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Appointment regulation for doctoral programmes

Policy document at Chalmers University of Technology AB

Chalmers University of Technology AB (“Chalmers”) has been a private higher education institution since 1994 and is owned by the Chalmers University of Technology Foundation. Research and education activities at Chalmers are regulated through a long-term agreement with the Swedish government, which is followed up by annual agreements.

Appointment regulations at Chalmers correspond to the governance that applies at government-owned higher education institutions through legislation such as the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. Appointment regulations are intended to specify rules on the same overarching level. Appointment regulations are adopted by the President of Chalmers. Additional policy documents are used in addition to appointment regulations when required for embodiment or governance. These documents must be titled, formulated and adopted in accordance with the rules that apply to Chalmers’ policy documents and delegation regulations.

This is a translation of the Swedish version. In the event of any discrepancy, the Swedish version of this document has preferential interpretation.

1 General regulations

1.1 Definitions

In this appointment regulation, the term doctoral student refers to a student who has been accepted to and is studying in a doctoral programme at Chalmers.

In this appointment regulation, the term Vice President refers to the person to whom the President has delegated responsibility for leading and coordinating the development and operation of Chalmers' doctoral programmes in accordance with the policy document Chalmers' delegation regulations (*Föreskrift för Chalmers delegationsordning*).

In this appointment regulation, the term Head of Department refers to the Head of Department or the person to whom the Head of Department has delegated responsibility for doctoral programmes at the department in accordance with the policy document Chalmers' delegation regulations (*Föreskrift för Chalmers delegationsordning*).

1.2 Responsibility and management

The President has delegated the Vice President responsibility for leading and coordinating the development and operation of Chalmers' doctoral programmes in line with Chalmers' vision, goals and strategies.

The Head of Department has overarching responsibility for the department's doctoral programmes. The Head of Department can choose to delegate the right to make decisions on doctoral programme matters to the Deputy Head of Department or Vice Head of Department in accordance with the policy document Chalmers' delegation regulations (*Föreskrift för Chalmers delegationsordning*).

For preparation support in matters related to doctoral programmes, the Vice President shall have a Doctoral Programmes Committee at their disposal. The Committee shall consist of the individual responsible for doctoral programmes at each department plus up to two doctoral student representatives and one student representative. The Vice President may decide to appoint other representatives to the Committee.

1.3 Degrees

Doctoral studies at Chalmers can result in a licentiate degree and/or a doctoral degree. A licentiate degree can be a milestone when working towards a doctoral degree.

The degree is given a title corresponding to the name of the faculty within which the undergraduate degree was earned. In some individual cases, it is possible to use a title that does not correspond to the name of the faculty within which the undergraduate degree was earned. Such a decision shall consider the focus of the doctoral student's studies at the first cycle (undergraduate) and second cycle (graduate) level or background in the subject area, as well as the focus of their doctoral education at Chalmers. The title is determined by the Head of Department in connection with admission. Any decision regarding exemption from use of the defined title is made by the Head of Department.

Chalmers has the right to award qualifications (degrees) based on the Act Concerning Authority to Award Certain Qualifications (1993:792) and the Government decision of 28 June 2007 on authority to award certain qualifications (U2006/9375/UH U2007/4718/UH).

The requirements that apply at Chalmers for earning qualifications (degrees) are established in the policy document *Local qualifications framework at Chalmers University of Technology*.

1.4 Graduate schools and doctoral study subjects

Doctoral studies at Chalmers are arranged by doctoral study subject and organised in subject-based graduate schools. Each graduate school corresponds to and has the same name as the subject. To clarify the profile of the degree, specialisations can be added to the subject.

A graduate school belongs to either a specific department or several departments (cross-departmental) and are designated Chalmers Graduate Schools. For cross-departmental graduate schools, a host department must be selected.

The Vice President shall make any decisions regarding the establishment and closing of any Chalmers Graduate School and the corresponding doctoral study subject.

Every doctoral student is admitted to a Chalmers Graduate School. In addition, a doctoral student may also be affiliated with national and/or international graduate schools. For some of these, Chalmers serves as the host university.

1.5 General syllabus

Each doctoral study subject shall have a general syllabus. General syllabuses are drawn up at the department, but must be approved by the Vice President. The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that the general syllabuses of the department are updated. Changes to general syllabuses shall be approved by the Vice President.

The general syllabus shall specify:

- i. The name of the subject and any specialisations
- ii. The prerequisite knowledge requirements and other conditions that apply for admission to the programme
- iii. The main content of the programme
- iv. Examination requirements
- v. The scope of the doctoral thesis in higher education credits
- vi. The scope of compulsory and elective courses in higher education credits
- vii. When the general syllabus or a change to this will go into effect
- viii. Any transitional rules and other regulations required

The general syllabus shall be drawn up in one Swedish and one English version and shall be registered at the department level.

1.6 Director of Studies

For each Chalmers Graduate School, there shall be at least one Director of Studies who is appointed by and reports to the Head of Department. At cross-departmental graduate schools, the Director of Studies is appointed by the Head of Department at the department where the Director of Studies will work.

The Director of Studies shall have a tenured appointment at Chalmers with the title associate professor, professor or full professor and have documented experience of supervision.¹

The role of the Director of Studies is to support doctoral students, supervisors and examiners in the doctoral programmes.

The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that the studies are followed up at least once a year for all of the doctoral students in the graduate school.

The Director of Studies is responsible for the graduate school's activities and development, e.g. by providing information about courses within the graduate school's subject area and by working to promote seminar activities and course development. The Director of Studies may also work to promote collaboration between graduate schools.

The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that the necessary documentation is available and compiled when the graduate school is being evaluated.

2 Access to courses and study programmes

2.1 General regulations

Admission to a doctoral programme may only take place if necessary prerequisites for an effective education are in place in terms of funding, research environment, supervision and a course offering that leads to a degree of internationally recognised quality.

Only doctoral students who can be offered study funding as specified in section 3 of this appointment regulation can be admitted to a doctoral programme.

2.2 Advertisement of vacancies

Vacant doctoral positions shall be openly advertised, and appointment to a position shall be subject to competition. Exception from this advertisement of vacancies can be made in the following cases:

- i. when admitting a doctoral student who will be conducting their studies within the context of employment with an employer other than Chalmers;
- ii. when admitting a doctoral student within the framework of an agreement for a double degree, or
- iii. in connection with the doctoral student's change of higher education institution or change of doctoral study subject.

Exceptions from the advertisement of vacancies for reasons other than those stated above are decided by the Head of Department.

2.3 Admission requirements and selection

In order to meet the general admission requirements for a doctoral programme at Chalmers, the student must have earned a degree at the second-cycle level. The student's degree must also have a specialisation that is sufficiently related to the doctoral study subject. Equivalent requirements apply to individuals with an education earned outside of Sweden.

¹ Employees of joint departments at Chalmers and Gothenburg University are exempt from the requirement of employment at Chalmers.

In addition to the general admission requirements, special prerequisite knowledge requirements may apply for the doctoral study subject. Any special admission requirements that apply with a specific doctoral study subject are specified in the general syllabus for the subject.

Applicants who do not have English or a Scandinavian language as their native language are usually required to take an English language test (e.g. TOEFL 550 (paper-based)/TOEFL 213 (computer-based)) prior to admission.

Applicants who do not meet the admission requirements may be admitted according to a special admission procedure. When this is applied, the Head of Department shall specify the supplementary courses required to begin doctoral studies in the subject based on the courses suggested by the examiner. Once the applicant has completed these courses with passing results, admission is permitted.

Selection from among qualified applicants shall be based on an assessment of their ability to learn and benefit from the doctoral programme. The assessment is made by a person or group appointed by the Head of Department. Gender equality aspects must be taken into consideration during the selection process.

2.4 Admission

Admission takes place to a doctoral study subject with a doctoral degree as the target degree. If special circumstances exist, a doctoral student can be admitted with a licentiate degree as the target degree. In such cases, this shall be clearly specified in the advertisement of the vacant position and in the admission decision. Financial reasons are not to be counted as special circumstances. The decision regarding admission is made by the Head of Department.

A doctoral student who has already earned a licentiate degree can be admitted to a doctoral programme intended to result in a doctoral degree, often referred to as “admission to a later part of the programme”. For this to take place, the previous subject must be deemed relevant to the new subject. Upon admission, the completed study time of direct relevance to the new subject is subtracted from the study time in the programme.

A doctoral student may not be admitted to more than one doctoral study subject at Chalmers at the same time.

3 Study funding for doctoral students

3.1 General regulations

Employment as a doctoral student is the main form of doctoral study funding at Chalmers. Other permitted forms of study funding are industrial doctoral student and other employment outside the university (see 3.3) and other employment within the university (see 3.4).

Exceptions from the study funding requirements in the previous paragraph are only permitted upon approval by the Vice President. The grounds for possible exceptions are laid out in Vice President’s Decision C 2011/110. See also 3.5.

3.2 Employment as doctoral student

Only those admitted to a doctoral programme may have doctoral employment.

Recruitment to a doctoral position shall be carried out in accordance with the policy document Chalmers' staff recruitment guidelines (*Chalmers riktlinjer för personalrekrytering*).

Doctoral employment is further regulated in the collective agreement.

Doctoral student salaries are regulated in a special agreement.

3.2.1 Form of employment

Employment as a doctoral student shall apply for an indefinite period, however no longer than until a specified date and never for a period extending more than one year after the award of a doctoral degree.

The first period of employment shall be one year. Subsequently, employment may be extended for a maximum of two years at a time.

A person may be employed as a doctoral student for a maximum of eight calendar years in total. The total employment period may, however, not exceed the time corresponding to full-time doctoral studies for a period of four years. For studies culminating in a licentiate degree, the total employment period may not exceed the time corresponding to full-time doctoral studies for a period of two years.

The total period of employment may, however, exceed that stated in the preceding paragraph if special grounds exist. Such grounds may comprise parental leave, leave of absence because of illness, leave of absence for service in the defence forces or an elected position in a trade union or student organisation, or parental leave.

The working hours are normally equivalent to full-time employment. Part-time employment, in addition to statutory leaves of absence, may be granted for those who combine their studies with employment outside of Chalmers if this is beneficial to the doctoral student's studies.

A doctoral student with doctoral employment who has been admitted to studies towards a licentiate degree and who, prior to the licentiate seminar, is considered to be capable of successfully continuing the programme shall be given priority as regards continued employment towards a doctoral degree over new appointment to such a position within the same research project.

Prior to each new period of employment, the doctoral student must be assessed as to whether they are capable of successfully continuing their studies until they earn their degree. In connection with this, the principal supervisor and doctoral student shall jointly draw up a documented study plan for the student's continued studies. If the supervisor does not believe the doctoral student is capable of successfully continuing until they earn their degree, the student's shortcomings shall be documented and addressed at an early stage in a meeting between the doctoral student, examiner and Director of Studies as specified in section 9 of this appointment regulation and the policy document *Regulation regarding the withdrawal of resources for doctoral students*.

If after assessment the doctoral student is found to not be capable of earning the degree, they shall be informed in writing that the employment will not be extended by no later than one month before the employment end date. The relevant trade union organisation shall also be informed. See also Section 9.

Decisions regarding remaining in a position after the degree has been earned are made by the Head of Department.

3.2.2 Departmental duties

A person employed as a doctoral student shall primarily devote themselves to their own studies as defined in their individual study plan. However, the employment may include other duties, equivalent to maximum 20 percent of a full-time position.

Departmental duties shall primarily relate to teaching within Chalmers. Other duties may be included if they contribute to the doctoral student's development into a researcher.

The scope and content of departmental duties shall be specified in the individual study plan.

The doctoral employment shall be extended by an amount equivalent to the scope of the departmental duties.

3.3 Industrial doctoral student and other employment outside higher education

The term industrial doctoral student refers to a doctoral student who is employed by a company, receives a salary from the company, and conducts doctoral studies within their employment. "Other employment outside higher education" refers to a doctoral student who is employed at e.g. a government agency, municipality, region or union and receives their salary and conducts doctoral studies within their employment.

In order to be admitted as an industrial doctoral student or with other employment outside higher education, the applicant must have approval from their employer to engage in doctoral studies during their working time in a scope sufficient enough for their studies to be effective.

As a minimum, an industrial doctoral student or a student with other employment outside higher education must be paid a salary in line with that paid to a student with doctoral employment at Chalmers.

Admission of an industrial doctoral student or a doctoral student with other employment outside higher education requires a written agreement between the funding employer and the admitting department in accordance with the central agreement template. The agreement and a copy of the doctoral student's employment contract with their employer shall be appended to the application for admission.

Industrial doctoral students and doctoral students with other employment outside higher education must be given the opportunity to teach within Chalmers or to perform other departmental duties that contribute to their development into a researcher. The scope shall be regulated in the agreement with the employer.

3.4 Other employment within higher education

"Other employment within higher education" refers to a doctoral student who has other employment (i.e. not employed as a doctoral student) at Chalmers or another university/higher education institution and conducts doctoral studies within that employment.

In order for funding within the framework of other employment within higher education to be approved, the applicant must have approval from their employer to engage in doctoral studies during their working time in a scope sufficient enough for their studies to be effective.

Admission to a doctoral programme within the framework of employment other than doctoral employment at Chalmers is only granted to individuals who already have permanent employment at Chalmers and who have been granted permission to conduct doctoral studies as skills development in their current position.

As a minimum, an individual with other employment within higher education must be paid a salary in line with that paid to a student with doctoral employment.

Admission of a doctoral student with other employment within higher education requires a written agreement with the employer.

3.5 Doctoral students admitted to a foreign higher education institution (Double Doctoral Degree)

When a doctoral student who is admitted to both Chalmers and a foreign higher education institution is at Chalmers within the framework of a double degree agreement, the department shall compensate up to the net salary of an employed doctoral student. Refer to Vice President's Decision C 2012/1108.

3.6 Visiting doctoral students

When a doctoral student who is not admitted to a doctoral programme at Chalmers spends more than six months at Chalmers, the department shall compensate up to the net salary of an employed doctoral student. Refer to Vice President's Decision C 2012/1066.

4 Programmes

4.1 Scope

The licentiate degree programme corresponds to a total of two years of full-time studies (120 credits) and includes work that is reported in a scientific thesis and the other elements specified in the local qualifications framework for doctoral programmes and the general syllabus for the subject.

The doctoral degree programme corresponds to a total of four years of full-time studies (240 credits) and includes a doctoral thesis and the other elements specified in the local qualifications framework for doctoral programmes and the general syllabus for the subject.

4.2 Individual study plan and study follow-up

Each doctoral student shall have an individual study plan that presents the planned and completed parts of the doctoral programme. The study plan serves as a guiding instrument for the entire programme and ensures that the studies are conducted and followed up effectively. The study plan shall contain the undertakings of both Chalmers and the doctoral student.

The individual study plan shall contain a timetable for the thesis work, which other elements are included, and the scope in higher education credits.

For studies leading to a doctoral degree, the individual study plan shall be drawn up with the aim of the doctoral student fulfilling the objectives of a licentiate degree after 50 percent of the doctoral study time.

The principal supervisor is responsible for working jointly with the doctoral student to draw up an individual study plan within maximum three months of the start of studies, and for submitting this study plan to the Director of Studies and examiner. The principal supervisor is responsible for revising the individual study plan together with the doctoral student at least once a year.

The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that the individual study plan is reviewed at a follow-up meeting at least once a year. The doctoral student, Director of Studies and the doctoral student's principal supervisor and examiner shall all take part in the follow-up meetings. Any assistant supervisor should take part in these meetings.

The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that the updated individual study plan is registered at the department after each study follow-up.

4.3 Licentiate and doctoral thesis

The licentiate thesis and doctoral thesis can be written as a compilation thesis or as a monograph.

Material from the student's own successful licentiate thesis may be used in the doctoral thesis, provided that a clear reference is made to the earlier work.

The licentiate thesis and doctoral thesis shall be written in English. In exceptional cases, they can be written in Swedish. They must then include an abstract in English.

The doctoral thesis must contain a popular science summary of the content in Swedish and/or English on the back of the cover.

4.4 Courses and other elements

The scope of courses and other elements is specified using a credit system, where 1.5 higher education credits correspond to one week of work. Courses that are part of the doctoral programme shall be assessed as either pass or fail. When examinations are assessed, consideration shall be given to the depth of the doctoral student's knowledge as well as their ability to independently assess and critically analyse.

Compulsory courses and elements at a Chalmers-wide level shall be specified in a local qualifications' framework. Compulsory courses and elements at the subject level shall be specified in the general syllabus for the subject.

The doctoral student's examiner shall assess and decide which elective courses and elements shall be included in the individual doctoral programme.

Any decisions regarding exemption from compulsory courses and elements shall be made by the Head of Department.

4.5 Transfer of credits

A doctoral student who successfully completed part of their doctoral programme at another university may be able to have these credits transferred to Chalmers.

A doctoral student may be given credit for studies other than those listed in the preceding paragraph if the nature and extent of the knowledge and skills cited by the student are such that they correspond on the whole to the course or study programme for which the credits are to be recognised. A student may also be given credit for corresponding knowledge and skills acquired in a vocational or professional capacity.

Credit may be granted provided that the applied credits are documented in an individual study plan that has been discussed and approved at a study follow-up meeting.

Any decisions regarding the transfer of credits from compulsory courses and elements shall be made by the Head of Department. Any other decisions regarding the transfer of credits shall be made by the examiner. The decision shall be accompanied by supporting documentation proving participation in the element in question, as well as the content, scope and information on the level of education.

4.6 Internationalisation

All doctoral students at Chalmers shall be ensured a minimum level of international contacts. Chalmers shall therefore promote internationalisation by supporting doctoral student participation in international conferences and collaborations, time spent abroad, and by inviting foreign guest researchers to the university.

4.7 Teaching skills

Doctoral students who teach within the undergraduate programme shall complete Chalmers' central introductory PhD course in teaching and learning in higher education or acquired equivalent knowledge in some other way.

4.8 Withdrawing from a doctoral programme

A doctoral student can withdraw from their programme through written application. With this type of interruption of studies, the doctoral student is no longer part of the doctoral programme in the doctoral study subject in question. Only the doctoral student can withdraw from their studies. If a doctoral student wishes to resume their studies after registering their withdrawal, they must reapply for admission to the doctoral programme.

5 Supervision

5.1 General regulations

A doctoral student is entitled to supervision during the entire study time (a maximum of four years of full-time studies), except if the doctoral student's supervision has been withdrawn in accordance with section 9.

The scope, form and quality of supervision shall always be addressed in connection with the annual study follow-up.

5.2 Supervisor

For each doctoral student, the Head of Department shall appoint one principal supervisor and one or more assistant supervisors in connection with admission.

The principal supervisor shall have associate professor qualification ("docentkompetent") and a tenured appointment at Chalmers². The Head of Department can decide that an assistant professor with tenure track at Chalmers can serve as principal supervisor provided that the doctoral student has an assistant supervisor fulfilling the criteria for principal supervisor.

² Employees of joint departments at Chalmers and Gothenburg University are exempt from the requirement of employment at Chalmers.

A doctoral student at a university without doctoral degree-awarding powers who has been admitted to a doctoral programme at Chalmers can have a principal supervisor at their home university. The principal supervisor shall have associate professor qualification and be appointed by the Head of Department at Chalmers. If the principal supervisor is at the home university, then there shall be an assistant supervisor at Chalmers who fulfils the principal supervisor criteria specified above.

A doctoral student with employment outside of Chalmers shall always have an assistant supervisor at the employer.

All principal supervisors at Chalmers shall have completed Chalmers' doctoral supervision programme or an equivalent supervision programme. Principal supervisors are expected to complete skills development in the supervisor role on a regular basis.

The principal supervisor is responsible for ensuring that there is a research assignment at the beginning of the doctoral studies, and for ensuring that the doctoral student receives qualified supervision by one of their supervisors in a scope sufficient enough to enable the doctoral student to follow their individual study plan.

5.3 Change of supervisor

A doctoral student who requests a change of supervisor and is deemed to have grounds for this shall be granted the change or an equivalent measure. Such grounds may be failure to address deficiencies in the supervisor's scope, form or quality that have been pointed out. The request for change of supervisor shall be made in writing.

The supervisor has the right to request withdrawal from the supervisor role for a student and have the request reviewed. The request to withdraw from the supervisor role shall be made in writing. A supervisor can only withdraw from the supervisor role once a new supervisor has been appointed.

Any decision regarding change of supervisor is made by the Head of Department. The Head of Department shall strive for an expeditious and transparent review of the matter. Both the doctoral student and the supervisor shall be given the opportunity to comment before a decision is made. The Head of Department's decision shall be issued in writing with the grounds stated.

The Head of Department's decision can be appealed to the Vice President. The appeal shall be made in writing and shall be received by the university registrar no later than three weeks after the date the decision was rendered. The appeal shall be accompanied by relevant background information. The Vice President's decision is final.

6 Examiner (doctoral student examiner)

For each doctoral study subject, the Head of Department appoints one or more examiners. The examiner shall have a tenured appointment at Chalmers with the title associate professor or professor.³

³ Employees of joint departments at Chalmers and Gothenburg University are exempt from the requirement of employment at Chalmers.

For each doctoral student, the Head of Department shall appoint an examiner in connection with admission. The examiner may only serve as a supervisor for the doctoral student in exceptional cases.⁴ Such an exemption is decided by the Head of Department after discussing the matter with the Vice President, but may not be granted if the supervisor is the doctoral student's closest line manager.

The examiner has overarching responsibility for the doctoral programme within a subject and shall ensure that the education within that doctoral study subject maintains high quality in terms of research assignment and other elements. The examiner is particularly responsible for ensuring that the doctoral student's education leads to fulfilment of the degree objectives.

The examiner shall participate in the annual study follow-up and approve the individual study plan.

The examiner shall preview the licentiate thesis and doctoral thesis.

The examiner shall approve the licentiate thesis and its presentation. The examiner decides when 50 percent of the doctoral studies have been completed and the doctoral student has thereby reached the so-called licentiate level.

7 Licentiate seminar

7.1 General regulations

The licentiate thesis shall be presented in English or Swedish at a public seminar on the Chalmers campus. The licentiate seminar shall take place during the period 25 August–21 December or 9 January–the Friday of the week before the Midsummer holiday and during normal working hours. If special circumstances exist, the Head of Department can decide to hold the seminar at another time or location.

If a licentiate degree will not be earned, a midway seminar shall be held. The midway seminar is held in Swedish or English at a public seminar on the Chalmers campus. If special circumstances exist, the Head of Department can decide to hold the seminar at another time or location.

For a full-time doctoral student deemed able to proceed towards a doctoral degree, the licentiate degree shall be earned or the midway seminar held within no more than three years, unless special circumstances exist. If the licentiate degree is earned or the midway seminar is held or planned after more than 3 years, the reason for this must be explained in writing by the principal supervisor and approved by the Head of Department.

7.2 Notification, decision regarding licentiate seminar and dissemination of information

The doctoral student shall notify the Head of Department of their desire to hold a licentiate seminar no later than four weeks before the planned date of the licentiate seminar.

The Head of Department shall determine the time and place of the seminar based on suggestions from the doctoral student. The licentiate seminar shall be announced at least three weeks in advance.

⁴ Applies to doctoral students admitted on or after 1 August 2020.

For three weeks prior to the seminar, the doctoral student is responsible for ensuring that copies of the licentiate thesis are available at Chalmers and corresponding departments at other colleges and universities in Sweden in sufficient numbers to enable satisfactory review of the thesis before the seminar.

7.3 Grading of licentiate thesis

The licentiate thesis and its presentation shall be graded on a pass or fail basis. The assessment is made by the examiner. If the thesis and/or its presentation receive a failing mark, the reasons for this shall be given in writing.

8 Doctoral thesis defence

8.1 General regulations

The doctoral thesis shall be presented in English or Swedish at a public defence on the Chalmers campus. The thesis defence shall take place during the period 25 August–21 December or 9 January–the Friday of the week before the Midsummer holiday and during normal working hours. If special circumstances exist, the Head of Department can decide to hold the defence at another time or location.

8.2 Notification, decision on defence and dissemination of information

The doctoral student shall notify the Head of Department of their desire to defend their thesis no later than four months before the planned date of the defence.

The Head of Department shall determine the time and place of the defence based on suggestions from the doctoral student. The thesis defence shall be announced at least three weeks in advance.

For three weeks prior to the defence, the doctoral student is responsible for ensuring that copies of the doctoral thesis are available at Chalmers and corresponding departments at other colleges and universities in Sweden in sufficient numbers to enable satisfactory review of the thesis before the defence.

8.3 Thesis preview

Quality assurance of the thesis prior to its defence is done by a preliminary version of the thesis being previewed by the opponent and the grading committee. The doctoral thesis shall be sent for preview no later than three months prior to its defence. Written statements must be received by the department no later than two months before the defence. It is sufficient to receive a statement indicating that the recipient received the thesis and deems it to be of sufficient quality to present in a defence. However, any recommendation advising against defending the thesis must provide the reasoning for this.

8.4 Opponent, chair of the defence and grading committee

The thesis defence shall have one opponent (faculty opponent). The opponent shall have scientific expertise equivalent to, or above, the associate professor level.

The defence shall be led by a chair. The doctoral student's principal supervisor should not serve as chair.

The grade for the doctoral thesis and its defence shall be determined by a grading committee specially appointed for each defence. The grading committee shall consist of three – or in special cases five – members. The majority of these shall be appointed from among researchers/teachers at a different department or outside of Chalmers. They should have scientific expertise equivalent to, or above, the associate professor level. Gender equality aspects shall be taken into consideration. At least one alternate shall be appointed.

The Head of Department shall appoint the opponent, grading committee and chair of the defence. Issues related to conflict of interest shall be taken into consideration when selecting the opponent and grading committee. Issues related to conflict of interest are regulated in the policy document *Guiding principles for conflict of interest in doctoral thesis defence*.

8.5 Grading committee's decision on grade

The grading committee appoints a chair from among themselves. The grading committee forms a quorum when all members are present. The committee's decision is defined as the opinion that the majority of the members agree on.

The opponent and principal supervisor shall be in attendance at the grading committee's meeting and participate in the deliberations, but not the decision. The examiner and chair of the defence may participate in deliberations, but not the decision.

The doctoral thesis and its defence are assessed as pass or fail.

If the defence is given a failing mark, the reasons for this must be stated. The committee decides whether any reservations shall be presented.

In the event of a failing mark, the Head of Department is responsible for informing the Vice President and for appointing a group to investigate the grounds for the grade. Based on this investigation, the Head of Department decides whether continued supervisor support should be offered to the doctoral student, with the aim of enabling a new thesis defence.

If the doctoral student fails their defence, they have the option of requesting to defend a revised thesis at a new defence. The decision to grant or reject this request is made by the Head of Department.

9 Right to supervision and other resources

If a doctoral student substantially neglects their undertakings as specified in the individual study plan or is otherwise judged to not have the ability or prerequisites to continue on towards their degree, the Head of Department may decide that the doctoral student shall no longer have the right to supervision and other resources for their doctoral studies. The decision on withdrawal of supervision and other resources may not be delegated.

The issue of withdrawing resources shall not be brought up until all other possibilities for solving the problems have been exhausted.

The decision to withdraw supervision and other resources shall be made based on the individual study plan, the account of the matter presented by the doctoral student and the supervisor, and any other investigation available. The review procedure is specified in the policy document *Regulation regarding the withdrawal of resources for doctoral students*. As part of the assessment, consideration shall be given as to whether Chalmers has fulfilled its undertakings as specified in the individual study plan and this appointment regulation. The Head of Department's decision on the matter shall be issued in writing with the grounds stated.

If the doctoral student is employed as a doctoral student, a decision to withdraw the resources comes into effect when the current term of employment comes to an end. The time point shall be specified in the decision.

For a doctoral student with other study funding, the decision goes into effect from the time point specified in the decision. With external funding, such as for an industrial doctoral student, the time point should be decided in consultation with the company and/or financier.

The doctoral student may appeal the Head of Department's decision to the Vice President. The appeal shall be made in writing and shall be received by the university registrar no later than three weeks after the date the decision was delivered to the student. The Vice President will conduct an investigation and then make a final decision in the matter.

10 Doctoral student influence

Doctoral students at Chalmers shall be given the opportunity to be represented in governing and preparatory bodies that are directly relevant to the programme and the doctoral students' situation. Through representative democracy, doctoral students appoint their representatives to various university bodies via the student union.

Guidelines for doctoral student participation in preparatory and governing bodies shall be established in greater detail in the policy document *Guiding principles on student influence at Chalmers (Riktlinjer för studentinflytande vid Chalmers)*.

10.1 Compulsory student union membership

All doctoral students must belong to a student union at Chalmers and pay membership dues. Certificates, diplomas, etc. shall not be issued to the student until the dues have been paid.

11 Working environment and study environment

Chalmers is subject to the Discrimination Act (2008:567). The purposes of this Act are to counteract discrimination and otherwise foster equal rights and opportunities without regard to gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or age.

11.1 Doctoral student representative

At Chalmers, there is a doctoral student representative (Doktorandombud, DOMB) tasked with helping doctoral students with problems they may have in relation to their studies. The doctoral student representative is employed directly by the board of the Doctoral Student Guild of the Chalmers Student Union and is therefore unaffiliated, non-partisan and neutral. Matters handled by the doctoral student representative are kept confidential.

The doctoral student representative shall always be given the opportunity to participate in the meetings if the doctoral student so desires.

12 Quality assurance

The university's management is ultimately responsible for high quality in research and educational activities. Chalmers' doctoral programmes shall undergo regular evaluation, which shall serve as the basis for development work. In the course of evaluation and development efforts, Chalmers shall ensure that doctoral students are given the opportunity to participate and that the needs of society are taken into account. Chalmers' quality assurance work in relation to the doctoral programmes shall be described in separate documentation.

13 Reconsideration, complaint and appeal

Students admitted to doctoral studies at Chalmers may appeal against the following decisions:

- i. Decision to reject a request for change of supervisor
- ii. Decision to withdraw the right to supervision and other resources
- iii. Decision to reject a request to defend a doctoral thesis

The complaint shall be made in writing and shall be received by the university registrar no later than three weeks after the date the decision was delivered to the student. The complaint shall be submitted to the Vice President responsible for doctoral programmes. The Vice President's decision, which is final, shall be issued in writing with the grounds stated and cannot be appealed.

14 Report of deviation from the appointment regulation

Any complaints of deviations from this appointment regulation shall first be directed the Head of Department and thereafter to the Vice President. The doctoral student can also turn to the Student Union's Doctoral Student Section, doctoral student representative or the trade union for support.