

Degree Regulations on Doctoral Education

[Suomeksi](#) | [På svenska](#)

Degree Regulations on Doctoral Education as of 1 August 2018

Aalto University General Regulations on Teaching and Studying (OOS)
Appendix: Section 43a DEGREE REGULATIONS ON DOCTORAL EDUCATION

[Degree Regulations on Doctoral Education \(pdf\)](#)

Contents:

- [1. Definitions](#)
- [2. Organisation of doctoral education](#)
- [3. Supervising professor and thesis advisor](#)
- [4. Study planning and supervision](#)
- [5. Doctoral studies](#)
- [6. Requisite components of the licentiate degree](#)
- [7. Licentiate thesis](#)
- [8. Examination and approval of the licentiate thesis](#)
- [9. Requisite components of the doctoral degree](#)
- [10. Doctoral dissertation](#)
- [11. Preliminary examination and granting permission for public defence](#)
- [12. Public examination of the doctoral dissertation](#)
- [13. Approval of the doctoral dissertation](#)
- [14. Evaluation and grading](#)
- [15. Entry into force](#)
- [16. Transitional provisions](#)

1. Definitions

The concepts used in these degree regulations are defined below.

Doctoral student

A person registered as an attending or non-attending doctoral student in an Aalto University doctoral programme. The wording *doctoral candidate* is also used.

Supervising professor

An Aalto University professor whom an Aalto school has appointed to hold overall responsibility for the degree of the doctoral candidate and the related supervision arrangements as well as for preparing the supervision plan with the doctoral candidate. The supervising professor may also act as the thesis advisor.

Co-supervisor

An Aalto University professor, or a professor of some other Finnish or foreign university, whom the school has for special reasons appointed to share, together with the supervising professor, overall responsibility for the degree of the doctoral candidate and for the related supervision arrangements. The co-supervisor may also act as the thesis advisor.

Thesis advisor

A school-appointed person who has expertise in the subject area of the doctoral dissertation. The duties of the thesis advisor are defined in the supervision plan of the doctoral candidate.

Research field

An area of academic research in which the school has agreed to provide doctoral education. The research fields of the School of Business are called major subjects.

Examiner

A school-appointed expert in the subject area of the licentiate thesis. To be eligible for appointment as an examiner, a person must hold a degree equivalent to a licentiate degree.

Preliminary examiner

A school-appointed expert who is suitably qualified in the area of arts or science studied in the doctoral dissertation. To be eligible for appointment as a preliminary examiner, a person must hold a doctoral degree or have sufficient artistic qualifications.

Opponent

A school-appointed expert who is suitably qualified in the area of arts or science studied in the doctoral dissertation. To be eligible for appointment as an opponent, a person must hold a doctoral degree.

Permission for public defence

Permission for public defence means permission for publication. Once given permission for public defence, the student may publish the doctoral dissertation and defend it in the public examination.

University doctoral programme

An administrative entity responsible for doctoral education, established by decision of the president. Each doctoral candidate of Aalto University is a student in one of the university's doctoral programmes.

Doctoral programme director

A person appointed by the school dean to lead the doctoral programme and be in charge of its planning, implementation, evaluation and development.

2. Organisation of doctoral education

The education leading to a licentiate or a doctoral degree is planned and organised by the doctoral programme on a research-field-specific basis. The school decides the doctoral research fields and designates the professors to be in charge of the research fields. The school also approves the research fields of students when granting rights to study.

The education is planned so as to allow students to earn the doctoral degree within the normative duration of study, which for full-time students is four years.

The education leading to a degree may be organised in collaboration with one or several Aalto schools or other Finnish or foreign universities.

3. Supervising professor and thesis advisor

The school appoints a supervising professor who represents the research field approved for the student. The supervising professor must be a tenure-track professor of the school, though for special reasons, a non-tenure track professor of the school may be appointed by decision of the dean.

The school may also appoint a co-supervisor for the student, in cases where the degree is completed in international or national joint supervision or if the degree requires shared responsibility because of its interdisciplinary nature. The co-supervisor may be a professor from Aalto University or from another Finnish or foreign university.

The school appoints one or several persons with expertise in the subject area of the doctoral dissertation to act as thesis advisors. The supervising professor and/or co-supervisor may also act as the thesis advisor.

Field of business:

Thesis advisors must hold a doctoral degree.

Field of arts and field of technology, architecture:

At least one of the thesis advisors must hold a doctoral degree. If the doctoral dissertation includes art productions or product development projects, at least one of the thesis advisors must have sufficient artistic qualifications and in-depth knowledge of the topic.

Field of technology:

Thesis advisors must hold a doctoral degree.

4. Study planning and supervision

Each doctoral student makes a study plan, a research plan and a supervision plan, the implementation of all of which is followed up by the supervising professor. The supervising professor is also responsible for the supervision arrangements of the doctoral student.

5. Doctoral studies

Doctoral studies are completed in the form of study modules. Those admitted to doctoral education shall:

1. pursue studies that deal with the preparation for research work, the application of research results and the dissemination of research findings;
2. gain comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of a research field; and
3. learn the principles of responsible conduct of research.

The scope of doctoral studies in credits is as follows:

Field of business:

60 credits

Field of arts and field of technology, architecture:

60 credits

Field of technology:

40 credits

The school approves the study plan of the doctoral student.

The school may, as necessary, require that students admitted to doctoral education also complete other studies.

6. Requisite components of the licentiate degree

To earn the licentiate degree, students shall:

1. complete the doctoral studies specified in item 5 above in accordance with the study plan and
2. write a licentiate thesis.

7. Licentiate thesis

The licentiate thesis is written on a topic related to the research field approved for the student.

In a licentiate thesis, the student shall demonstrate good conversance with the field of research and the capability of independently and critically applying scientific research methods.

As a licentiate thesis may also be approved a number of scientific publications or manuscripts vetted for publication deemed sufficient by the university which deal with the same set of problems and a paper summarising the findings or some other work which meets corresponding scientific criteria. The publications may include co-authored publications if the author's independent contribution to them can be demonstrated.

A licentiate thesis is a public document which shall be on display at the school.

8. Examination and approval of the licentiate thesis

The licentiate thesis is presented at the school. For the thesis to be examined, the student shall submit it and an application for its examination to the school. The application for examination must be approved by the supervising professor. The school appoints one or two examiners for the licentiate thesis and obtains statements from all of them. The student is provided with an opportunity to reply to the statements. After this, the school decides on the approval of the thesis.

Without reasonable grounds, the examination of a licentiate thesis shall not take more than *two months* from the date of the appointment of the examiners.

9. Requisite components of the doctoral degree

To earn a doctoral degree, students shall:

1. complete the doctoral studies specified in item 5 above in accordance with the study plan
2. demonstrate independent and critical thinking in relation to their field of research, as well as
3. write a doctoral dissertation and defend it in public.

10. Doctoral dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is written on a topic related to the research field approved for the student. The dissertation shall contribute to new scientific knowledge.

A separate decision will be made regarding the formats and requirements of the doctoral dissertation.

A doctoral dissertation is a public document, which shall be on display at the school.

11. Preliminary examination and granting permission for public defence

In order to obtain permission for public defence, the doctoral candidate shall submit the manuscript of the dissertation and the request for permission for public defence to the school. The request for permission must be approved by the supervising professor.

Upon receipt of the manuscript and the request for permission, the school shall decide on submitting the manuscript for preliminary examination and appoint at least two preliminary examiners for it. The preliminary examiners must hold a doctoral degree. In the field of arts, it is possible to appoint a third preliminary examiner who, instead of holding a doctoral degree, has sufficient artistic qualifications. The doctoral candidate is provided with an opportunity to comment on the choice of the preliminary examiners.

The school may decide not to submit the manuscript for preliminary examination if it finds that the manuscript has major flaws and/or it fails to meet the general formal requirements set for the doctoral dissertations of the university.

The school obtains and processes the statements of the preliminary examiners regarding the manuscript of the doctoral dissertation. The doctoral candidate is provided with an opportunity to reply to the statements of the preliminary examiners.

The school decides on granting permission for public defence upon receipt of the statements of the preliminary examiners.

Without special reasons, the entire processing of the manuscript shall not take more than *three months* from the date of appointment of the preliminary examiners.

Once the student has been granted permission for the public defence, he or she submits the dissertation for publication and agrees with the school on arrangements for its public examination.

12. Public examination of the doctoral dissertation

The doctoral dissertation shall be examined and defended at a public examination for which the school determines the date and language and appoints a custos to supervise the examination and one or two opponents. The doctoral candidate is provided with an opportunity to comment on the choice of the opponent(s).

The work or works constituting the doctoral dissertation shall be on display for examination at the school for *a minimum of ten days* before the public examination.

The school may issue further provisions on the arrangements and proceedings of the public examination.

13. Approval of the doctoral dissertation

Within two weeks of the public examination, the (two) opponent(s) appointed by the school shall, either individually or jointly, submit to the school a written statement concerning the dissertation and its defence. Any written comments announced as forthcoming at the public examination of the dissertation shall be submitted to the school within two weeks of the examination.

A demand for rejecting the dissertation must be made in writing and reasons for rejecting it must be included. A demand for rejecting the dissertation may be made by the opponent or by a member of the doctoral programme committee who is entitled to take part in decision-making concerning the study attainment in question.

The written statements of the opponents and other written comments shall be submitted to the school for use in the approval of the dissertation. The dissertation author shall be given an opportunity to reply to these statements and comments and other documents related to the evaluation in writing within a time determined by the school.

After this, the school decides on the approval of the doctoral dissertation.

14. Evaluation and grading

Licentiate and doctoral degrees are graded on the following scale:

Field of business:

Licentiate theses and doctoral dissertations are evaluated on a scale of Pass/Fail.

Field of arts and field of technology, architecture:

Doctoral dissertations are evaluated on a scale of Pass with Distinction/Pass/Fail.

Licentiate theses are evaluated on a scale of Pass with Distinction/Pass/Fail (architecture).

Field of technology:

Licentiate theses and doctoral dissertations are evaluated on a scale of Pass/Fail.

No overall grades are assigned for individual study modules.

15. Entry into force

These regulations enter into force on 1 August 2018.

16. Transitional provisions

The grading scale specified in the prior regulations on licentiate and doctoral degrees shall apply to theses submitted for examination prior to 1 August 2018.