

Guidelines for PhD studies at the Department of Physics and Astronomy [update date of board's approval when done]2022-06-17

NOTE: This is a translation of a document in Swedish. If there are any conflicts between this document and the original, the Swedish text takes precedence.

## Guidelines for PhD Studies

Supplement to the Rules of Procedure for the Department of Physics and Astronomy regarding PhD studies.

Approved by the department board 2022-06-17.

**Commented [GA1]:** Update with new date when the board decides to approve the new version.

COMMENT THAT WILL BE REMOVED AFTER APPROVAL: Revision 2024 due to migration of the entire UU web as well as new regulations from Teknat. Yellow highlights mark updated links to web sites/files and record IDs (diarienummer)/similar. Comments and tracked changes are other types of minor editorial changes. /Gabriella Andersson 2024-09-03.

### 1. Overall regulatory documents

PhD studies at Uppsala University are regulated at the university level by the document: "Guidelines for third-cycle (doctoral) education at Uppsala University UFV-2022/728",

<https://regler.uu.se/dokument/?contentId=626068>

At the Faculty of Science and Technology, the following guidelines also apply:

"Guidelines for doctoral (third-cycle) education – Faculty of Science and Technology" [TEKNAT 2021/301](#),

<https://www.regler.uu.se/dokument/?contentId=1013696>

The Faculty of Science and Technology's website with information about PhD studies can be found here:

<https://www.uu.se/en/disciplinary-domain/science-and-technology/study/doctoral-studies>

~~Information~~ Internal information and documents related to PhD studies at the department are collected on the website (work in progress during 2024):

<https://www.uu.se/medarbetare/institution/fysik-och-astronomi/forskarutbildning>

**Commented [GA2]:** Let's see how far we get with this. Currently (240903) there is no English version, but we're working on that.

What is described in this document is a **supplement to** the above guidelines at university and faculty level and does not replace these.

These guidelines contain both requirements ("shall"), strong recommendations ("should") and good examples of how certain steps can be implemented ("can").

### 2. Division of responsibilities and organisation

These guidelines apply for all postgraduate subjects within the Department of Physics and Astronomy and apply for all enrolled doctoral students, irrespective of their form of financing. It is the responsibility of the Professors responsible for doctoral studies (FUAP) to inform the supervisors within their postgraduate subject about the content of these

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guidelines. If an assistant FUAP (bFUAP) has been appointed for a group of PhD students, e.g. all PhD students within a research program, the bFUAP shall assist FUAP with informing the supervisors involved.

The university's, the faculty's and the department's<sup>1</sup> Rules of procedure define responsibilities and duties of the university's executive functions and bodies.

The department **board** is responsible for the development and changes of these guidelines.

**The Director of PhD studies (FUS)** supports the Head of department in matters concerning PhD studies. On delegation of the Head of Department, FUS at the Department of Physics and Astronomy also has the responsibility to spread information about PhD studies within the department. FUS shall regularly gather the department's FUAPs, bFUAPs and supervisors for information and discussion meetings.

**Commented [GA3]:** More well-defined role for bFUAP; when the digital ISP is implemented this will be necessary.

FUS is responsible for keeping this document updated and inform FUAP about changes.

**The FUAP has the overall responsibility for the quality** of the PhD studies within their subject. FUAP may delegate certain tasks to one or several deputy FUAP (bFUAP), according to the faculty's Rules of procedure.

**Commented [GA4]:** Important to note that it's written here what tasks may be delegated, since it's quite limited.

If the FUAP wishes to modify these guidelines for their postgraduate subject, a proposal should be submitted to the department board.

One or more **PhD ombudsmen** are appointed by the PhD students at the department. The ombudsman acts as a link between the department management and the PhD student council and the PhD students.

#### **Links to current organisation within the Department of Physics and Astronomy:**

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Department management

<https://www.uu.se/en/staff/department/physics-and-astronomy/contact>

PhD ombudsman, PhD student council (information is updated by the PhD student council)  
<https://www.uu.se/medarbetare/institution/fysik-och-astronomi/forskarutbildning/doktorandombud>

**Commented [GA5]:** The English version of this page will hopefully be available soon.

### **3. Admission**

- The announcement of a doctoral student position **shall** be made as broadly as possible. Before proceeding with the selection of candidates, an assessment **should** be made of the number, quality and recruitment breadth of the applications received. If the number or quality of applicants is deemed deficient, the call procedure **should** be reopened or a written justification (submitted to the Head of department) must be submitted with the admission application documents.
- The admission procedure **shall** be documented by the main supervisor or other

<sup>1</sup> Rules of procedure for the Department of Physics and Astronomy, FYS 2021/172. TekNat rules of procedure: <https://www.regler.uu.se/dokument/?contentId=652494>

responsible person in a written report and be attached to the documents at admission.

- A committee consisting of several experienced persons **should** be appointed to handle the admission. A shortlist of applicants **should** be interviewed on site<sup>2</sup>. Interview via video link is also possible.
- The interview day **should** include elements that test the candidate's oral, written and scientific ability and knowledge. The interview **can** include some of the following elements:
  - oral presentation of e.g. MSc thesis or corresponding large project work,
  - a scientific discussion relating to the project/postgraduate subject and which not directly relates to the MSc thesis. The candidate might e.g. have received a number of publications a few days before the interview (alt. the same day) that is then discussed,
  - practical test, preferably something that tests the candidate's ability to express oneself in writing, e.g. the candidate can be asked to write an Abstract to a non-published manuscript,
  - meeting with other PhD student(s) (might be another PhD student in the research group, at the division or the department, and/or representative in PhD student council, PhD ombudsman).

Newly accepted PhD students **shall** be informed about the possibility of a mentor in the form of another, experienced PhD student. Mentors are assigned by the department's PhD student council / PhD ombudsman in consultation with relevant FUAP.

#### 4. Supervision

- The main supervisor **should** be appointed among the department's and IRF's teachers and researchers. Exceptions are motivated in writing by FUAP to the Head of department. [Read the faculty regulations](#).
- The supervision **should** take into account the document for concretisation of the learning objectives that the department board has adopted<sup>3</sup>.
- When changing supervisors, the Head of department is responsible for the composition of the new supervisor's team in consultation with FUAP and FUS.

#### 5. Extension of study time and leave

In what follows, with *prolongation* is meant an extension of the net study time. With *extension* is meant an extension of the study time in calendar time that does not affect the

<sup>2</sup> For concrete [tips/hints](#), see e.g.: <https://mp.uu.se/sv/web/info/stod/kompetens-rekrytering/rekryteringsprocessen>

<sup>3</sup> [\[FA Guidelines learning goals.pdf\]](#) (Sharepoint: Institutionen för fysik och astronomi / Dokument / Institution / Forskarutbildning)

**Commented [GA6]:** The link in the footnote to "concrete hints" will be updated to something similar on the MI site about recruitment, with the help of VHR.

**Commented [GA7]:** I want this addition to avoid suggestions of un-qualified supervisors. It could possibly be a separate bullet point, as a reminder that Teknat puts requirements on who can supervise.

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net study time.

PhD studies towards a doctoral degree includes 48 months of full-time studies (net study time). In the normal case, the PhD student has an employment as a PhD student during the entire net study time. Prolongation may be granted in certain cases, e.g., for periods of longer parental leave and for certain fiduciary duties within the university (see the faculty Guidelines).

- Costs that arise in the event of prolongation as a result of parental leave or fiduciary duties **shall** be paid by the department centrally.
- The cost of the parental benefit supplement for PhD students who are on parental leave in total corresponding to at least 6 months full-time for one year (i.e., current twelve-month period) **shall** be paid by the department centrally.

Other leave and illness, as well as the time the PhD student engages in departmental service, such as teaching, do not affect the net study time, but give the PhD student the right to extend the studies' calendar time to the same extent as the leave/illness/service (time-for-time).<sup>4</sup>

- Costs that may arise due to a PhD student's other leaves and illnesses **shall** in the normal case be covered within the financing plan specified at the time of admission.
- The actual outcome of time devoted to own studies, leaves and absences **shall** be documented in ISP during the annual review process to make it possible to follow the development of the net study time.
- PhD students **shall** be given full compensation (extension time-for-time) for the time spent on teaching. Mutual commitments and expectations for the PhD student's teaching, e.g., regarding the time a certain teaching task can be expected to take, **shall** be discussed between PhD student, supervisor, course responsible teacher and the division's undergraduate studies coordinator both before and during implementation of the teaching. If large deviations from the plan arises, the extent of the teaching **should** be revised. The PhD student **should** book and document their teaching time, e.g., in the template document available at [MP in the department's Sharepoint group](#).

Vacation does not give the right to either prolongation or extension.

## 6. Supervisor colleges

- Each PhD programme **shall** at least once per semester arrange a supervisor board where the situation for each doctoral student and general supervision issues are discussed; for the larger PhD programmes, it may be appropriate to hold several meetings. FUAP **shall** arrange the meeting and in the normal case chair the meeting proceedings. FUAP can delegate this responsibility to bFUAP.

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<sup>4</sup> Chap 5 in HF regulates employment as PhD student: [Högskoleförordning \(1993:100\) Svensk författningssamling 1993:1993:100 t.o.m. SFS 2022:341 - Riksdagen](#)

**Commented [GA8]:** Tried adding the URL to the PhD studies folder on the department Sharepoint (that link was not included in the Swedish version of this document)

- If there are no good reasons not to, the main supervisor **shall** attend the meeting where the doctoral students under her/his responsibility is discussed. The main supervisor **shall** in writing inform and motivate any absence (submitted to FUAP). Assistant supervisors and other senior staff have the right to attend to the extent FUAP finds appropriate.
- At the supervisor colleges, FUAP/bFUAP **shall** inform about news and terms with relevance to the PhD education.

#### 7. Checkpoints

- Within four months after admission, the PhD student **shall** together with supervisor give a seminar related to the PhD project to make sure that it got off to a good start, has a realistic plan, etc.
- After about 24 months of net study time, the PhD student **shall** present a half-time seminar (can be a licentiate seminar).
- About 6 months before dissertation, the PhD student **shall** present a final seminar.
- After each seminar, supervisor, FUAP and possible others invited meet for a short discussion about the outcome (notes are kept by the main supervisor). Note that for examination at licentiate seminar, special rules apply.
- The main supervisor is responsible for that the PhD student receives feedback, preferable written, based on the outcome of the discussion.

#### 8. In case of problems

- If problems arise within the PhD studies for a doctoral student or a supervisor, measures **shall** be taken promptly according to the points below, depending on the nature of the problem.
- If a doctoral student experiences problems in her/his education, there are the following resource persons who can provide support and help: the Department of Physics and Astronomy's PhD student ombudsman, supervisor, division head, FUAP/bFUAP, PAP, FUS, Head of department, VHR, the university's PhD student representative, union representatives.
- According to the Higher Education Ordinance, a doctoral student has the right to change supervisor if it so requests. A PhD student does not have in the same way automatic right to change project/division, but it can be considered if possible and deemed necessary or appropriate.
- In the event of problems that cannot be easily solved between the supervisor and the PhD student the following process should be followed:
  - The PhD student makes an initial contact with the department's PhD student ombudsman and FUS to create an overview picture of the problems and stake out a way forward.
  - Depending on the nature of the problem, the issue is primarily addressed with FUAP, bFUAP who in a dialogue with the supervisor and the PhD student (and if appropriate PAP and/or division head) tries to find a solution. FUS takes part in this dialogue.
  - If the problems cannot be solved within the division/research programme, the

issue is passed on by FUS to the Head of department, where also VHR should give support.

- The process must be documented appropriately in each step.
- When problems arise or may be predicted, more frequent revisions of the study plan should take place. It is then important to formulate clear goals that are agreed upon with each new revision. It must also be clear how the supervisor and the university work to achieve the goals. During the revision, previous goal fulfillment must be discussed and what measures have been taken and how this has worked. Contact FUAP and FUS for advice and support. Frequent revisions and good documentation of meetings etc. is a must in formal disputes.
- If a supervisor experiences problems in his/her role as supervisor, there are the following resource persons for support: division head, FUAP/bFUAP, PAP, FUS, Head of department and VHR. If the problems cannot be solved locally within the research group or the division/research programme, they are with the help of FUS passed on to the Head of department, with support from VHR.

#### 9. Other

- PhD students **should** be offered employee development dialogues with other than the supervisor.
- It is primarily the recruiting research projects that are responsible for completing the funding of a PhD student during the regular 48-montht net study time.
- The quality and development of the PhD studies **shall** continuously be evaluated and discussed. FUS **shall** at least once per semester call the department's FUAP, bFUAP to a minuted meeting.
- Research programme responsible professors **shall**, together with the appointed faculty supervisors, assist FUAP/bFUAP with quality assurance of the dissertations.