Study plan

What, why and how?

- What is a study plan?
- Why to do and have a study plan?
- How to choose courses and what can be included in the degree?
- What kind of courses can be included in the degree?
- Individual study attainments (custom course credits) in the doctoral degree
- Study plan confirmation process

The study plan is an official document in which the courses included in the degree are confirmed in detail: course code, course name and credits. The courses are also grouped by modules of the degree program. In the Doctoral Programme of Electrical Engineering the study modules are research field studies and general research studies. The structure of the degree is described separately.

Why to do and have a study plan?

The study plan is an important part of planning your studies. It is important to discuss the courses included in the degree with your supervising professor and he/she needs to support the study plan before it can be confirmed by the doctoral programme committee or the Chair of the doctoral programme. The confirmed study plan ensures that there are no surprises with the studies required and you can graduate as planned.

If the plan should change, the new study plan can be confirmed by submitting a new one.

How to choose courses and what can be included in the degree?

It is worth discussing the theoretical studies with the professor when the doctoral thesis research is planned. The studies in the field of research should support doctoral thesis work and you can choose courses from your own school, other Aalto schools or other Finnish universities. Studies completed at Aalto will automatically be displayed on your transcript.

Studies at other universities

Applying for a flexible study right

If Aalto does not have the needed courses or teaching, the doctoral student can, within the framework of flexible study right, conduct individual courses at other Finnish universities as well. In these cases, the studies must be validated in an officially confirmed study plan before applying for a flexible study right.

1. Update your study plan, check the deadlines for applications
2. Submit the study plan to the Student Services of the Doctoral Programme by email
3. After your updated study plan has been confirmed, you can apply for a flexible study right
4. (After you have completed the course, check the guidelines below starting from item 2)

Transferring the courses from other universities

The new student information system, Sisu, has replaced Aalto University’s previous student information system Oodi on 9.8.2021. From now on also doctoral students have to do their study plan in Sisu. Registration for courses and exams are done in Sisu, and it is not possible to enrol for the courses if they are not included in your study plan in Sisu. Everyone graduating from June 2021 onwards needs to do a Sisu study plan, even if the studies have already been confirmed and completed.

Instructions:

- Sisu instructions for students (e.g. recordings on Sisu webinars)
- How to make a study plan in Sisu? (instructions for doctoral students)
  - Please remember to choose the correct curriculum period on the basis of your study plan. E.g., if your right to pursue the doctoral degree has started in January 2018, choose 2017-2018 as your curriculum period.
If you have already completed courses suitable for the doctoral degree (in Finland or abroad), the credits need to be first confirmed in the study plan and then transferred to Aalto University. For this, you need to apply for a credit transfer:

1. Update your study plan if necessary, check the deadlines for applications. In order to transfer the credits to Aalto, the courses transferred need to be included in the study plan confirmed by the Doctoral Programme Committee
2. Fill in the application for credit transfer
3. Submit the "application for credit transfer" form and an official transcript of records including the courses to be transferred to the Student Services of the Doctoral Programme by email

What kind of courses can be included in the degree?

- Research field studies
- General research studies

Individual study attainments in the doctoral degree

You can have individual study attainments (called custom course credits in Sisu) in your doctoral degree. You may for example participate in summer/winter schools, complete individual assignments, or do a book exam, please see below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research field studies 20-35 ECTS</th>
<th>Recommendations for credits</th>
<th>Restrictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientific summer and winter schools</td>
<td>2–3 ECTS/week</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-study (e.g. books, journal or conference articles; written/oral exam/review or a report to demonstrate learning)</td>
<td>1–10 ECTS, the supervising professor shall determine the amount of credits</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General research studies 5-20 ECTS</td>
<td>Recommendations for credits</td>
<td>Restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning university practices (teaching and guidance)</td>
<td>The module cannot consist solely of teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assistant for exercises or teaching</td>
<td>1-3 ECTS/course</td>
<td>Max 3 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thesis advisor of bachelor’s thesis</td>
<td>0,5 ECTS/thesis*</td>
<td>Max 2 ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thesis advisor of master’s thesis</td>
<td>1-3 ECTS/thesis</td>
<td>Max 3 ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations in an international conference of the field</td>
<td>The module cannot consist solely of conference presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presentations in international conferences**</td>
<td>1-2 ECTS/conference</td>
<td>Max 3 conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No half credits are registered, only whole numbers of credits. Once you have been the thesis advisor for two bachelor theses and the bachelor seminars of both have ended, you will automatically get the credits for it in SISU, within one month. If you have not gotten your credits or you have questions regarding the advising of bachelor theses please contact Markus Turunen (markus.turunen@aalto.fi).

**The study attainment includes: a rehearsal presentation in Finland, presenting a poster or giving an oral presentation at the conference and active participation in the conference

The supervising professor decides the amount of credits (within the restrictions described above) to be given as he/she should have the best information on the amount and level of difficulty of the work the doctoral student has done. 1 ECTS is equivalent to 27 hours of work. Please note that any work cannot be compensated multiple times. Regarding the advising of bachelor’s thesis, the credits are decided by Markus Turunen.

Registering individual study attainments (called custom course credits in Sisu) for the doctoral degree

The individual study attainments are now applied for and registered in SISU. The form for Custom course credits is signed by the supervising professor and should be included in the Sisu application.
For those individual studies that you have completed, but which have not been registered yet, you need to

1) fill out the Custom course credits form (above) and get your supervising professor’s signature (no need to fill in the course code, it will automatically be generated in Sisu)

2) apply for the custom course credit, instructions in Sisu help

3) attach the signed custom course credit form to the application in Sisu

Please check our guidelines on what information needs to be mentioned on the custom course credits form. Information on the language of study attainment is available at Language of study attainments.

Please note that you should NOT combine study attainments; each attainment should be registered individually. For example, if you have done three book exams, and your supervising professor will give two ECTS for each, you should apply for custom course credits separately for each book! Please also notice that no half credits are registered. Only whole numbers of credits will be registered, so only if the attainment is worth 0,5 ECTS, it is acceptable to combine the attainments, so that the amount of ECTS is a whole number.

Study plan confirmation process

- Familiarize yourself with the degree structure and the requirements regarding the courses
- Discuss the studies and requirements with your supervising professor.
- Make yourself a study plan in Sisu
  - How to make a study plan in Sisu? (instructions for doctoral students)
- If additional information is required, you will be contacted by email.
- You will be informed by email when the study plan has been confirmed.
- Study plans are confirmed once a month, on the day of the Doctoral Programme Committee meeting. The timetable of the DPC is available here Doctoral programme committee.

500 euro scholarship for completing the theoretical studies

If you have completed your theoretical studies (40 ECTS) within one year and six months from the date of admission to the doctoral programme, you can apply for a scholarship of 500 euros for completing the theoretical studies. The scholarship can be awarded after your theoretical studies have been confirmed. The application has to be submitted within six months of the fulfillment of the scholarship criteria.

The link to the online application form as well as the application instructions are available at Incentive scholarships.