibility of the research plan
- clarity of the research questions
- practical or theoretical relevance of the research in its field
- suitability of the research topic for the doctoral programme
- feasibility of the study plan
- applicant's academic success in previous studies
- methodological and theoretical abilities required by scientific research
- applicant's motivation
- language proficiency required in the studies
- availability of supervision resources at the Faculty

The Steering Group for Doctoral Education may also assess the applicant's suitability and motivation by interviewing him/her. The assessments of individual postgraduate applicants are not public.

For a specific reason and after discussing the matter with the Head of a Doctoral Programme, doctoral students may apply to have their dissertation registered even before they have completed their Master's degree. In such cases, the Faculty may allow registering the dissertation and the student can proceed in doctoral studies up to the public defence. However, the right to study and the doctoral degree certificate can be issued only after the student has completed the Master's-level degree.

The basic condition for applicants with an international qualification is that their degree or the combination of degrees gives them eligibility for the corresponding level of higher education in the country in question (amendment to Section 37 of the Universities Act). Applicants must provide certified education documents, and applicants from some countries must provide documents in accordance with the specific country requirements mentioned on the application page in accordance with Tampere University's common policy.

The Dean of the Faculty admits the students based on the proposal of the Steering Group for Doctoral Education.

2.2. Applying for a Right to Study in a Doctoral Programme

Application rounds for doctoral studies are organised twice a year, in October and April. However, the International Doctoral Programme in Epidemiology (IPPE) accepts applications only every other year. Specific application dates are published on the University's [Doctoral Programmes](#) page.

A person who wishes to begin postgraduate studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences should contact a professor or docent (adjunct professor) working at the Faculty at least one month before the application deadline to ask them to become supervisor(s) and to agree on the research topic, research methods, implementation possibilities, and other relevant aspects of the research work. The applicant must have found at least the responsible supervisor by the end of the application period.

After this, the applicant must do the following:

- gain support for the right to study application from the responsible supervisor or all supervisors if they are already known
- ask the Head of the Doctoral Programme or the professor responsible for the field of study to sign the application form
- submit the application form with enclosures via the electronic application system (Studyinfo) to be assessed by the Steering Group for Doctoral Education.

The following documents should be attached to the application form on Studyinfo:

- application form for the right to study, signed by the Head of the Doctoral Programme and the supervisor(s)
- research plan (max. 6 pages including references)
- preliminary postgraduate study plan
- motivation letter (reasons for applying, 1 page)
- in the case of non-Finnish applicants, a certificate attesting to the applicants' Finnish- or English-language skills
- applicant's CV and a possible list of publications
- certified copies of degree certificates if the degrees were not earned at a Finnish university (official translations are required if the degree(s) were completed elsewhere than Finland) and a transcript of the academic records.
- Copy of the applicant's ID (passport or other official identification document containing a photo). This is not required if the applicant has previously studied at Tampere University.

- Applicants who have completed their previous academic degree(s) elsewhere than Finland must also submit a transcript of records showing the grade of their Master's thesis or the general grades of an international degree.
- Approval forms from Follow-up Group members (note: establishing a Follow-up Group is voluntary)

[The application form](#) and [SOC's supervision agreement and study plan form](#) can be found on Tampere University's [Forms for doctoral students](#) page.

- **Research plan:**

The maximum length of the research plan is 6 pages including references (Times New Roman or similar, font size 11, with 1,5 line spacing). The main supervisor and Head of the Degree Programme/professor in charge of the field (and the voluntary Follow-up Group) must approve the plan before it is processed further. The research plan must be written in such a way that it applies to the entire doctoral dissertation/licentiate thesis project.

- **1. Summary of the research plan (max. 1 page, no references)**

- **2. Title of the study**

In English and Finnish

- **3. Background of the study**

Contains a short review of the research topic and locates the applicant's research in relation to the field of study.

- **4. Aims of the study**

The aims of the study and research questions must be clearly delimited and presented (eg the general aim and specific questions).

- **5. Data and methods**

Forming the research data and its rationale.

Description of the research methods.

- **6. Publication of the study**

Form of the study (monograph or article-based)

Description of the content of the articles and publication plan.

- **7. Timetable for the study**

Describe the timetable for the different phases/parts of the study and any funding plan the study requires.

- **8. Ethical considerations**

Describe the ethical considerations that must be considered in the study and assess whether an Ethics Committee opinion is required.

- **9. References**

Language requirements

Tampere University's general language proficiency requirements apply to applicants to the Doctoral Programmes at the Faculty of Social Sciences. An applicant seeking admission to a Doctoral Programme must submit evidence of good command of Finnish or English. Thus, an applicant must submit evidence of good command of English for academic purposes. There are two ways of demonstrating proficiency in the English language: language tests and previous studies. If adequate language skills can be demonstrated on obvious grounds and by other means, a Doctoral Programme may, on specific grounds, waive the language test requirement of an individual applicant.

- Language tests:
- Tampere University accepts the following tests and scores as proof of good command of English:
- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): 92/Internet-based (none of the section scores below 20)
- IELTS Academic (International English Language Testing System): minimum points 6.5 with no individual score below 5.5
- PTE Academic (Pearson's Test of Academic English): minimum points 62 (no part below 54)
- C1 Advanced test (CAE) C
- C2 Proficiency test (CPE) Level C1
- National Certificate of Language Proficiency (YKI), level 5
- Please note that the language test score must be valid throughout the application period. Language test results are valid for two years.
- Previous studies:
- If you have one of the following, you do not need to submit a language test score: A Master's degree completed in an English-language programme at a university in an EU/EEA country, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, or the United States.

2.3. Publishing Admission Results, One Study Right Provision, Accepting a Study Place, and Enrolment

Admissions are announced before the start of the following semester with [application pages](#) containing the exact dates. Admissions are published by sending an email to the applicants.

According to Section 82 of the Universities Act, admission results must be accompanied by a notice setting out the procedure whereby the applicant is able to obtain information about

the application of the admission criteria to him/her. A negative decision on the right to study is accompanied by information on the appeals procedure.

An applicant dissatisfied with the admission results may request a rectification in writing from the Faculty Council within 14 days from the publication of the results. The rectification request with justifications should be posted to Tampere University, address FI-33014 Tampere University or by email tau@tuni.fi.

Provision of One Study Right

According to Section 38 of the Universities Act, a student may accept only one study place in a degree programme leading to an academic degree and beginning during the same semester.

Accepting a Study Place

The admitted student must notify Tampere University of his/her acceptance of the study place within the deadline specified in the University's admission notification. If an admitted student fails to notify the University within the deadline, he/she will lose his/her study place.

The right to study begins on the date mentioned in the admission decision, generally either on the first day of the month following admission or at the beginning of the following semester.

Enrolling as a Doctoral Student

To retain their right to study, students must enrol as present or absent each semester in a manner decreed by the University. Only students enrolled as present may participate in teaching, or study at the University.

A Doctoral Student who has not completed annual enrolment will lose his/her right to study (Universities Act 558/2009, Sections 39 and 43). If the student wishes to continue his/her studies later, he/she must apply to the Faculty of Social Sciences in writing for reinstating the right to study.

Regaining the right to study may be applied according to the [instructions on the Student's Guide](#).

2.4. Responsible Supervisor and Other Supervisors

A person who wishes to begin doctoral studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences should contact a professor or a docent (adjunct professor) working at the Faculty at least a month before the

application deadline to ask him/her to become the supervisor(s) and to agree on the research topic, research methods, implementation possibilities, and other relevant aspects of the research work.

According to Tampere University Regulations on Degrees, all doctoral students are appointed 1) a responsible supervisor and at least one co-supervisor, or 2) a responsible supervisor and a Follow-up Group, or 3) a responsible supervisor, at least one co-supervisor, and a Follow-up Group. The responsible supervisor oversees the doctoral student's degree studies and supervision arrangements. The division of labour between the responsible supervisor, other supervisors and the Follow-up Group is agreed on separately by drafting a supervision agreement. See chapter 2.7. below for information on the supervision agreement.

The responsible supervisor must be a professor, tenure-track teacher or docent who represents the field of the doctoral research and works at Tampere University. For special reasons, a person who is not employed by Tampere University, but conducts research within Tampere University's research community, can also be appointed as the responsible supervisor. The other supervisors must have completed a doctoral degree.

The supervisors of a dissertation must ensure that the study intended to be presented as a doctoral dissertation fulfils the formal requirements of a dissertation as well as those regarding content and quality. Moreover, it is the responsible supervisor's duty to read the manuscript before it is submitted for pre-examination.

The responsible supervisor also approves the other postgraduate studies included in the study plan and degree (a total of at least 60 credits).

The Dean makes the decision on the supervisors and the possible Follow-up Group. Additions or changes to supervision relationships are made using the University's general [Changes in the supervision arrangements](#) form, which is submitted to the Head of Study Services in charge of postgraduate studies at the Faculty (soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi). When needed, the Steering Group for Doctoral Education addresses any problems in supervision relationships.

According to common practice, supervising duties follow the principles of sound scientific practice and the supervisors receive no financial compensation.

2.5. Field of study

In postgraduate studies, the doctoral programme determines the field of study. The fields of study (formerly known as majors, disciplines etc.) of the Faculty's Doctoral Programmes are presented in the table on page 2. The responsible supervisor must come from the field of study of the dissertation. Only one field of study is assigned to each dissertation even in cases where there are two supervisors from different fields or Faculties. The field of study is part of the decision on the right to study meaning that changes to the field of study are decided by the Dean.

2.6. Follow-up Group

If desired, a Follow-up Group is set up to support the doctoral student. These groups add to the guidance and feedback expertise as well as the quality of doctoral dissertations. In addition to supervisors, researchers from, for example, other universities, companies, or research institutes can be selected to join a Follow-up Group. The Follow-up Group is composed of the supervisor of the dissertation as the chairperson and 2–3 other experts, at least two of whom have completed a doctoral degree.

The Follow-up Group is set up at the start of the doctoral studies. It meets at least once a year, either at the invitation of the doctoral student or a supervisor. The doctoral student ensures that a memo is written of each Follow-up Group meeting.

When necessary, the Steering Group for Doctoral Education can ask the Follow-up Group to issue an opinion on how the student is making progress with the dissertation. Members of the Steering Group for Doctoral Education have the right attend Follow-up Group meetings as appropriate.

2.7. Research Plan, Personal Study Plan and Supervision Agreement

Potential doctoral students must draft a research plan and a preliminary study plan to be included in the application for a right to study.

Guidelines on drafting **a research plan** are available on the [Doctoral programmes](#) pages (Study with us -> Our programmes -> Doctoral programmes) for each Doctoral Programme, How to apply for Doctoral Programmes at Tampere University web pages and chapter 2.2. of

this Handbook. Changes in the research plan are only communicated to the Faculty's Steering Group for Doctoral Education if the topic or the field of study changes.

A preliminary **personal study plan (PSP)** is drawn up during the application process, on a free-form basis, in accordance with the current [curriculum of the Doctoral Programme](#). The aim is to ensure that each doctoral student has as clear and appropriate study plan (PSP) as possible at an early stage of the postgraduate studies, which will best serve the dissertation research while providing the student with a broad range of research skills. In addition to the studies in the field, sufficient methodology studies must be included. In addition to SOC's own education provision, applicants should find out about the joint studies offered by [Tampere University's Doctoral School](#). The student's personal study plan, approved by the supervisor, is discussed by the Steering Group for Doctoral Education as part of processing the application for a right to study. In addition to the courses offered by the Faculty and Tampere University's Doctoral School, students may also choose to study in the Doctoral Programmes of other Faculties or other Finnish and/or foreign universities' postgraduate programmes as well as in other courses agreed with the supervisor.

After gaining the right to study, the doctoral student draws up his/her PSP also in the [SISU system](#), Tampere University's study information system. Instructions on planning the studies and drafting the PSP in SISU are available in the [Student's Guide](#). The study plan can be updated throughout the studies and the changes are to be discussed at least at the annual study reporting discussion with the supervisor(s) as necessary. For more information on the reporting of studies, see chapter 3.2.

During the first semester of studies, the doctoral student and his/her supervisor draw up a supervision agreement to ensure that the dissertation research progresses smoothly within the agreed timeframe. The aim of the supervision agreement is to systematise and record the discussion on the forms, practices and timing of doctoral studies and dissertation work, as well as the division of labour between supervisors. It is signed by all the parties involved. The supervision agreement template is available on the Faculty's forms in Tampere University's Students' Guide. The completed supervision agreement should be sent to the Faculty's Head of Study Services in charge of postgraduate education by e-mail to soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi.

3. Curricula of Doctoral Programmes

3.1. Structure and Content of Curricula

The curricula of the Faculty's Doctoral Programmes and the teaching schedule (available courses) are published in the [Student's Guide for each Doctoral Programme](#) and field of study. The curricula are approved by the Faculty Council for three-year periods. Curricula describe the goals, structures, and contents of the degrees. The structure contains all the studies and their scope in the degrees. The courses are specified for each academic year and can be found in the [Courses section](#) of the Study Guide. The correspondences between the current and previous curricula are described in the course info of each course.

The scope of the doctoral degree is 240 credits, which usually equals four years of full-time study. The degree consists of the dissertation research (180 credits) and doctoral courses (60 credits). One year of full-time study equals 60 credits, which corresponds to approximately 1,600 hours of working. A personal study plan (PSP) of the studies included in the Doctoral Programme is drawn up in the electronic SISU system. (See chapter 2.7.)

At the Faculty of Social Sciences (SOC), the structure of the doctoral degrees is the following, which should be checked for each Doctoral Programme from the [curricula](#):

- General Academic Competences 20-30 ECTS OR 10-20 ECTS
- Discipline- and field-specific studies 30-40 ECTS OR 20-50 ECTS
- Doctoral Dissertation and its public defence 180 ECTS

In General Academic Competences, students select courses from those organised by Tampere University's Doctoral School, one's own or another Doctoral Programme at TAU, or methodology and general academic skills courses organised by other universities. The Orientation to Doctoral Studies course of the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Research Ethics course organised by the Doctoral School are compulsory for all Doctoral Programmes. Agree with your supervisor about other possible postgraduate courses. Please refer to the curriculum for the specific requirements of each Doctoral Programme.

After completing studies in the General Academic Competences module, the doctoral students

- have command of good scientific practice, are familiar with the philosophy of science and know how to apply both to research and in their role as an expert
- have a wide understanding of different research methods in their field
- have acquired the general skills of an academic expert

The discipline and field-specific studies should be planned together with the supervisor. Courses can be chosen from studies offered by Tampere University's Doctoral School, the Faculty of Social Sciences, other faculties, or other universities. The aim of the module is to develop a deep understanding and knowledge of the student's field of study and research area, and to deepen the student's knowledge of specific issues in the field. The discipline and field-specific studies include a research seminar in the field of study/discipline. Please refer to the curriculum for the specific requirements of each Doctoral Programme.

As a rule, only postgraduate or advanced level studies should be completed.

After completing the discipline- and field-specific studies, doctoral students have a profound understanding of the specific questions in their field of study and research topic, can further develop their own field of study and have gained abilities to develop their field of research on a wider scale.

Further instructions on the doctoral dissertation can be found in Chapter 4.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) in doctoral studies:

With the approval of the supervisor, other attainments than regular course units may be accepted as part of the studies. The table below lists examples of courses or other attainments that can be recognised in the doctoral degree. If the number of credits has already been determined, those credits will be used. Other attainments are scaled as proposed by the supervisor in accordance with the recommendation below. More information on completion methods and requirements is available on the course unit page and the SISU system.

Course content/description	SISU course code and credits (old curriculum in brackets)
Participating in teaching max. 5 ECTS as agreed with the supervisor.	DPSOC.010 (=DPSO C.001) Teaching 1-5 ECTS
Participation in national or international postgraduate education in the field; e.g. Summer Schools, research network meetings; 1–2 courses = 5 ECTS	DPSOC.020 (=DPSOC.002) Other scientific education 1-10 ECTS

Scientific publications, e.g., one scientific article which is not included in the thesis 5-10 ECTS as agreed with the supervisor.	DPSOC.030 (=DPSOC.003) Other scientific publications 5-10 ECTS
Participation in a scientific meeting or conference in Finland or abroad. Credits vary according to the length and content of the conference as agreed with the supervisor; 1-2 ECTS according to the supervisor.	DPSOC.040 (=DPSOC.004) Scientific conference 1-10 ECTS
Field-Specific literature, exams and essays as agreed with the supervisor.	DPSOC.050 (=DPSOC.005) Other field-specific studies 1-10 ECTS

The curriculum also includes the following joint doctoral studies offered by the Faculty:

Orientation to doctoral studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences
Writing Academic Journal Articles
How to finish your dissertation: writing integrative chapter/finalizing a monograph
Vauhtia kirjoittamiseen (Speed up your writing, this course has no English-language name but is available to all students)
Seminar for writing a summary chapter of PhD thesis
How to make it short - Instructions on abstract writing

News about studies, dissertation defences, and other topical matters are published on Tampere University's [website](#) and [intranet](#) as well as the Faculty's email list for doctoral students (soc.doctoralstudents@lists.tuni.fi). New doctoral students are automatically added to the Faculty's joint email list.

The activation and deployment of Tampere University's TUNI computer account and changing the password happen on id.tuni.fi. [Further information is available in the University's handbook](#). Please note that the University communicates with students only via the firstname.surname@tuni.fi email, so use it actively throughout your studies. The email account will close seven days after graduation or the expiry of the right to study. [The validity of the basic user account can be checked in the id.tuni.fi service](#).

3.2. Reporting the Studies

According to Section 25 of Tampere University Regulations on Degrees, the progress of degree students is monitored at various phases during their studies. At the Faculty of Social Sciences, doctoral students have the duty to report on the progress they are making in their research work and other studies once a year. Annual reporting is a precondition for receiving any research grants awarded by the Faculty. Doctoral students should submit their report on a separate form by the end of October each year.

[The form for annual reporting](#) is available in Tampere University's Student's handbook.

The Follow-up Group (voluntary) is an important body monitoring the doctoral student's progress. When necessary, the Steering Group for Doctoral Education also has the right to request the doctoral student and his/her supervisor to report on the progress the student is making with the dissertation and doctoral studies.

According to Section 3 of Tampere University's Regulations on Degrees, feedback is collected on education as part of the quality management and development of education.

At Tampere University, a feedback survey on postgraduate studies is collected from all doctoral students every two years. The results are available on the [Feedback on education](#) page in the intranet. Faculty-specific summaries of the responses are available to the Tampere University community on TG-TAU Opetussuunnitelmatyö.

3.3. General Doctoral Programme

The dissertation is a coherent presentation of original scientific knowledge based on the doctoral student's independent research. The dissertation is a monograph written by the

author or several publications on the same field of study and a summary thereof, as deemed sufficient by the Faculty Council. Publications may also include co-publications if the dissertation author's independent contribution can be demonstrated.

According to Section 26 of Tampere University Regulations on Degrees, doctoral students who fail to further their dissertation and other studies may be transferred from a Faculty's Doctoral Programme to the Faculty's **General Doctoral Programme**.

In the General Doctoral Programme

- the student can continue to study and do research
- the progress the doctoral student makes in studies and research is not monitored
- the doctoral student is not supervised, and he/she cannot submit a Licentiate thesis or doctoral dissertation for pre-examination meaning that students cannot graduate from the Faculty's General Doctoral Programme.

A doctoral student in one of the Faculty's Doctoral Programmes may be transferred to the general doctoral programme when

- the doctoral student asks to be transferred
- the doctoral student enrolls as absent in two consecutive academic years (absences related to parenthood or military service are not counted as absences)
- the progress the doctoral student has made in the previous two years has significantly deviated from the timetable set out in the supervision agreement and the study or research plan.

Before transferring a doctoral student to the General Doctoral Programme, the student is given the opportunity to give an account of his/her studies. The doctoral student may also choose to waive his/her right to study. The Dean makes the transfer decisions. The matter is prepared by the Faculty's study administration or the Steering Group for Doctoral Education.

Students in the General Doctoral Programme, who have started to study again, may reapply to the Faculty's Doctoral Programme after

- a supervision discussion with the supervisor(s)/Follow-up Group and a new supervision agreement has been made, and
- the student has updated his/her personal study plan and research plan.

If the doctoral student receives a favourable opinion from his/her responsible supervisor regarding transferring back to the Doctoral Programme, he/she shall submit a free-form

application and attachments (study plan, research plan, supervisor's opinion) to the Faculty's study administration. The matter will be discussed by the Faculty's Steering Group for Doctoral Education. The decision on the transfer is made by the Dean based on the Steering Group's proposal.

4. Dissertation Guidelines

4.1. What is Required of a Dissertation

The dissertation is a coherent presentation of original scientific knowledge based on the doctoral student's independent research. The dissertation is a monograph written by the author or several publications in the same field of study and a summary thereof, as deemed sufficient by the Faculty Council. The publications may also include co-publications if the dissertation author's independent contribution to them can be demonstrated.

There are two stages in the examination of a dissertation: the pre-examination and the public defence. The Doctoral Programmes' curricula include descriptions of the dissertation, the learning outcomes and the things that are done in the public defence.

4.2. Form of the Dissertation

A dissertation can be either a monograph or an article-based dissertation.

An article-based dissertation consists of several scientific articles, which together form a consistent entity, and a summary that draws together all the articles. The summary presents the dissertation's goals, methods and results, and the student writes it independently. However, the articles can have several authors provided the doctoral student has a clear, independent role in each of them. An article can also be a systematic literature review, if it contains a synthesis produced with an analytical method, produces new information and is not merely descriptive.

The articles of a dissertation must be published in scientific peer-reviewed (referee system) journals or books. Suitable publications may be searched on the [Publication Forum website](#).

The manuscript of an article-based dissertation can be submitted to pre-examination when at least three articles have been published or accepted for publication, and the

summary has been completed. In addition to published articles, the dissertation may include one or several articles that have been submitted for publication.

In general, an article can only be used as part of one dissertation. However, for specific reasons, an article can be published in two different dissertations. In such a case, the doctoral students must have a distinctive, independent contribution in it. As a rule, the first author has the privilege to use the publication. If an article is used in more than one dissertation, a written consent is required from all the authors and the responsible supervisor. If the dissertation contains more than one article that is also published in another dissertation, the matter must be approved by the Steering Group for Doctoral Education before the pre-examiners can be appointed. Doctoral students using a joint publication and their supervisors must make a joint written statement on the contribution of each student in conducting the research and preparing the publication. The report is submitted to the Steering Group for Doctoral Education before the appointment of the pre-examiners, and it is included as an appendix to the dissertation manuscript that is sent to the pre-examiners.

The articles may include an article that the doctoral student has published as part of a Master's thesis.

A monograph is an independent scientific study, which focuses on research results that have not been published before. It is the result of the doctoral student's own research and solely written by him/her.

4.3. Guidelines on Writing Article-based and Monograph Dissertations

Every dissertation must have a cover page presenting the title of the dissertation, name of the doctoral student, the Faculty that accepted the manuscript for publication and the fact that the work is a doctoral dissertation. Overleaf are included the name of the University and Faculty, the responsible supervisor, and other supervisors, custos, pre-examiners and opponent(s).

An article-based dissertation usually consists of the following elements:

- Table of contents
- List of the original publications on which the dissertation is based. If any of the articles have been/will be used as part of another dissertation, this information must be added at the end of the list of original publications.
- A list of the abbreviations, pictures and diagrams used

- A Finnish- and English-language abstract of 1–2 pages.
- A short introduction
- A literature review presenting the essential background of the research topic, the development of knowledge and research and their current status.
- Research questions
- Materials and methods
- Results and, in an article-based dissertation, a summary of the results
- Discussion that involves a critical approach to the results in light of the methods and content, the significance of the results, and a comparison of the results to previous studies in the field
- Summary and conclusions (and future scenarios)
- Acknowledgements
- Bibliography

In an article-based dissertation, the results and discussion should summarise the articles and form a synthesis of the research results. It is not desirable for the results section, or especially the discussion section, to contain many direct quotations from the text of the articles, or for the summary of the dissertation to proceed entirely along the lines of the sub-publications.

In terms of presenting and discussing the results and methods, the summary must be an independent entity that is understandable even without reading the original articles. The summary may include the same images as the original articles, but they must contain a full reference to the original article, and the author must have the publisher's permission to use them. This also applies to tables if they have been copied from the articles.

A monograph generally consists of the following elements:

- Preface/Acknowledgements
- Table of Contents
- A list of abbreviations, images, and diagrams
- Abstract (1–2 pages) in Finnish, English or Swedish.
- Introduction
- Research questions
- Linking the topic and study to the context of previous research, relevance of the study
- Theoretical framework, key concepts, and methods
- Research data
- Results
- Conclusions, which draw together the results of the study and discuss their broader empirical and theoretical relevance
- Sources and bibliography

The language of the dissertation must be polished. If the dissertation is written in another language than the first language, a language check is required. The Steering Group for Doctoral Education may also require a language revision. A dissertation can be published in Finnish, Swedish or English.

4.4. Submitting a Manuscript for Preliminary Examination

When the doctoral student and supervisor(s) find that the dissertation manuscript is ready for preliminary examination (contents and layout completed), the manuscript (in PDF-form) and a signed form for permission to submit the manuscript for preliminary examination should be sent to the Faculty by email to (soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi). The Faculty appoints the preliminary examiners.

[The application form](#) contains the supervisor's proposal for preliminary examiners and a possible proposal for the opponent and custos. The doctoral student, supervisors and the Head of the Doctoral Programme must sign the form. The form is available on Tampere University's electronic [Students guide](#) from "Forms and links at SOC's Scientific Postgraduate Education. The last page of the form contains further instructions on the necessary attachments of the manuscript.

The following enclosures are needed with the pre-examination permission form:

1. An abstract (1–2 pages) summarising the main findings of the study in both English and Finnish
2. A Turnitin report signed by the responsible supervisor
3. If the dissertation is article-based, the following documents should also be submitted:
 - A list of the articles. If all the articles have not been published in scientific publications yet, a confirmation of their status is required. This confirmation can be a publisher's message (eg a printed e-mail) either affirming acceptance for publication or receipt of a submitted article.
 - A report about the doctoral student's personal contribution to each article. The report should describe the student's contribution (as appropriate) to each article in terms of choosing the topic, forming research questions, choosing the research setting and methods (eg drafting a questionnaire), collecting data, conducting analysis, interpreting the results and writing the article. The report (1–2 pages) must be approved and signed by the doctoral student and the responsible supervisor.
 - If any of the articles in the dissertation has been or will be used as part of another dissertation, a written consent is required from all other article writers and their supervisors.

4. Electronically submitted (soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi) dissertation manuscript in the PDF format. The articles of an article-based dissertation may be included in the same file or they can be sent as separate files.

The originality of doctoral dissertations and Licentiate theses submitted for pre-examination is verified by using the Turnitin originality checking software. Further instructions for [supervisors are available on the intranet](#) and for [doctoral students in the Student's Guide](#).

4.5. Pre-examiners

The pre-examiners and the opponent must come from outside the University and be experienced experts at the docent level. A person who has a conflict of interest may not act as a pre-examiner or opponent. For a valid reason, the second pre-examiner may be from Tampere University, but even in this case his/her main working position must be elsewhere than in Tampere University's scientific community. The pre-examiners and opponent should not have scientific publications or similar co-operation with the doctoral student or the supervisors within the last three years. Stipulations on the conflict of interest of experts are presented in Sections 27–29 of the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003)

A pre-examiner may act as the opponent on only very specific grounds. The Dean appoints the pre-examiners.

4.6. Pre-examination

Once the Dean has appointed the pre-examiners, the Faculty sends them the manuscript and relevant instructions by email.

There are two stages in the examination of a dissertation: the pre-examination and the public defence. The pre-examination is the most important scientific quality assurance procedure in the dissertation process. It is the responsibility of the pre-examiners to give an opinion on whether the manuscript has such scientific or artistic value that the Faculty can authorise its presentation as a dissertation. At the public defence, the opponent in particular will assess the doctoral student's ability to defend his/her work and research results.

The pre-examiners submit their statement on the dissertation manuscript to the Faculty for granting the permission to defend the work in public. The pre-examination should be carried out within two months of receipt of the request for the pre-examination.

From the perspective of research ethics and the integrity of the process, doctoral students should not directly contact the pre-examiners during the examination. When necessary, the pre-examiners may contact the doctoral student or the responsible supervisor to clarify the claims, perspectives or data presented in the dissertation. Pre-examiners are not expected to supervise the doctoral student's work or require several rounds of revisions. If the pre-examiner has been in contact with the student during the process, the supervisor must be informed, and this should be mentioned in the statement. Communications with the student can also occur with the supervising professor acting as an intermediary. If significant changes have been made to the manuscript based on the pre-examiner contacting the doctoral student, a mention of this must be added to the pre-examination statement.

Pre-examiners are expected to review the dissertation as one entity, even though the scientific articles possibly included in the dissertation may already have undergone a peer review and been accepted for publication. The Faculty expects the pre-examiners to submit a statement that clearly defines whether the manuscript can be presented as a doctoral dissertation. The statement should be either favourable or negative, not conditional. However, the pre-examiners may recommend minor changes or revisions to the manuscript, which the doctoral candidate may consider. The pre-examiners may also propose technical changes to the manuscript. A permit to accept the dissertation may also be refused during the pre-examination.

The pre-examination statement should include:

1. A statement on the dissertation that evaluates the scientific quality and the strengths and limitations of the dissertation (approx. 2-4 pages).
2. A possible separate list of suggested revisions and changes.

In the statement, the pre-examiner:

- a) recommends permitting the manuscript to be presented as a doctoral dissertation OR
- b) does not recommend permitting the manuscript to be presented as a doctoral dissertation

In his/her statement, the pre-examiner is invited to comment on at least the following points:

1. The general nature of the dissertation: A brief description of the scientific content and main results presented in the dissertation
2. Scientific novelty, scientific significance, practical significance

3. Coherence: Does the manuscript comprise a coherent, unified entity?
4. Clarity of the research questions and objectives
5. Knowledge of relevant scientific literature
6. Command of the research method(s)
7. The quality, extent, and relevance of the research data.
8. The doctoral student's independent contribution, for example, to co-authored publications and the planning and implementation of research
9. Scientific maturity of the research and critical approach
10. Writing style and presentation

After the pre-examiners have provided their statements, the Steering Group for Doctoral Education presents its opinion on granting the permission to defend the dissertation. After this, the Dean decides about granting the permission to defend the dissertation and appoints an opponent and a custos for the defence.

Because the pre-examiners participate in the grading of the dissertation, the doctoral student drafts a list of the corrections and changes made to the manuscript after the pre-examination. The Faculty will send the list and the published dissertation to the pre-examiners for grading (see Chapter 5.5. Grading a Dissertation).

After this, the Faculty sends the opponent, doctoral student and custos instructions on, for example, the public defence.

If a pre-examination statement is negative, the pre-examination process may be discontinued by the doctoral student. The Dean makes the formal decision on this. Once the process has halted, a new pre-examination process can be started when authorised by the supervisors.

4.7. Publishing the Dissertation

There are several ways to publish a dissertation. The most common one is to publish it online and printed as part of the Tampere University Dissertations series. Doctoral students should ask the publisher for permission to use the research articles as part of the printed online dissertation. A printed dissertation can also be published by another publisher than the University.

The list below details the phases in the publication of a dissertation. Further instructions on each step, which are always up to date, are available in [Tampere University Library's guideline](#):

- 1) Make note of the layout of the series, see the Template and layout page.
- 2) Download the template for the title page and fill in the requested information.
- 3) Check with the Faculty (soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi) that the information you are providing is correct.
- 4) Send a notice of the dissertation defence, the filled title page template and the possible publication permits to the Library.
- 5) Ensure that the Faculty has granted you permission for the public defence. The Faculty informs the doctoral student, supervisor, and Library about the permit to defend the dissertation.
- 6) Send your dissertation to the printers by filling in the order form (about 5 weeks before the dissertation defence).
- 7) Read the proof version of the dissertation carefully and approve it.
- 8) Send the possible articles (if they are different than in the printed book) to the Library as PDF files.
- 9) Draft the news release about the dissertation defence as instructed.

It is possible to book a one-hour free consultation with the Library about finalising the dissertation.

In addition, a layout service is available by paying a fee.

4.8. Publicity of the Dissertation and Communications

The dissertation must be publicly available at least 10 days before the public defence. If the dissertation is published in Tampere University Dissertation series, the printing house will deliver copies directly to the Faculty and the Library. If a dissertation is published elsewhere, the author must submit ten (10) copies to the Faculty and three (3) copies to the Library 14 days before the defence.

Publication support

The University subsidises the printing costs of the doctoral dissertation by paying the costs of 18 copies, which includes the Faculty's and Library's copies. The Faculty mails the dissertations to the opponent, the pre-examiners, the supervisors and custos and the copies that are publicly available in the university's buildings. The doctoral student pays for the personal copies he/she orders. The City of Tampere supports doctoral students by awarding grants to cover [the printing costs of dissertations](#) (Page available only in Finnish).

The dissertation can be read via the University's [public defence events](#) page at least 10 days prior to the public defence. The dissertation is also available at the Faculty office.

5. Dissertation Defence and Grading the Dissertation

5.1. Custos

The custos is the chair of the public defence and represents the University at the event. He/she ensures that the opponent and doctoral student understand the nature of the defence proceedings and follow the conventions. The custos may be a professor or docent of the University who has supervised the dissertation. An emerita or emeritus professor who has been an active supervisor for the dissertation may also act as the custos. The Faculty Council appoints the opponent and custos.

5.2. Agreeing on Dissertation Defence and Practical Arrangements

Immediately after agreeing with the custos and the opponent on the date of the dissertation defence, the doctoral student must also notify the Faculty's study administration by email soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi so that the public presentation of the dissertation for the fixed period (10 days) can be taken care of and that other preparations for the official distribution of the dissertation may be undertaken.

The team of campus assistants helps the doctoral student in the practical arrangements of the dissertation defence (booking the lecture hall, ordering possible refreshments, the travel and accommodation arrangements of opponent(s)) kampusassistentit@tuni.fi. The dissertation defences are organised at Tampere University's premises. By Dean's decision, a dissertation defence may exceptionally be held elsewhere if the dissertation is related to Tampere University's Unit located outside Tampere that also has teaching and research activities in the field. In this case, a remote connection is recommended to enable following the dissertation defence virtually.

The University's [Student's guide](#) contains TAU's general and Faculty-specific guidelines on dissertation defences. The page also contains information on the public defence costs that [the SOC Faculty pays for](#). The Faculty sends instructions on the public defence (including the lines to be spoken at the defence) to the opponent, doctoral student and

custos. The opponent is also sent information on travel and accommodation arrangements. The formalities of the public defence can be found in chapter 5.4. below.

5.3. Publicity of the Dissertation Defence

Doctoral dissertations must always be examined in public. The public defence of a doctoral dissertation serves at least three purposes:

- 1) It offers an opportunity to publicly and reliably ensure that the doctoral student has written the dissertation himself/herself and that the dissertation meets the scientific criteria set for a dissertation.
- 2) It offers the opponent(s), people assessing the dissertation and other people interested in the topic an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the dissertation by listening to, making observations, asking questions and by discussing with the author.
- 3) It offers an opportunity to highlight research in a way that deviates from the everyday and is more visible to the public.

5.4. Formalities Observed in the Dissertation Defence

The public defence generally follows certain traditional customs and formal requirements. These customs and formal requirements supplement the official regulations concerning the examination of a dissertation. Over time, the formalities and traditional customs evolve. For this reason, the main participants at the defence should always negotiate the arrangements beforehand and define the way the formalities are applied in practice.

Dress code

It is customary for the doctoral student, custos and opponent to wear a tailcoat and a black waistcoat (or a uniform without any honorary medals). Women wear a black formal outfit and no hat. If the opponent and custos consider it appropriate, men may wear a black suit instead of a tailcoat. The custos and the opponent must hold their doctor's hats in their hands when entering and exiting the lecture hall.

Entrance and opening a dissertation defence

The participants enter the lecture hall in the following order: first, the doctoral student; second, the custos; and, last, the opponent(s). In the lecture hall, the custos will position him/herself in the middle, with the doctoral candidate on his/her left side and the opponent on the right. Once all participants have taken their places, the custos will start

the public defence by saying: *“As Custos appointed by the Faculty of Social Sciences, I officially open this public defence.”* The Custos briefly introduces the Doctoral candidate and the opponent to the audience. After this, the custos and opponent(s) sit down.

Lectio praecursoria

The doctoral student does not sit down but holds his/her lectio praecursoria, an introductory lecture, which may last for 15–20 minutes. The purpose of the opening lecture is to introduce the audience to the topic of the dissertation, but not to present the results or the course of the study in detail. The listeners are greeted in the order of importance: *“Honourable Custos, my esteemed Opponent, Ladies and Gentlemen.”* During the opening lecture, the doctoral student’s assistant can disseminate copies of the lectio praecursoria to the audience. A non-Finnish opponent is given a translation of the lectio praecursoria, if it is held in Finnish. After the lecture, the doctoral student says: *“Professor (or Doctor etc.) N.N., I respectfully ask you, as the Opponent appointed by the Faculty of Social Sciences, to present your criticism concerning my dissertation.”*

Examination of the dissertation

The introductory lecture and the dissertation defence can be held in Finnish, Swedish or English.

The opponent will then stand up and give a short initial response about the dissertation’s position and significance in the field. After this, both the opponent and the doctoral student sit down. Even if there are more than one opponent, only one of them will give the initial response.

If there are several opponents, they may agree to take turns and decide on a division of labour beforehand as well as participate in the discussion on a topic raised by one of them.

The dissertation defence must not take more than six hours. The examination may be suspended for a break; the custos announces the break.

At the end of the examination, the opponent stands up to present his/her final statement, which the doctoral student hears standing up. In the final statement, the opponent says whether he/she will recommend approving the dissertation.

After the final statement, the doctoral candidate immediately expresses his/her thanks to the opponent(s): *“I thank you, Professor/Docent N.N, for the valuable comments concerning my dissertation I have received from you”*. The doctoral candidate then turns to the audience and says: *“I now ask the members of the audience who wish to comment on my dissertation to request a permission to speak from the Custos.”* The custos then asks the audience to pose questions and comments to the doctoral candidate and gives the floor when asked. If someone in the audience considers that the dissertation should not be approved, they must declare their objection to the Faculty Council in writing.

The custos closes the examination by saying: “This public defence is now completed.”

The participants then leave the lecture hall in reverse order, i.e. the opponent(s) leave first, followed by the custos and doctoral candidate.

The Faculty will send the lines to be spoken to the opponent(s), custos and doctoral students.

5.5. Assessment of a Dissertation and the Opponent’s Statement

According to Tampere University Regulations on Degrees, the Faculty Council approves and evaluates doctoral dissertations based on the written statements provided by the opponent(s), a possible grade proposed by an evaluation committee, pre-examiners’ statements and other written comments.

At the Faculty of Social Sciences, assessment consists of 1) the written pre-examination statements and grading recommendations of the pre-examiners, which they give on the completed dissertation, taking into account any alterations made to it and the author’s report on them (see section 4.6), and 2) the statement and grading recommendation of the opponent.

The opponent’s statement should consider the dissertation as well as the public defence according to the following criteria:

Assessment criteria

- The general nature of the dissertation: A brief description of the scientific content of the dissertation and the main results
- Scientific novelty value, scientific significance, and practical importance

- Cohesion of the manuscript: does the research conducted for the dissertation form a unified, controlled entity
- Clarity of the research questions and objectives
- Knowledge of relevant scientific literature
- Command of the research method(s)
- Quality, extent, and relevance of the research data.
- The independent role of the doctoral student in, among other things, joint publications/research design and implementation.
- Scientific maturity of the research and critical approach
- Writing style and presentation
- Ability to conduct scientific debate and defend the dissertation in the public defence (opponent)

The official opponent(s) submit a written assessment report to the Faculty. The opponent(s)' statement must be submitted to the Faculty within two weeks of the dissertation defence. According to Section 44 of the Finnish Universities Act (558/2009), the doctoral candidate can reply to the statement. In addition to the written statement, the opponent(s) submit a proposal for the grade with a separate form.

The opponent(s)' and pre-examiners' grade proposals should follow the following principles.

Grading principles

Dissertations are graded using the scale of *approved with distinction, approved, and failed*.

Approved with distinction

The approved with distinction grade can be given to a dissertation whose international scientific quality and significance are exceptionally high and where the doctoral candidate's own innovative contribution is especially important. In the light of the assessment criteria, the dissertation has considerable merits without shortcomings that would cancel the merits. The doctoral dissertation is ethically sound and follows good scientific practice.

Approved

The study has the contribution value required of a dissertation, ie it addresses a scientifically important and well-grounded set of issues and has produced new and significant information for the theory and praxis in the research field. The approved grade requires that there are no significant deficiencies in the dissertation in terms of goal setting, presentation of the theoretical background, selection of data and methods, and the presentation of results and conclusions.

The dissertation is ethically sound and follows good scientific practice. The author of the dissertation has defended the research results in the public examination and responded to the public criticism.

Failed

Pre-examiners and the opponent must recommend that the dissertation is failed if it does not meet the criteria for acceptable work, has significant inadequacies, or has been found to contain ethical misconduct (such as scientific fraud).

6. Graduation

A doctoral student may request a degree certificate when the dissertation has been assessed by the Faculty Council and all the studies set out in the curriculum have been completed and entered in the academic record. In Sisu, the PSP must be up-to-date and approved by study administration. Only students who are [enrolled as present](#) may graduate.

Doctoral students apply for graduation and the degree certificate via the SISU study information system. The Student's Guide contains further information on [requesting the degree certificate](#). The Dean makes the decision on awarding the degree.

The certificate is sent to the new doctor's address. It may also be picked up in person upon agreement from the Linna building on the city centre campus every month except July.

7. Guidelines on the Licentiate Thesis

In a licentiate degree, the student must demonstrate knowledge of the research field and the ability to apply research methods independently and critically. Where applicable, the instructions concerning a doctoral dissertation can also be applied to a licentiate thesis.

For a licentiate degree, a student must complete the same studies (60 ECTS) as for a doctoral degree. Detailed information about the scope and contents of the studies and completion methods is available in each Doctoral Programme curriculum. In addition, a licentiate thesis is needed, which is approved by the Faculty Council. The recommended extent of the licentiate thesis is 90 ECTS.

A licentiate thesis can be either a monograph, a consistent entity of at least two scientific publications or manuscripts intended for publication paired with a summary (cf. an article-based dissertation) that describes the objectives, methods and results of the study, or other

work that fulfils equivalent scientific criteria. The publications may include co-authored publications if the student's independent contribution can be clearly demonstrated.

When the author considers his/her licentiate thesis to be ready for examination, he/she must submit the following: the manuscript (in PDF format) and the permission to submit the thesis for examination form. The documents and relevant enclosures should be sent to the Faculty so that the examiners can be appointed.

The permission for pre-examination form contains the supervisor's proposal for examiners. Both examiners must hold doctoral degrees. One of the examiners must come from outside the University and the other examiner can be a supervisor. Delegated by the Faculty Council, the Dean appoints two examiners for a licentiate thesis.

The student and the supervisor must sign the form. The form is available on Tampere University's electronic [Student's guide](#) from "Forms and links at SOC's Scientific Postgraduate Education.

The required enclosures:

- 1) An abstract (1–2 pages) summarising the main findings of the study in both Finnish and English.
- 2) A Turnitin report signed by the supervisor.
- 3) If the licentiate thesis is article-based, the following documents should also be submitted:
 - A list of the articles on which the research is based. If all the articles have not been published in scientific publications yet, a confirmation of their status is required. This confirmation can be a publisher's message (eg printed e-mail) either confirming acceptance for publication or receipt of a submitted article.
 - A report on the student's own contribution in each article. The report should describe the student's contribution (as appropriate) to each article in terms of choosing the topic, forming research questions, choosing the research setting and methods (eg drafting a questionnaire), collecting data, conducting analysis, interpreting the results and writing the article. The report (1–2 pages) must be approved and signed by the doctoral student and the responsible supervisor.
 - If any of the articles in the licentiate thesis have been or will be used as part of another dissertation, a written consent is required from all other article writers and their supervisors.
- 4) Electronically submitted (soc.doc.tau@tuni.fi) thesis manuscript in the PDF format. The articles in a licentiate thesis may be included in the same file or they can be sent as separate files.

The originality of licentiate theses submitted for examination is verified by using the Turnitin originality checking software. Doctoral students may use the Turnitin programme already

during their research work to ensure that they have correctly referred to literature. When the licentiate thesis is complete and all the references are properly done, the manuscript is fed to the Turnitin programme for the official originality check. Further instructions for [supervisors are available on the intranet](#) and for [doctoral students in the Student's Guide](#).

After the Turnitin check, the licentiate thesis is submitted for assessment in the Trepo publication system according to the Library's instructions, after which the manuscript can no longer be edited. The examiners are sent the same version of the thesis as has been saved on Trepo. The Library's website contains guidelines on [submitting a licentiate thesis for assessment](#).

The Student's Guide contains general information on the [examination process of a licentiate thesis](#).

A meeting to examine the thesis is organised, at which at least one of the examiners must be present. The examiners must give a reasoned written statement on the thesis after the examination. The examination must be carried out within two months. Before issuing their opinion, the examiners may consult with the author of the thesis on any shortcomings they have identified and on any proposals for corrections. The examiners' statements are sent to the Faculty.

Once the Faculty has received the statements, they are sent to the author. The author has the right to respond to the examiners' statements (Section 44, Universities Act 558/2009). The examiners' statements are first discussed by the Steering Group for Doctoral Education after which the Dean, delegated by the Faculty Council, approves the thesis based on the examiners' statements.

The Licentiate thesis is evaluated on a scale of pass/fail. Licentiate theses are published electronically in Tampere University's institutional repository Trepo, which the Library maintains. The thesis is published after its approval has been recorded in the student information system SISU and transferred from SISU to the Library. The grade will not be published online.

If an examiner does not recommend the approval of a licentiate thesis, the student will withdraw the manuscript from examination and, after corrections, the review process may start again.

8. Steering Group for Doctoral Education

According to Section 7 of Tampere University Regulations on Degrees, each degree programme has a steering group with teachers, students and support staff as members, and other experts as deemed necessary. At the Faculty of Social Sciences, scientific postgraduate education is coordinated by the Steering Group for Doctoral Education. The Steering Group's term of office is the same as that of the Faculty Council's.

The Steering Group for Doctoral Education prepares matters related to scientific postgraduate education to be decided by the Faculty Council or Dean. The steering group consists of the Heads of the Doctoral Programmes. Two doctoral students are also members. All members have alternates. The Head of Study Affairs in charge of postgraduate education is secretary of the committee who also presents matters concerning postgraduate studies to the Faculty Council and the Dean. As a rule, the Steering Group for Doctoral Education meets once a month.

At the Faculty of Social Sciences, the duties of the Steering Group for Doctoral Education are to

- coordinate, prepare and be responsible for curriculum design at the faculty level in co-operation with the Doctoral Programmes
- report to the Academic Board on the implementation of strategic priorities in the curricula
- formulate the Faculty's strategic and substance priorities for the design and development of curricula in doctoral education (including pedagogical development) to be adopted by the Faculty Council.
- process feedback and statistical data, identify faculty-level development needs and monitor the progress made by doctoral students
- plan the curricula and teaching of Doctoral Programmes to be adopted by the Faculty Council
- prepare guidelines that specify the Degree Regulations or other university-level guidelines
- prepare the admission criteria of doctoral students and admit doctoral students/doctoral researchers; specify the target numbers of students and the criteria for changing one's doctoral programme, field of study, and major subject
- process applications for right to study to be decided by the Dean
- address matters related to doctoral dissertations and licentiate's theses to be decided by the Faculty Council or Dean (may be delegated to the doctoral programme or the Head of a Doctoral Programme)
- address legal protection issues and possible problem situations in supervision relationships
- process proposals on Doctoral Programmes to the Faculty Council and develop and evaluate the operations of Doctoral Programmes
- monitor the doctoral education budget

The Steering Group may invite additional members and experts in accordance with the issues to be addressed. The meeting times of the Steering Group, members and duties are available on the Faculty's [TG-SOC Info](#) area.

9 Funding

The Faculty of Social Sciences hires doctoral students to salaried employment relationships if the Faculty's financial situation permits. The job title of an employed doctoral student is doctoral researcher. A position can be offered for max. 4 years and its purpose is to allow doctoral researchers to focus on their dissertation study on a full-time basis.

The Faculty and supervisors will assist doctoral researchers to apply for external funding. Dissertations are often completed with the help of a personal grant or scholarship.

The Faculty also offers [travel and language check grants](#) to doctoral students.

More information about all types of funding can be found in Tampere University's [Student's guide](#).

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These guidelines on scientific postgraduate education at the Faculty of Social Sciences (SOC) are valid until further notice. The need for updates will be assessed in synch with the three-year curricula cycle at Tampere University.

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Appendix 1. Responsibilities and Duties of Doctoral Students and Supervisors

The responsible supervisor oversees the doctoral student's degree studies and supervision arrangements. The supervisors of a dissertation must ensure that the study intended to be presented as a doctoral dissertation fulfils the formal requirements of a dissertation in terms of content, quality, and form. Moreover, it is the responsible supervisor's duty to read the entire dissertation manuscript before it is submitted to pre-examination. The responsible supervisor also approves the other postgraduate studies included in the personal study plan and degree (a total of at least 60 credits).

The doctoral student commits to

- maintaining the supervisory relationship with the supervisor(s) and being active in communication
- submitting an annual progress report to the supervisor(s)
- being the principal player in his/her own research work
- being familiar with the curriculum and updating the personal study plan (PSP)
- actively acquiring skills and knowledge needed to advance the research
- adhering to the agreed working timetable and to informing the supervisor about factors that may affect making progress in the work
- sending the supervisor(s) parts of the manuscript for comments in due time before meetings, according to what has been agreed
- presenting all potential questions and possible worries concerning the work in the meetings
- considering the supervisor's comments concerning the dissertation/thesis
- complying with the rules of responsible conduct of research in the supervision relationship and in conducting research and to discussing these issues with the supervisor(s) as necessary
- discussing possible research funding and career opportunities with the supervisor(s)
- forming an agreement with the supervisor(s) about the principles of co-authored publications well in advance.

The supervisor(s) commit to:

- supervising the doctoral/licentiate research diligently throughout all its stages and adhering to the agreed working timetable
- giving feedback regularly, within reasonable time, and reading the texts submitted before supervision meetings
- acquainting the student to the practices of academic work and other scientific activities (e.g. publications, conferences, international mobility, ethics) in a mutually agreed way
- notifying the student about significant factors that may affect supervision possibilities. If a supervisor is unable to perform the supervisory duties, (s)he attempts to find a replacement and informs the Faculty. In case of changes, a formal decision by the Dean will be required.
- presenting all potential questions and possible worries concerning the work in the meetings
- complying with the rules of responsible conduct of research in the supervision relationship and discussing these issues with the student
- discussing possible research funding and career opportunities with the student
- assisting the student, if necessary, to apply for research funding by forwarding information about funding opportunities and by writing recommendations
- forming an agreement with the student about the principles of co-authored publications well in advance.

If insurmountable obstacles occur between the doctoral student and the supervisor(s), either party can refer the matter to the Steering Group for Doctoral Education.