



DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN LAW

GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Aims of postgraduate studies

According to the Government Decree on University Degrees (1039/2013) Section 21, the objective of postgraduate studies is that the doctoral candidate

- 1) becomes well-versed in his/her own field of research and its social significance;
- 2) 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;
- 3) becomes conversant with the development, basic problems and research methods of his/her own field of research;
- 4) gains such knowledge of the general theory of science and of other disciplines relating to his/her own field of research as enables him/her to follow developments in them;
- 5) gains sufficient communication and language skills and other necessary skills in order to work in extensive and demanding expert and development roles and in international collaborative settings.

A postgraduate degree provides additional qualifications for several different legal expert positions. These include, in addition to the traditional academic teaching and research positions, for instance jobs in national and international legislative drafting, judge and prosecutor posts as well as specialist jobs in public administration, economic life and legal aid.

2. Doctoral degree in law

Postgraduate degrees in law include the degrees of Doctor of Laws and Licentiate of Laws. Since the 1st of August 2011, the Faculty of Law at the University of Turku has only granted study rights for doctoral degree. The Faculty of Law may grant on special grounds and based on the supervisor's statement a study right for licentiate degree for those who have been granted a right to study for a doctoral degree.

According to the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004), in order to be awarded a doctorate, the doctoral candidate must complete the required postgraduate studies, demonstrate independent and critical thinking in the field of research, and write a doctoral dissertation and defend it in public. The Doctor of Laws degree is meant for individuals who are either interested in pursuing a career in research or planning to pursue specialist careers. The standard time reserved for the completion of the degree is four years of fulltime studying.

3. Doctoral Programme in Law

The University of Turku has a Graduate School that encompasses the entire university. It aims to provide systematic, high-quality and supervised doctoral training within a controlled time frame. The Graduate School coordinates doctoral training at the University of Turku. Its academic structure and working methods meet the recommendations on the development of doctoral training given by the Academy of Finland. The Graduate School comprises the doctoral programmes provided by the faculties.



The doctoral programme provided by the Faculty of Law is called the Doctoral Programme in Law. All the doctoral candidates admitted to pursue a Doctor of Laws degree at the Faculty of Law participate in this programme. The Faculty of Law may also collaborate with other doctoral programmes.

The Director and the Board of the Doctoral Programme are responsible for running the programme.

4. Application procedure

4.1. Right to pursue a Doctor of Laws degree

The right to pursue a Doctor of Laws degree is granted by the Dean of the Faculty of Law based on the proposition of the Board of the Doctoral Programme in Law.

The Dean may grant the right to anyone who has earned a Bachelor of Laws, Master of Laws, Master of International and Comparative Law or Licentiate of Laws degree in Finland or a Master of Social Sciences degree at the University of Turku if the applicant is otherwise considered suitable to pursue a doctoral degree. The Dean will appoint a person who has previously consented to supervise the applicant as the supervisor.

An applicant with a foreign law degree comparable to a Bachelor of Laws or Master of Laws degree or some other Master's degree completed either in Finland or abroad, is required, in addition to the requirements mentioned above, to prove that their degree gives them the capability to participate in the postgraduate studies in Law and that their language skills are sufficient for participating in the postgraduate studies. If the applicant's degree does not correspond to a Bachelor of Laws or a Master of Laws degree, the right to participate in postgraduate studies is granted only for a cogent reason.

4.2. Application process

The Doctoral Programme in Law invites applications for a study right twice a year. A maximum of 15 new doctoral candidates are admitted each year. Before submitting an application, a person applying for doctoral studies must discuss personally with the person or people proposed as their personal supervisor. The applicant must present to the supervisor their preliminary research plan, study plan, funding plan and the working plan, and schedule of the dissertation and then amend them on the basis of the discussions, if necessary. The applicant must attach to the application a notice of consent from one supervisor who meets the criteria of the Faculty.

Instructions for submitting an application and information about the application periods can be found at: <https://www.utu.fi/en/research/utugs/doctoral-programme-in-law/admission>

4.3. Evaluation criteria for accepting doctoral candidates

When considering the applicant's capability to complete the degree, the following facts are taken into consideration:

- academic attractiveness, importance and feasibility of the research plan, and sufficiently wide-ranging knowledge of the research on the applicant's field manifested in the research plan and methodological approach,
- connection between the research project and the faculty's focus in research,



- previous studies in law, their content and level if the applicant has a degree other than a Master of Laws degree,
- possible publications,
- the merits and grade of the Master's thesis and possible postgraduate degree thesis in Law and
- a certificate of language skills, if needed.

5. Supervisor and supervisory group

A doctoral candidate has, in general, two personal supervisors. In connection with granting the study right, the Dean appoints a main supervisor for the doctoral candidate. The second supervisor will be appointed within a year from granting the study right.

The person appointed as a main supervisor must be a Professor or Docent in the Faculty. The other supervisor can be a Professor, a Docent or a person that holds a doctoral degree from the Faculty of Law, another faculty at the University of Turku or from another university. However, at least one supervisor must be employed by the Faculty of Law at the University of Turku. In order to ensure the quality of supervision, it is recommended that one supervisor has no more than 5-7 supervisees, if there is no special reason for exceeding this limit. If necessary, the supervisor(s) can be changed or a new supervisor appointed for the doctoral candidate.

Each doctoral candidate funded by UTUGS or the doctoral programme, employed in a research project or working as a grantee full-time will be appointed a supervisory group consisting of the supervisor(s) and 2 to 3 individuals with a Doctor's degree. The supervisory group is appointed by the Board of the Doctoral Programme. The Board endeavors to secure the expertise required when appointing the supervisory groups.

Doctoral candidates working on their doctoral dissertation part-time may, for particular reasons, have an appointed supervisory group, in case they present a request to the Board of the Doctoral Programme. If the doctoral candidate's funding period ends and they no longer work on their doctoral dissertation full time, they may be removed from the evaluation process of the supervisory group.

Supervision will be carried out with regard to the Principles of Good Supervision. The principles are available in Finnish at

<https://www.utu.fi/sites/default/files/public%3A//media/file/Ohjausperiaatteet.pdf>

The Doctoral Programme Coordinator can be contacted in a case of possible problems concerning supervision or supervisory groups. The Doctoral Programme handles all the problem cases.

6. Structure of the doctoral degree

The postgraduate studies in the Doctoral Programme in Law consist of 240 credits (ECTS). The studies consist of six units:

1. Dissertation (200 credits)
2. Orientation period (2 credits)
3. Dissertation seminars (12 credits)
4. Methodological studies (8 credits)
5. Ethics of Academic Research (2 credits) and
6. Optional studies (16 credits).



Requirements regarding doctoral dissertation and postgraduate studies are published in the electronic study guide.

6.1 Compensation and inclusion of studies

A doctoral candidate may request to compensate studies belonging to the doctoral programme with national or international university-level studies if their quality and extent corresponds to those of the doctoral programme. However, such studies may not be a part of a degree that the doctoral candidate has already completed. The doctoral dissertation cannot be compensated.

The doctoral candidate may also include university-level studies done in Finland or abroad in the optional studies of the doctoral programme.

The compensation of obligatory studies can be requested with an electronic application form in the UGIS system.

The director of the doctoral programme decides on the compensation of obligatory studies, whereas the inclusion of optional studies is determined by doctoral candidate's supervisor.

7. Monitoring the work progress

7.1 Annual reporting

As a part of the monitoring of the work progress each doctoral candidate submits an electronic annual report by the informed deadline. In the annual report, the doctoral candidate estimates how their doctoral studies and work on the doctoral dissertation have progressed during the previous year. The report is processed as a part of the annual evaluation.

Submitting the report is a prerequisite for keeping the study right active and, for instance, for applying for travel grants.

7.2 Supervisory groups

The role of the supervisory group is to monitor the progress of the doctoral candidate's work at least four times during the doctoral studies.

The first evaluation is carried out approximately four months after the beginning of the doctoral studies, e.g. in April for those beginning in January and in November for those beginning in August. During the first evaluation, the supervisory group evaluates the research plan and the scheduling of the research and defines sub-goals for the next evaluation period.

The following three evaluations are held annually in a year from the last evaluation. The second, third and fourth evaluation will concentrate on the agreed upon output and progress of the doctoral dissertation and studies, and apart from the fourth evaluation, specifying sub-goals for the next evaluations.

The supervisory group formulates a written report that is submitted to the doctoral candidate and the Board of the Doctoral Programme according to the guidelines of the doctoral programme. Additionally, the supervisory group arranges a feedback discussion with each doctoral candidate according to the instructions of the doctoral programme. The doctoral candidate and the whole



supervisory group participate in the feedback discussion in which the supervisory group and the doctoral candidate discuss the written report and define together sub goals for the next evaluation period.

The doctoral candidate reports annually on the goals and results of their work to the Doctoral Programme of Law as instructed by the doctoral programme.

8. Graduation

8.1. Preliminary Examination and the Permission to Defend the Dissertation

The studies included in the doctoral degree should, as a rule, be completed before the manuscript is submitted for preliminary examination. In case the studies are not completed, the doctoral candidate should present a plan for completing their studies to the Doctoral Programme in Law. Completing the studies is a prerequisite for granting a permission to defend the dissertation.

After consulting with the supervisor(s), or the supervisory group, a doctoral candidate starts the pre-examination process by using an electronic form found in the UGIS system. The form must include an electronic version of the dissertation.

The supervisor or the supervisors make a proposal to the Faculty Board for appointing pre-examiners by using an electronic form found in the UGIS system. The proposal must include a plagiarism check certificate. The supervisor conducts the electronic check-up by using the plagiarism detection program provided by the university. Additional information can be found in <https://www.utu.fi/en/fairutu>. The supervisor must ask for a consent from those proposed for the task in the application and agree with potential other supervisors about starting the pre-examination process. The doctoral candidate is offered an opportunity to give a statement about the appointment of the proposed pre-examiners.

The Board appoints at least two pre-examiners for the study. The pre-examiners are given a time frame of two months in which to complete the preliminary examination.

The pre-examiners must make a well-founded statement on whether the study demonstrates good familiarization with the field of research and whether it reflects the ability to independently and critically apply the scientific research methods of the research field. A pre-examiner cannot give a conditional statement. The doctoral candidate is offered an opportunity to respond to the pre-examiners' statements.

After receiving the statements of the pre-examiners, the Faculty Board decides whether or not permission to defend the dissertation will be granted. If permission is not granted, the pre-examination process ends. The doctoral candidate can restart the process by reapplying for permission.

8.2. Opponent and Custos

The supervisor makes a proposal to the Faculty for the appointments of the opponent(s) and the Custos by using an electronic form available in the UGIS system. The supervisor cannot act as the opponent. If there is a good reason, two opponents may be appointed. The Custos is the supervisor of the doctoral candidate or a Professor of the discipline or of a related field. The Custos must be employed by the University of Turku.



8.3. Distribution of the Dissertation

Before the public examination, the doctoral candidate has to deliver the dissertation for public distribution, published in print or electronically.

The University of Turku recommends that all dissertations are produced electronically and published in the publishing archive of the university.

See also the instructions of the University for publishing the dissertation:

<https://www.utu.fi/en/research/dissertations/guidelines>

The instructions of the Doctoral Programme must be followed:

<https://www.utu.fi/en/research/utugs/doctoral-programme-in-law/for-the-doctoral-candidate/dissertation-process>

The copies submitted to the university must be in the format of a dissertation. A separate title page containing information about the time and place of the public dissertation and the fact that the publication is an academic dissertation, approved by the Faculty of Law to be publicly published, is attached to the dissertation.

According to the Rector's decision (5 November 2013), the dissertation must always include a summary both in Finnish and in English, regardless of the language the dissertation is written in. In addition to summaries in Finnish and English, a summary in some other language can be included in the dissertation.

8.4. Press Release on the Public Examination

The doctoral candidate must follow the general guidelines set by the University of Turku (<https://www.utu.fi/en/research/dissertations/guidelines>).

For the practical arrangements regarding the formulation of the press release, the doctoral candidate is requested to contact the Faculty office (law@utu.fi) early on.

8.5. Public examination

The public examination follows the general guidelines set by the University of Turku

<https://www.utu.fi/en/research/dissertations/guidelines>

8.6. Evaluating and Approving the Dissertation

The task of the opponent is to present the Faculty Board, within four weeks of the public examination, with a statement recommending either the approval or rejection of the dissertation. The opponent must justifiably evaluate the quality of the dissertation, and the criteria used by the opponent should be clearly defined in their statement. The statement of the opponent should evaluate the research and the research problem on the basis of their academic attractiveness, innovativeness and scholarly significance, the candidate's familiarity with the discipline and their ability to examine their own and earlier research critically, the application of research methods, the structure, delimitation and style of presentation as well as the ability of the author to publicly defend his or her research.

The Faculty Board will decide on the approval of the dissertation after having received the evaluation from the Opponent.



9. Transitional regulations

The regulations of 2010-2011 apply to doctoral candidates who have been granted the study right for a Licentiate in Laws prior to the 1st of August 2011 otherwise, but following the decision of the Faculty Board (28 November 2017) the Dean decides on appointing the examiners of the licentiate thesis and approves the licentiate thesis, and the thesis is not defended in the licentiate seminar. The doctoral candidate must agree separately on the arrangements of the missing studies by discussing the substantial requirements and the modes of completing the studies with their supervisor and by drawing up a study plan for completing the Licentiate of Laws degree to be accepted by the doctoral programme.

Taking part in the Orientation Period (2 credits) only applies to doctoral candidates who have been accepted into the programme after 1 August 2013.

Taking part in the Ethics of Academic Research course (2 credits) only applies to doctoral candidates who have been accepted into the programme after 1 August 2018.

If the doctoral candidate has completed or substituted parts of the dissertation seminar module prior to 1.8.2020, the doctoral candidate participates in the dissertation seminars as stated in the curriculum 2020-2022. The dissertation seminar module is completed once the doctoral candidate has participated in the dissertation seminars for four years.